

# The Dog Logs

Monologues  
by Dogs  
as told by  
C.J. Johnson

directed by  
Gin O'Brien

APRIL 10 - 19

[BNT.ORG.AU](http://BNT.ORG.AU)

Ballaarat Mechanics Institute  
117-119 Sturt St. Ballarat



ballarat  
national  
theatre  
SINCE 1938



# NEWSletter

APR / 2026

## From the Chair

To view the Message from the Chair go to the link below:

[Ballaratmi.org.au/from-the-chair-apr-2026/](http://Ballaratmi.org.au/from-the-chair-apr-2026/)



BALLAARAT  
MECHANICS'  
INSTITUTE

# Rosemary Recommends

## Authors of the Month

### Fiona Lowe.

Fiona has lived in Edmonton Canada, Madison Wisconsin, and currently lives close to the Great Ocean Road in Victoria. In 2005 she sold her first Medical Romance to Harlequin Mills and Boon. Since then she's written nine books won a CataRomance Reviewer's Award and has been nominated for the Ruby (Australia's premier romance writing award).



### Anna Johnston.



Anna lives in Melbourne with her husband and daughters. *The Borrowed Life of Frederick Fife* is her first novel.

Anna left an imminent career in medicine to follow her heart into her grandfather's nursing home where she became the social support coordinator, When injury left her unable to continue, she began to write about it. Anna has enjoyed a lifelong passion for theatre, screenplay, travel and creative ageing.

## Book of the Month

### *A Far-Flung Life* by M.L. Stedman.

Western Australia, 1958 where, for generations, the MacBrides have lived on a remote sheep station, Meredith Downs. A million acres, it's an ocean of arid land.

One ordinary day, on a lonely road, patriarch Phil MacBride swerves to avoid a kangaroo. In seconds, the lives of his entire family are shattered.

Then, instead of leaving them to heal, fate comes back for them in a twist of consequences that will cause one of them to lose their life, and another to sacrifice theirs for the sake of an innocent child. Matt, the youngest MacBride, is plunged into a moral and emotional journey for which there is no map, no guide, as he is forced to choose between love and duty, sacrifice and happiness.

## Recommended Reads

### *The Inn at Penglis Cove* by Lauren Westwood.

When Juno's marriage implodes, an unexpected inheritance offers her a way out: a crumbling inn perched high on a Cornish cliff, left to her by a great-aunt she never knew. Hoping to give her children a fresh start, Juno swaps city life for windswept coastal walks and salty sea air...only to find that the Cross Keys Inn is steeped in secrets. Locals talk of pirates and a mysterious ghost shop connected to the chilling tale of Bess Trevelyn, murdered at the inn two centuries before. Meeting the handsome but cold landowner Will Penhelion, a descendent of poor Bess's husband, Juno realises the past and present are entwined in ways she never imagined.

### *This Book Made Me Think Of You* by Libby Page.

When Tilly Nightingale receives a call telling her there's a birthday gift from her husband waiting for her at her local bookshop, it couldn't come as more of a shock, as her husband Joe died five months ago.

The gift is simple – twelve carefully chosen books from Joe, one for each month...

# New releases

## Shellybanks by Louise Milligan.

On the sands of Shellybanks, where tides can quickly turn treacherous, journalist Kate Delaney once nearly drowned. Years later, reeling from a violent crime that has upended her life in Melbourne, she returns to Dublin to comfort her beloved aunt Dolores-only to discover Dolores has her own buried trauma. As a teenager, Dolores was drawn into a disturbing religious movement that stole her youth, her freedom, and so much more. With Katie's help, she is determined to confront the powerful network that made her suffer years of silence and shame.

## New Releases Mystery

*The Girls Before* Kate Alice Marshall  
*What The Bones Know* Kirstyn McDermott

## Aust Mystery

*Dark Desert Road* Tim Ayliffe  
*Haze* Sam Elliott  
*Old Games* Fiona Hardy  
*On The Edge* Kate Horan  
*Antihero* Gregg Hurwitz  
*Two Islands* Ian Kemish  
*Shellybanks* Louise Milligan  
*The Cursed Road* Laura McCluskey  
*The Hiding Place* Kate Mildenhall  
*The Gambler* Josh Pomare  
*The Pact* Lisa Walker

## Historical

*The Strawberry House* Rachel Burton  
*The Shock Of The Light* Lori Inglis Hall  
*The Girls of Good Fortune* Kristine McMorris  
*Meet the Newmans* Jennifer Niven  
*The Orphan at the Irish Adoption House* Michelle Vernal  
*The Inn at Penglis Cove* Lauren Westwood  
*The Violin Maker's Secret* Evie Woods

## Aust Historical

*A Far-Flung Life* M.L. Stedman

## Romance

*The Island Retreat* Cathy Kelly  
*An Almost Perfect Summer* Jill Mansell  
*This Book Made Me Think of You* Libby Page

## Aust Romance

*The Last Poem* Courtney Peppernell

## Novel

*The Secrets of the Lost Vineyard* Erin Palmisano

## Aust Novel

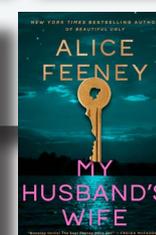
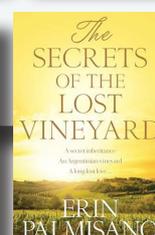
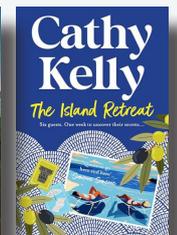
*Iluka* Cassie Stroud  
*Three Summers* Karen Swan  
*In a Common Hour* Sita Walker

## Psychological

*My Husband's Wife* Alice Feeney

## Non Fiction

*Letter From Provence* Sheryle Bagwell  
*Peg Rankin; A Journey of Faith and Resilience.* Peter Rankin SDB



## Twilight Talks: Focus on Ballarat

Presented by Dr Phil Roberts OAM  
& Neil Leckie OAM

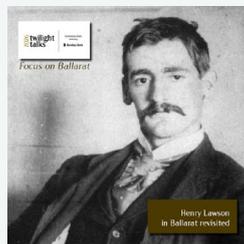
Full Program: [ballaratmi.org.au/twilight-talks/](http://ballaratmi.org.au/twilight-talks/)

Wed 15 April | 5.30pm

### Henry Lawson in Ballarat revisited:

Presented by Hedley Thomson.

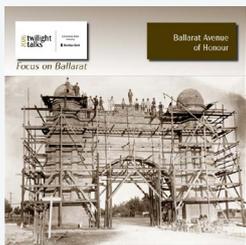
Last November Hedley Thomson provided an entertaining and informative presentation about Henry Lawson's 1887 visit to Ballarat to explore the Eureka Rebellion sites. This year he will return to this topic, detailing the impact of that visit and the events of Eureka generally on Lawson's long literary career.



Wed 22 April | 5.30pm

### Ballarat Avenue of Honour and a look behind names on the Avenue plaques:

Presented by Amethyst May & Garry Snowden.



Amethyst is a student at Mount Clear College who has a passion for Australia's war history. She will present a short documentary on Ballarat's women during the Great War, which won a gold medal recently. She looks

forward to an opportunity to answer your questions about this moving tribute to our service personnel.

Garry Snowden is President of Ballarat's Arch of Victory/Avenue of Honour Committee and has extensively researched the men and women commemorated.



Wed 29 April | 5.30pm

### Nostalgic memories of Stawell & Ballarat 1950s & 1960s:

Presented by author of *Dickie Larsen's Pumpkin & Other Stories*, Geoff Carr.

Geoff Carr is a Ballarat-based author of short stories inspired by his childhood. He grew up in the Wimmera town of Stawell and cherished his caring and loving upbringing enveloped in the blue silhouettes of the famous Grampians and lesser-known Black Ranges. This was the setting before commencing his teaching career and settling in Ballarat for over fifty years.

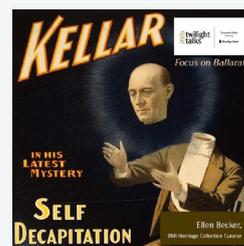


Wed 6 May | 5.30pm

### What We Watched Before Cinema:

#### *Entertainments at the Mechanics' Hall, 1863-1919*

Presented by BMI Heritage Collection Curator, Ellen Becker.



When the Mechanics' Hall opened in 1863, the people of Ballarat flocked to see some strange and spectacular contemporary entertainments — mesmerists, automata, waxworks, human curiosities, and the magic of the first moving image technologies. Join Curator Ellen Becker in traversing the entertainments held in the hey day of the hall, before it was converted into the **Britannia Cinema** in 1919.

Cost: \$9 BMI members & \$13 GA.

Tix: [events.humanitix.com/bmi-twilight-talks-season-1-2026](http://events.humanitix.com/bmi-twilight-talks-season-1-2026)

Tickets also available from the Library Box Office.

Proudly supported by **Community Bank Buninyong**.

# Other News

## Royal South Street Society

Come and join us on Thursday 19 March at the Piano Bar for a night of cheeky laughs and bingo. Every ticket sold raises funds for the Ballarat Eisteddfod! Tickets are just \$15 each, and there's the option to purchase food and drinks at the bar.

Representatives from RSSS Dance Committee will be attending the Victorian Dance Festival in Melbourne from 22–24 May. They will be promoting the RSSS Ballarat Eisteddfod within the wider dance community, with a focus on sharing our fabulous eisteddfod with prospective schools and performers and connecting with others to share ideas and experiences.

This is an event you'll definitely want to be part of! Join us on Friday 12 June for our Volunteer Interactive Training Day. You'll have the opportunity to rotate through each volunteer role, with live practice performances to make the experience hands-on and engaging. There will also be additional training sessions covering Writers, Square Sales, and Child Safety. Information coming to our website soon.

Full details of sections available on our website.

[royalsouthstreet.com.au](http://royalsouthstreet.com.au) or contact via email: [info@royalsouthstreet.com.au](mailto:info@royalsouthstreet.com.au)



## Stella Prize Longlist 2026

The 2026 Stella Prize Longlist presents another twelve exceptional works by Australian women and non-binary writers.

Spanning poetry, memoir, fiction, non-fiction and graphic works, the 2026 longlist presents themes that explore the transformative power of memory, truth and the intrinsic beauty of creative fiction.

This year Stella received 212 entries. In the coming weeks, this list will be reduced to six to make up the short list, to be announced on Wednesday, April 8th, before one extraordinary book is awarded the \$60,000 Stella Prize, announced May 13th.

Find out more:  
[ballaratmi.org.au/stella-prize-2026-long-list/](http://ballaratmi.org.au/stella-prize-2026-long-list/)

## Give Now | 2026 Annual Appeal

We hope you consider a tax-deductible donation to the Ballarat Mechanics' Institute (BMI) 2026 Appeal.

For more than 166 years, the BMI has been part of Ballarat's story. Established in 1859, it continues the proud tradition of Mechanics' Institutes — organisations created to provide education, knowledge and community connection for everyone.

To find out more go to our Donations page on the website to find out more.

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

Paula Nicholson, President





**BALLARAT  
MECHANICS'  
INSTITUTE**

**What's On  
April**



**A Trio of Stunning Piano Quartets**  
**Brian Chapman & Friends**  
12 April at 3pm

**A TRIO OF  
STUNNING PIANO QUARTETS**  
**BRIAN CHAPMAN  
AND FRIENDS**

**Susan Pierotti**  
Violin

**Katharine Brockman**  
Viola

**Rosanne Hunt**  
Cello

**Brian Chapman**  
Piano

**MOZART: Quartet in G minor, K.478**  
**BEETHOVEN: Quartet in E flat, Op.16**  
**BRAHMS: Quartet in G minor, Op.25**

**Minerva's Secrets**  
**Night Tours**  
2 Tours 7pm & 9pm | April 24, May 19 & June 12



**OPENING HOURS**

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

**Vintage Shop:** Thu, Fri, & First Sat of the month - 11am-3pm

**Holidays/closures**

Good Friday - 3 Apr  
Easter Monday - 6 Apr  
ANZAC Day - 25 Apr  
King's Birthday - 8 June  
AFL Grand Final - Sept  
Melbourne Cup - 3 Nov

**School holidays**

3 Apr - 19 Apr 2026  
27 Jun - 12 Jul 2026  
19 Sep - 4 Oct 2026  
19 Dec - 27 Jan 2027

**Important Dates**

Australian Heritage Fest	18 Apr -18 May
Ballarat Marathon	25 & 26 Apr
Ballarat Craft & Design Wk	1-10 May
Ballarat Heritage Fest	21 - 24 May
Ballarat Pride Month	1-30 June

[ballaratmi.org.au/important-festivals-dates/](http://ballaratmi.org.au/important-festivals-dates/)



	Tue 31 Mar	Wed 1 Apr	Thu Thu 2 Apr	Fri 3 Apr	Sat 4 Apr	Sun 5 Apr
	10am-3pm   Library	10am-4pm   Library 7pm-8pm   Kadampa Meditation Series	10am-3pm   Library 11am-3pm   Vintage & Collectables	Library Closed Vintage & Collectables Closed  Good Friday	Library Closed Vintage & Collectables Closed  Easter Saturday	Closed   Library  Easter Sunday
Mon 6 Apr	Tue 7 Apr	Wed 8 Apr	Thu 9 Apr	Fri 10 Apr	Sat 11 Apr	Sun 12 Apr
Library Closed  Easter Monday	10am-3pm   Library	10am-4pm   Library 7pm-8pm   Kadampa Meditation Series	10am-3pm   Library 11am-3pm   Vintage & Collectables	10am-4pm   Library 11am-3pm   Vintage & Collectables  7pm-8.30pm   <i>The Dog Logs</i>   Ballarat National Theatre	9.30am-12noon   Library  7pm-8.30pm   <i>The Dog Logs</i>   Ballarat National Theatre	Closed   Library 2pm-3.30pm   <i>The Dog Logs</i>   Ballarat National Theatre  3pm-5pm   Brian Chapman & Friends: <i>A Trio of Stunning Piano Quartets</i>
Mon 13 Apr	Tue 14 Apr	Wed 15 Apr	Thu 16 Apr	Fri 17 Apr	Sat 18 Apr	Sun 19 Apr
10am-4pm   Library	10am-3pm   Library  6pm-7.30pm   In conversation with Gerardine Christou.	10am-4pm   Library 7pm-8pm   Kadampa 5.30pm-6.30pm Twilight Talks, Henry Lawson in Ballarat revisited  7pm-8.30pm   <i>The Dog Logs</i>   Ballarat National Theatre	10am-3pm   Library 11am-3pm   Vintage & Collectables  7pm-8.30pm   <i>The Dog Logs</i>   Ballarat National Theatre	10am-4pm   Library 11am-3pm   Vintage & Collectables  7pm-8.30pm   <i>The Dog Logs</i>   Ballarat National Theatre	9.30am-12noon   Library  7pm-8.30pm   <i>The Dog Logs</i>   Ballarat National Theatre	Closed   Library 2pm-3.30pm   <i>The Dog Logs</i>   Ballarat National Theatre
Mon 20 Apr	Tue 21 Apr	Wed 22 Apr	Thu 23 Apr	Fri 24 Apr	Sat 25 Apr	Sun 26 Apr
10am-4pm   Library	10am-3pm   Library  6pm-7.30pm   In conversation with Fiona Lowe	10am-4pm   Library 5.30pm-6.30pm Twilight Talks, Ballarat Avenue of Honour, names behind the plaques 7pm-8pm   Kadampa Meditation Series	10am-3pm   Library 11am-3pm   Vintage & Collectables  7.30pm Ballarat Film Society   <i>Storie di Spiriti Amanti</i> , French Drama/Thriller	10am-4pm   Library 11am-3pm   Vintage & Collectables  7pm & 9pm   <i>Minerva's Secrets</i> , Night Tours, 2 sessions.	Library Closed  ANZAC Day	Closed   Library
Mon 27 Apr	Tue 28 Apr	Wed 29 Apr	Thu 30 Apr	Fri 1 May	Sat 2 May	Sun 3 May
10am-4pm   Library	10am-3pm   Library	10am-4pm   Library 5.30pm-6.30pm Twilight Talks, Nostalgic memories of Stawell & Ballarat 7pm-8pm   Kadampa Meditation Series	10am-3pm   Library 11am-3pm   Vintage & Collectables  6.30pm-8pm   In conversation with Anna Johnston.	10am-4pm   Library 11am-3pm   Vintage & Collectables	9.30am-12noon   Library 11am-3pm   Vintage & Collectables	Closed   Library 1pm-4pm Artistanbul: Create your own Turkish Mosaic Lamp

## A Ballarat National Theatre Production

### *The Dog Logs*

Fri 10, Sat 11, Wed 15, Thu 16, Fri 17, Sat 18  
April at 7pm. | Sun 12 & Sun 19 April at 2pm

Play by C. J. Johnson, film critic for The  
Nightlife | Directed by Gin O'Brien

*The Dog Logs* is a refreshing take on canine life that  
is touching and surprisingly human.

From a tough Rottweiler with neighbour problems  
to a prima donna toy poodle who wants attention,  
this collection of hilarious and heart-breaking  
monologues examines the lives of dogs from every  
breed, age, and situation. Telling stories of friend-  
ship, romance, and revenge.

Cost: \$30 adults, \$25 Conc. \$20 BNT members  
Tix: [events.humanitix.com/bnt-the-dog-logs/  
tickets](https://events.humanitix.com/bnt-the-dog-logs/tickets)

Tickets not for purchase at the Library Box Office.



## Brian Chapman & Friends

### A Trio of Stunning Piano Quartets

Sunday 12 April, 3pm

Pianist Brian Chapman will be joined by violinist  
Susan Pierotti, violist Katharine Brockman and  
cellist Rosanne Hunt.

#### The Program:

**Mozart:** Quartet in G minor, K.478

**Beethoven:** Quartet in E flat, Op.16

Interval – Refreshments included

**Brahms:** Quartet in G minor, Op.25

Complimentary light refreshments will be served  
at Interval. Although advance booking is  
recommended, cash and EFTPOS ticket sales  
will be available at the door.

Cost: Adult, Snr. \$45 | Conc. \$40 | Student \$20.

Tix: [trybooking.com/events/landing/1507815?](https://trybooking.com/events/landing/1507815?)

Tickets not available from the Library Box Office.

## In Conversation with Gerardine Christou

### *Peg Rankin: A Journey of Faith & Resilience* by Peter Rankin SDB

Tuesday 14 April, 6pm - 7.30pm

This is the story of Peg, an ordinary woman who  
was “made of extraordinary stuff”.

Margaret (Peg) Rankin is remembered by all who  
knew and loved her as a woman of kindness with  
a ready smile. Her long life brought her much joy,  
love and happiness. She was the devoted mother of  
twelve children and many grandchildren, a farmer,  
a chef and a confidante for many. There were also  
challenges and tragedy. With her strong will she  
persisted and got on with the next thing.

Always positive, Peg was quick to move on from trials  
and setbacks. She was a true Christian. She embodied  
love, mercy, joy, a ready sense of humour and above  
all, resilience and faith. This is her remarkable story  
told by a loving son.

Gerardine Christou, is Peter's sister, she will present  
Peter's legacy, and contribute to this remarkable story.

Cost: \$11

Tix: [events.humanitix.com/peg-rankin-bmi](https://events.humanitix.com/peg-rankin-bmi)

Tickets also available from the Library Box Office.

## Twilight Talks: Focus on Ballarat

Presented by Dr Phil Roberts OAM  
& Neil Leckie OAM

Wed 15 April | 5.30pm

**Henry Lawson in Ballarat revisited:**  
Presented by Hedley Thomson.

Wed 22 April | 5.30pm

**Ballarat Avenue of Honour and a look behind  
names on the Avenue plaques:**  
Presented by Amethyst May & Garry Snowden.

Wed 29 April | 5.30pm

**Nostalgic memories of Stawell & Ballarat  
1950s & 1960s:**

Presented by author of *Dickie Larsen's Pumpkin &  
Other Stories*, Geoff Carr.

Wed 6 May | 5.30pm

**What We Watched Before Cinema: *Entertainments*  
at the Mechanics' Hall, 1863-1919**

Presented by BMI Heritage Collection Curator,  
Ellen Becker.

More details in the main body of the newsletter.

Cost: \$9 BMI members & \$13 GA.

Tix: [events.humanitix.com/bmi-twilight-talks-  
season-1-2026](https://events.humanitix.com/bmi-twilight-talks-season-1-2026)

Tickets also available from the Library Box Office.

## In Conversation with Fiona Lowe *The Drowning*

Host, author AJ Lyndon

Tuesday 21 April, 6pm - 7.30pm

A body on the beach. An inheritance. A family  
pulled apart. CC Cilento's best memories are  
of spending every summer holiday running wild in  
and out of the family beach house with her cousins,  
James, Ollie, Felix and Lily. It's the next best thing  
to having brothers and sisters. They've continued the  
summer tradition into adulthood, getting together at  
the shack with its absolute beach frontage.

But now a bombshell has dropped: the four sibling  
cousins have officially inherited the property – along  
with an unexpected fifth share to CC. What starts  
out as the perfect gift, and a way of keeping the  
family connected forever, quickly devolves into an  
emotional power struggle. Half of them want to keep  
the legacy intact, while the others want to sell – and  
each side will do anything to make it happen. Soon,

CC can't tell friend from foe. When a body is found on  
the shack's beach, has this family dispute turned deadly?

Cost: \$11

Tix: [events.humanitix.com/fiona-lowe-bmi](https://events.humanitix.com/fiona-lowe-bmi)

Tickets also available from the Library Box Office.

## Ballarat Film Society *Only The Animals* French Drama/Thriller

Thursday 23 April 7.30pm showtime

Following the disappearance of glamorous housewife  
Evelyne Ducat (Valeria Bruni Tedeschi), the lives of  
five people who are linked to her are brought together to  
devastating effect as the local police investigate the case.

France, 2019, 116min. Directed by Dominik Moll.

Why not become a member of the Ballarat  
Film Society [ballaratfilmsociety.weebly.com/](https://ballaratfilmsociety.weebly.com/)

## Minerva's Secrets Night Tours

Friday 24 Apr, Tuesday 19 May & Friday 12 June,  
2 Tours each day, 7pm & 9pm

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!

Cost: \$27.50

Tix: [events.humanitix.com/minerva-s-secrets-  
after-dark](https://events.humanitix.com/minerva-s-secrets-after-dark)

Tickets also available from the Library Box Office.

## In Conversation with Anna Johnston *When lemons give you life*

Host, Jane Neild

Thursday 30 April, 6.30pm - 8pm

Redemption is a dish best served warm...

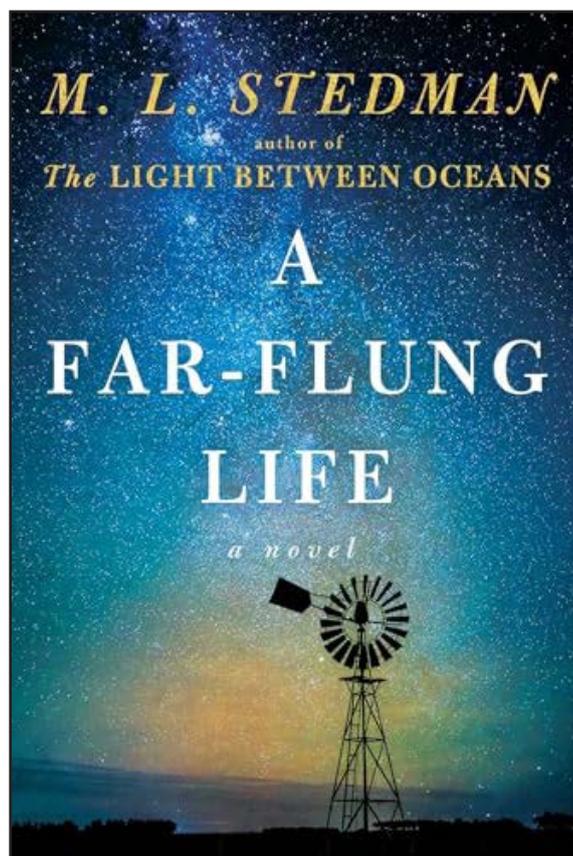
Retired Michelin-star chef Griff Barlow has lost his  
appetite for life. Widowed, grieving and living in  
an aged care facility where beige slop passes for food,  
Griff is done – with guilt, with loneliness and with  
the lie that made headlines when he was diagnosed  
with dementia. Planning one final act, Griff breaks  
into the nursing home kitchen to cook one last lemon  
tart. But the simple act of cooking awakens a long-  
forgotten joy and soon he's restoring flavour, dignity  
and delight to his fellow residents. Meanwhile, his  
estranged sister, Lisa, is grappling with a late-in-life  
ADHD diagnosis, an unexpected romance and  
a frightening health reality of her own. As secrets  
simmer and second chances collide, both siblings are  
forced to confront what it really means to choose life.

Drawing on Anna Johnston's experience working in  
aged care, the novel offers a rare and compassionate  
perspective on how people diagnosed with dementia  
are often dismissed, underestimated and quietly erased.

Cost: \$11

Tix: [events.humanitix.com/anna-johnston-bmi](https://events.humanitix.com/anna-johnston-bmi)

Tickets also available from the Library Box Office.



## Library Operating Hours

Monday, Wednesday, Friday: 10am - 4pm

Tuesday & Thursday: 10am - 3pm

Saturday: 9.30am - 12 noon

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We acknowledge the support of our valued Supporters & Partners

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### Supporters & Partners

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

The Copland Foundation

### Corporate & Community Partners

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Colliers International | Jellis Craig | Ballarat Grammar | Baird & McGregor | Specialist Centre Ballarat

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G Gay & Co Mitre 10 | Federation University | IMD Tech | Tony De Jong Drafting | The Cleaners Room

Ballarat Connected Communities

Ballarat Cemeteries | Royal South Street Society | Ballarat National Theatre | BallaRat Pack

Find out how you can become involved | [ballaratmi.org.au/about-us/supporters-partners](http://ballaratmi.org.au/about-us/supporters-partners)

This newsletter has been printed courtesy of the office of Juliana Addison MP, Member for Wendouree.