

New book: Warrnambool – This is home



Me – Carol Altmann – with my self-published tribute to my hometown of Warrnambool that will be launched on August 19.

[box] “Warrnambool – This is home” is limited to 500 signed and numbered copies: \$30 plus \$8 flat postage anywhere in Australia. You can [order a book direct from the author by direct deposit or Paypal](#). Books are also available from [Warrnambool Books](#), Fairy St. [/box]

[dropcap style="color: #a5cecd;"] W [/dropcap]hen I first returned to live in my hometown of Warrnambool in early 2013 after being away for more than 20 years, I had a new appreciation for the ties that bind people from this seaside city.

Despite Warrnambool now being a place of 32,000 people, we all feel like we know each other and, if we don't, we spend a few minutes playing what one friend described to me as “the game”.

This is where you ask each other what school you went to, or the names of your parents/brothers/sisters, or if you knew such-and-such and – usually – within no more than four or five moves, “bingo!” you have made a connection.

But it is also more than that.

It is the environment that also connects us: the wild ocean, the bent trees, the Norfolk pines, the whales, the restless wind...

And it is even more than that.

It is the iconic people and places that are so familiar to us and that we remember so fondly, even nostalgically, as we all age and they start to slip away. Names like Swintons, Kermonds, Macks Snacks, Ryan’s Removals, The Savoy, Rauert’s shoe store, Politis fish and chips, the Matera Brothers and on it goes.

I chose 30 of these icons to photograph and write briefly (snapshots) about – I could have chosen many more – as a small collection of some of the places and faces that connect us as being “from Warrnambool”, even if we live many miles away.



Warrnambool identities: John, Maroulla and Peter Sycopoulis in front of their Kepler St family home. The book is dedicated to Maroulla, who passed away earlier this year.

[dropcap style="color: #a5cecd;"] A [/dropcap]s the book unfolded, I felt an increasing sense of urgency to capture these special places and faces before it was too late, because there is no doubt Warrnambool is facing unprecedented challenges that are seeing many businesses close and not replaced by others.

In the 16 months since I started this book, the Savoy has closed, the Criterion Hotel building has been pulled down and Lucas Bros butchers was sold out of the family. Just this week it was announced that Capricorn Records would come to an end next month after 35 years.

Warrnambool is changing and, as with any change, there is both an anticipation about what might come and a sadness about what has been lost.

This book is my attempt to preserve some of our shared and precious past.

As I say in the introduction: "Whether you live in Warrnambool, or you simply carry it in your heart, this is a tribute to the place by the sea that no matter how widely we travel, we will always call home".

* * *

***Warrnambool – This is home* features the following:** Swinton's Supermarket (Val Grundy/Dot Grauer); Lucas Bros Butchers (Ken Lucas); Materia Bros (Mario, Paul and Mark Materia); the Sycopoulis family home (John, Maroulla and Peter Sycopoulis); Kermond's Snack Bar (Rob and Bill Kermond); Mack's Snacks (Graeme, Keith and Paul McLeod); Savoy Restaurant (Alan Tampion); Rauert's Shoe Store (Ron and Peter Rauert); The Bowl (Lucas Reid and Andrea Occhipinti); Politis Seafood (Helen, George and Chris Politis); Robert Ulmann whale mural (Justy Ulmann); Warrnambool Surf Lifesaving Club (Lisa Logan (Cole), Ben Logan, Ron Cole); The Warrnambool Standard (Peter Collins and Peter Fletcher); The Warrnambool Woollen Mill site (Mary Jackson); Chittick's Bakery (Ian Robb and John Chittick); Capitol Cinema (Ivan Berndt); Fletcher Jones Gardens (Lex Caldwell); The Quarry/ art collectives (Claire Drylie) Ryan's Removals (Frank and Graeme Ryan); 3YB radio (Steve Welsh and Lyndsay Hill); W'bool Grand Annual Steeplechase (Brian McIver); W'bool Aquarium (Donna Krebs (Livingston)); Timor St Newsagency (Brian Mills); Bojangles Pizza (Simon Mugavin); Isles General Store (Ken Isles); McNeil's BP Service Station (Noel McNeil); the War Memorial Angel; T&G clocktower (Peter Hogg); The Criterion Hotel.

[box type="bio"] ***Warrnambool – This is home* will be limited to 500 numbered and signed editions. If you would like to order a copy (\$30 plus \$8 flat postage if required) from Bluestone Magazine, [you can do so here](#). Books are also on sale at [Warrnambool Books](#).** [/box]

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**Sprinkling some literary
fairy dust**



Paul Jennings will be one of the star attractions at the Children's Book Festival this week. Image: www.moke.com.au

[dropcap style="color: #dc943c;"] W [/dropcap]arrnambool's own **Paul Jennings** will lead a trio of award-winning children's authors and illustrators at the Warrnambool Books Children's Festival this week.

The festival runs from Thursday, May 15 to Saturday May 17 at 169 Fairy St and features a different author each day, starting with young adult author **Sue Lawson**.

Sue is the author of three highly acclaimed books – *Finding Darcy*, *After* and *Pan's Whisper* – and will be signing books in-store on Thursday from 4pm-5pm.

Illustrator **Judy Watson** will be in the chair from 4pm-5pm Friday and signing copies of some of the more than 20 children's books she has illustrated, including *Goodnight Mice!* which won the Prime Minister's Literary Award for

children's fiction.

The festival will come to a colourful end on Saturday with Paul Jennings in-store from 11am-1pm, together with live music and a transformation of Fairy St into fairy street, featuring fairies, free lollipops and giveaways. Paul is one of Australia's most successful authors, having sold more than nine million copies of his books worldwide.

The festival coincides with [Warrnambool Books](#) celebrating its 30th birthday, which is no small feat in itself: we hope they are around for another 30.



Young adult author Sue Lawson will appear at the festival on Thursday.



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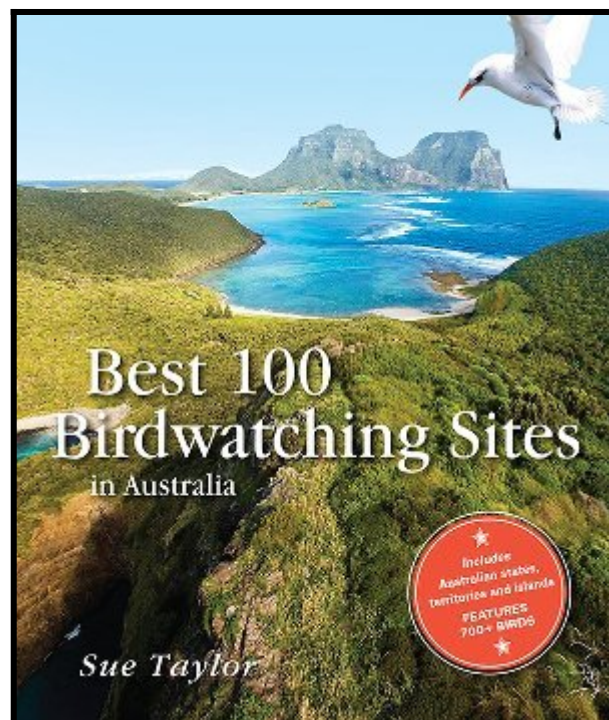
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Bird lovers can scratch that twitch



[dropcap style="font-size: 60px; color: #8F9F59;"] I

[/dropcap]f you are a regular reader of *Bluestone*, you will know that we love birds.

We are not alone, as one of most popular stories that we ran via our Facebook page was about our quest to save a hooded plover's nest on the banks of the Hopkins River from being trampled. Our followers were glued to the progress reports on "Pip" and her two eggs. (You can [catch up on that story here](#).)

This week's Bookmarks selection from **Warrnambool Books** is sure to have bird lovers running for the binoculars as it selects 100 of the best birdwatching sites in Australia and, best of all, some of them are right here in South-West Victoria. Of course!

It also answers that nagging question that we know has kept people awake at night: where can you spot the Bar-tailed Godwit?

Michaelie Clark, from Warrnambool Books, explains more:

Best 100 Birdwatching Sites in Australia, by Sue Taylor, is the ultimate guide for avid twitchers.

Fully illustrated and featuring more than 700 birds, the book will direct you to the best locations for observing nesting Noddies, spotting Siberia-bound Bar-tailed Godwits, and hearing the high-pitched whistle of the male Musk Duck.

The chapters are divided by locations in Australia's states, territories and islands, so birdwatchers can easily find the section relevant to the area they live in or are visiting. The guide features more than 20 locations throughout Victoria, including Port Fairy and Koroit.'

[box] You can keep up with new releases and classics from Warrnambool Books via their [Facebook page](#).[/box]



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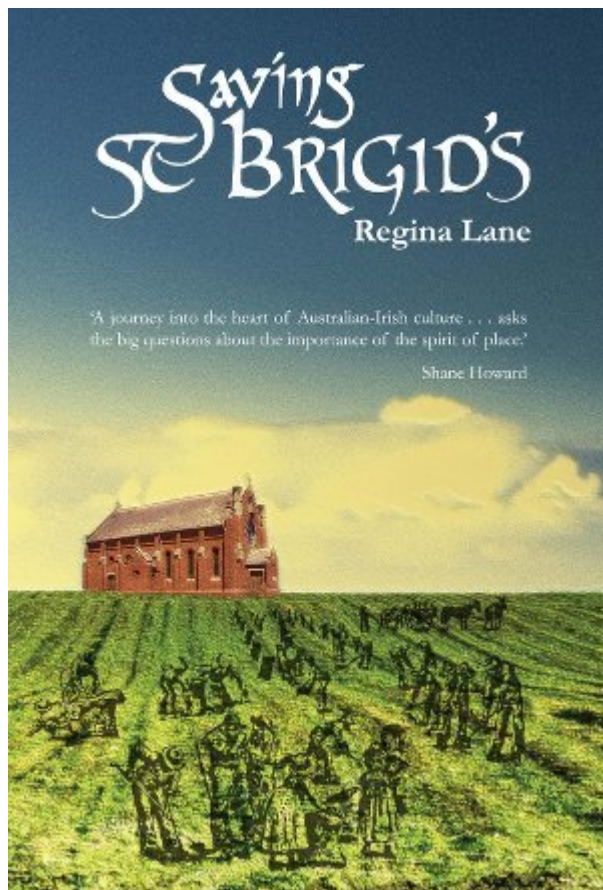
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**St Brigid's story proves
anything is Pozible**



[dropcap style="font-size: 60px; color: #8F9F59;"] 0
[/dropcap]ne of the most highly anticipated local books in a long time is **Regina Lane's** story about the battle to save the 100-year-old St Brigid's Church at Crossley.

Just as the grassroots effort to save the church has been one of epic proportions, so to has the writing of the story behind the campaign that saw the church returned to the community after it was decommissioned by the Catholic Church in 2006.

Saving St Brigid's (Bridin Books) is Regina's first book and was a true labour of love. Her deep, personal connection to the church, which was her family's local church when Regina grew up as a child at Tower Hill, spurred her on to raise the \$15,000 required to write and publish the book.

Late last year Regina launched a [Pozible crowd-sourcing campaign](#), where people are asked to pledge funds to meet a set

target, and continued working on her 50,000-plus word manuscript.

Regina raised the \$15,000 – and polished the manuscript: both by deadline. What a magnificent achievement.



The hard slog: author Brigid Lane puts the finishing touches to *Saving St Brigid's* during the heatwave earlier this year. (Image: [Brigid Lane](#))

[dropcap style="font-size: 60px; color: #8F9F59;"] While the book will be officially launched tonight, following the 'soft' launch at the Port Fairy Folk Festival last Saturday, we have asked **Michaelie Clark**, from [Warrnambool Books](#), for a synopsis:

"When the Catholic Church put St Brigid's church and hall up for sale in 2009, the reaction from the locals was fervent and swift.

They remembered the legacy of their ancestors, the fierce sense of faith that was represented by the church, built by the children of famine survivors in the Erin of the southern hemisphere. They weren't going to let such an important part of their heritage go without a fight – even if they had to take it all the way to Rome.

Regina Lane brings the spirit of the region's multi-faceted history alive through the tale of modern rebellion, and in doing so, creates her own culture of thought, which leaves a legacy of its own."

You can find out more about Regina and the story behind *Saving St Brigid's* on [her website](#) and the **Friends of St Brigid's website**.

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