



Winter
2026

Hello Buninyong

Community Bank · Buninyong

Backing buninyong's digital community

Community Bank Buninyong customers can proudly stand behind an investment supporting the redevelopment, strategic planning and sustainability of the new Love Buninyong website.

The project has created a new, fresh and central online space where residents and visitors can learn about local activities, events and businesses. Alongside the direct funding, more than \$7,000 in in-kind value has supported content creation and development work.

Community Partnerships Lead Kelly Bevan said the website gives local people a dedicated place to learn more about what is happening in Buninyong and creates a valuable platform for local businesses.

Explore the new site at lovebuninyong.com.au

Read the full story here... <https://www.communitygrowshere.com.au/post/backing-buninyong-s-digital-community>



Chair Message

Since our last newsletter, we've seen some important projects come to life across our local region, led by local people, volunteers, schools, clubs and community groups doing work that genuinely matters.



Our first FUEL Youth Summit filled Civic Hall with Year 10 students for a full day of leadership, practical tools and future-focused thinking. It was a big investment in local young people and a clear example of what community banking can help make possible.

You'll read about Lea's choice to support Horse Shepherd Equine Sanctuary, young mental health ambassadors being recognised through Live4Life, safer equipment for Buninyong Little Athletics and faster care for injured wildlife through Ballarat Wildlife Hospital.

There are stories about local history, music, community learning, environmental volunteers, digital support for the new Love Buninyong website and a first premiership for the Flying Aces tennis team. Different projects, different people, but the same simple idea behind them.

When customers bank with Community Bank Buninyong, more local projects get the chance to actually happen. And that's what we love to see.

Brett Jones
Chair



Ballarat was fully FUELLED

Our first ever FUEL Youth Summit was designed to give local Year 10 students a day of big ideas, practical leadership tools and real stories to help them think about what comes next.

Held at Civic Hall Ballarat in March, FUEL brought together almost 200 students from almost every local secondary school for a fully-funded youth leadership and empowerment experience. With thanks to our Community Bank customers the experience was valued at more than \$175 per student.

Presented by Youth Leadership Academy Australia, with venue support from the City of Ballarat, the day gave students access to world-class inspirational speakers, workshops, practical learning and a chance to think about their own future with purpose.

The program featured speakers Wil Massara, Bonnie Ryan Rowe and Mack Murphy with lunch and snacks included so students could focus on learning, meeting others and taking something useful from the day.

This was a proud Community Bank Buninyong project, created to support the next generation of local leaders, doers and changemakers. It also gave us a brilliant example of what community banking can look like when profits are turned back into opportunities for young people.

For all the images and videos from the day visit www.communitygrowshere.com.au/fuel







National Volunteer Week

National Volunteer Week in May gave us another chance to tip our hat to the people who keep community life moving.

That starts with our volunteer Board of Directors, who help steer the community company behind Community Bank

Buninyong. It also includes the countless volunteers behind the clubs, programs, services and the 240+ community groups we've supported.

From sport and arts to emergency services, care programs, youth support and environmental projects, these volunteers are often the ones quietly turning good ideas into something useful for local people.

Ballarat young mental health ambassadors recognised

Young people in Ballarat are helping lead important conversations about youth mental health across regional Victoria.

Live4Life Crews won the Victorian Government Group Achievement in the Community Award at the 2026 Victorian 7News Young Achiever Awards, recognising Year 9 and 10 student volunteers who promote mental health awareness, reduce stigma and encourage help-seeking among peers.

Community Bank Buninyong supports the Live4Life program in Ballarat, where young people can face greater barriers accessing mental health support. Since launching in 2010, more than 40,000 young people have completed evidence-based mental health education through Live4Life and more than 1,800 students have volunteered as Crew members across Victoria.

Community Partnerships Lead Kelly Bevan said these young people are helping lead important conversations within schools and the wider youth community.



Read the full story here... <https://www.communitygrowshere.com.au/post/ballarat-young-mental-health-ambassadors-recognised>





Lea's choice supports second chances

Each year, our Community Bank Buninyong branch team can direct support to a cause close to their heart through our Community Investment Program.

Lea chose the Horse Shepherd Equine Sanctuary at Gordon, a local organisation rescuing and rehabilitating horses in crisis, alongside other animals who have found safety there.

For Lea, the choice was personal. Horses have been part of her life since childhood and her rural ties have given her a deep appreciation for the care, patience and work involved in looking after animals well.

Horse Shepherd is funded by donations and welcomes community support through donations, horse sponsorship and volunteering. It is a lovely example of our team backing the causes that matter to them personally.

You can support Horse Shepherd Equine Sanctuary too, visit horseshepherd.org.au or call 0400 743 188.

Read the full story here... <https://www.communitygrowshere.com.au/post/lea-s-choice-supports-second-chances>



Community Impact



Care where it is needed most

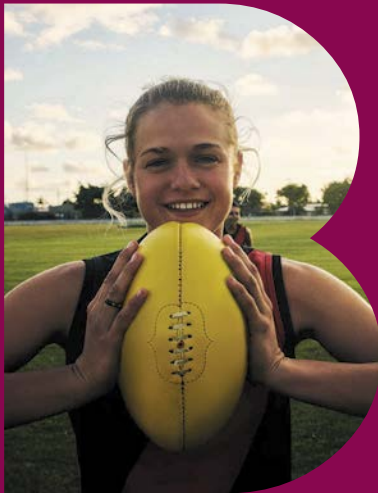
When people are doing it tough, practical help can mean everything.

Community Care Centre Ballarat is a collaborative project by local Rotary groups that collect, sort and distribute donated goods to people who need support. The centre helps people experiencing homelessness, vulnerability or the sudden loss of household items after hardship or crisis.

Community Partnerships Lead Kelly Bevan visited the centre recently to see the work up close and learn more about the difference it is making across Ballarat. And with over 165 consignments already delivered in 18 months, it's fair to say the impact is being felt.

This is community care in its most practical form. Local people seeing a need, working together and making sure support reaches people when they need it most.

Read the full story here... <https://www.communitygrowshere.com.au/post/care-where-it-s-needed-most>



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Representing community banking...together!

We were proud to come together with Community Bank Creswick & District and Community Bank Ballan & District for Commerce Ballarat's Farmer's Day Out.

There is something pretty powerful about regional collaboration when it is done with purpose. From Forage & Feast to supporting Farmer's Day Out, we're showing what can happen when local Community Bank companies work together and use our collective power for even greater good.

Between our three local branches, we have returned more than \$7 million back into our communities. Into local projects for local people. The way it should be.

A big thank you to Commerce Ballarat for creating a space for industry connection, ideas and support for our farming communities. We were pretty chuffed to stand alongside our Ballan and Creswick colleagues and be part of it.



Delivering uplifting music to the community

Ballarat Choral Society delivered major classical works by Dvorak and Mozart with support from Community Bank Buninyong customers. The funding helped engage eight soloists, giving the choir the chance to take on challenging repertoire and share it with local audiences.

For the choir, the project supported performance quality, member development and access to ambitious live music close to home.

Read the full story here... <https://www.communitygrowshere.com.au/post/delivering-uplifting-music-to-the-community>



Community Impact

SparkTank continues to deliver long after the actual event with practical projects that make life better for local people.



History through young eyes

Community Bank Buninyong contributed \$2,000 to help Sovereign Hill Museums Association deliver Teen Time Travellers, a student-led program for young people aged 13 to 18.

Students explored Ballarat's 1850s history alongside contemporary conversations about discrimination, gender, culture and the environment. The trial showed how student-led ideas can be valued, tested and developed into real learning experiences.

Read the full story here... <https://www.communitygrowshere.com.au/post/history-through-young-eyes>



Safer jumps for local kids

Buninyong Little Athletics Club pitched for new high jump mats to help young athletes train and compete more safely. The new mats give children a safer landing area, support confidence and reduce pressure on volunteers to keep fundraising for essential equipment.

This is a practical project with very real benefits for kids, families and the volunteers who help local sport happen each week.

Read the full story here... <https://www.communitygrowshere.com.au/post/safer-jumps-for-local-kids>



Faster care for wildlife

Ballarat Wildlife Hospital stole hearts at SparkTank last year and took home \$10,000 towards a portable X-ray machine, with the remaining funding provided by the Buninyong Mt Helen Lions Club.

For injured wildlife, the first few hours can make all the difference. The new portable X-ray machine helps the hospital assess animals sooner, make quicker welfare decisions and improve chances of treatment, rehabilitation and release.

Read the full story here... <https://www.communitygrowshere.com.au/post/faster-care-for-wildlife>



Community Impact



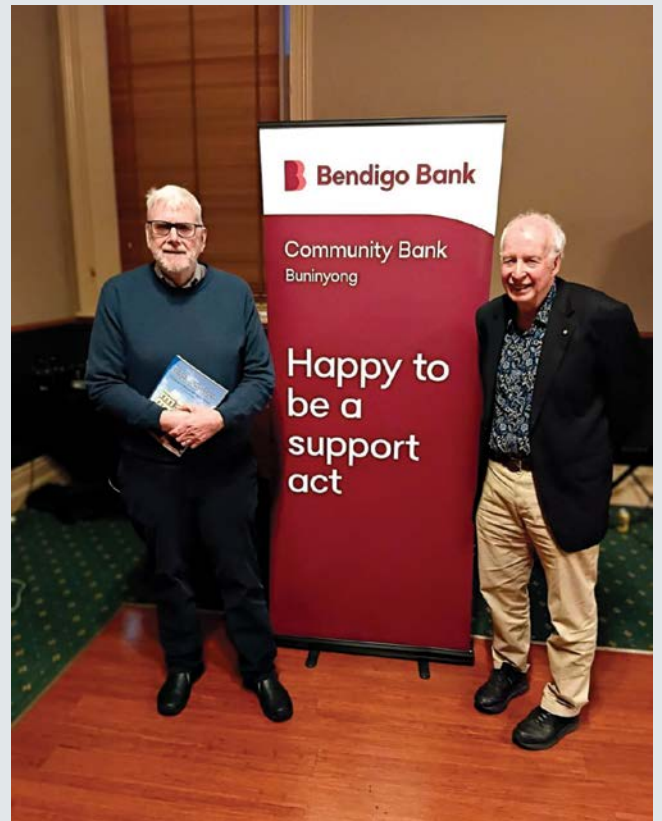
Flying aces claim maiden premiership

A huge congratulations to the Flying Aces, who claimed their first premiership in the BDTA Midweek Ladies Tennis Competition after an impressive finals campaign.

Community Bank Buninyong supported the competition with Community Gold to help celebrate the season and recognise players across the season.

Finishing fourth on the ladder, Flying Aces timed their run beautifully and delivered a close grand final that came down to the very last set.

Read the full story here... <https://www.communitygrowshere.com.au/post/flying-aces-claim-maiden>



Twilight Talks spark curiosity

Community Bank Buninyong supported the Ballarat Mechanics' Institute 2026 Twilight Talks program, helping a much-loved local series continue to inform and inspire.

The 2025 program delivered 14 talks, with strong attendance from members and the broader community. Topics ranged from Ballarat history and infrastructure pressures through to environmental change, theatre, war history, service, grief and local stories.

This type of community learning matters because it gives people accessible ways to keep exploring ideas, history and culture right here in Ballarat.

Read the full story here... <https://www.communitygrowshere.com.au/post/twilight-talks-spark-curiosity>



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Community Impact

Little shed, big difference

Sometimes the most practical support can make the biggest difference.

Yarrowee Leigh Catchment Group now has a new garden shed to store tools and resources in one central location at the City of Ballarat native nursery in Wendouree.

For a volunteer-run organisation, that means tools are easier to find, easier to borrow and easier to put to work at planting days, working bees and environmental projects. It has also strengthened the group's partnership with the City of Ballarat.

This is the sort of practical investment that removes barriers for volunteers and helps them keep doing the important work they already do so well.

Read the full story here... <https://www.communitygrowshere.com.au/post/little-shed-big-difference>



2026 Business Excellence Awards

Federation University | Commerce Ballarat
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Community Bank Buninyong Community Spirit People's Choice Award

VOTING OPEN
23 June - 12 July

commerceballarat.com.au

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About Us

We're a local branch with a local purpose. Community Bank Buninyong is owned by the community and operated in partnership with Bendigo Bank. That means our profits go right back into our local area to help our community thrive. Our community company is Social Traders Certified and an award-winning organisation.

Chances are you've seen our impact in action, at your club, your school, your community group or a local event. Bank with Community Bank Buninyong where it's a win-win for you and your community.



Talk to us today



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We're open:

9.30am - 5.00pm Monday to Friday

Our Leadership Team:

Chair: Brett Jones **Company Secretary:** Scott Sherritt
Treasurer: Graeme Benn **Directors:** Joanne Innes, Andrea Mason, Omaru Maruatona, Stacey Oliver, Karen Snibson.
Branch Manager: Randall Dreger

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P 5341 8066 ABN 63 137 673 388



After-hours lending appointments

Life doesn't stop at 5pm and often this is when you make all the big decisions. If you're thinking about a new car, first home, upsizing, downsizing or hitting the road for a while, Peita offers appointments by arrangement at a time that suits.

To book, give Peita at least 24 hours notice by calling the branch during business hours or emailing peita.mcnaught@bendigoadelaide.com.au.



Let's Be Friends!



Jump on your socials and follow us on Facebook and Instagram @communitybankbuninyong for local impact stories featuring your clubs, organisations and the community.

We'd love to show you more of what we do each week.