

HeartBeat Victoria Ballarat Branch Newsletter May – June 2026

Welcome to our new members.

Several new members have joined us so far this year. If you see a walker you don't recognise, please introduce yourself and make them feel welcome. We currently have 96 registered members.



How many people are on our walks each week?

The Tuesday indoor walk at the badminton stadium is now averaging over 40 each week.
The Wednesday walk at Lake Esmond is up to 30 each week.
The Thursday walk indoor walk at Delacombe Town Centre is around 10-14 each week.
The Friday walk at the Botanic Gardens is averaging around 30 each week.
The Saturday walk at Victoria Park is around 10-12 each week.

Heart Week 2026 will take place during 4th to 10th May 2026

Heart Week is Australia's national heart health awareness week held in May each year.

- It provides an opportunity for the Australian public and health professionals to start a conversation about heart health and take positive steps to reduce their risk of heart disease.
- Wear red to show your support.
- Invite a friend to join the fun and get walking.



**Never miss a BEAT during Heart Week
and **Wear Red** on each walk.**

Heartbeat Ballarat greatly appreciates the support received from the Hon. Catherine King. This newsletter is printed with assistance from very helpful staff



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Reducing Your Chance of a Fall

On April 23rd we had a dinner meeting followed by guest speakers talking about the factors that lead to falls and how those risks can be reduced.

We thank Kidman Ng and Linda Macauley, both from Grampians Health, for their excellent presentation. Factors which may lead to a fall.

1. **Medication** Often the medication we take has side effects. They may send our blood pressure or blood sugar too low. They may make us feel lightheaded, woozy or weak and susceptible to a fall. If you experience any of these then talk to your doctor or pharmacist about them.
2. **Eyesight** Particularly for those wearing bifocal glasses, your vision can be distorted if you have your head at the wrong angle and looking through the wrong section of the lens.
3. **Footwear** It is essential you wear correct fitting footwear. Loose fitting shoes or ones that are too big may lead to a trip and fall. Slip-ons are convenient but lace-ups provide better support for your foot. If you have bald tyres on your car it is going to lose grip. The same goes for your shoes. Check the tread on your shoes is not too worn and prone to slip.
4. **Thinking, Focus and Concentration** It is easy to not focus on where we are walking because we are thinking of other things. It is essential we focus on the terrain on which we walk, particularly when we encounter steps, stairs, rough ground or wet surfaces.
5. **Nutrition and Hydration** Eat regular meals from all food groups, drink water and limit alcohol. Vitamin D and Calcium help you to keep your bones strong.
6. **Keep a Healthy Mind** Keep your mind active to improve your response times and alertness. Try activities such as puzzles, cards, home repairs, reading, playing with your grand kids or joining a social group.
7. **Exercise to build balance and strength.** Practise standing up from your chair every day. Practise strengthening your leg muscles with activities such as squats and heel raises. Practise activities that improve and maintain balance. For example, you can hold onto the back of a chair or bench while you do movements standing on one leg.

Grampians Health, the City of Ballarat Aging Well Program, your Local Community Health Hub, Gymnasiums and your doctor can provide more information on these.



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Guest Speakers and Social Events: We need your suggestions.

Over the years we have had some amazing guest speakers and presentations at some of our dinner meetings. We try to arrange presenters to cover topics of interest to our members and their health and well-being, particularly relating to heart health. Our social events help build peer support and social connection. If you have ideas for topics or guest presenters let our committee people know your thoughts.

COMING EVENTS

The purpose of our social events is to provide peer support and connection to community. Both as important as being active to support your heart health and well-being. How many events you attend is your choice.

We try to spread these events across different days of the week and at different times to allow people who have fixed commitments to attend. During the Winter months we try to have less evening events. If meals are involved, we try to choose venues that have a senior menu available or a variety of choices.



Hydrant Food Hall Brunch / Morning Tea

Saturday 2nd May 10:30 AM at Hydrant Food Hall, 3 McKenzie St, Ballarat Central.

Please write your name in the [Blue Activity Book](#) available at each walk or contact Lyn Webb. RSVP by 24th April so a final booking can be made.

May Birthdays Dinner

Friday 29th May 6:00 PM at Inn of Khong, 519 Main Rd, Golden Point.

Please write your name in the [Blue Activity Book](#) available at each walk or contact Lyn Webb. RSVP by May 22nd so a final booking can be made.



June Birthdays Lunch

Monday 15th June 12:30 PM at the North Star Hotel, 302 Lydiard St N, Soldiers Hill. Please write your name in the [Blue Activity Book](#) available at each walk or contact Lyn Webb. RSVP by June 8th so a final booking can be made.

Cup oh Joy Brunch/Morning Tea



Sunday 28th June 10:30 AM at 81A Humffray St N, Ballarat East (former Eastern Hotel/The Painted Lady). Cup Oh Joy is a new, cozy vintage-style café.

Please write your name in the [Blue Activity Book](#) available at each walk or contact Lyn Webb. RSVP by June 22nd so a final booking can be made.

Christmas in July Lunch

Sunday 26th July 12:00 PM Ballarat Golf Club Bistro. 1800 Sturt Street. Food and drink is at own cost.

Please write your name in the [Blue Activity Book](#) available at each walk or contact Lyn Webb. RSVP by July 19th so a final booking can be made.

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Ongoing social activities for Ageing Well in Ballarat

Strength for Seniors - Gentle and effective exercises that are tailored to your abilities. This class will help you to increase your strength, improve your mobility, and increase bone health	When: Mondays from 2-3pm Where: Vickers Street Community Hub, 250-256 Vickers Street, Sebastopol Cost: \$5 and bookings not required. Pay via EFTPOS (card) on the day. No classes on public holidays.
Tai Chi - designed to improve balance, mobility and overall wellbeing	When: Tuesdays from 2pm-3pm Where: Vickers Street Community Hub, 250-256 Vickers Street, Sebastopol Cost: \$5 and bookings not required. Pay via EFTPOS (card) on the day. When: Fridays from 10.30-11.30am Where: Learmonth Bowling Club, 2 McKay Street, Learmonth Cost: \$5 and bookings not required. Pay via EFTPOS (card) on the day. No classes on public holidays.
QiGong - helps you to take control of your health and wellbeing, focus the mind, and calm stress and anxiety	When: Wednesdays from 9-10am Where: Brown Hill Hall, 375 Humffray Street North, Brown Hill Cost: \$5 and bookings not required. Pay via EFTPOS (card) on the day. When: Thursdays from 9.30-10.30am Where: Djila-tjarri Community Hub, 18 Donegal Drive, Alfredton Cost: \$5 and bookings not required. Pay via EFTPOS (card) on the day. No classes on public holidays.
Seniors Exercise Park Come and Try Days - Mount Pleasant Reserve at Morton Street, Ballarat VIC 3350 - M R Power Reserve at Sebastopol, Ballarat VIC 3356 - Lucas Central Park at Eleanor Drive, Lucas VIC 3350	Free outdoor sessions to boost strength, balance, flexibility, mobility and reduce fall risk. When: Thursdays at 1.30pm Where: Mount Pleasant Reserve, Morton Street, Mount Pleasant Cost: FREE and bookings not required. No classes on public holidays.
Genesis Gym - Functional strength class	Cost: \$5 per class Speak to Megan-Jane

For more information or other events refer to <https://www.ballarat.vic.gov.au/community/ageing-well/ballarat/social-activities-programs-and-events>

Effective balance exercises for seniors include single-leg stands, tandem (heel-to-toe) walking, and side-stepping, which can be done daily to prevent falls and improve stability. Aim for 10–30 seconds per pose or 10–15 repetitions, using a sturdy chair or wall for support. Strengthening the core and legs is key.

Safety Guidelines

Use Support: Always start near a sturdy, non-movable chair or kitchen counter.

Improvement Tips:

As balance improves, try holding on with only one hand, then just fingertips, then no hands.

Consistency: Perform these exercises daily to see improvements.

Advanced Variations

Eyes Closed: Perform standing exercises with eyes closed to challenge proprioception.

Uneven Surface: Practice standing on a cushion to create a less stable surface

Essential Daily Balance Exercises

Single-Leg Stand: Stand on one leg for up to 20 seconds, using a chair for support, to build ankle stability.

Tandem Standing/Walking: Place one foot directly in front of the other (heel-to-toe) and hold for 30 seconds or walk in a straight line.

Side-Stepping: Step sideways slowly while holding onto a counter, improving weight-shifting capabilities.

Weight Transfers: Stand with feet shoulder-width apart and sway from one leg to the other, holding for 5 seconds on each side.

Toe/Heel Raises: Rise up on your toes, then rock back onto your heels to strengthen lower legs.

Grampians Health Ballarat	Ballarat Community Health (BCH)	St John of God Ballarat Hospital
Gait and Balance class	Exercise Physiology	Falls and balance program
Falls and Balance clinic		

St John of God Ballarat Hospital

- 8-week falls and balance exercise and education program held every Monday and Wednesday afternoon
- For more information, please contact the Outpatient Rehabilitation Unit on (03) 5320 2592

Ballarat Community Health (BCH)

- BCH Gym offers a supervised exercise program designed to promote healthy aging and support individuals with complex health and wellbeing needs. Each participant receives a personalised exercise program tailored to their unique goals and requirements.
- For more information, contact the customer service team on (03) 5338 4500

Grampians Health

- Balance Group class includes exercise and education to help prevent falls. It's designed for people who have trouble with walking or balance.
- Falls and Balance clinic involves a specialist medical and allied health assessment clinic for clients with higher falls risks or dizziness who would benefit from a multidisciplinary assessment and education.
- For more information, contact Ballarat Central Intake on (03) 5320 6690 or email Centralintakereferrals@gh.org.au

Balance & Stability Exercises for Seniors

Sit-to-Stand
Rise from a chair without using hands if possible.



Side Steps
Step side-to-side slowly with control.



Marching in Place
Lift knees alternately while standing.



Clock Reach
Imagine a clock, reach arms toward different numbers.



Single-Leg Stand
Lift one leg straight back while holding a chair.



Side Leg Raises
Hold a chair, lift one leg to the side.



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MAY 2026						
Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Friday	Sat
31					1 Walk Botanic Gardens 10:00	2 Victoria Park Walk 9:30 Morning Tea / Brunch 10:30 Hydrant Food Hall
3	4	5 Indoor Walk Badminton Centre 10:00	6 Lake Esmond Walk 10:00	7 Indoor Walk Delacombe Town Centre 11:00	8 Walk Botanic Gardens 10:00	9 Victoria Park Walk 9:30
10	11	12 Indoor Walk Badminton Centre 10:00	13 Lake Esmond Walk 10:00	14 Indoor Walk Delacombe Town Centre 11:00	15 Walk Botanic Gardens 10:00	16 Victoria Park Walk 9:30
17	18	19 Indoor Walk Badminton Centre 10:00	20 Lake Esmond Walk 10:00	21 Indoor Walk Delacombe Town Centre 11:00	22 Walk Botanic Gardens 10:00	23 Victoria Park Walk 9:30
24	25	26 Indoor Walk Badminton Centre 10:00 Aging Well Expo Mercure	27 Lake Esmond Walk 10:00	28 Indoor Walk Delacombe Town Centre 11:00	29 Walk Botanic Gardens 10:00 May Birthday Dinner 6:00 Inn of Kong	30 Victoria Park Walk 9:30

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JUNE 2026						
Sun		Tues	Wed	Thurs	Friday	Sat
	1	2	3 Lake Esmond Walk 10:00	4 Indoor Walk Delacombe Town Centre 11:00	5 Walk Botanic Gardens 10:00	6 Victoria Park Walk 9:30
7	8	9 Indoor Walk Badminton Centre 10:10	10 Lake Esmond Walk 10:00	11 Indoor Walk Delacombe Town Centre 11:00	12 Walk Botanic Gardens 10:00	13 Victoria Park Walk 9:30
14	15 June Birthday Lunch 12:30 North Star Hotel	16 Indoor Walk Badminton Centre 10:10	17 Lake Esmond Walk 10:00 (Comm 6pm)	18 Indoor Walk Delacombe Town Centre 11:00	19 Walk Botanic Gardens 10:00	20 Victoria Park Walk 9:30
21	22	23 Indoor Walk Badminton Centre 10:10	24 Lake Esmond Walk 10:00	25 Indoor Walk Delacombe Town Centre 11:00	26 Walk Botanic Gardens 10:00	27 Victoria Park Walk 9:30
28 Brunch/ Morning Tea 10:30 Cup Oh Joy	29	30 Indoor Walk Badminton Centre 10:10				