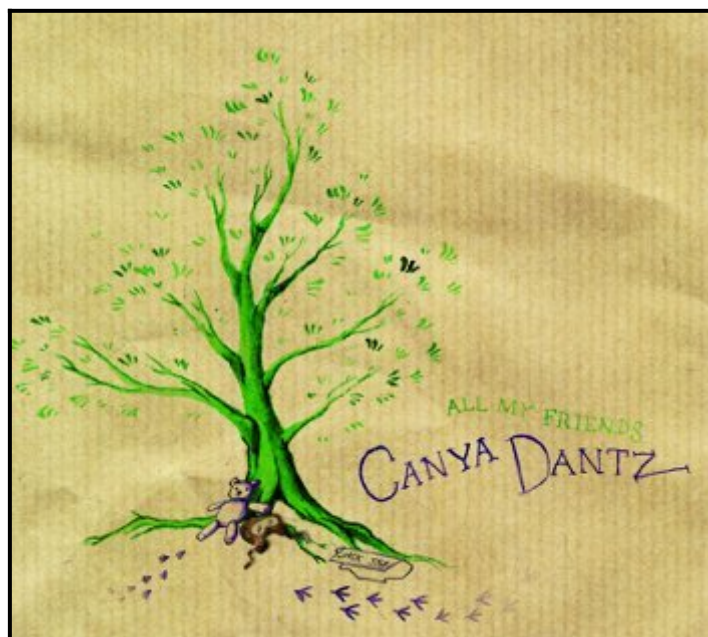


Barry Peters CD pack



CLOSED: winner Kate Melican Rollo

[dropcap style="font-size: 60px; color: #DDCE8D;"] T
[/dropcap]his is a competition for the younger Bluestone Magazine fans!

We have a 5-set CD collection of great kids music (plus a DVD) by local singer/songwriter [Barry Peters](#).

If you are a [paid subscriber](#) just email us your name and address to editor@bluestonemagazine.com.au and we'll announce the winner on Friday 28 February.

The winner of this competition was Kate Melican-Rollo, from Tower Hill.

Fletcher recommendations:

Jones



THE WARRNAMBOOL PLANNING AND HERITAGE GROUP:

[dropcap style="font-size: 60px; color: #DC943C;"] R
[/dropcap]ecommendations to council:

i) Council and Heritage Victoria to conduct a survey of the Fletcher Jones site in Warrnambool to consider the current condition and integrity of its state heritage listed aspects. The survey should re-examine what remains of the most significant aspects of the site to the local community and to the state. We would like to see Heritage Victoria and Council take a proactive role with the owner (present or future) to find a solution for renewal of this site and a way to share the stories attached to this site. Examples of best practice and processes for renewal of similar sites could be used to inspire recommendations for options and incentives to ensure

it has a viable, vibrant future.

ii). Council and Heritage Victoria to provide funds for a current structural assessment of the Fletcher Jones water tower (locally called the Silver Ball) with a view to determining a schedule of repair and maintenance works (and their cost) to ensure this state heritage listed structure is safe and viable for the next 50 years.

iii). Council and Heritage Victoria work with the Jones family to develop a social history project that tells the Fletcher Jones story and connection in Warrnambool.

The Warrnambool City Council's response (as listed 9/12/13):

[dropcap style="font-size: 60px; color: #DC943C;"] A [/dropcap] number of buildings and features within the site are listed on the Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) as significant.

Council is interested in working with the current landowner, or any future landowner, to ensure that significant elements of the site are properly protected and managed. Council is also interested in ensuring that any future redevelopment of the site involves renewal and moves away from its historical manufacturing past.

A structural assessment of the former water tower (silver ball) was undertaken in 2004. The assessment identified rectification works including replacement of hold down bolts on the south-western column, and removal of ladder and water pipe. The assessment also recommended a painting program to protect the tower from further corrosion.

In 2010, the bolts were replaced, and the water pipe and ladder were removed. It is unknown whether the painting program has been implemented.

Council officers will continue to work with the current

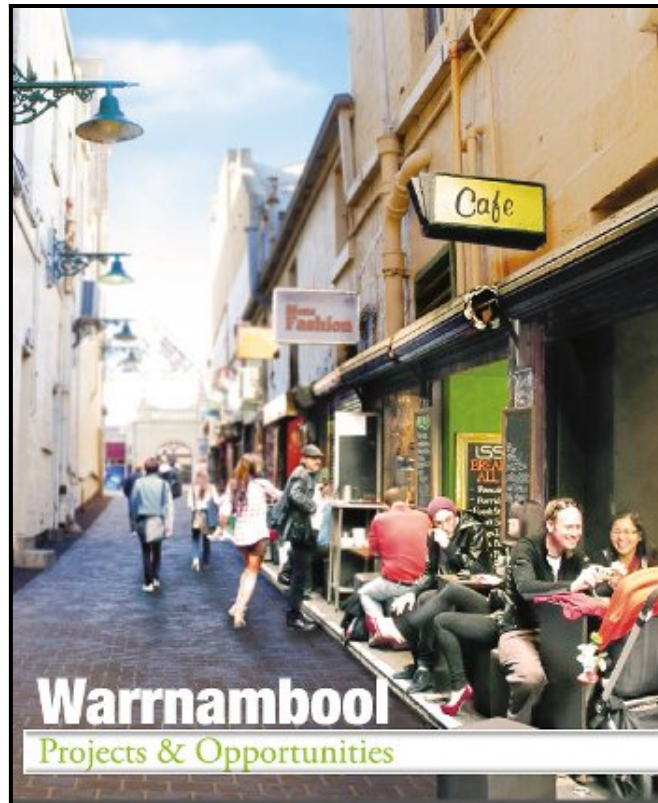
landowner, or any future landowner, with a view to update the 2004 structural report and identify any further matters that may need addressing.

The former Fletcher Jones factory is clearly of social significance to Warrnambool and the State of Victoria. There will many people within the community who have strong links to this site. It is becoming increasingly important that these stories are captured and shared.

Council officers will investigate funding opportunities to undertake a social history of the site (involving the Jones Family, former factory workers and members of the community). These stories will assist in the preservation of important elements of the site and in any future redevelopment of the site.

* * *

Be all things or stick to the basics?



The dream: an image of bustling cafes built into the sides of Warrnambool's laneways graces the cover of the council's recently released priority 'wish list'.

[dropcap style="font-size: 60px; color: #A5CECD;"] Councils were once primarily responsible for rates, roads and rubbish: my, how times have changed.

The [16-point list of advocacy priorities](#) released by the Warrnambool City Council suggests that the council must now be all things to all people, fixing everything from school retention rates, to unemployment, to developing the region's food export industry...right down to upgrading the stormwater drains. But is this what ratepayers really want or expect?

Sixteen points is a lot of priorities for a council covering only 32,000 people and they can't possibly all be met,

especially when we struggle to get the public toilets right.

I say this because as I was walking back from a media briefing on the plan last week, I wandered past the vandalised portable toilet box on Gilles St, across the road from the heritage precinct of the former police station and court house.

Having only been back in Warrnambool a relatively short time, I thought these toilets must have been installed for the comfort of the workmen repairing the former post office nearby.

A google search, however, revealed the eyesore is considered [a public toilet and has been sitting there since 2011](#) while the council finalises its public toilet strategy.

My heart sank. If it takes more than three years to sort out the public lavatories, what hope is there of achieving the bulk of the 16 priorities that had just been outlined to the media by **Mayor Michael Neoh** and **CEO Bruce Anson**?

Moreover, do we need to have 16 priorities? What about focussing on five, securing the funding for these, and doing them really, really well? (We will list our top five later).



The reality: the 'temporary' toilet block on Gilles St indicates that making progress on some projects can take years.

[dropcap style="font-size: 60px; color: #A5CECD;"] While there is nothing wrong with thinking big and aiming high, we have three levels of government for the simple reason that each one looks after different levels of responsibility.

Ratepayers, I suspect, want a local council to focus on maintaining and improving their local amenities, to ensure that their city is a good looking and vibrant place where people want to live, work or visit for an unforgettable holiday.

Given this, it was heartening to hear Mr Anson list the revitalisation of the CBD as the *number one* priority, but there was scant detail on how this would be done, and by when. (*Since this piece was written, WCC has announced it is seeking an architect to redesign the portion of Liebig St between Koroit St and Raglan Parade*).

The gradual rejuvenation of some of the city's laneways – a wonderful council project – is an example of what can happen, yet the F Project artists behind all of this hard work are scrimping and scraping to develop their art space down at The Artery, in Timor St.

[The Artery](#) has the potential to utterly transform what was a bland part of the CBD and to draw tourists in droves, but unfortunately this simple project has received very little council money.

At the same time, the council says in its latest document that it hopes to secure \$100,000 for a "comprehensive study" into food production in south-west Victoria and potential export

markets. Why? Isn't this the domain of the State Government and, more particularly the local member, **Denis Napthine**? Or perhaps it is even better suited to the Federal Government, and our local member, **Dan Tehan**?



The Artery artists' hub in Timor St has the potential to be a magnet for tourists and locals alike.

[dropcap style="font-size: 60px; color: #A5CECD;"]L[/dropcap>lobbying the other two tiers of government is part of what local councils do, but do we really want to secure and spend \$100,000 on another study in the process?

Even a portion of this money would go a long way toward, for example, The Artery being able to open its retail space, gallery and studios – heck, they might even be able to get their signwriting done.

To be fair, the council's priority list does contain some good, grassroots project such as upgrading the dated public swimming pool and working on a plan to improve the equally dated and tiny library, but it also contains a chunk of

'priorities' that have been around for so long now, most of us have forgotten when they were first announced, such as sorting out the future of the Fletcher Jones site, Flagstaff Hill and the railway station precinct.



Warrnambool will receive a longer airport runway, but the trains will still be slow, unreliable and crowded.

[dropcap style="font-size: 60px; color: #A5CECD;"]S[/dropcap]peaking of the railway, improving the inadequate train service to Melbourne has been another, long-standing priority that has again been wish-listed by the council, yet it is the [extension of the Warrnambool airport runway](#) that is taking precedence for \$4.5 million in state and federal funding.

The number of people who use this runway will be minuscule compared to the number of train commuters who already struggle to find a seat on a service that operates only three times a day and lumbers along at a Cobb-and-Co-like speed of 74 kph.

We should be outraged, especially as our compatriots in

Bendigo, Ballarat and even Traralgon each have more than a dozen services a day, including a number of express trains.

A fast, reliable commuter service between Warrnambool and Melbourne is also critical to tourism, yet there is no indication that the service will receive another cent from either the state or federal governments.

The council has developed an enormous [amount of strategic plans and strategies](#) – the latest one brings the total to 32 in the past 10 years – but my fear is that it is spreading itself too thin, that it expends too much time and money reaching for the stars rather than dealing with the basics, and that, like the toilet box in Gilles St, it will ultimately struggle to be flush with success.

[box] **Below are Bluestone's five funding priorities (what are yours?):**[/box]

- Secure and save the best of the Fletcher Jones site and gardens and lobby for state funds to make it happen. This site is critical to creating a sense of 'arrival' to Warrnambool and has the [potential to be something very special](#).
- Fix the train service with more frequent, faster and reliable trains that include express services.
- [Revitalise the CBD](#) by, for example, offering incentives to restore and repair the heritage buildings, remove the parking meters and create a true restaurant precinct.
- Finish the sensational foreshore bike path by, as previously suggested by the council, linking it back through Lake Pertobe to the railway station. People would travel to Warrnambool (on a fast train) just to ride this path – I have already met some.
- Upgrade the [whale watching precinct](#) into the world-class attraction that it should be.



More opinion pieces...

[Who will step up for Fletcher Jones?](#)

[Time for a fresh start with Australia Day](#)

[Broken link for Artlink](#)

[Losing sleep over a lot of rubbish](#)

[Close Flagstaff Hill; save Fletcher Jones](#)

[When scrutiny is sub-standard, democracy suffers](#)

Port Fairy bookclub review: Eyrie

[box] Bluestone recently profiled the [Last Thursday Book Club](#) in Port Fairy and invited members of the group to tell us about their book of the month. This month, **BRIGID FOARD**, is in the chair: [/box]



Brigid Foard (right), who is a member of The Last Thursday Book Club, in Port Fairy, gives us the rundown on Tim Winton's latest novel.

[quote]

[dropcap style="font-size: 60px; color: #A5CECD;"] T
[/dropcap]im Winton's ***Eyrie*** commanded much discussion between the members of The Last Thursday book club, in Port Fairy this month.

The mark of a good read can often be the ripple effects of discussion when there are no easy answers, no comfortable resolutions of character or motive. The ambiguous elements of *Eyrie* are its strength, with Winton going to great lengths to avoid sentimentality and cliché.

Our discussion ranged from what really was the stain on the carpet at the start of the text, to was Tom Keely trying to save himself by helping Kai?

Eyrie is a thought provoking work dealing with themes such as redemption, class and the future of Australian society (more

specifically, WA).

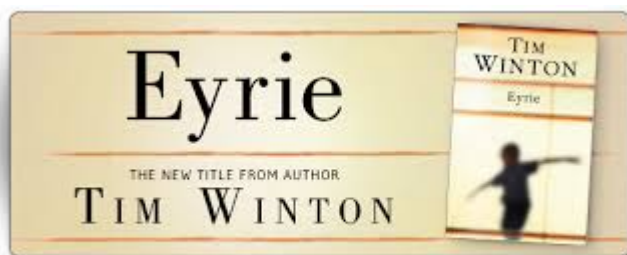
Most agreed that this is the most thrilling of Winton's books in that it had that page turning effect on most of us.

I felt that Keely's mother Doris was one of Winton's more convincing female characterisations to date. The humour in the novel was something we all remarked upon. There are some hauntingly beautiful images in the novel which I will remember for years to come (surely testament once again to the work's quality).

Winton has once again structured his writing around a few motifs: in 'Eyrie' they are birds, flight, falling; in 'Breath' – breathing, resuscitation, water.

This structural formula serves as both a functional and aesthetic framework, (including the title) and in my opinion solidifies the work as a classic.

Eyrie is one of those works that stays with your consciousness and makes you really think."



[box type="bio"] Have you read *Eyrie*? What did you think?[/box]



You might also enjoy...

[What I am reading: Portland arts identity Jan Colliver](#)

[What I am reading: 02 Media director Karen Foster](#)

[Second hand bookstore opens in Koroit](#)

[What I am reading: artist Gareth Colliton](#)

[Biblio-Art prize launched at Blarney Books](#)

[What I am reading: ABC Radio south-west breakfast presenter Jeremy Lee](#)

From a cupcake copper to a farmer's wife



Within the space of about a fortnight, Jo O'Keefe went from being a police officer in Portland to running her

own cafe in Port Fairy, The Farmer's Wife Harvest Cafe.

[dropcap style="font-size: 60px; color: #ABCCAB;"] A [/dropcap]t the risk of using a bad pun, a new alleyway café in the heart of Port Fairy is quite arresting – not least because it is run by a former police officer.

The Farmer's Wife Harvest Cafe, tucked at the end of a gorgeous bluestone and rubble walled lane off Sackville St, is the latest venture for local **Jo O'Keefe** who has had what can only be described as a varied career.

Until last November, Jo was Senior Constable O'Keefe based at the Portland police station as part of a 10-year career with the thin blue line.

Prior to joining the force, however, she had spent most of her life in hospitality, including working in kitchens while studying – and completing – a Fine Art degree at Deakin University in Warrnambool in the early 1990s.

"Everyone used to call me the Cupcake Copper because I was better known for my scones and cupcakes that I would bring into work, than for any actual policing," Jo laughs.

"I have always had a background in hospitality though and, since I was 18, worked in Lorne, Apollo Bay, Warrnambool and up at the snow fields."



An earlier life in hospitality has seen Jo turn full circle and live her dream of opening her own place.

[dropcap style="font-size: 60px; color: #ABCCAB;"] A [dropcap]fter the birth of her son, Tex, in 2000, Jo decided to scratch an itch that she had harboured since she was 12 years old, after one of the police horses visited her school in Melbourne.

“That horse, ‘Gendarme’, had me completely hooked and I was determined to join the force one day...I finally did, just before I turned 40,” Jo explains.

“I am not sure why, but I thought it might also be better for me as a single Mum, which I was at the time, but I didn’t factor in the night shifts,” she laughs.

As a result, Tex was “raised by the village” of Port Fairy with various friends chipping in to help when Jo moved there in 2006.

It has made Tex a well-adjusted kid, who now helps out making

smoothies and juices in the café during school holidays, says Jo.



Some of the tasty treats on offer: the brownies sold by the tray-full during the peak summer season.

[dropcap style="font-size: 60px; color: #ABCCAB;"] F
[/dropcap]our years ago, life took another turn when Jo married local farmer **Scott Moore** – hence the inspiration for the name of her café.

“I had been thinking about getting out of the force and I always wanted to run my own café, then this place came up and I jumped at it,” Jo says.

“I finished up work in November and, two weeks later, opened up the café in December.”

The café, which offers simple healthy lunches, coffees, cakes, fresh juices and a range of gluten-free products, hit the ground running and Jo found herself making 5.30am starts to

keep on top of the summer rush.

“I knew it was going to be full on for those first couple of months, but it was great fun,” she says.

Part of the café’s appeal is that it is tucked well away from the main street and provides a safe place for kids who are kept entertained by the plastic farm animals that are provided by Jo and can be hidden into the nooks and crannies of the sandstone wall.

“I am not sure if we have found them all again yet,” she smiles.



Some of the local patrons that help to keep the kids happy...

[box] The Farmer’s Wife Harvest Cafe is at 47a Sackville St, Port Fairy, and is open 9am-3pm seven days. You can find it on Facebook [here](#). [/box]



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