

Maranoa Ward

July 2022



Maranoa Ward Cr Cynthia Watson
at the Beckett Park Soldiers Memorial.

Cr Cynthia Watson

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Dear neighbours,

My children enjoyed playing at Beckett Park. Climbing the tower and playing games in the playground was the focus of our activities. School picnics and other social events have made many wonderful memories for me and enrich my experience when I return to enjoy the familiar and treasured surrounds of this wonderful park.

We make memories in the places we live. Returning to places and houses we grew up in can sometimes be challenging when the changes we see are discordant with our memories. Our desire to preserve the past finds expression in our urban landscape through heritage conservation and environment protection initiatives. Public monuments are another form of memory keeping but in a special and unique way. They are often the focus of historical celebrations which keep and create public memory, forge a shared public identity, and connect past, present and future.

On important days such as Anzac and Remembrance Day, we gathered to pay respect and remember. The First World War took a heavy toll on Boroondara with hundreds of local men leaving their families to fight, and a community dedicated to supporting them through fundraising, care packages and clothing drives. Boroondara has 5 cenotaphs or public memorials that were built to be a tangible source of comfort for families who lost loved ones in the First World War, and other wars and conflicts that have followed. You can read more about the Beckett Park Soldiers Memorial in these pages, and I encourage you to visit all the beautiful war memorials in Boroondara and simply remember. Lest we forget.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C. Watson'.

Cr Cynthia Watson

Our own memorial to those who served

Australian war memorials take many forms – from simple stone crosses to elaborate cenotaphs and shrines, and the avenues of honour that mark the gateway to so many country towns.

The movement to create these memorials began while the First World War was still raging – Boroondara's Surrey Gardens Cross and Shrine were opened in April 1918, 7 months before the Western Front fell silent, marking the end of the war.

Our own Beckett Park Soldiers Memorial, placed at the apex of Balwyn's Beckett Park, was the third memorial built in Boroondara. Designed by Balwyn builder and contractor Edwin Le Leu, it was opened on 24 May 1919. Made of concrete and marble, and later faced with stone from Briagolong, it carries the names of 176 soldiers and nurses from the then North Ward of the city of Camberwell who served in the First World War.

An additional plaque is dedicated to those who fought in the Second World War and later conflicts.





Thirty years of volunteering

This year, we are celebrating the 30-year anniversary of the Boroondara Volunteer Resource Centre – a remarkable milestone.

Boroondara has one of the strongest rates of volunteering in Melbourne, with more than a quarter of residents donating their time. Our volunteers play a vital role in our community, with many Council programs and initiatives relying on their assistance.

Local Maranoa resident Anita Paxton has been volunteering in our community for many years. She volunteered with Friends of South Surrey Park for more than 12 years, helping regenerate the area by clearing blackberries and weeds from Back Creek and improving the landscape. “We planted thousands of indigenous seedlings, shrubs, grasses, and trees,” says Anita. “This has created a green belt for the community to enjoy and promoted the return of native flora and fauna to our area – great for bird watching.”

For the past 6 years, Anita has volunteered with the Boroondara Stroke Support Group – a volunteer-run organisation that gives younger and older stroke survivors a chance to share

their stories and gain the confidence to support each other.

Anita happened to meet a vibrant group of stroke survivors at a social event at her husband’s lawn bowls club. Having nursed for more than 40 years, including caring for acute stroke patients, she decided to channel that into supporting stroke patients’ transition back into the community.

“I love being able to help provide a safe and relaxed environment where our members can feel they can talk, laugh, sing, play, relax and find some joy in what can be a very difficult time,” says Anita. “Volunteering has given me extra purpose, and the sense of feeling more valued. It has provided me with a way to use my personal skills to assist others and build new relationships. I heartily recommend volunteering.”

To find out more about volunteering and to view current opportunities, visit:

 www.boroondara.vic.gov.au/bvrc

Balwyn Road pedestrian crossing update

Council is pleased to announce that a long-advocated signalised pedestrian crossing on Balwyn Road near Gordon Barnard Reserve and Hislop Park, Balwyn North, will soon be delivered following approval and funding from the Department of Transport.

There are currently no pedestrian crossings along Balwyn Road between Belmore Road and Doncaster Road, which has led to users of recreational facilities on both sides of Balwyn Road – and other members of the community – crossing the road at uncontrolled locations.

To provide adequate visibility and disability-compliant gradients, the new crossing will be placed on the flattest section of Balwyn Road, between Tower Road and Tuxen Street. Kerb outstands (raised areas on either side of crossing) are proposed on both sides of Balwyn Road, which will result in the removal of about 4 on-street car-parking spaces.

Works are due to be delivered by the end of 2022.

For more information, please contact us:

 boroondara@boroondara.vic.gov.au



The Eisteddfod is heating up at Hawthorn Arts Centre

The heats for the 2022 Boroondara Eisteddfod are well underway, and with more than 1,000 participants performing across 11 weeks of competition, this year's Eisteddfod is shaping up to be the most exciting yet.

The Eisteddfod provides a fantastic opportunity for people of all ages to showcase their skills and share the joy of performing. Disciplines this year include piano, voice, strings, woodwind, brass, choral and instrumental ensembles. Classical guitar has also been added, diversifying the offering for the community and giving more opportunities to a wider number of developing performers.

This year will also feature a Gala Concert, showcasing finalists from vocal, strings, woodwind and brass competitions. The winners from each of those disciplines will be decided and announced at the concert. The prestigious Piano Concerto Final will feature 3 virtuosic young pianists and the winning performance presented at this exciting event.

After two years of disrupted delivery, it is particularly rewarding to be working towards live performances again at Hawthorn Arts Centre and welcoming back our tireless volunteers. Boroondara Eisteddfod's volunteers have been the lifeblood of the competition since its inception, and Council is extremely appreciative to have their efforts, wisdom and experience assisting the Eisteddfod in 2022.

Council also acknowledges the Eisteddfod Advisory Committee members who continue to provide guidance and stewardship of the competition: Anne Gilby, Yvonne Giltinan, Douglas Heywood OAM, Dr Yvonne Ho AM, Gary Kirby, Dr Sharon Lierse and Dr Elizabeth Mitchell.

Community members are encouraged to come along and enjoy the performances at Hawthorn Arts Centre and support our local homegrown talent. The Gala Concert is on Wednesday 20 July and the Piano Concerto Final is on Sunday 24 July.



To buy tickets and for more information, visit:

 www.boroondara.vic.gov.au/eisteddfod



New Hilda Street Reserve playground on its way

Preparation works to deliver the new and improved Hilda Street Reserve playground start this month, with construction gearing up mid-August. We expect it will be ready for local families to enjoy by November.

Once complete, the new playground will include the themes and play elements most popular with the community.

The final design aims to provide a balance of traditional physical play and nature-based play opportunities. There will be a bucket spinner, a new combination unit, monkey bars and new swings, while balancing logs, rocks for hopping and timber stumps will encourage nature-based play.

New shade trees and pavers between park and playground elements will complement the new playground and increase connection and accessibility.

For more information, visit:

 www.boroondara.vic.gov.au/hilda-street-reserve-playground

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