



Welcome to the July 2026 Newsletter from the Ballarat Wholefoods Collective! We hope you had a wonderful winter solstice, and that our members with children at school are enjoying the school holidays.

Thanks for being members of the Collective. If you'd like to continue as a member, fees are due in July. Keep an eye out for a reminder from Wendy.

## What's in the July Newsletter?

- Reflections on the recent Preloved Fashion Sale by Grace Darke.
- Information on changes to Schulz Dairy reusable milk bottles.
- An update from the Ballarat Wholefoods Collective president, Howard Gibbon – including some exciting news!

## Grace Darke on her experience at the June Preloved Fashion Sale

Last month we ran our quarterly preloved fashion market, and what a market it was! Over 1300 people walked through the Barkly square corridors, atrium and community hall, shopping for preloved clothing from over 50 stalls. Imagine all of the clothing that hasn't had to be produced and shipped across the world because these wonderful shoppers have chosen to shop pre-loved!

It was another one of our busiest markets, even the jigsaw swap stall said it was their busiest yet! When people weren't browsing through rails of good quality second hand bargains, they were having a coffee or bite to eat at 'Our Kitchen Social Cafe' which we're so pleased to say was 'run off their feet' all day! It feels so good to support such an ethical, local and inclusive social enterprise, and thank you to Ines and her team for their hard work keeping our shoppers energised and hydrated.

The raffle was also well participated, and our lucky winner got to take home a lovely collection of items from the Collective as well as other local and ethical goodies, thanks to Glenda and crew for organising this.

The event was captured by the awesome 99.9 Voice FM, as they walked around interviewing event organisers & stall holders in-between playing some banging tunes, it's been incredible to watch this symbiotic relationship emerge. If you haven't set this local community radio as a favourite, please do, as well as truly local conversations, they play some classic tunes!

And of course, we can't forget our incredible event organisers and volunteers on the day; the Pre-loved committee work so hard in the background and on the day pulling off an incredible event, and if it wasn't for their time, hard work and passion this wouldn't be possible and we thank them for making the day such a success.

It's been incredible to watch this event grow over the past few years, a simple idea to lower our waste emerging into a community event focussed on so much more! Seeing this event bring together community focussed people and groups and enabling power and growth to be put back into the hands of the people has been mind-blowing, demonstrating that we can shop and be happy without harming the planet or people. And it's not just the tremendous volume of clothing and accessories we've potentially prevented from going to landfill or impact of the fast fashion industry, but the physical connection and positive mental wellbeing that is created when people come together in social connection.

To our event organisers and other volunteers, shoppers, stall holders, to the other organisations that participated in the event and our supporters, even if it was only to share the event with others; it took a village! And together, we have made a difference, and it's you that bring us hope and optimism that a kinder and brighter future is possible.

**The next Preloved Fashion Sale is on Saturday, 29 August.** It is only \$10 to have a stall. Reach out to book a stall or to help organise this wonderful community event. You can also follow along on social media and check out photos from past events on [Instagram](#) or [Facebook](#).

# Changes to Schulz Dairy Reusable Glass Bottles

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- Schulz are moving to a new glass bottle from July 2026, one that is manufactured in Australia!
- This means you will see a slightly different bottle at the Collective when we reopen for term three, and the refundable deposit will increase to \$3 per bottle.
- Since Schulz launched their returnable glass bottle in 2017, they have kept over 50 tonnes of plastic out of the waste system!
- **Old bottles must be returned, clean and without any plastic or paper attached, to the Collective by Thursday 30 July 2026 to receive the \$2 deposit back.** To keep them out of the waste system you may prefer to save them as a souvenir. They make a handy storage container for dried goods!
- For more information, check out the Frequently Asked Questions on the Schulz website: <https://schulzorganicdairy.com.au/glass-bottle-faq>.



## Friendly Reminders

### Open Times

- We are open during Victorian school terms:
  - **Thursdays, 9am-1pm and 5-6.30pm**
  - **Saturdays, 9am-12noon**
- **We re-open for term three on Thursday 16 July 2026** and close for the school break on Thursday 17 September 2026.

### Don't forget!

- **Wash your hands** before you enter the shop. There are bathroom facilities in the corridor on the right before you enter.
- **BYO bags and clean containers.** A sturdy bag or two to carry your groceries, a couple of produce bags for loose fruit and vegetables, and different sized containers or jars for bulk goods.

### Tips to get the most out of your visit

- Considering **using a shopping trolley/jeep to make your shop easier.** There are different types available so find one that works for you: narrow and upright to take on the bus, or sturdy with a basket that lifts off.
- We know **parking can be tricky but remember there are loading areas** near the Ballarat Tool Library, accessible via the parking on Princess Street South. If your groceries are too heavy to cart back to the car, leave your trolley or bags while you move your car to the loading zone, collect your groceries, pack the car and go.

### During your visit

- To ensure we pay correctly we must all **'tare' the scales and ensure they are at zero before filling our containers.** Put your container on the scales, push 'tare' until all the readings are at zero, then fill away! If you aren't sure, ask for help.
- Shopping lists: there are pens and clipboard in the bulk produce room, or you can make a list on your phone. Be sure to include your name, item details and weight in grams.
- Be patient! **Ballarat Wholefoods Collective is volunteer run.** If you see that someone needs help and you know what to do, give them a hand. If you see a job needs doing, do it!

## A Note From The President

Hi One and All:

And the good news is: that the Collective is the happy recipient of a grant from the City of Ballarat for the princely sum of \$8,263.00. All the accolades for this must go to Susan Mould who worked her magic on the application. Your efforts are greatly appreciated Sue!

Why do we need such a donation from the City of Ballarat I can hear you ask? Well, this money will buy us a new fridge and freezer, new scales and computer hardware to replace what we're currently using which, to be honest, is getting a bit geriatric. Some or all of these items may already be in operation by the time this newsletter goes to print.

I think it's fair to say that winning this grant is a great step forward, it gives us the tools we need to successfully maintain the Collective's operations for the next 5 – 10 years, or maybe longer. That assumes, of course, everyone wants the Collective to keep going almost indefinitely. I for one certainly hope it does. Looking back over the last ten years or so it's really encouraging to see that we've gone from strength to strength. In fact, out of the several whole-foods collectives that started up in our region in recent times, we're the only one that's survived, or should I say is still flourishing.

If I pause to ponder over the question of how that's come to pass, it occurs to me that a major factor is the willingness of members to pitch in and help. It's a common adage with volunteer run organisations that 80% of the work is done by 10% of the people. In the case of the BWC let's aim to reverse that so 80% of the people do a small percentage of the work. So pick a job, big or small, that you can take responsibility for and commit to it. Even if that's simply taking empty boxes every week to add them to your domestic recycling, every little bit helps.

To quote a former US President (definitely not the current one), "Think not what your Collective can do for you, but what you can do for your Collective."

Until next time, STAY WARM.

Howard Gibbon

President

