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BROWN HILL

COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

2026 Winter / Spring Edition #47

The Ballarat Tramway Museum, The Brown Hill Connection

By James Proctor

While the Ballarat Tramway Museum has been a feature of the Ballarat Botanic Gardens for more than 50 years, less well known is the role the Brown Hill Progress Association played in the establishment of the museum.

Ballarat's first tram service began on Boxing Day 1887, with horse-drawn trams connecting the railway station with Lake Wendouree and the Botanic Gardens. The trams were operated by the Ballarat Tramway Company. This was only two years after Melbourne's first permanent tram service started, with cable trams.

Electric tram services commenced in 1905, with trams operated by the Electric Supply Company of Victoria (ESCo). Ballarat became the second city in Victoria to get a full-time electric tram service, after Bendigo in 1903. While there was an electric tram service connecting Box Hill with Doncaster between 1889 and 1896, Melbourne's first permanent electric tram service began in 1906.

ESCo was acquired by the State Electricity Commission (SEC) in 1934, which included its tramway operations in Ballarat and Bendigo. The SEC had also acquired the Geelong tramway system in 1930 when it acquired the Melbourne Electric Supply Company.

The SEC was set up by the Victorian Government in 1921 to generate and distribute electricity to all households and businesses in Victoria, using Latrobe Valley brown coal. To date, electricity had been generated and distributed by municipal and private generator and distribution companies. While these companies were keen to supply electricity in cities and large towns, they were reluctant to expand into more remote areas. They were also largely reliant on black coal from NSW, the supply of which was often interrupted by industrial action.

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Occasionally, some content included in our newsletter may be upsetting for some readers. If you need support, contact numbers are available online: brownhill.vic.au/new-to-brown-hill/need-some-support/

Brown Hill Progress Association would like to acknowledge the Wadawurrung people and their ancestors who have been custodians of the Ballarat area for thousands of years performing age-old cultural ceremonies, celebrations and traditions. We acknowledge the Ballarat Aboriginal community, many of whom were forcibly removed from their families during the Stolen Generations decades and brought to Ballarat. We acknowledge and pay our respects to Elders past and present.



From the President's Pen...

People often call me the “Mayor of Brown Hill” and I take that as a compliment. I have lived, worked, played sport over 50 years, and volunteered for around 20 years in this community. As current President of the Brown Hill Progress Association (BHPA) I am often asked “*what does the BHPA do?*”

As some may know, most of the BHPA committee members were originally pulled together as part of the management team for the Community Swimming Pool back in 2006. As the pool aged, this same group then worked collaboratively with City of Ballarat to establish the new Splashpark opened last summer and to improve the whole Reserve facilities. We are constantly in the ear of Project management in Council, to progress with the next stages.

It's not all about big structures though. On Monday mornings under the guidance of Helen, the coordinator from Ballarat North Neighbourhood House a small group of volunteers set up the room for the local toddlers Playgroup at Russell Square. Out come bean bags, mats and toys for the kids, Mums and Dads to socialise, chat and have a hot drink. 90 minutes later we pack up again and look forward to the next week. Over 12 weeks of the last school term, we worked with the Brown Hill Cricket Club and cooked around 140 sausages on Friday nights for the kids and families involved in Auskick. We provided shelter on the wet Saturday mornings for parkrun and ran the occasional sausage sizzle. In Summer we load up the esky with frozen icy-poles and drop them around at parkrun and to families at the Splashpark.

We also collaborate and assist other groups if needed. The Brown Hill Fire Awareness Network, Brown Hill Uniting Church, Brown Hill Lions Club, Caledonian School and the Committee of Management for the Brown Hill Community Hall are close allies and can call on us when needed.

Probably our most important ongoing commitment is the production and distribution of the Brown Hill Community Newsletter. For over 10 years our group of over 30 volunteers has delivered over 2,700 newsletters of each edition to the letterboxes of the community, four to six times per year and posted it for general access on the Brown Hill Community Hub website. Our wonderful Editor from day one, Sarah, has pulled together 46 editions and has now passed the baton over to Rachael our new Editor who has this edition as her first production. We thank Sarah and wish her well and show our appreciation to Rachael who has stepped up to the role. The BHPA can be proud of what it has achieved, and we look forward to the challenges of the future.

Your President,
John O'Brien

From the Secretary's Desk

Not much news from the BHPA as I put this short update together. Our small group of committee members and volunteers continue to work with the local community as President John O'Brien has mentioned in his summary.

BHPA members assisted with a great sporting event held in late July, called Rogaining. It was based from our Reserve and the Brown Hill Cricket Clubrooms. See full report on page 7. A big thank you to all our cooks over the weekend and to the organisers who were terrific to work with.

The BHPA also just donated a Defibrillator Unit to Caledonian Primary School. This came about after a meeting discussion that the Education Department doesn't see a defib as being necessary in public school first aid kits. This came as a great surprise. Let's hope it is used as infrequently as possible but at least it is now available and will be externally mounted for public access if necessary.

As this Newsletter goes to the printer, BHPA will be having their AGM. We look forward to the coming financial year and welcoming some new faces to our hard-working committee.

Cheers,

Brendan Stevens

Do you have something to share with the Community?

Has your local community group celebrated a special occasion, have an upcoming event, or would you like the community to know more about your group?

This is a newsletter for the community by the community so we welcome any contributions from the Brown Hill community. Email your contributions to: newsletter@brownhill.vic.au or deliver a hard copy to the reception desk at Caledonian Primary School, Thompson Street, Brown Hill during school term and school hours.

Please read the editorial policy regarding contributions before submitting an article or advertising: brownhill.vic.au/newsletter.



Next Meeting - All Welcome

30 September 2026, 7.00pm
Brown Hill Cricket Club

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News from the Principal's desk



It is hard to believe we are past the halfway mark of 2026!

When I look back over the year, it has been a very exciting and action packed six months.

Students were very excited when our new climbing gym, catering for students of all ages, was installed in the playground. Our undercover multi-sports court was also completed last term. This provides a great new space for students to play and participate in sport. There are plenty of sports opportunities here including house and inter-school athletics and cross-country, and for older students inter-school basketball, netball, AFL and soccer. Our Stingers Futsal team competes at Major League every Saturday morning and are having a very successful season.

We are very proud of our engaging Science Program. Students have a specialist class each week and attend several excursions throughout the year to Earth Ed and Ecolinc. This year students have Dug up Diprotodons, explored Space Junk, examined changing states of matter and studied Earth's changing landscape.

In Science, our students have recently been exploring how animals use camouflage to blend into their surroundings. Many of the butterflies were so well camouflaged that they took ages to find!

I always enjoy visiting our Music Room to hear students learning percussion, ukelele, singing and exploring electronic music. The focus this term is learning news songs and preparing for our end of year concert, which will be held at Woodmans Hill Secondary College. Earlier this term we visited Mt Rowan Secondary to watch their performance of *Elf the Musical*, which was a treat.

As part of a Cultural Heritage Day, one of the highlights for me (an avid Hawks supporter), was a visit to the MCG with a small group of our students to meet some of the players. At the Tydetdji Yulk space, students created their own art using traditional symbols from the Wurundjeri people.

I am looking forward to an exciting second half of 2026 at Little Bendigo!

Anthony Tait
Principal

Michaela Settle MP

State Member for Eureka



POWER YOUR DAY FOR LESS

FREE ELECTRICITY IN THE MIDDLE OF THE DAY FOR ELIGIBLE VICTORIAN HOUSEHOLDS

From 1 October, the new Midday Saver will give many Victorians access to three hours of free daytime electricity, helping households that can shift their usage save on energy bills.



michaela.settle@parliament.vic.gov.au 5331 7722 [/MichaelaSettleMP](https://www.facebook.com/MichaelaSettleMP) [michaela.settle.com.au](https://www.michaela.settle.com.au)

Putting People and the Planet First



An ethical, local, sustainable and member-run food co-op, located at Barkly Square, Ballarat East. Open during Victorian school terms: Thursdays, 9am - 1pm and 5 - 6.30pm, also Saturdays, 9am - 12noon.

In addition to our shop, we also run regular workshops on topics ranging from making preserves to crafts, plus we run a quarterly pre-loved fashion market!

In June we ran our quarterly pre-loved fashion market, and what a market it was! Over 1,300 people walked through Barkly Square, shopping for pre-loved clothing from over 50 stalls. Imagine all of the clothing that hasn't been produced and shipped across the world because these wonderful shoppers have chosen to shop pre-loved! It's been incredible to watch this event grow over the past few years, a simple idea to lower our waste - emerging into a vibrant and socially impactful community event. It is not just the tremendous volume of clothing and accessories we've potentially prevented from going to landfill (just one of the huge impacts of the fast fashion industry), but also the physical connection and positive mental wellbeing that is created when people come together in social connection.

The Ballarat Wholefoods Collective, and its Pre-loved Fashion Market, is special because it puts people and planet first instead of money. We bring community together and put power and growth back into people's hands. You can see this each time we open, when the farmers that grow the food that we sell deliver to the shop and then even continue to shop for their own food, just as Campbell Mercer from Manna Hill Estate did last week when he delivered his award winning, certified regenerative, biodynamic and organic extra virgin olive oil.

We source foods directly from the farm which means we pay the farmer a fair price; we remove the complicated supply chains and ensure the farmers get a fair price; we also ensure a fair price to our shoppers as we are a member-led not-for-profit. It's win-win!

We pride ourselves on having this relationship with our farmers and understand the enormous pressure the farming community is under economically, and from climate change. As a community we can help shape our future... People power is where you shop and who you support, people power is refusal to participate in unethical systems and food is one of the most powerful daily refusals we have. This is why we support small, local and community owned farms and businesses. Our aim is to keep the dollars circulating locally. We know where our food comes from and who grew it.

The Ballarat Wholefoods Collective and its Pre-loved Vintage Market allows you to shop guilt free! Our focus is on consciously consuming and supporting one another.

The next Pre-loved Fashion Sale is on Saturday, 28 November from 11am - 3pm. It is only \$10 to have a stall, visit our website for more details and to book a stall: ballaratwholefoodscollective.com.au/preloved-fashion

Grace Darke

Member of The Ballarat Wholefoods Collective



Campbell Mercer of Manna Hill Estate at the Wholefoods Collective

Presidents Report 2025-2026

This past year, 1st July 2025 to 30th June 2026, the club welcomed new members, due to advertising principally by our Secretary, Jenny McCarthy, and member Ruby Bentley. The Club has 36 registered members, an increase from the previous year.

Activities commence at 12.15pm to 1.15pm with the board game Sequence. This is played and enjoyed by more members. Three boards are now in use to accommodate more players. 1.30pm-3.45pm indoor bowls, euchre, rummy king, scrabble and sequence are played. Half hour for afternoon tea from 2.30pm to 3.00pm. The first Monday in the month, along with indoor bowls, HOI is played. This is popular with members with a few only coming to the club to play HOI. HOI is like Bingo, but played with 13 playing cards each and winner/s choose a small grocery item from the table, however, chocolate bars have crept in. Along with HOI, on the first Monday in the month we have a special afternoon tea. 80th and 90th birthdays are celebrated with a birthday cake and extra treats.

Christmas in July and Christmas lunches were both held at the Brown Hill Hotel with the meal subsidised by the club. The Club once again held a pie and slice lunch which was well attended and subsidised by the club.

There was a departure from the Club's birthday being held the first Monday of December. The birthday was celebrated on Monday, 8th September as it was considered that December is a very busy time. Members and guests were entertained by Simon Carroll singing along with his amazing banjo playing skills. Once again, the birthday cake was a stand of cupcakes and pre-packed boxes of sandwiches and slices for afternoon tea. A food hamper for the door prize and many prizes for the well supported raffle.

I have many members to thank. Gloria Kenneth once again took on the role of Secretary which she fulfilled admirably. Gloria relinquished this role in January due to ill health.

Jenny McCarthy again stepped in to the role and attends and reports on Association meetings as well as keeping the Minutes of the club. Jenny also keeps the Club's notice board up to date with the various club and Ageing Well activities.

The Treasurer's position was vacant, so this was filled by myself. As I am also President, I wanted the Treasurer's position to be only temporary. I have filled this role for the year, but 2026-2027 will see a new member willing to fill this role.

Harry Burt sets up and co-ordinates the bowls with the aid of Wally Cook and Glenn Richards. Betty McGarry continues to run the euchre with her hole punch and 'Oscar' timer as well as supplying the chocolate bars for the least successful players on the day. Thank you to those members who set up and serve the afternoon tea as well as sell the Lucky Number cards. With 25 numbers on the cards at \$2.00 each, \$25.00 to the winner and \$25.00 to the Club. This is our only fund-raising for the club.

A special thank you to Mary Langley and Shirley Martin for supplying delicious scones, jam and cream and drop scones for the HOI afternoon tea. I look forward to the 2026-2027 financial year with the club continuing to grow with new members and remaining a friendly and welcoming club.

Dianne Eden,
President Brown Hill Seniors Club
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FEATURE ARTICLE

Victorian Rogaining Association Event

Saturday 18th and Sunday 19th July 2026, Brown Hill Reserve

Rogaining is a long-distance cross-country navigation sport for teams of two to five people. The sport originated in Victoria in 1976 with significant input from Rodney, Gail and Neil Phillips (hence, the name 'rogaine' is taken from the first few letters of their names). A rogaine usually runs for 6 to 24 hours and about six are held in the Victorian bush each year. Competitors ages range from 12-75 years with many families competing as a team.

The Victorian Rogaining Association (VRA) chose the forest tracks between Brown Hill and Creswick as a perfect site for their mid-winter event. The Brown Hill Progress Association was invited to cater each afternoon-evening for the competitors and volunteer organisers of the VRA with the Brown Hill Cricket Clubrooms as the home base.

The weather was cold but clear on both days. A total of 400 participants took part over the weekend with approximately 200 competitors on Saturday and another 200 for Sunday. Saturday had two courses laid out orienteering style and was designated as an eight hour event. The longer course was 50km and the shorter 30km. Saturday started at midday with most teams back between 6:30-8:00pm. The last team did not get in until after 9pm. It was very cold, so our cooked sausages, vege-burgers, onions, bread and condiments were very welcome along with a huge pot of soup, cooked up by the VRA group.

The Sunday was a daylight event. Start time was 10:00am and we prepared food to be eaten between 3:30pm and 5:00pm. The experienced VRA organisers had estimates of the food needed and their timing was almost spot on. All competitors were in by 5:00pm, fed and the site was packed up by 6:00pm and the VRA people returned to their hometowns, all over Victoria. The BHPA cooks thoroughly enjoyed the event and there was very little left over by Sunday evening.

In the end we cooked up around 520 sausages, 130 vege-burgers, 11kg of onions and 40 loaves of bread. The Brown Hill Cricket clubrooms were a perfect venue for the event with all competitors very grateful for a warm building and hot showers and toilets available after they finished.

If you would like more information about Rogaining, visit rogainevic.org.au for more details.

Brendan Stevens





BALLARAT SOCIETY OF ARTISTS INC.

Winter was No Time to Hibernate

Winter might be a quiet time for some people, but our artists are out and about participating in various activities, art shows and exhibitions. Currently, we have an exhibition at the Lake Wendouree Museum, three of our artists are in an exhibition at Beaufort Art Trax, and two others are planning exhibitions at Gallery 127 in Avoca. During September/October, 25 members are participating in an exhibition in the Ballarat Library with *'A Lifetime of Colour'*.

With art show season underway, all are busy creating and we continue to make use and appreciate our warm meeting space at the Brown Hill Uniting Church Hall. At our monthly meetings in the hall, we have invited our artists to share their art practice. Colleen Simmons (photo) recently engaged us with her love of quilling. Creative Saturdays over Winter have had a few members gathering to create together - a perfect way to spend a Saturday with friends and art.

We have also continued to run Winter Workshops. Our first was with mixed media artist Gaye Niewenhof, over at the Lucas Hub, and recently with member and president, Jon Lam (pictured above) at the church hall. Both workshops had around 12 people in attendance.

If you are interested in joining our group, we meet on the first Saturday of the month at 10.30 at the Brown Hill Uniting Church Hall in Humffray Street North. For further information contact our membership secretary membership.bsainc@gmail.com.

We look forward to meeting you at one of our events.



PERRIDAK BURRON

The Beauty of Culture all Around Us!

Perridak Burrton has had some amazing adventures this term! We are so fortunate to have the opportunity to see, feel, and hear the beauty of culture all around us!

As we learn and grow with, and alongside our children, we're exposed to the beauty of our Country through its people, places, and things.

We had a deadly NAIDOC week! Throughout the week, children spent time learning on Country, created beautiful art pieces using natural resources, had a visit from Ash and Nikki from Connected Beginnings team and, an epic up close encounter with some of Australia's stunning wildlife provided from Reptile Encounters! The Kuwiyn children created a storybook using symbols, and a poster with Wadawurrung words was carefully curated by our Parrwang mob.

For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children's Day this year, we had a range of experiences for our children to explore. We encouraged reflection on the traits that make us who we are; cultivated creative artistic creations using colours inspired by nature, introduced burron to a traditional Torres Strait Islander dish: Goeynaw Mabuth, had a visit from Western Creation (Pancakes) who shared the beautiful sounds of the didgeridoo, Garrang and Parrwang shared a beautiful story 'Walk with Us' - a meaningful story of connection to Country, and to top it off, a colouring competition where our Perridak community were given the opportunity share their artistic flares!

As we venture into the final weeks of this term, we look forward to celebrating National Science Week, Book Week, Educators Day and so much more.

It's been a wonderful term so far and we can't wait to see all the beautiful and meaningful learning to come!

Fireaware: Bushfire Risk and What We Can REALLY Do About It!



For the last ten years I have been providing Brown Hill residents with information on the bushfire risk and how to prepare through the Brown Hill FireAware Network. But I was always aware that it was lacking the very specific information needed for urban-rural fringe residents living in closely spaced housing, like ours, to act.

Nine January was the impetus to go searching for what was missing. Many of you would remember that day: Ballarat's hottest day on record, for that date, gusts near 90km/h. No fire reached us - but the conditions were exactly what Dr Kevin Tolhurst warned Brown Hill residents about back in 2017, in his risk assessments:

- Brown Hill is one of the worst bushfire areas in Ballarat;
- Embers are a massive threat with potential for backyards catching fire;
- Houses close together are the main risk of house-to-house ignition;
- There aren't enough firefighters and fire trucks to protect all the houses.

Nothing since has reduced that risk. Climate projections since 2017 have only strengthened his conclusions. Extreme fire danger days are becoming more frequent, not less.

Good news I found it! Fire science research, expert assessments, and official guidance answers the question: *What can residents actually do?* Three fire scientists, working independently, land on the same point:

- Kevin Tolhurst: "When houses are closer than about ten metres to each other, they become a real threat to their neighbours."
- Jack Cohen (USDA), who developed the Home Ignition Zone concept: houses ignite from embers landing "within 5 feet [1.5m] of flammable walls and attachments" — not from the fire front itself.
- Justin Leonard (CSIRO): "Invariably, the greatest risk by fire is ember attack and the surface fire that ignites houses..."

Zero to 1.5m: It really is the most critical. I can't over emphasise that as a guiding principle."

That 0 to 1.5m zone, "Zone Zero," around the perimeter of a house, is entirely within a resident's control. This is the 1st of 3 zones. However, things get complicated when housing is closely spaced: your zones and your neighbours can overlap. This moves it from an isolated house solution to a collective neighbourhood response, for collective preparation. It is the compromised reality of where we live and the housing type we live in.

Wanting to know more about that compromised reality, and what to do about it?

The QR code will take you to the Network's anchor page, "*What you need to know when you CAN'T leave*". If you're thinking "*but we plan to leave early so this doesn't apply to us*" — it applies to you most of all.



Hazen

Brown Hill FireAware Network Coordinator
hmc433@hotmail.com



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The Multicultural Access Program (MAP) is an initiative of the Western Victoria Primary Health Network (WVPHN), launched in 2024 to improve access to primary healthcare services for people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, across Ballarat and surrounding areas.

The program is delivered by Ballarat Community Health (BCH) in partnership with Ballarat Regional Multicultural Council (BRMC) and provides free monthly health clinics at the BRMC Welcome Centre on Barkly Street in Bakery Hill, as well as at community centres in Sebastopol, Lucas and Alfredton.

Ballarat is home to one of the largest populations of people from non-English speaking backgrounds in western Victoria, and many community members experience challenges in accessing healthcare services and health information. The MAP initiative aims to reduce these barriers by providing culturally accessible healthcare services, including:

- Vaccinations
- Health assessments
- Health education
- Care planning
- Referrals to additional support services

This program is designed to improve health literacy and ensure community members can access timely and appropriate healthcare, regardless of their language or cultural background. Community members seeking information about upcoming MAP clinics can contact **Tashkah Lloyd** at the Ballarat Regional Multicultural Council on **0428 487 469** or via email at tashkahl@bchc.org.au.

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Catherine King MP
FEDERAL MEMBER FOR BALLARAT

Standing up for our community!

Authorised by Catherine King
MP, 5 Lydiard St Nth, Ballarat,
VIC 3350

Shaping Futures: Celebrating Early Childhood Educators at Y Learn and Swim

“When you see the bright faces and smiles as children arrive at our kinder or ELC, it really highlights the excitement that each day at our centre can bring,” said Simone, Educator in Y Learn and Swim’s Kindergarten. It was just before the start of a session, and she was busy mixing playdough before the children’s arrival.

Amongst all the fun and activity, behind every kinder or childcare day is a dedicated team of professionals shaping the future of our youngest community members.

Y Learn and Swim’s Manager, Elvie Jenkins, shared that an important date takes place in September for the staff team. “Early Childhood Educators’ Day, which takes place in early September each year, is a time to especially shine a spotlight on our extraordinary team who go above and beyond each day.”

As an Educator, Simone appreciates the recognition that the day brings. This is also a special year for celebration, as she looks forward to a significant milestone of her own, her 25-year anniversary as an Early Childhood Educator.

“The bonds that are created with children and families, and seeing the joy that children radiate, really gives me a warm feeling every day,” she added.

Addi, who is based in the ELC’s Platypus room, commenced at Y Learn and Swim earlier in the year, after completing her Certificate III. Addi is a natural with young children, and she says she has found the perfect place to focus on the career that she loves.



Early Childhood Educators at Y Learn and Swim, Brown Hill: Simone (Kindergarten) and Addi (Long Day Care).

“The thing I most enjoy about working with children is that I get to help them grow, learn and develop new skills. It’s so rewarding seeing them achieve something they couldn’t do before. Seeing them smile and feel proud of themselves is honestly one of the best parts of working in childcare,” she said. Keen to increase her knowledge in this space, Addi is combining work in the ELC with studying her Diploma of Early Childhood Education and Care.

Centre Manager Elvie encourages the community to recognise and thank all Early Childhood Educators who make such a difference to so many children and families.

“Our Educators lay the foundation for our children’s lifelong learning as well as providing warm, supportive care. From building essential social and emotional skills to creating safe, interesting spaces to inspiring young minds, Early Childhood Educators do far more than care for children. They guide, encourage, teach and empower them. We can’t thank them enough for all that they do.”

For more information about Y Learn and Swim and their Long Day Care, free Kindergarten and Swimming Lessons, see ylearnandswim.org.au or call 4320 0850 to book a tour.



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The Ballarat Tramway Museum, The Brown Hill Connection

Various options were considered for the operation of trams in Ballarat, Bendigo and Geelong including; handing these over to the city councils, expanding the role of the Melbourne and Metropolitan Tramway Board (M&MTB) and setting up a provincial tramways board. However, the SEC ended up as a, slightly reluctant, tramway operator.

By the end of ESCo's tramway franchise in 1934, Ballarat's tram system had reached the end of its useful life. While the SEC considered replacing the trams with either motor or trolley buses, this would have required significant roadworks, in addition to importing either motor or trolley bus chassis. Thus, it was cheaper to refurbish the tram system. In addition, there was a ready supply of second-hand trams available from Melbourne, which was in the process of building a large fleet of W class trams. The refurbishment was intended to keep the tramway operational for another 15 years - it continued for another 37!

While the 1950s saw wholesale abandonment of tram systems in Australia, the tram systems in Ballarat and Bendigo continued essentially unchanged through the 1960s, however, the Geelong tram system closed in 1956. While the Liberal government led by Henry Bolte, first elected in 1955, was generally not sympathetic towards tramways, it lacked the numbers in the Legislative Council to close the tramways in Ballarat and Bendigo, as the Country Party declined to support the legislation. This changed in 1970. At the same time, the SEC pointed out that it was unfair for Victorian electricity consumers to subsidise tramway losses in Ballarat and Bendigo.

While there had been moves in the 1960s to preserve some of Ballarat's trams, it was not until the closure of the system had been announced that a tramway preservation movement got underway. First off the mark was the Brown Hill Progress Association (BHPA) led by Mr Melton Foo. Melton was a prominent Brown Hill resident and businessman, operating a BP service station at 265 Scott Parade. He was instrumental in getting the BHPA to recognise the historical significance of Ballarat's trams. (The foundation members of the Ballarat Tramway Museum that I spoke to while preparing this article all recognised Melton's important role.) After his success with preserving Ballarat's trams, he was elected to the Ballarat City Council, serving two terms as mayor.

The BHPA organised a tram charter, followed by a public meeting in the Brown Hill Hall on Sunday 18 April 1971. This was attended by around 50 people and led to the formation of the "Lake Wendouree Tramways Museum Committee".

While some questioned the value of preserving part of the Ballarat tram system, when Melbourne possessed one of the largest tram systems in the world, it was pointed out the Ballarat system was a very different operation and that many interstate tourists were coming to both Ballarat and Bendigo specifically to ride their unique tramway systems.

A Melbourne-based preservation group was then formed at a meeting on Thursday 29 April 1971 at the Victorian Railways Institute at Flinders Street Station. The two groups got together at a meeting at the Ballarat Lower Civic Hall on Sunday 30 May 1971. This led to the creation of the Ballarat Tramway Preservation Society (BTPS) which became the Ballarat Tramway Museum. There was some initial tension between the two groups. The Ballarat group saw the Melbourne group as a bunch of 'long haired student types', while the Melbourne group saw the Ballarat group as 'old fogies', however, differences were soon put aside to work towards the joint goal of preserving Ballarat's tramway heritage.

The initial proposal by the BHPA was to set up a circuit of track in Victoria Park and to power the trams using onboard diesel motors, however, it was quickly realised that this failed to recognise the historic value of the trams and electric traction was adopted as the preferred choice.

Options for location of tram operations included:

- Street track around Lake Wendouree
- Near the newly opened Sovereign Hill
- Site of the former Ballarat Zoo (in the Botanical Gardens)
- Along the Gillies Street frontage of Victoria Park
- Eureka Stockade
- Russell Square.

Lake Wendouree was chosen as the other sites did not offer sufficient historic or tourist appeal to make the operation viable.

Operating a museum tramway on street track, with volunteers, offered a particular challenge as all other tram museums in Australia at the time were located on off-road sites. Bendigo's talking trams were also just a proposal at this stage. The only example of a volunteer operated tram museum on former street track was in Montevideo, Uruguay. This museum operated between 1967 and 1974.

Having chosen Lake Wendouree, the next question was how much track would be operated. While there was support for track all the way around Lake Wendouree, this was ruled out on cost grounds.

This would also have required either new track around the southern shore of the lake or use of track in Sturt Street parallel to the lake. In addition to cost, the Ballarat City Council (BCC) did not support street track outside the Botanic Gardens as it would 'create parking problems'.

The BTPS favoured the retention of street track from Carlton Street, the current southern terminus, to View Point, while retaining the SEC depot in Wendouree Parade near Forest Street. As well as housing museum trams, it was proposed the depot be used as a transport museum. The BCC did agree to a trial tram operation between Carlton Street and the SEC depot, subject to SEC approval. This lapsed as the SEC wanted to sell the depot and decommission the power house.

Eventually the BCC agreed to retention of street track within the Botanic Gardens between St Aidans Drive and Carlton and granted permission for the BTPS to build a new depot inside the Botanic Gardens next to the trout hatchery. The BTPS also received tram 14 from the BCC and trams 26, 27, 28, 38 and 40 from the SEC. (Tram 40 was the last tram to run in Ballarat). Track outside the Botanic Gardens was removed in 1973.

The Ballarat Tramway Museum began operating trams on Boxing Day 1974, the 87th anniversary of Ballarat's first horse tram service. The official opening was held on 1 February 1975.



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Ballarat Tramway Museum

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James Proctor is a volunteer driver at the Ballarat Tramway Museum and a recent resident of Brown Hill.

Photography Acknowledgement

The photos featured in this article were taken by Ballarat Tramway Museum driver and foundation member, Chris Phillips at the tram charter which preceded the Sunday 13 May 1971 meeting at the Ballarat Civic Hall.



More Than Just Bowls

Victoria Bowling Club is proud to be part of the Ballarat East community, and while bowls remain at the heart of the club, there is so much more happening behind the greens. Located in Ballarat East, Victoria Bowling Club has been working hard to create a welcoming space where members, families, local groups and the wider community can come together, socialise and celebrate.

Our newly decorated function room is a big part of this vision, providing a versatile venue for everything from birthday celebrations and family gatherings to work functions, Christmas parties, community events and wakes. With seating for large groups, a licensed bar, commercial kitchen, access to catering, PA system and microphones, disability access and plenty of parking, the function room offers a convenient local option for events without having to travel across Ballarat. The room also overlooks the bowling greens, providing a relaxed setting with a distinctly local feel.

We are continuing to build relationships with local businesses to provide catering options for functions and events. Our partnerships with local food providers allow us to offer flexible packages while supporting other Ballarat businesses.

We are also developing our popular Barefoot Bowls packages, combining social bowls with food for an easy and affordable night out. Options include pizza packages and BBQ packages, making Barefoot Bowls ideal for workplace celebrations, Christmas functions, family get-togethers or simply a fun night with friends.

The club's social calendar is also growing. Throughout the year, we are planning a range of activities designed to bring people through our doors, including trivia nights, music bingo, Parma nights, family days, Melbourne Cup celebrations, corporate bowls events, fundraising activities and special social events. Our Friday night Members Draw is another way we are encouraging people to get involved, with paid and social members able to take part while enjoying happy hour and the friendly atmosphere of the club.

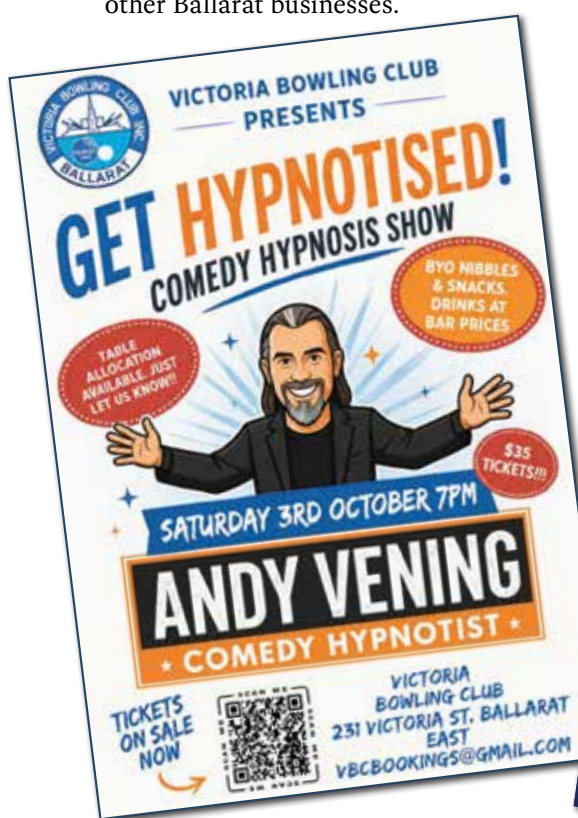
Of course, bowls remain a huge part of who we are. Victoria Bowling Club is proud of its strong playing history, with our Saturday and midweek teams continuing to compete at the highest level and strive for further success. But our club is about much more than what happens on the green. We want Victoria Bowling Club to be a place where people feel welcome, whether they are an experienced bowler, someone who has never picked up a bowl before, a local family looking for somewhere to celebrate, or a community group searching for a venue.

As a community club, we are always looking for ways to connect with local residents, support Ballarat East businesses and create more opportunities

for people to meet, celebrate and enjoy themselves close to home. So, if you haven't visited Victoria Bowling Club recently, why not drop in, enjoy a drink, have a look at our facilities and see what is happening at your local club?

Victoria Bowling Club – bowls, functions, friendship and community, all in the heart of Ballarat East.

Kelly Silbereisen





WARRENHEIP PRIMARY SCHOOL

100 Days of School

This term the students at Warrenheip Primary School celebrated being at school for 100 days this year. Our students dressed as their 'future' self and then participated in fun learning activities for the entire day. We are so proud of our students and families for their commitment to quality education.



Kitchen Garden

We are learning that winter is a busy time in the garden. It is an opportunity to plant winter crops, tend to the mushrooms and make sure the worms are comfortable and well fed. We have been busy making a scarecrow to protect our spring crops from the hungry birds, and we have really enjoyed winter cooking! Baked apples and pancakes with stewed fruit have been two highlights.

Enrolments for 2027

With planning underway for 2027, if you would like to see what Warrenheip has to offer for your education needs, please give us a call and arrange a time for a tour. We are always happy to show families around our Great Little School!

Jo Reyntjes

Principal

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Something for Everyone

Welcome Sunday



On Sunday the 12th July the Brown Hill congregation acknowledged six people who have joined our congregation over the last year. The Chair of the congregation, Rob Glass, offered the hand of friendship. The congregation got to hear from those welcomed, and the congregation is very thankful for the gifts and talents that new people bring to our church life. Pictured is Rob Glass welcoming Sadie, the dog, who attends church with her family. Sadie provides much joy in our services.

Men's Breakfast on 23rd May

Fifteen men enjoyed a hearty breakfast and a talk on the 1978 theft of the Tom Roberts painting 'The Charcoal Burners' from the Art Gallery of Ballarat. Jane Measday is a volunteer guide from the gallery and was able to share the story of the theft and return of the impressionist painting. The work depicts the hard labour of making charcoal and some of the men present had undertaken this work in the past.

Men's Breakfast on 29th August

A great turnout for the Men's Breakfast last Saturday morning heard our guest, Danielle Measday (Conservator of Natural Sciences at Museums Victoria) speak about her six week adventure on board the RV Investigator, the CSIRO research ship.

Thirty four days, working 12 hour shifts, cataloguing and conserving specimens dredged from the sea bed, sometimes at a depth of nearly 10 kilometres. These specimens were packed and sent to museums around Australia where they will continue to be part of the ongoing research.

"We know more about the surface of Mars than we do about the deep oceans around us", Danielle told us as she showed us some truly strange and exotic pictures.

The next Men's Breakfast will be held on **Saturday October 17th**. James Proctor is coming to speak on the history of the Ballarat Tramways. Come and share a good breakfast with good company and interesting speakers.

Events and Activities

Worship on Wednesdays (WOW) at 1.30pm in the church hall for those who like a midweek opportunity for informal worship and sharing the sacraments if you choose. There is an opportunity to share a short time of fellowship over afternoon tea afterwards.

Morning Tea in the hall Sunday 29th November at 10am followed by discussions about issues affecting our community. All welcome.

Craft, Cuppa & Chat group meets on the first and third Thursdays each month at 1.30pm in the church hall. Come along if you're interested in craft, or just come for a chat!

The Op Shop is open on Thursdays and Fridays, 9.30am - 12.30pm, providing our community with very good quality clothing and bric-a-brac at very affordable prices. We now have an EFTPOS facility.

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YOGA, FOR ALL PEOPLE
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An advertisement for Eastside Yoga Ballarat. It features a photograph of a yoga studio with several mats rolled up on the floor and a group of people practicing yoga. The text 'eastside YOGA BALLARAT' is overlaid on the image.

Prepares for a new chapter and upcoming fire season



After nine years serving as Captain of Glen Park Fire Brigade, I will be stepping down from the role as the brigade welcomes a completely new Brigade Management Team.

I would like to say a very big thank you to the outgoing Brigade Management Team for their hard work, dedication and commitment over many years. Some of these volunteers have held officer roles for more than 30 consecutive years, making an enormous contribution to the brigade and our local community.

It has been an honour and privilege to lead the brigade over the past nine years and to work alongside the dedicated volunteers who give their time to support our community. While I am finishing as Captain, I will continue my involvement as Secretary and Treasurer and look forward to supporting the new management team in the years ahead.

The brigade will also recognise the outstanding contribution of its volunteers at a Brigade Medal Presentation Dinner in October.

The evening will provide an opportunity to acknowledge the hard work, commitment and service of our members, many of whom give countless hours to help protect and support the community.

With the upcoming fire season predicted to be hot and dry, now is the time for local residents to start preparing their properties. Simple steps can make a significant difference, including cleaning gutters, removing flammable materials from around homes and sheds, and clearing excess leaves, grass and other debris. Residents are encouraged not to leave preparations until the last minute. Taking action now can help reduce the potential impact of fire and make properties safer during the summer months.

Glen Park Fire Brigade is also encouraging community members to consider becoming volunteers. There is much more to being part of a brigade than fighting fires. Volunteers can assist with administration, fundraising, property and equipment maintenance, community engagement and many other important roles.

Whether you are interested in becoming a firefighter or simply want to give something back to your local community, there is a place for you at Glen Park Fire Brigade. For more information, contact the brigade on 5334 5524. Members are also at the station every Sunday morning from 9.30am, so please feel free to drop in, have a look around and chat with our volunteers.

Tracey Webber
Secretary/Treasurer

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Strong Year 9 NAPLAN Growth at Woodmans Hill

Our 2026 Year 9 NAPLAN results provide encouraging evidence of the progress being made by students at Woodmans Hill Secondary College.

While proficiency data shows where students are performing at a particular point in time, growth is the most important measure for evaluating our impact. It considers where students began and how much progress they have made between Years 7 and 9. Strong growth provides the clearest indication that our teaching practices and learning supports are having a positive impact on student learning.

Our Year 9 growth results were particularly positive:

Reading:

78% of students achieved medium or high growth
— four percentage points above the state.

Numeracy:

77% achieved medium or high growth
— three percentage points above the state.

Writing:

73% achieved medium or high growth
— equal to the state.

Spelling:

78% achieved medium or high growth
— four percentage points above the state.

Grammar and Punctuation:

78% achieved medium or high growth
— five percentage points above the state.

In four of the five assessment areas, *Woodmans Hill students achieved stronger growth than the Victorian result, with Writing equal to the state.* The data also indicates that our students are making stronger progress than students with similar starting points in comparable schools.

These results provide evidence that our focus on explicit teaching, modelling, scaffolding, supported application and collaborative improvement through Professional Learning Communities is contributing to positive student progress.

The data also gives us a clear direction for our next stage of improvement. We will continue strengthening explicit teaching and gradual release across all classrooms, while sharpening our attention on writing, junior school literacy intervention and increasing the proportion of students achieving high growth in numeracy. NAPLAN represents one important source of information about student learning. Alongside classroom assessment and teacher judgement, it helps us recognize effective practice and identify the areas requiring further attention.

We congratulate our Year 9 students on their effort and progress and acknowledge the sustained commitment of our teachers, education support staff and families. These results reflect our collective determination to improve learning and ensure every student is supported to grow.

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Disc Golf – Golf for Everyone

Mt. Xavier Disc Golf Course - A New Chapter for Mt Xavier and Disc Golf in Ballarat.

There's a new reason to explore the beautiful, undulating landscape of Mount Xavier Golf and Bowls Club. Opened in 2024, the Mt. Xavier Disc Golf Course is more than just a new sporting facility; it is a celebration of a new partnership and the dedicated spirit of our local community. Born from a collaboration between Ballarat Disc Golf and the Mount Xavier Golf and Bowls Club in 2023, the course is a testament to what a shared vision can achieve.

What is Disc Golf:

The sport of disc golf follows the basic rules of golf, but with the use of a disc and a basket instead of clubs, ball and hole. Disc golf is an extremely low cost and accessible activity. It's a great way to get some exercise, enjoy the beautiful scenery, and spend time with family and friends.

Disc Golf in Ballarat:

Ballarat has a vibrant disc golf community. We currently have three disc golf courses and a growing community of casual and experienced players. The variety of courses offers a tailored experience from players having their first throw to talented players competing in tournaments.

Thanks to the initiative of Andrew Ferguson at Recreation Activity Design (RAD) and the support of Ballarat City Council, Victoria Park Disc Golf course became the first true 18-hole disc golf course in the state. Opened in December 2020, the course is a great way to try out the sport. The terrain is flat and the fairways are wide. It has continually featured in every version of uDisc's (scoring app) "5 Best Disc Golf Courses in Every Country" list, and has featured as the #2 in Australia on the list for three years running in 2023, 2024, and 2025.

Winter Valley Disc Golf course is another course located amongst the new housing developments of Winter Valley, established in 2021. It consists of only six baskets and is extremely beginner friendly. The club runs a glow in the dark social round during autumn and winter months.

Lastly, in 2024 Mt Xavier Disc Golf course was opened and is an initiative of the Ballarat Disc Golf Club with the support of the Mount Xavier Golf and Bowls Club and GUF Ballarat.

Disc Golf in Mount Xavier:

What began as a nine-hole layout has rapidly grown into a full 18-hole course, designed to provide a thrilling new way to enjoy the great outdoors. The course expertly winds its way through the existing golf landscape, taking players through tight wooded gaps, across broad open fairways, and up and down the distinctive hills that give Mt Xavier its character. It is a challenging course, praised by disc golfers for being one of the most technical in the country, but it's a challenge that offers a unique and rewarding experience.

The true story of the course, however, lies in the people who built it. Its development and continued refinement are the result of tireless efforts by a team of amazing volunteers. You might even catch a glimpse of them working in the woods, adding new touches or improving existing holes. This communal effort has also been supported by local businesses, with special thanks due to GUF Ballarat for their generous donation of resources that helped install permanent tee pads and loaned 9 of the 18 baskets on the course.

While the course is a work in progress, with improvements like permanent signage still underway, it's a project that shows our community is always growing and building.

We invite you to be a part of this journey. Come and experience the course for yourself, whether you are a seasoned player or a curious beginner, the volunteers behind this project have made it a welcoming place for all.



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**New
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Find us on 



Advanced Hole 15 at Victoria Park.
Photo: Dr. Marlon S. Gonsalves

Try Disc Golf Today!

Ballarat Disc Golf runs weekly leagues for new and regular players. The club hosts a league round on the first Sunday of every month at Mt. Xavier. The club also runs a league day on the longer tees at Victoria Park every 2nd Saturday and they wrap up the month with a league round on the shorter tees on the last Saturday of the month. You can find us on Facebook by searching 'Ballarat Disc Golf'.

Every Tuesday evening for most of the year, the club also hosts a casual round. In Summer there is a casual round at Victoria Park and in winter there is a glow in the dark round at Winter Valley. Whether you are starting out or a longtime player, everyone is welcome.

You can however try the sport at any time. That's the appeal of it. All you need is a disc and you are good to go. Victoria Park and Winter Valley are free to play. For just a \$10 fee per person, you can play all day at Mt. Xavier Disc Golf course.

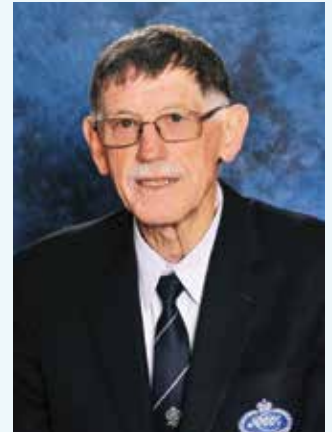
Residents can borrow discs from the Ballarat Library for free. Loan discs may also be available at the club house. For those who wish to purchase their own discs, they are available from the local games store, Guf Ballarat. Come experience a sport built by the community for the community.

VALE

Mr Ronald Harrington OAM

14/10/37 - 11/06/26

Ron was a proud Brown Hill resident who was actively involved in volunteer community work throughout his whole life. Ron dedicated himself to the Royal South Street Society, serving as Board



Member, Vice-President, President, Life Member, and long-serving Chair of our Calisthenics discipline. Ron and his wife Dawn helped shape generations of young performers through their tireless work with Calisthenics competitors.

A passionate advocate for the arts, education and community, Ron's leadership extended beyond Ballarat through his founding role with the Association of Eisteddfod Societies of Australia.

Ron was Treasurer of the Brown Hill Progress Association for 6 years and was the keeper of finance records up to 2009, which included the first 3 years of managing the Brown Hill Community Swimming Pool. Ron was also active in Brown Hill community work especially in the days when Melton Foo was our local councillor and eventually mayor of the city.

Awarded the Order of Australia Medal in 2008 for service to the community, Ron leaves an extraordinary legacy that will continue to inspire future generations. Our heartfelt condolences are extended to Dawn and his family. It was always a privilege to share a cuppa and a committee table with Ron - he will be sadly missed.

Brendan Stevens
Secretary BHPA



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Visit glenparkps.vic.gov.au and our Facebook page: facebook.com/learningwithliterature/ to see what learning experiences we can offer.

Email us from our website to arrange a visit

Young Environmental Leaders Spark Brown Hill's Inaugural Community Garage Sale

Caledonian Primary School's Environmental Leaders are calling on the Brown Hill community to register for the inaugural **Brown Hill's Greatest Community Garage Sale**, a suburb-wide fundraising and sustainability event taking place on Saturday 17 October 2026.

The event, which invites households across Brown Hill to hold their own garage sale on the same day, will be the first of its kind in the suburb, and is being championed by the school's Environmental Leaders as part of a student-led initiative promoting reuse, recycling and sustainable living.

Registration costs \$25 per address and includes inclusion on the official Garage Sale map, a promotional goodie bag, and community-wide marketing support. Funds raised through registrations will go towards the school's End of Year Celebration Day, while the broader event aims to keep unwanted household items out of landfill and strengthen connections across the local community.

As part of the project, the Environmental Leaders have also organised a Toy Swap Day for students at school and have been involved in designing promotional materials and driving community awareness for the garage sale.

Registrations for this inaugural event are open now, with confirmed participants to be included on the official event map and promoted across the Brown Hill Community Newsletter, social media, local flyers, business displays and public relations campaign. Organisers hope the event's first year will lay the foundation for it to become an annual fixture on the Brown Hill calendar.

MY STORY: SUSIE STROUD

Living with Myasthenia Gravis (MG)

Hello there. I am a local resident who has lived in Brown Hill for over 15 years. I moved to Ballarat along with my husband, son and daughter over 25 years ago from the Central Coast of NSW. After living in different areas of Ballarat, we bought a block of land and built our home with Bryan & Petersen back in 2011. This area of Brown Hill is lovely with lots of space, trees and close to centre of town.

I was diagnosed with a very rare auto-immune disease way back in 2008 but probably had this disease a few years prior. MG is not an easy auto-immune disease to diagnose and can take quite some time of good detective work by a GP and then onto a Professor of Neurology in Melbourne. MG is an auto-immune disorder in which your immune system attacks the connection between nerves and muscles, resulting in fluctuating severe muscle weakness.

This condition can affect voluntary muscles, making speaking, swallowing and or breathing extremely difficult. I am trying to increase awareness about this disease so research and improved care can be achieved for those who are sufferers.

Along with Myasthenia Alliance Australia I am involved in "ART with HEART". This is where artists, community leaders, supporters and friends gather for an inspiring online event of creativity, connection and philanthropy. We are asking local artists to donate a piece of their art or service for an online auction in 2027. So, if anyone would like to assist or need further information, I am happy for you to contact me.

Susie

0416 147 424, susiestroud58@gmail.com

Myasthenia Alliance Australia,
Free Call 1800 802 568



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2026!

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Hill's Greatest Community
Garage Sale!



Saturday 17th October
2026



Registration Fee \$25
per Address.



AUSKICK 2026

Under the Lights

On a beautiful winter night ~ 200 participants and spectators attended Brown Hill Auskick final session for season 2026. Brown Hill Auskick is volunteer-run and we are fortunate to have the support of many.

Our deepest gratitude to James 'Coach Couz' Couzens for being an excellent human, and conducting the best band of young people in town. Ryan, Ben, Ed, Will, Sam and Oscar show up and pour positivity into the kids every week and we thank them sincerely for their efforts.

Behind the scenes, it's Phil from the Brown Hill Cricket Club who gets Brown Hill Auskick off the ground each year, and on the BBQ he is ably supported by John, Rex, Brendan, Bernie and all from the Brown Hill Progress Association.

Thanks to players from North Ballarat Football & Netball Club for supporting us on field this year. If your young ones are looking to join a club, send us a Facebook message and we'll connect you www.facebook.com/brownhillauskick

Each year we receive a visit from the Western Bulldogs Roadshow, who give the kids a great time with footy skill inflatables, with thanks to Campbell Waring and his team.

Financial support gratefully received from Brown Hill Lions Club, Brown Hill Uniting Church, Brown Hill Hotel Social Club and Brown Hill Progress Association.

And finally, thank you to all our families for choosing Brown Hill Auskick for their young ones. We hope their love of playing footy is life long and we appreciate being a part of their footy experience.



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