

Ballarat East

Community News

Edition 8, May 2022

Connecting people in Ballarat East, Canadian, Eureka, Golden Point, Mount Pleasant and Warrenheip



Margaret Bosidis Photography

Swordcraft in Ballarat

Jo Latten, Volunteer, Ballarat East Neighbourhood House captures a passion for Swordcraft from local participants, Dominic and Samantha.

An eerie mist slowly drifts over the ground outlining the trees in the background. The moonlight glints off ominous metal and then out of the darkness someone yells, "Blood and Gore!" and the scene erupts in warriors fighting ferociously. This is Swordcraft and battles are waged on our very own White Flat Oval every Monday eve. With combatants dressed in colourful robes and armour using Live Action Role Play (LARP) weapons, warbands of Elves, Knights, Hussars, and Evil Mages

come from all over Ballarat to immerse themselves in a fantasy world to fight it out and claim victory for their team. People from all walks of life attend these events and I asked local doctor Dominic Nowell (D) (pictured above) and University Educator and Swordcraft volunteer Samantha Harriage (S) to explain more about this exciting sport.

What attracted you to Swordcraft?

D - When I was studying in Melbourne, one of my housemates suggested I come along one night to the Melbourne Swordcraft. I had so much fun I've been doing it ever since.

S - When I was 16 or so, I participated

in a small "come-and-try" demonstration at a local Sunday market. For a gold coin, they tossed a sword into my hand and let me fight someone in full chainmail! As soon as I was able to participate I did and I've been attending the weekly games since 2017.

What is a warband and which warband do you belong in?

D- A warband is a group of players that share a theme and colours and fight together alongside other warbands. I'm in the Middenheim Seventh State Troops and our warband is based on 17th century German Landsknechts.

S - A warband is more or less a mini team which has its own theme and fighting style. I have been in a few over the years but am currently in a Warhammer Fantasy High Elf warband known as the Aurelian Inquest.

What can people expect on their first night?

D- You will be taught how to fight safely, and you will have an experienced player directing you around the field and where to fight and be given lots of opportunities for heroic battles.

S - Turn up to the game before 6.30 pm in the comfiest sport attire, and you will be guided through the rules and the fighting by one of our friendly new player trainers. Expect a healthy amount of excitement and adrenaline as you transverse the field, completing objectives and facing off against other players. All in a fun and safe environment of course!

...continued p.10

Acknowledgement of Country

We 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 would like to acknowledge the Ballarat Aboriginal community, many of whom were forcibly removed from their families during the Stolen Generations decades and brought to Ballarat. We would also like to acknowledge and pay our respects to Elders past and present.

About the Ballarat East Community News

The Ballarat East Community News is a project of the Ballarat East Neighbourhood House. Its establishment in early 2021 was supported by the City of Ballarat through a Community Impact Grant and by VicHealth through a Reimagining Health Grant.

Contributors

This publication is compiled, edited and designed by Ballarat East Neighbourhood House volunteers and staff. Our front page banner was designed by local artist, Kelsie White. Thank you to this edition's volunteer contributors, Jo, Ashleigh and Charisma and Georgina.

The views expressed or information provided in this publication are not necessarily those of the Ballarat East Community News or Ballarat East Neighbourhood House, including any officers, members, agents, volunteers or contractors.

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Frequency and distribution

This publication is printed six times each year. In 2022 it will be distributed in February, April, May, July, September and November to over 7000 letterboxes in the suburbs of Ballarat East, Canadian, Eureka, Golden Point, Mount Pleasant and Warrenheip.

Hard copies are delivered by a team of over 40 local volunteers, a key community development element of this project.

This publication is printed locally on 100% recycled paper by a family-owned business, Ballarat Mailworks.

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This publication is supported by:



Thanks to VicHealth for supporting the ongoing establishment of this important community project through a Reimagining Health Grant.

Subscribe

You can subscribe to be emailed a link to the full-colour PDF of each edition by registering online or emailing the Ballarat East Neighbourhood House: ballarateastnh.org.au/contact-us

Next Edition

Articles and ideas for Edition 9 are due by **1 July 2022** by email or in hard copy to the Ballarat East Neighbourhood House office. Please read the editorial policy: ballarateastnh.org.au/ballarat-east-community-news/community-news

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Join our Team

Ways in which you could volunteer to help with this publication include: writing articles, proof-reading, taking photographs, seeking advertising, layout/design and/or delivery. Interested? Please get in touch.

Ballarat East Neighbourhood House

reception@ballarateastnh.org.au

0422 612 052

Barkly Square,

25-39 Barkly Street, Ballarat East

9.00 am - 5.00 pm Tuesdays to Fridays during school term. We recommend making an appointment.

Memberships:



Welcome to Edition Eight, Ballarat East Community News

VOLUNTEERS
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NSW

VOLUNTEER
VIC

#THANKYOU

National Volunteer Week 2021

#NVW2021



Thank you volunteers!

In May, we celebrate National Volunteer Week. This year's theme is **Better Together**. Volunteering brings people together; it builds communities and creates a better society for everyone. National Volunteer Week is a chance for all of us to celebrate and recognise the vital work of volunteers and to say thank you. Together, through volunteering, we are changing our community for the better.

It is inspiring to see volunteers work together on a common goal, find a purpose through helping others and forming friendships. Across Ballarat there are many wonderful volunteer-run organisations making great things happen for our people, plants and animals. Thank you to everyone who contributes their time and skills to make Ballarat a better place for us all.

Enjoy this edition!

Sarah Greenwood-Smith

Editor, Edition 8

Manager, Ballarat East

Neighbourhood House

0422 612 052

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The SoupBus

The SoupBus provides an after-dark meal service to Ballarat's homeless and less fortunate through the cooperation and support of the Ballarat community.

SoupBus aims to create dignified and respectful interaction with those in our community who are in need of the greatest assistance. Five evenings a week (Sunday 5.30 pm - 7.30 pm and Monday to Thursday 7.30 pm - 9.00 pm), one of our supporting restaurants, cafes and bakeries assist in food preparation for the SoupBus to distribute free of charge from our central location.

With approximately 300-400 volunteers across a variety of roles including: food collection from local restaurants and cafes, accepting donations at our storage container (located on the corner of Eureka and Fussell Streets - behind the Ballarat East Men's Shed), to being on the frontline serving our patrons each night and food preparation, board members and of course, driving the bus.

OnTrack Foundation Inc.

The OnTrack Foundation Inc. is made up of a voluntary Board that operates without any compensation to its members. That means 100% of the money raised through our sponsors, fundraising efforts and private donations goes back into the running of the SoupBus and the Education Scholarships that the Foundation provides.

Our vision is one of compassion, justice and meaning, expressed through a caring community where all people are valued and respected. It is in this spirit that we pursue a community development approach with these principles: Whole of Person, Asset Building, Contribution to Others, Co-Operation, Prevention and Advocacy.

Five nights a week, 52 weeks a year, we have worked to feed and care for our local men, women and children in need since 2009. 100% of all funds raised go back into the running of the SoupBus and our Education Scholarships.

ontrackfoundation.org.au/the-soup-bus

**We're supporting Victorian households
by putting \$250 back in their pocket
for energy bills.**

From 1 July, Victorians can apply for the new
\$250 Power Saving Bonus program.

Contact my office for details on how to apply.

Michaela Settle MP STATE MEMBER FOR BUNINYONG

15 Main Road, Bakery Hill 3350 P: 5331 7722 E: michaela.settle@parliament.vic.gov.au





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ptv.vic.gov.au



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ballarateastnh.org.au facebook.com/ballarateastnh receptionsballarateastnh.org.au



Photographer: Neil Huybregts

Giant "spider" makes a meal of the weeds on Black Hill

Dog-walkers, joggers and cyclists have been stopping to take photos and videos of an amazing machine (pictured above) that's been crawling up the steep slopes at the back of Black Hill, grinding the weeds into mulch. As many as half-a-dozen of us at a time have been gathering to feast our eyes on the slow, methodical revelation of the undulating slopes, bare cliff faces and piles of mullock left behind by the miners and brickmakers.

It's called a spider, but it doesn't scurry. Alan, the operator, has been doing this sort of work for years and it's been almost mesmerising watching him slowly crawl up and down the slopes, grinding away at the blackberries, gorse and broom that have hidden Black Hill for many decades, repairing any damage to the

slopes as he goes along.

He's left behind a thick mat of mulch, and when the weeds resprout, never fear, City of Ballarat got the funding to do this from the State Government and the deal is that any regrowth has to be sprayed to ensure that these fabulous improvements are permanent.

Who knows what else might be possible? Recently, there's been some real effort put into restoring City of Ballarat's environmental capability. With some luck and a bit of lobbying, we may even see planting of native vegetation on these slopes in the coming years. I can't wait.

*Neil Huybregts
Friends of Black Hill Reserve
Friends of the Yarrowee River*

Eureka Centre

Who owns Eureka? Ballarat Heritage Festival at the Eureka Centre

Friday May 20, 2022

6.00 pm - 7.30 pm

Free

5333 0333

eurekainfo@ballarat.vic.gov.au

Join us for a panel discussion about the significance of the Eureka Rebellion and its contested legacy.

In the past year, the appropriation of the Eureka Flag has been the subject of heated debate. The flag has a long history as an adoptable symbol with diverse claimants from trade unions to libertarians and most recently by far-right fringe groups. The flag has been purloined by individuals and groups from across the social and political spectrum.

This panel discussion will reflect on Eureka's defining values, its enduring appeal and the flag's symbolic malleability.

This is a prelude event for the Ballarat Heritage Festival presented by the Eureka Centre.

Chair: Jeff Sparrow, author and journalist

Panel: Greg Barns SC, barrister and political commentator Dr Anne Beggs-Sunter, historian and Lecturer, Federation University.

Visit the Eureka Centre online:
eurekacentreballarat.com.au/events



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2 BIG locations over 2 BIG days

June 7 & June 8, Barkly Square & The Goods Shed

The Ballarat Jobs and Training Expo is a careers, training and skills Expo that will host over 100 organisations and employers.

Industries represented will include training, volunteer, and employment pathway opportunities within Ballarat and surrounding areas. All designed to support and engage our community.

The Expo is a great chance for attendees to talk to professionals in industries of interest, attend interactive workshops, team building, networking activities, forums and seminars.



Register now for your free tickets at
www.ballaratjobsandtrainingexpo.com.au

Oasis in the Desert - Grand Chrysanthemum Show and Historic Photo Exhibition at Barkly Square

Presented by the Ballarat East Town Hall Gardens Revitalisation Group, a group of the Ballarat East Neighbourhood House, in partnership with the Barkly Square community, The Oasis in the Desert is a flower and garden show and photo exhibition celebrating the chrysanthemum and the unfolding beauty of the former Town Hall Gardens.

This family-friendly weekend event is part of the 9-day Ballarat Heritage Festival and will see displays, talks, demonstrations, kid's activities, garden tours, a choral presentation and a major photography exhibition, showcasing the heritage significance of the former Town Hall Gardens and the Ballarat East Civic Precinct.

The amazing A Pot of Courage Café will be open from 10.00 am - 3.00 pm on Saturday (closed on Sunday), so you can enjoy some delicious food and a warm cuppa while you enjoy the event.



Inspired by the written descriptions of historic activities and events held at the Barkly Square precinct, local artist, Faye Sun (pictured above) has created wonderful paintings to help the broader community better understand what happened at this important site, in particular the contribution of the Chinese community.

The event is being supported by tenants at Barkly Square including Ballarat Group Training, Gordon TAFE staff and students, Ballarat East Neighbourhood House staff and volunteers, Ballarat Regional Multicultural Council, the Men's Shed, A Pot of Courage Café and others.

Thank you to the event sponsors: UFS Pharmacies and Sovereign Press and also the City of Ballarat for support of this event through the Ballarat Heritage Festival.

When: 10.00 am - 5.00 pm, Saturday 21 and Sunday 22 May, 2022

Where: Barkly Square precinct and the surrounding Ballarat East Town Hall Gardens, Barkly Street, Ballarat East.

Cost: Free

barklysquare.org.au/oasisinthedesert

Ballarat East Town Hall Gardens Revitalisation Group



**Saturday 21 May
& Sunday 22 May**

25-39 Barkly Street,
Ballarat East

For more information, please contact the Ballarat East Neighbourhood House:
reception@ballarateastnh.org.au
0422 612 052

**Join us for The Grand Chrysanthemum Show,
an historic photo exhibition of the former
Ballarat East Town Hall Gardens and more!**



barklysquare.org.au/oasisinthedesert

Proudly supported by



Oasis in the Desert - Grand Chrysanthemum Show and Historic Photo Exhibition at Barkly Square



Inspired by the inaugural Ballarat East Town Hall Gardens event for the Ballarat Heritage Festival, local James Tournier (pictured above) has created a replica of the original building.

James, a member of the Ballarat Community Men's Shed based at Barkly Square, explained that the model took eight months to complete, starting in October 2021. He made sure that it was completed in time for the Ballarat Heritage Festival in May 2022.

The detailed model has been constructed using materials such as medium-density fibreboard (MDF), match sticks, skewers and plywood.

Whilst this project was completed by James he got some ideas and inspirations from other members of the Men's Shed, with the majority of information from photos gathered from the internet and various other sources.

This project is completely

handcrafted, including doors and windows. There are also working lights connected to switches hidden within a small out-building crafted towards the back of the model. This smaller building represents one of the 15 buildings that surrounded the Ballarat East Town Hall building.

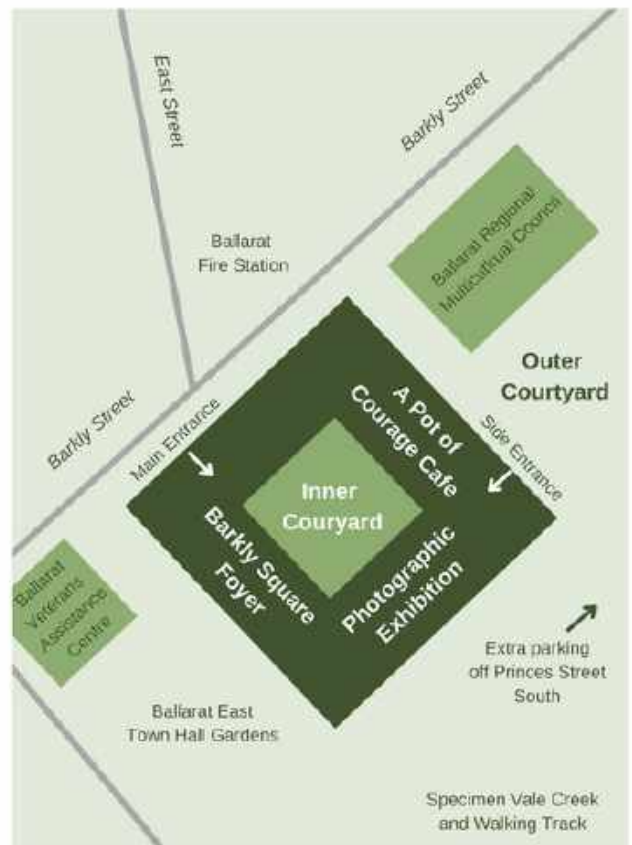
James' model will be on display at Barkly Square.

Article by Ashleigh, Social Work Student, Victoria University

Day	Time	Event	Location
Saturday 21 May	10am	Exhibition opening with invited guests. All welcome. A Pot of Courage Cafe open.	Barkly Square Foyer
	10:30am	Chinese Flower Dance	Barkly Square Foyer
	11am	One Voice Choir	Inner Courtyard
	12:30pm	Garden Tour	Meet in Outer Courtyard
	1:30pm	Food Is Free Inc. talk with Lou Ridsdale	Inner Courtyard
	3pm	Floral Art Demonstration with Alan Randell-Smith Chelsea Flower Show Gold Medalist	Barkly Square Foyer
Sunday 22 May	10am	Exhibition opens for Day Two	Barkly Square
	11am	Floral Talk with Kevin Moneghetti	Inner Courtyard
	11am-2pm	Food Is Free Inc. Kids' Garden Activity	Outer Courtyard
	12:30pm	Garden Tour	Meet in Outer Courtyard
	2pm	Floral Art Demonstration with Alan Randell-Smith Chelsea Flower Show Gold Medalist	A Pot of Courage

The Barkly Square Exhibition is open all day, 10am to 5pm. The Historic Photo Exhibition will run until 31 May. A Pot of Courage cafe will be open for refreshments on Saturday from 10am to 3pm. Refreshments are also available on Sunday.

Map of Events



For more information, please visit our website:
barklysquare.org.au/oasisinthedesert



Winter in Ballarat is a great time for having a hot cuppa... and the best partner for a cuppa is one of our delicious Scones. We bake 4 varieties (Date, Choc Mud, Blueberry & White Choc Chip and Cheese & Chive) fresh everyday! As a Special Offer to readers of the Ballarat East Community News, when you purchase a 4 Pack of Scones for \$7.50 we'll throw in any loaf of bread up to the value of \$5.00 for FREE!

Simply bring in this coupon to redeem the offer. One per customer per day.

Shop 6, 73 Victoria St, Bakery Hill Shopping Complex

Valid at Bakers Delight Bakery Hill only until Sunday 26 June 2022.

Join our News delivery team

Do you live in or close to Canadian, Golden Point, Mount Pleasant or Warrenheip?

Could you be a delivery volunteer?

News delivery is six-times each year and takes about one hour each time.

Keen? Call the Ballarat East Neighbourhood House on 0422 612 052 or reception@ballarateastnh.org.au

Ballarat East Neighbourhood House

Events are back!

We have so much coming up at the Ballarat East Neighbourhood House that we are taking it week by week.

In May we have **Neighbourhood House Week** (9-15 May), followed by **Victorian Law Week** (16-22 May) and **Volunteer Week** (17-23 May). So much to share, learn, enjoy and celebrate!

We are excited to be partnering with several inspiring organisations at Barkly Square to present a new event for the **Ballarat Heritage Festival** (p. 6 and 7). Take an hour or half a day to come along and see the beautiful floral displays, listen to the With One Voice Choir, enjoy the Chinese Flower Dance and impressive lanterns and enjoy a hot drink and delicious meal from A Pot of Courage café.

There are so many groups doing amazing things at Barkly Square. We are partnering with the Ballarat Tool

Library to present a **Bicycle Maintenance Workshop** from 10.00 am - 12.00 noon on Saturday 4 June. Delivered with support from the VicRoads Community Road Safety Grants, there will be lots to learn and free hot drink vouchers for everyone who registers and comes along. ballarateastnh.org.au/social-connection/active-transport

Our very popular Friday afternoon **Watercolour** class with Kelsie is full, so we have started another class from 10.00 am - 12.00 noon on the same day. \$15 per session. Interested? Please contact us. (See photo on p.9).

Thank you to the awesome team at the Eureka Centre who are working with us to deliver two new classes: **Alexander Technique**, 10.00 am - 11.00 am Wednesdays and **Gentle Yoga**, 9.30 am - 10.30 am Fridays.

Want to find out more? Contact us: ballarateastnh.org.au/contact-us

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THE EDUCATION STATE | VICTORIA State Government | Education and Training | KINDERGARTEN Victorian Government Approved

The Ballarat East Neighbourhood House is delivering a series of free one-hour **Mental Health and Wellbeing** webinars, in partnership with Wellways, held on the first Wednesday evening each month from 7.30 pm.

Our first session was very inspiring, with Sumira and Rebecca from Women's Health Grampians being interviewed by their colleague, Kate. They spoke about the mental health impacts of COVID lockdowns on women, in particular women from a migrant background. The recording can be watched online (link below).

Upcoming webinars:

Wellways

wellways.org

7.30 pm - 8.30 pm Wednesday 1 June

The importance of community connection and presentation from a person with lived experience of schizophrenia.

Lifeline Ballarat and the new Mental Health and Wellbeing Hub

ballarat.lifeline.org.au

7.30 pm - 8.30 pm Wednesday 6 July

How to access these important services in Ballarat. Who they are for and how they can support you. Presented by Paul Huggett (see p.12).

To find out more about how to access these free sessions and watch the recordings, visit:

ballarateastnh.org.au/support/mental-health-and-wellbeing

or contact the Ballarat East Neighbourhood House.



Watercolour with Kelsie. Image supplied.

In **National Law Week**, we will be hosting a day of free legal information sessions in partnership with the Ballarat and Grampians Community Legal Service. On Wednesday 18 May, talks will include:

- 10.30 am - 11.15 am, Wills and Probate
- 11.30 am - 12.30 pm, Powers of Attorney
- 1.30 pm - 2.30 pm, Advanced Care Directives

On Thursday 19 May, a free online webinar will be held at 7.00 pm about Wills. To register:

ballarateastnh.org.au/support/legal-support.

Ballarat East Neighbourhood House AGM

On Wednesday 25 May from 6.00 - 6.30 pm, our Annual General Meeting will be held at the Wendouree Neighbourhood Centre, 12-14 Violet Grove, Wendouree. If you would like to find out more about registering to attend this event, please contact the Ballarat East Neighbourhood House.

See our up-to-date Activities Calendar:
ballarateastnh.org.au/classes/activities

Contact us:

ballarateastnh.org.au, 0422 612 052
reception@ballarateastnh.org.au
9.00 am - 5.00 pm Tuesdays to Fridays during school term.



Calling all family pets

Ballarat East Neighbourhood House is looking for a pet mascot to join our team!

The job requirements are to be cute and friendly, willing to come and visit us at Barkly Square, Ballarat East, a few times over the year and to be super photogenic.

If you think your pet has what it takes, please email us your pet's name, a pet photo (which you are happy to have published online and in print) and short pet biography.

Photographs of the finalists will be included in the July edition for voting. The winning pet will be introduced in the following edition as our new pet mascot!

See: ballarateastnh.org.au/about-us/our-team/pet-mascot for more information.

...continued from p.1

Do you have to know how to use a sword to participate in Swordcraft?

D- No, you learn the basics on your first night and there are players of all skill levels. But if you want to fight Pat you will need to know how to use a sword!

S - Absolutely not! Our friendly new player trainers give practical training from your first night. A plethora of people can teach newcomers new things as they continue to play the game. There are plenty of other weapon styles that can be taught as well, including Live Action Role Play (LARP)-Safe archery and two handed weaponry such as pikes, spears and staves.

Are the weapons made from metal?

S - Haha! No, they are made of foam generally, with a fibre-glass core, though the composition does change depending on the weapon type. One thing is for certain, they are designed with the utmost safety in mind for the combatants.

How do you decide on a character?

D- It's different for everyone, you can base your character on your favourite historical figure or fictional character.

S - How I decided on a character is based on the group I have joined and how they interact with the overarching Warhammer fantasy theme. That being said, there are many who use their Dungeons and Dragons (D&D) characters as a base and mould them into the Warhammer fantasy setting.

How fit do you have to be?

D- You don't have to be fit at the start, but you will be by the end!

S - The beauty of Swordcraft is that it



Margaret Bosidis Photography

caters to a wide range of fitness levels. How you interact in the game is completely up to you! Different warbands have different fighting styles which may lend themselves to a slower moving shield wall, or a fast-paced skirmish squad. There's something for pretty much everyone.

How many people fight each night?

S - On an average night, we do have around 50-60 people. However, we have been growing over the last few months, which is great for overall community health and wellbeing!

How old do you have to be to fight?

S - In line with our insurance, participants have to be over 15 years to participate in the game.

What else can you do if you don't want to fight?

D- You can be a healer, who are on the battlefield but don't have to fight, a volunteer to run Swordcraft, run a shop at Quest or even play an instrument.

S - A variety of non-combatant roles is available. All fighting styles have a varied level on intensities, so it is rare to have someone in a completely non-combatant role as participants find a level which is most comfortable for them.

What is Quest? (Pictured above)

D- An annual event where much larger battles are waged, major story developments occur and people can socialise and do non-combat activities. There is also a village with trade shops such as one that sells swords.

S - Quest is a camping event which, depending on the chapter, can vary from a few days to a whole week! Usually taking place over Victorian school holiday periods, it is an opportunity to immerse yourself in the Warhammer fantasy world and really explore scenarios as your character. Much like D&D, but in real-life! It's one of the things I look forward to the most during the year, often with people travelling from all across the country to participate. Swordcraft Ballarat hold theirs in April every year.

Are Monday nights the only time?

S - Swordcraft has a variety of chapters across the state, with games happening almost every day of the week, depending on location. Monday is in Ballarat, Wednesday is in both Geelong and Bendigo, Friday is in Melbourne, Saturday is in Gippsland and Albury/Wodonga and Sunday is in Mildura! See the Swordcraft website and social media.

Supporting our community since 1981



- Adult Education and Training
- Employment Services & Support
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- Volunteering Opportunities

Tuppen Drive, Sebastopol | www.ballaratnc.org.au | Ph: 5329 3273





Catherine KING MP
 Federal Member for Ballarat

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Standing up for our Community!

www.catherineking.com.au
Authorised by Catherine King, Australian Labor Party, 304 Sydney Avenue, Ballarat, VIC.



BALLARAT
 WHOLEFOODS
 COLLECTIVE

OP SHOP CLOTHING SALE!

SATURDAY 4TH JUNE, 2022

10am-1pm

Pre loved clothing, vintage, retro, children's clothing + more!

More information contact Alison 0434 003 686

Pot Of Courage Cafe will also be OPEN.

Barkly Square, Barkly St, Ballarat East



Keep an eye out for our Workshops happening this year at Ballarat Wholefoods!
 Murray's Spice Day, Bake a Cake w/ Sara Kittelty, Make Kasundi w/Mick, Christmas in July Feast, Learn to Crochet, Knit and make a bouquet!
 See our Facebook + Instagram for more info.



**NEIGHBOURHOOD
 POLICING**

A statewide practice to improve community safety through engagement at a local level

Our Commitment to Victorians

By 2022 Neighbourhood Policing will be implemented across Victoria to standardise and improve our approach to community policing and engagement. Neighbourhood policing prioritises as part of our core duties:

- Actively listening to the community
- Understanding, recording, and responding to community safety concerns
- Building trusted, supportive relationships with the community
- Working together with the community and partners to address safety concerns
- Sharing the outcomes and actions taken to address concerns.

Working Together

Neighbourhood Policing sees police working with community at a grassroots level, with a shared ownership of local safety concerns and focus on problem solving together. We want to work with you to develop safety responses that meet local needs. Together we can address emerging issues before they escalate and focus on activities

that prevent crime in the first place, to ensure Victorians are safe and feel safe.

Next Steps

We are committed to working with local councils and other community and business partners in each Police Service Area to establish or re-establish a Local Safety Committee.

The Local Safety Committee will develop a plan to address safety concerns through both policing and non-policing activities. To understand what's happening in your area or to join your Local Safety Committee please contact your Local Area Commander or Neighbourhood Policing Coordinator. See:

police.vic.gov.au/neighbourhood-policing



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Letting people tell their stories

Interview by Georgina Noad-Delaney, Community and Human Services student, Federation University.

Born and raised in Ballarat, Paul Hugget has had a long and enjoyable career helping others in the community through social work with Lifeline and now, the new Mental Health Hub.

Paul has always had a passion for helping others and volunteering in his local community. He did volunteer work in his youth with at-risk teens, which gave him a sense of the possibility of helping others. In his pre-adolescence, Paul volunteered with the elderly, doing activities with them, talking and letting people tell him their stories.

This experience working with others, helping them thrive and allowing them to express and verbalise themselves gave Paul the idea of what he wanted to do. Before this early work, he was more interested in science as his goal in high school was to become a microbiologist. However, his volunteer work pushed Paul in a different direction and changed his perspective, understanding how much he valued giving back to the community.

When Paul got his first job in the field, he found it challenging but well-fitting as he believed that people were taking control of their own stories and journey. Paul's passion had taken him to work in Melbourne and Ballarat, managing Lifeline, a job and mission he strongly believes in.

Lifeline thrives on volunteers and the work of people who want to help and give back. Paul felt drawn to be involved with Lifeline saying, "It is mainly run by volunteers who are passionate people."

One of Paul's most enormous career passions and the aspect of supporting mental health he values, is people giving back. He based that on his



Paul Huggett, Image supplied

experiences working with people who wanted to help and had a passion for creating change.

This journey of working in mental health, hearing stories and wanting to support people inspired Paul to get involved with the new Mental Health Hub project with Uniting. This motivation comes from experience in the field and seeing gaps in mental health support.

The Hub, which is currently in the process of being developed, will be a service that will allow people to reach out for support without a referral. Paul describes the project as a "trigger for mental health", allowing people to walk in and discuss with trained workers how they are feeling.

The service will allow people to share their stories, get help to understand what's going on and form some short-term strategies. Paul's goal is that people can come in, have someone to talk to and seek help. The Hub will travel to smaller areas to allow those who may not be able to seek help, due

to where they live, to have someone to talk to. This goal of the Mental Health Hub, as with the goal for Lifeline and personally for Paul, is for people to be able to share their stories and own their journey. Paul sees these services both give people the chance to get help and also push away the notion of any stigma or fear.

As Paul has had a long journey working in the field, he does not have any plans to stop. That drive always remains. However, as Paul believes, "There are inspiring stories in anyone's journey" and it just takes one person to listen to see who they are and how we can help.

If you are inspired or interested in Lifeline, contact them via email. They are always looking for passionate volunteers and offer extensive training. Volunteers, in Paul's view, are a necessary part of helping people to change.

ballarat.lifeline.org.au