



# VOLUNTEERING NEWSLETTER

APRIL/MAY 2017



**Give Happy, Live Happy**

## VOLUNTEERS MAKING A DIFFERENCE

**GIVE HAPPY  
LIVE HAPPY**



*Tony McIlroy,  
Chief Executive Officer*

In the lead up to National Volunteer Week from 8–14 May, I want to take this opportunity to thank our volunteers, to recognise your contribution and to encourage more people to volunteer. National Volunteer Week gives us time to pause and reflect on the work of more than 6.1 million volunteers across Australia.

This year's theme is "Give Happy, Live Happy". Not only do volunteers

help make the lives of others happier, research tells us that volunteering increases volunteers' happiness.

Many local volunteers have expressed their satisfaction in giving time to help others. More than 450 volunteers dedicate time to help operate a range of Council programs and services with a direct impact on individuals in the community.

Benalla has a strong culture of volunteerism and this has helped to make our community stronger and more resilient. Volunteers come from all walks of life and backgrounds. Whether volunteers give several hours per week or one hour a year, their time and efforts are truly appreciated.

Finding new volunteers to ensure our programs continue to run is a challenge. By far word of mouth is the best way to encourage people who might be thinking about volunteering to take part. We can all be ambassadors

for volunteering in the lead up to National Volunteer Week. Talk to others about our volunteering roles, the benefits and the difference it makes to others.

On behalf of the Council and staff, I offer a public thank you to each of you for your dedicated service to the people of our community.

**Tony McIlroy**  
Chief Executive Officer



### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

CEO Message.....	1
Rotary Take a Bow .....	1
Accessibility Reference Group .....	2
Local Fast Facts .....	2
Benalla Litter Gatherers .....	2
Friends of BPACC .....	3
Volunteer Profiles .....	3
Visitor Information Centre .....	4

### ROTARY TAKE A BOW

The Rotary Club of Benalla plays an integral role in assisting to deliver many of Benalla's major community events. They work closely with Council's Events Coordinator. It's been a busy Spring/Summer season for our Rotarians who have participated in either catering or event logistics for the Benalla Festival Street Party, A Day in the Gardens Market and the Benalla Races for the Euroa Cup. The Rotary Club also coordinated and provided catering for the Lakeside Craft and Farmer's

Market, Benalla Triathlon, the 34<sup>th</sup> FAI World Gliding Championships, Australia Day celebrations and the Jayco Herald Sun Tour 2017. The Council could not deliver what we do without the Rotary Club of Benalla.





## MOBILITY MAP IMPROVES ACCESS FOR ALL

Congratulations to the Benalla Accessibility Reference Group, a committee of volunteers with lived experience of disability, whose efforts over the past year culminated in the launch of the Benalla Mobility Map. Residents and visitors to Benalla now have a map of facilities and paths that are accessible to people of all abilities. The project involved a partnership between the Council and the Disability Advocacy and Information Service (DAIS), with funding from the RACV Good Citizen Program. Copies of the Mobility Map are available from all Council service points and can be downloaded from the Council's website [www.benalla.vic.gov.au](http://www.benalla.vic.gov.au)



*Members of the Accessibility Reference Group celebrate the successful launch of the Benalla Mobility Map at the Benalla Library. Cr Barbara Alexander and Susanna French, Rural Access Officer with community members: Joan Vance, Annemarie Broughton (hidden), Cheryl-Anne Menere, Keith Menere (seated), Peter Simpson, Dawn Keast and Rex Nankervis.*

## SUPPORT THE GALLERY THROUGH VOLUNTEERING

Over the past year, volunteers at the Benalla Art Gallery assisted more than 15,000 visitors by providing information or sales at the Gallery gift shop. Volunteers are valued members of the Gallery team and play an important role assisting staff with public programs, special events, research, and social functions. If you are interested in supporting the Gallery in any of these ways, please contact the Gallery Administration and Customer Relations Officer on 03 5760 2619.



## LOCAL FAST FACTS

Over the past year the Council's volunteers have continued to make a positive difference to the lives and experiences of people across our community:

- Meals on Wheels delivered 11,090 meals
- Volunteer transport assisted clients to 334 appointments, covering 49,000 kms

A fantastic effort. Thank you to those who give their time on a regular basis to help.



*Members of the Litter Gatherers team meet with the Mayor, Cr Don Firth, (second from left) with Anne Cresswell, Max Tilbury, Mel McDonald and John Borthwick.*

## HELP KEEP BENALLA LAKE LITTER FREE

Do you feel frustrated when you see litter around town? Be part of the solution by joining the Benalla Litter Gatherers Group, now in its 16<sup>th</sup> year. Whether you are an individual, family or group of friends who have a spare hour or two throughout the week, the Litter Gatherers welcome your company.

All volunteers are equipped with a grabber, gloves and high visibility vest, along with health and safety training. It is a great way to exercise and keep fit while reducing litter and setting a good example for others in the community.

Contact Jane Taylor, Volunteer Development Coordinator on 03 5760 2600 for more information.



## BPACC GETS HELP FROM ITS FRIENDS



The Benalla Performing Arts and Convention Centre (BPACC) was built in 2004, a partnership between Goulburn Ovens TAFE and the Council. After the complex was built, members of the public were invited to support the newly formed 'Friends of BPACC' via an annual subscription.

With the opening of BPACC Cinema there was a need for ushers. Friends of BPACC and other volunteers provide ushering for weekly cinema sessions. Theatre productions also rely on volunteer ushers. Volunteering at BPACC is a great way to stay connected with the performing arts while also meeting people who have a shared interest in cinema, drama, music or dance.

The Friends have also purchased or contributed to the purchase of items

for BPACC including individual chairs for the auditorium, a large screen TV for the foyer, the digital projector, cinema lighting for the entrance, and in partnership with the Rotary Club of Benalla, outdoor seating.

The Friends operate as an Incorporated body. They meet monthly. To find out more about joining the Friends or volunteering with BPACC contact the BPACC Coordinator on 03 5762 5515.

## L2P MENTORING A REAL BUZZ

Warren Tucker has been an L2P Mentor since the program's inception in 2011 when it was first auspiced by NESAY. He has mentored eleven young people, six of whom have attained a driver licence. "You get a real buzz from that." When asked what he enjoyed most about the program Warren said it was, "the chance to keep in touch with young people and the ability to influence them (hopefully in the right way)."

Warren heard about L2P when he moved back to Benalla after 30 years in Melbourne. He signed on through Centrelink's Mutual Obligation Volunteer Program. Warren has delivered more than 500 hours of driving with young people. What a great effort! To learn more about supporting young people through this great program, call the L2P Coordinator on 03 5760 2600.



*Warren Tucker - young at heart.*



*John and Tim on hand to assist members of the Rose City Ladies Group.*

## ON THE BUSES WITH JOHN LINDSAY

John Lindsay has volunteered with the Council since 2005. As well as a volunteer driver with Aged and Disability Services, he is also a keen Rose Dead Header with the Friends of the Benalla Botanical Gardens and has volunteered with the Wall to Wall Street Art Festival. We caught up with John at the Rose City Ladies Luncheon. He says he has really enjoyed getting to know the activities staff and attendees over the years and looks forward to the friendly bus banter as he transports

planned activities participants to their homes. Recently John has had trainee bus driver, Tim Murphy along for the ride. Tim, at 30 years of age, enjoys the flexibility of the volunteer role and finds satisfaction being around the older clients as "there are definitely life lessons I can learn."

Contact the Volunteer Services Team Leader on 03 5761 2250 to discuss volunteer roles within Aged and Disability Services.

## THE VISITOR INFORMATION CENTRE NEEDS YOU

Volunteers keep the VIC open for the hours required to maintain its status as Visitor Information Centre.

We currently need volunteers to help provide information to tourists and visitors. It is a great team to work with

and a rewarding environment. If you know anyone who has a passion for helping others discover the wonders of our region please suggest they contact the VIC on 03 5762 1749.

**Want to know more about volunteering opportunities?**

Visit our website: [www.benalla.vic.gov.au](http://www.benalla.vic.gov.au)

Email: [council@benalla.vic.gov.au](mailto:council@benalla.vic.gov.au)

Contact the Customer Service Centre on **03 5760 2600**





*Tourism Coordinator, Alison Angus (right) and newest volunteer recruit to the Visitor Information Centre, Annie Hills, welcome UK tourists to Benalla.*

## THE MOST IMPORTANT ASSET IS A SMILE

As Council's Tourism Coordinator, Alison Angus is eager to promote Benalla and its surrounding towns as a tourist destination. Part of her role includes the running of the Benalla Visitor Information Centre. The Centre is the first point of call to the many visitors to our town. "Visitors come to us for things to see and do, accommodation, maps, merchandise and help to get to their next location." The Visitor Information Centre is a fully accredited part of a strong network not only in Victoria but Australia wide. "I am very passionate about tourism and the role Visitor Information Centres play."

Volunteering at the Centre includes participating in 'famils' where volunteers get to experience what Benalla has to offer first hand. Parks Victoria recently took some of the volunteers to Mt Samaria National Park. Volunteers have also been to the

Benalla Art Gallery for a guided tour of the Brett Whiteley exhibition and to the Benalla Migrant Camp.

Alison says "the most important asset that volunteers need to have at the Visitor Information Centre is a SMILE! The role is about providing good quality customer service and assisting our visitors." Volunteers work collaboratively with the Historical Society in regards to the Costume and Kelly museum. The role involves on-the-job training and you will learn something new every shift. The Centre is a seven day a week operation with two shifts per day and offers flexibility for volunteer hours.

If you think you might be interested contact Alison on 03 5762 2627 or pop into the Visitor Information Centre in Mair Street for a cuppa and find out more (open 9am – 5pm).

## NEWS FLASH: VOLUNTARY HOURS RECOGNISED BY CENTRELINK

Did you know that the Council is registered with Centrelink to provide voluntary work opportunities for eligible job seekers aged 55 years

and over. For people who receive unemployment benefits, they may be able to satisfy their mutual obligation requirements through volunteer

hours. For more information contact Jane Taylor, Volunteer Development Coordinator on 03 5760 2600 or [jane.taylor@benalla.vic.gov.au](mailto:jane.taylor@benalla.vic.gov.au)

## Volunteering: The heart of our Community

The *Volunteer Connection* newsletter is distributed three times a year to volunteers and partner organisations. We invite community groups with volunteer programs to share their news, events and stories.

For further information about *Volunteer Connection*, contact:

Jane Taylor, Volunteer Development Coordinator on **03 5760 2600** or [jane.taylor@benalla.vic.gov.au](mailto:jane.taylor@benalla.vic.gov.au)

**Want to know more about volunteering opportunities?**

Visit our website: [www.benalla.vic.gov.au](http://www.benalla.vic.gov.au)

Email: [council@benalla.vic.gov.au](mailto:council@benalla.vic.gov.au)

Contact the Customer Service Centre on **03 5760 2600**