

**MINUTES for the GENERAL MEETING of  
FRIENDS OF THE BENALLA LIBRARY INC. (FOBL)  
held at 9:45am at the Benalla Library  
on Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> March 2026**

1. **Apologies:** Amber Gold, Priscilla Shanks, Phyllis Doxey, Andi Stevenson, Ashley Merbach.
2. **Present:** Shirley Robertson, Robyn Maclean, Corrie Witlox, Deb Saunders, Geraldine McCorkell, Bev Thornell, Heather Rogers, Christine Glynn, Kay Blore, Annie Cuming
3. **Minutes of the previous meeting held on February 17<sup>th</sup> 2026**

**Received:** Corrie Witlox **Seconded:** Robyn Maclean **Passed**

**Business Arising:**

- Geraldine visited Mary to acknowledge her offer for a new location for RedB4. She was disappointed that we had decided to stay where we are.
- Subcommittee for the Writing Competition have met twice
- Yoto purchase – follow up with Ashley to make this purchase
- A time has been booked at the Assembly of Council for 1<sup>st</sup> April at 6pm to present information about FOBL to the Councillors.

**4. Correspondence:**

**In:** Email from Ramey re the Writing Competition – held over to General Business

**Out:** None recorded

**Moved that correspondence be accepted:**

**Accepted:** Kay Blore **Seconded:** Bev Thornell **Passed**

**REPORTS:**

**Treasurer's Report**

**Opening Balance 1/2/26** \$17,356.32

**INCOME**

Book sales 1,440.40  
\$18,796.72

**EXPENDITURE**

*Shop*

Hide's Bakery – rent	\$ 600.00	
Hide's Bakery – electricity	62.93	
Hide's – coffee vouchers	179.20	
BRCC Rates	<u>359.00</u>	
		<u>\$1,201.13</u>

*Library Support*

Benalla Newsagency - Papers	110.00	<u>1,311.13</u>
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**Closing Balance 28/2/26** **\$17,485.59**

Term deposit maturing 8/8/26 @4.5%	\$14,630.00	
Term deposit maturing 11/4/26 @ 4.0%.	<u>11,592.59</u>	<u>\$26,522.59</u>

**TOTAL FUNDS 30/1/26** **\$43,708.18**

**Moved:** Corrie Witlox **Seconded:** Heather Rogers **Passed**

**Membership Report:**

**61** General Members

**39** Life Members

**TOTAL: 100 Members**

## **Library Coordinator's Report:**

### **HIGHLIGHTS SINCE LAST MEETING (FEB 2026):**

- A new High Country Library Hub Coordinator has been appointed after Sally's departure. More information to come, when available.
- Many conversations, in High Country and PLV, around censorship have been taking place. Benalla Library is committed to ALIA's anti-censorship goals and will continue to stand against censorship.
- Love Your Library In Your Language has started again. We had a great response last year. Please let any library users, who you know speak a language other than English, that we would love to hear their feedback and requests!
- Ashley and James have attended Oral History Preservation training to help diversify library staff knowledge and maintain our audio local history collection better.

### **REGULAR WEEKLY PROGRAMS:**

- **Morning Mah-jong**, Monday, 9:45-11:45am
- **Crafternoons**, Monday and Wednesday, 1:00 – 3:00pm
- **Walking Talking-Book Club**, Tuesday and Thursday, 7:00 - 8:00am
- **Chatty Café Communi-tea**, Tuesday, 10:00 – 12:00pm
- **Digital-Library Help**, Wednesday, 4:00 – 4:30pm
- **Super Seniors PS5 Sessions**, Thursday, 10:30 – 12:00pm
- **Scrabble**, Thursday, 10:00 – 12:00pm
- **Extra Mah-jong**, Thursday, 10:00 – 12:00pm
- **Card Game Club**, Thursday, 2:00 – 3:00pm
- **PS5 Open Sessions**, Saturday, 09:05 – 09:50am, 10:05 – 10:50am, 11:05 – 11:50am

### **REGULAR MONTHLY PROGRAMS:**

- **Spintronics for Adults**, First Tuesday, 3:00 – 4:00pm
- **Library Lovers Social**, Second Wednesday, 5:00 – 6:00pm
- **One-on-One Resume Basics**, Third Thursday, 10:00am, 10:30am, 11:00am, 11:30am
- **Family History Research Support**, Second Friday, 2:00 – 3:00pm
- **Basic Digital Help**, Last Friday, 2:00pm, 2:20pm, 2:40pm

### **ITEMS THAT WOULD ASSIST STAFF/PATRONS**

- **Shelf for Adult Graphic Novels – \$1584 (including GST and freight)**

*Ashley asked if we could consider the shelving and shelf dividers below as the separation of the graphic novels has become an unexpected requirement. This will be followed up with committee members for a decision.*



We are in the process of separating our adult graphic novel collection and our teen graphic novel collection to better align with other HCLN libraries. Other HCLN libraries started separating their collections to help parents assist teens finding an age-appropriate item on-shelf. We will be able to separate items by moving the international (or LOTE) collection onto a new shelf in the adult fiction area and use their current position for graphic novels (as the size of the shelving will fit the collection better). The new shelf will fit on the back of one of the red chairs near the international section, facing the circulation desk. This is seen as a child safe requirement by other HCLN Coordinators.

- **International Collection (Adult and Junior/Teen) Language Shelf Dividers – \$493.35 + Shipping**

To help young and old patrons identify the language they are looking for, and highlight to other patrons that the collection is available, we would like to use language dividers in this area (like our alphabet dividers, but it says “Spanish”). This collection is used by locals who speak other languages, as well as by students learning other languages in school. This will also help staff when reshelving.

Languages we have available for loan in junior, teen, adult, and non-fiction include:

- Auslan
- Braille
- Arabic
- Chinese
- Dutch
- French
- German
- Hindi
- Indonesian
- Italian
- Japanese
- Punjabi
- Russian
- Sinhalese
- Spanish
- Thai
- Vietnamese

 Shipping	Shipping will be quoted by our team manually for the best rate.	
	Dual Language Section Dividers - Black, Mini (150mm) <span style="float: right;">×</span>	
	- 30 +	\$448.50
Subtotal		\$448.50
GST		\$44.85
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$493.35</b>

- **Program including Speech Pathologist for young families – \$193.99 per hour = \$290.98 per session**

Molly, the speech pathologist, would be more than willing to attend for semi-regular sessions as she is sure this could be beneficial. The office she works in also has professionals who can help parents with emotional regulation, psychological development, and other important developmental stages if we would like to engage with them also.

## LONGTERM GOALS

- **External Chute Upgrade – Pricing below**

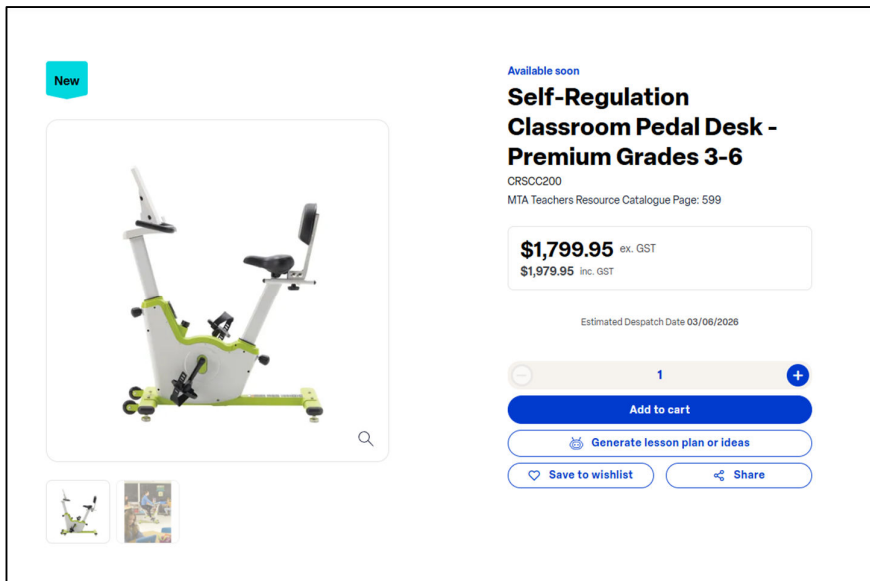
Item	Price	Provider	Quote Number	Quote Expiry
24/7 Return Chute V2	\$13,432.00 + \$48.00 + 926.00 <hr/> \$14,406	FE Tech	20251104	24/12/2025
Builder – Removal of old chute, Install of new chute, Labour and Materials (may be more if work is harder than expected)	\$1,654.00	Shib Hot Constructions (Nicholas Diteodoro)	"Library Book Return Box"	08/02/2026
Electrical and Cable Work	Approx. \$1000	Luke Johnson Electrical	REQUOTING	
	<b>\$17,060</b>			

### **Yoto Players, accessories, and books – To be purchased**

So far a success at Wang. I would suggest waiting for a sale on the Yoto website, as what was under \$4,000 when first looked is now \$5440.18 without the sales.

## - Self-Regulation Pedal Reading Desk – \$2034.84 (including freight) - REASSESS IN FUTURE

Movement helps children, particularly those with high energy or ADHD, to stay attentive and calm during reading, which can lead to better learning outcomes. A reading bike would assist bridge accessibility barriers for children with high sensory seeking behaviors, as well as assisting all children develop better coordination, posture, health, focus, and multitasking. This bike would help students who come into the library for study after school, children coming in to meet tutors, and families coming in to read and relax in the library.



### Bookshop Report:

There was a small leak after the very heavy recent rain.

Bookshop is going well. Selling lots of the \$1 books. Possible donation for teen books is EdSpace or Flexi Learning.

**Reports accepted: Moved: Bev Thornell Seconded: Kay Blore Passed**

### **GENERAL BUSINESS:**

#### **1. Writing Competition Update**

The subcommittee has meet twice since our last FOBL Meeting. The Writing Competition will be open in early June and close by the end of July – dates still to be confirmed.

Judging will take place during the first two weeks of August and the Presentation for winners will take place at the Benalla Library on Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> August at 5pm. This coincides with Book Week.

The entry form will include instructions and a choice of 9 Story Starters from which participants can select. The entry age group categories for

students will be based on school levels - Years 3 and 4, Years 5 and 6, Years 7 and 8, Years 9 and 10, Years 11 and 12. The Open Section is unlimited.

The Competition Prizes and Values are still under discussion but will be confirmed at our next meeting.

The criteria for competing in the writing competition was discussed: For adults, they are required to live in the municipality of Benalla Rural City Council.

For students, we will be inviting those who attend our local schools, those who live in our municipality and attend schools outside Benalla and/or those who are regular users of the Benalla Library to participate.

An email will be sent to our local schools requesting their support in promoting the Writing Competition.

Ashley has confirmed that library staff are happy to assist with the poster and other collateral as required for the Writing Competition.

If any member would like to be involved in the judging process please let Geraldine, Robyn or Deb know.

**Next Meeting: Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> May – General Meeting**