



2021 Turn the Page Review



[Review Document, Creative Clunes Turn The Page 2021](#)

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Creative Clunes Inc, the producers of the Clunes Booktown Festival, Booktown on Sunday, Book Clubs Hub, Life Cycle of The Book, and the Clunes Ceramic Award, is supported by the Victorian Government through Creative Victoria.

We respectfully acknowledge the Wadawurrung and Dja Dja Wurrung people - traditional custodians of the land on which we live and work.

*All photography by Ash + Elm Studios, unless otherwise stated.
All quotes verbatim from survey comments and author feedback.*

1. Summary of 2021 event

The 2021 Clunes Booktown Festival was the fourteenth year Clunes has held the Annual Booktown Festival albeit in a new format, following on from the event being cancelled in 2020. Sadly the 2020 Clunes Booktown Festival was the first major event to be cancelled due to the global pandemic, but it was reimaged in 2021 as *Turn The Page*, a series of events taking place over the month of May.

The direction and programming of the month- long celebration of books and reading, stimulating dynamic conversations across the month of May, was intended to be a modified Covid Safe 'Booktown' event.

The program was designed with the first weekend to run like a Clunes Booktown Festival, as per previous years, the middle weekend being dedicated to Writers Skills Development workshops and talks, and the final weekend a celebration of book clubs and the business behind them through panel discussions and audience interactive talks.

Unfortunately, with COVID-19 risks dominating Victoria, the middle weekend focusing on Writers Skills Development was postponed and the final weekend for the celebration of book clubs was cancelled as a live event, due to Victoria being placed a 4th state-wide lockdown. This component of the program was produced online during the lockdown, and we presented four sessions via zoom across the lockdown period for our audience.

During the first weekend of May we facilitated pop-up book shops in some of the vacant buildings in Fraser Street and supported five local booksellers for the weekend.

The event was officially opened with a Smoking Ceremony and very moving Welcome to Country from Dja Dja Wurrung elder, Paulie Ugle.



2. 2021 Innovations

- Creative Clunes employed Suzi Cordell as Festival Event Manager to help deliver the Turn The Page panels/talk participations across two venues, coordinate our Welcome To Country and help facilitate local book sellers in vacant shop fronts.
- Creative Clunes employed Dawn Holland as our Covid and Safety Coordinator.
- The event was officially opened with a Smoking Ceremony and very moving Welcome to Country from Dja Dja Wurrung elder, Paulie Ugle.
- Creative Clunes engaged a film crew to record the Town Hall talks and made these available to the public through our website and socials.
- Continued our relationship with RACV Goldfields Resort for subsidised accommodation for VIP visitors.

3. Attendance

Understandably our physical attendances were well down, but we were incredibly pleased with the enthusiasm of attendees and their gratitude that we were able to produce something this year. We noted that there were a couple of hundred additional visitors, outside ticket holders, that came to the town for book browsing over the weekend. Additionally, we now have a larger online audience than previously, of whom we will work to continue to engage.

Welcome to Country was attended by approximately 50 people. We held 13 talks in the Historic Town Hall and the Attitude Building which were attended by 901 people. This year we did not have a fenced off festival precinct, so we did not have the ability to count the number of visitors to the town, but it is estimated, through discussion with local traders, that there was approximately 1000+ visitors over the first weekend in May.

The last weekend in May was cancelled as a live event and the sessions were produced online during Victoria's 4th state-wide lockdown. We were able to present 4 talks online across the lockdown which were well attended with 202 live views and our visitation rate to our website to view the uploaded talks increased by 68.8%. Overall, the content has clocked up 14 hours, 26 minutes, 12 seconds of viewing time.



4. Surveys:

Wesley College volunteers carried out face-to-face Festival Precinct Visitor surveys, asking:

- How did you hear about the festival?
- Did you travel to/stay overnight in the region?
- Where did you stay in the region?
- Approximately how many hours have you spent at the festival?
- Postcode of respondent.

60% found out about TTP through Word of Mouth
75% were from or stayed in the region over the weekend
34% visited the region for a half day
51% of visitors surveyed came from Regional Victoria

*Love the festival and
a really interesting
talk.*

5. Key Results for 2021:

- Gross festival income was \$10,631.
- Author Talks income was \$10,631 for weekend one.
- Weekend three was offered online for free and made an income of \$185 through donations.
- 100% tickets were purchased online as we did not offer ticket sales at the door.
- The festivals busiest time was 11am to 3pm on Saturday.
- 5 talks sold out; Fickle Fashion, Lapsed with Monia Dux, The Recovery, Sprinter and Sprummer and Telling Tales of Awful Truth.

6. 2021 Partners

Key Partners

Creative Victoria
Hepburn Shire Council
Visit Victoria
Nalderun
Hepburn Shire Libraries

Media Partners

Gold FM
The Courier
Dilmac Media
Triple R

Community Partners

Attitude
RACV

Readings

Wesley @ Clunes
Local booktraders – Boom,
Laneway Books, Huc &
Gabet, Biblioburro Books
Belle Real Estate
Clunes Greengrocer
Clunes Newsagency
Clunes Primary School
Clunes Tourist and
Development Association
Full Parallel Productions
IGA Supermarket Clunes
National Hotel
O'Hara's Bakery Café
Rose and Oak
Criterion

Widow Twankey's
Creswick and District
Community Bank

Entertainment

Local Children's
entertainer and Magician –
Aiden McHarg (Stopwatch)
Whizz bang Band –
Ballarat – provided
atmosphere across Clunes
on Saturday

7. 2021 Book Traders

Due to COVID-19 we were unable to welcome our Book Traders on Fraser Street in outdoor marquee spaces or indoors.



More books! - but it is Covid, so I get it, and I can't wait to see all the festivities in full next time!

Angela Crocombe from Readings Kids

Instead, this year we supported 5 local Book Seller over the month of May to have a presence in the town through pop-up stores and Creative Clunes had a pop-up shop in The Warehouse where Author signing took place. Angela Crocombe from Readings Kids generously volunteered to run the shop for the weekend.

We also provided an additional 9 of our regular Book Sellers with a 12-month annual presence on the [Clunes Booktown Festival](#) website.



Book browsing outside BOOM on Fraser Street.

7.1 Talk Venues



Writer and historian Robyn Annear with local Writer and Chair Barbara Curzon-Siggers sitting outside Attitude before presenting sold out talk FICKLE FASHION.





The 1872 Heritage **Town Hall** was used for ticketed Author Talks and Panel Discussions. Smaller projector screen than previous years appeared to work well for the video recordings of the talks. There was a projector mounted to PA using a wireless control. We had 4 speakers at a low level which provided good coverage for the building with generally positive feedback and 1 Hearing Loop, which was not utilised and can probably be skipped in future. We used 3 handheld and 1 Lapel microphones for on stage presenters and would not recommend lapel microphones for future events, as presenters were not practiced in their use. A lavalier microphone may be preferable outside of COVID restrictions, however the handheld microphones worked very well. We had 1 handheld 'roving microphone' for audience questions, mainly to capture questions for the video feed, probably not required otherwise. Bump-in gave sufficient time for setup and testing, however a full tech run including video/sound would be advised in future. Lighting in the hall was improved with the use of two side lamps provided by the video team, in future additional overhead lighting would also improve the aesthetic.



Chair, Prof Tim Lynch in conversation with Ross Garnaut and Bill Bowtell for sold out talk The Recovery.

With a normal capacity of 190 we had to reduce this to 90 seated, with social distancing measures to comply with the State Government COVID safety restrictions. Two Panel Discussions -, 'The Recovery; Renowned thinkers and writers Ross Garnaut and Bill Bowtell explore the politics and economics of the COVID-19 pandemic. Who got it right and where to from here' and 'Telling Tales of Awful Truth; Derryn Hinch reminisces with Leslie Falkiner-Rose about the good, bad, and often hilarious days of gripping gossip, the Truth newspaper, tabloid TV and their resonance in news today' sold out with visitors to the town hoping to snag a cancelled spot on the day.



*Renowned Aboriginal photographer Wayne Quilliam talks about his stunning book *Culture is Life*, with Sue Lawson.*

Several other talks and discussions were close to capacity in the Town Hall. We have an excellent AV and Tech team in the Town Hall and this year for **Turn The Page** we had a film crew record these talks which we have made available online to view and as audio through Sound Cloud.

Link to [talks](#)
[audio](#)



Sold Out talk, Sprinter and Sprummer with Stephen Ryan and Tim Entwisle who explored our response to the unique Australian climates and seasons and discussed what to plant and grow.

This was the first year we used **The Attitude Building** as a talk's venue. In the past, for the Clunes Booktown Festival we had Book Traders in this building but for **Turn The Page** we set up as a talks venue and sold well with *'Fickle Fashion, Lapsed with Monia Dux'* and *'Sprinter and Sprummer'* selling out. The venue proved to be excellent with regards to disability access - the building has wheelchair access at the rear of the building which is easy to navigate and ample disabled parking. We made use of the in-house AV system for slides and audio. 1 boundary microphone and control equipment were rented for the use in the venue. Audience and presenter feedback was generally excellent

This was my first Booktown and while I realise it was different from previous years, it didn't disappointment. The town had a real buzz to it, loved how some houses had books for sale in their front yard, the shops were friendly and helpful and the food was great. The author talks were very interesting and well organised. Congratulations Clunes Booktown. I can't wait to come back next year where, hopefully, it will be back to normal.

7.2 Entertainment & Kids Activities

Whizz Bang Band – Ballarat High School – provided atmosphere across Clunes on Saturday and local children’s entertainer and magician – Aiden McHarg (Stopwatch) – provided entertainment on Sunday.



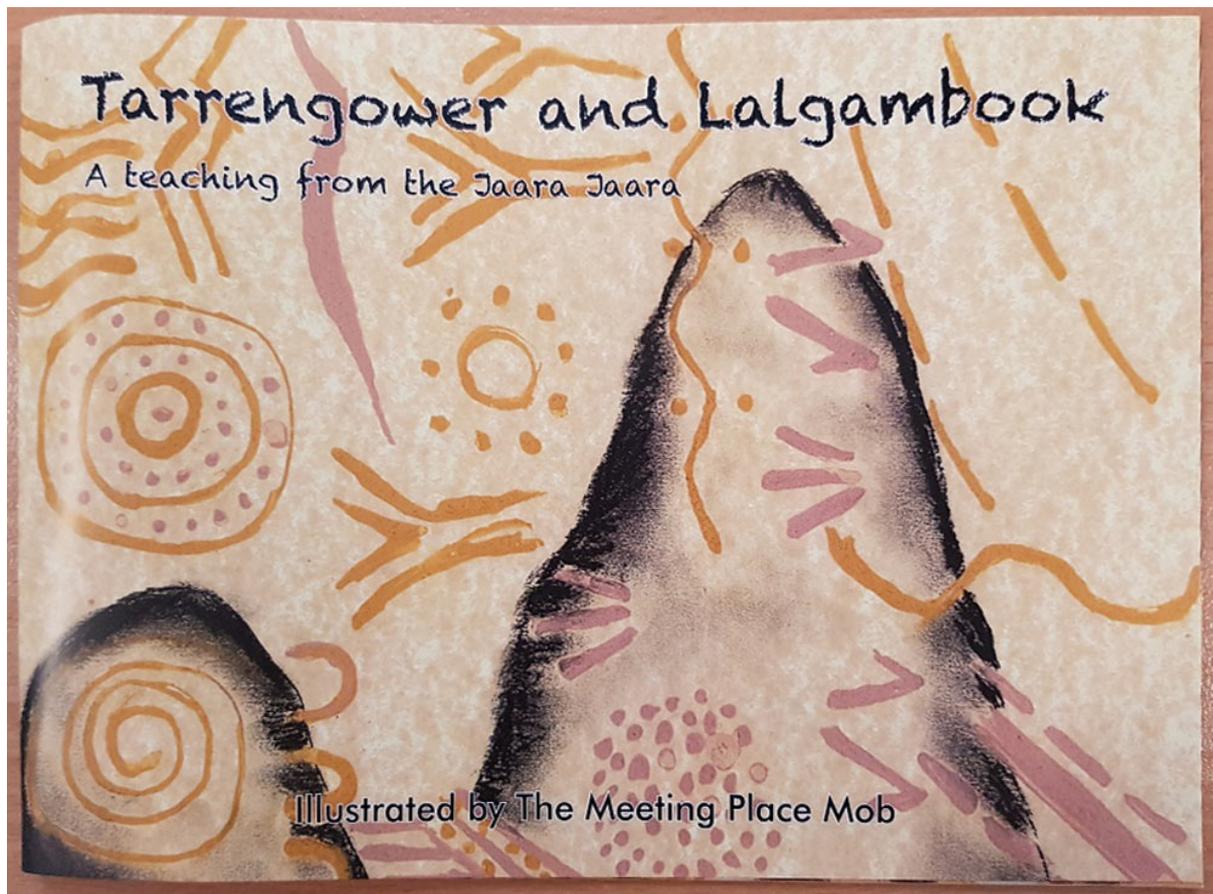
Aiden McHarg (Stopwatch) & Whizz Bang Band

A yellow poster for 'Turn the Page Story Telling Sessions For Children' held on 5 & 6 July 2021. The poster features the 'Creative Clunes' logo at the top right and a 'Heal Country!' logo at the bottom right. The main text reads 'Turn the page Story Telling Sessions For Children 5 & 6 July 2021'. It mentions a special session by Maya Coff from Nalderun about the book 'Tarngower and Lalgambook'. The poster lists the following sessions:
MONDAY 5 JULY 2021
Clunes Library - 10.30am | 53 Fraser St
Creswick Library - 2.30pm | 68 Albert St
TUESDAY 6 JULY 2021
Daylesford Library - 10.30am | Cnr Bridport & Albert Sts
Trentham Library - 2.30pm | 13 Albert St
The poster also includes a small image of the book cover for 'Tarngower and Lalgambook' and a red ribbon graphic at the bottom.

Originally planned for 2nd weekend – to coincide with Reconciliation Week - Maya Coff from Nalderun youth team conducted a story telling / Jaara Jaara teaching and activities with Hepburn Shire libraries – leading into NAIDOC Week. This was our first foray into partnering with Nalderun, in collaboration with Hepburn Libraries, and we are thrilled with the outcomes and the relationship building that will be strengthened over time.



Maya Coff from Nalderun youth team at Creswick Library reading *Tarrengower and Lalgambook – A teaching from the Jaara Jaara*. This book was created by the kids at the Meeting Place. It is the teaching about the two mountains that fought on the Country.



8. Logistics

8.1 Safety

This year the safety of our community, audience and presenters was of utmost importance. In response to COVID conditions and restrictions, we planned a COVID Safe festival and we were able to employ a COVID Safety and Risk Management Officer, who assisted with the planning and all risk assessment aspects. She also assisted with the requirements for Volunteer training.

We implemented, in accordance with the Victorian State Government COVID-19 restrictions, safe check in to venues with QR codes and hard copy sign in sheets.

Funding assisted in offsetting venue capacity limits, whereby our seated audience occupied 50% capacity in both venues, ensuring the comfort and safety for everyone. We were able to, position COVID wardens to ensure the capacity remained capped and for safe entry and exit from venues.

8.2 Waste Management

Hepburn Shire emptied all street bins prior to the **Turn The Page** Festival.



Like it quieter,
less hustle and
bustle

8.3 Toilets

Hepburn Shire Council provided a cleaner for the weekend who kept Collins Place and The Warehouse toilets clean and in stock of paper.

8.4 Road Closures

This year there was no street closer.

8.5 Parking

Extensive signage was erected to direct visitors to parking, and a dedicated area for disabled parking was located at the Attitude Building on Fraser Street and outside the Town Hall on Bailey Street.

8.6 Train Service

No extra services were provided by V/Line, this year. V/Line did track works over the first weekend of May.

8.7 Food Vendors

No extra food vendors were brought in this year so we could support local businesses who have been suffering due to COVID-19 lockdowns in 2020 and 2021.

8.8 Office

The Ulumbarra Room of The Warehouse, 36 Fraser Street, served as a central point for the festival operations over the weekend, with thanks to The Hepburn Shire who provided us with WIFI connection over the weekend.

8.9 Volunteers

This event would not be achievable without a dedicated band of volunteers, and once again large numbers of residents of Clunes and the surrounding area stepped up to undertake this vital task.

The number of volunteers required, along with the training and induction for a vastly different festival to what they are used to become an extra aspect of volunteer engagement this year. Their role including an extension of their allocated times to assist with COVID safety task, managing audience expectations and undertaking COVID monitoring at each of the venues. Ce held several information and training sessions, under the guidance of our COVID Safe and Safety Manager, for our amazing volunteers for this year's event.

Volunteers were requested to sign-on, and collect their identifying apron, at the festival office located in The Ulumbarra Room of The Warehouse, 36 Fraser Street.

8.10 Use of the Warehouse and Council facilities

We received fantastic support from the Warehouse staff and volunteers both before, during and after the festival weekend. Our Creative Clunes pop-up shop was located in the Esmond Gallery of The Warehouse and was used for author signings after talks.

9. Marketing and Media Campaign

9.1 Marketing & PR Summary:

The Clunes Booktown Festival returned, albeit in a new format, in 2021. Following on from the major festival event being cancelled in 2020 – the first major event to be cancelled due to the global pandemic – Clunes Booktown was reborn as Turn The Page, a series of events taking place over three weekends in May.

Turn The Page was announced on Monday 29 March, with tickets on sale from the same day. The program was an ever-moving feast with the first weekend like a Clunes Booktown Festival as per previous years, the middle weekend being dedicated to emerging writers and workshops and the final weekend a celebration of book clubs and the business behind them.

Unfortunately, with COVID-19 risks overshadowing Victoria, the middle weekend focusing on emerging writers was postponed and the final weekend for the book club business was cancelled and switched to an online format that was shown later.

Clunes Booktown has an established audience of book lovers and Clunes-curious travellers. With a defined audience in place, introducing a new format had its challenges. Clunes Booktown Festival has a very strong brand as a beautiful, engaging, future thinking event that captures the attention of book lovers of all ages and demographics.

A new audience for the emerging writers' weekend and the Book Club Hub events is still a work in progress. Due to the postponement and cancellation of these events, there was plenty of changes in the marketing strategy with radio and print ads being pulled at the last minute, stories being adapted or changed or even running with incorrect information. With the many changes to programming, social media messaging was also a challenge. A lot of Clunes Booktown Festival fans were expecting the 'normal' festival and were upset to discover it wasn't the same as previous years.

Over the first weekend, crowds were in the hundreds, and everyone looked happy and comfortable. The general vibe of the opening weekend was joyful, and the program went ahead as planned with

several talks sold out in advance. The emerging writer's weekend has been moved to October and the Book Clubs Hub weekend was transferred to an online / recorded format.

For future Festivals it is encouraged to have a final program completed approximately three months in advance of the event to ensure a strong marketing and publicity campaign, as well as to enable time to generate awareness with audiences – both current and new. It would be my hope that Clunes Booktown Festival returns to its pre-covid format in 2022, providing book lovers with their much-loved community festival.

Highlights included feature stories on Clunes in The Age and Sydney Morning Herald and a massive three hour outside broadcast on ABC Radio Ballarat on the Friday before opening weekend.



Clunes Museum Volunteers

[Link to Media Report](#)

10. Creative Clunes Staff and Board

10.1 Staff & Key Volunteer Leads

CEO.....	Richard Mackay-Scollay (resigned January 2021)
Program Developer/Coordinator.....	Maryanne Vagg, Leslie Falkiner Rose (volunteer positions)
Event Producer & Logistics	
Co-Ordinator	Suzi Cordell
Administrator and Author Liaison.....	Sharon Hughes
Media Consultant & Publicist	Ali Webb, House of Webb
Graphic Design	Sahm Keily
Festival Photographer	Ash + Elm Studios
Covid and Safety Coordinator.....	Dawn Holland, Joseph Rogan
Volunteer Registration.....	Jane Lesock & Chris O'Donnell
Accommodation Advisors	Graeme Johnstone & Nick Hutson

10.2 Board

Chair	Ember Parkin
Treasurer	Chris O'Donnell, Leslie Falkiner Rose
Secretary	Kadir Hussein
Members	Richard Gilbert
.....	Leslie Falkiner-Rose
.....	John Griffin
.....	Jeremy Harper

11. Financial Report

11.1 Ticket Sales

We utilised trybooking.com again for online ticket sales, resulting in 901 tickets sold. With funds only taking a couple of days to clear, this was a simple, cheap and efficient setup and brought us a lot of data on our ticket purchasers.

This year we released all tickets for Author Talks and Panel Discussions with the release of the program.

11.2 In kind support

In kind support was through corporate and government, local traders, advertising & media discounts, venue hire and accommodation.

11.3 Booktown Festival 2021 Income Statement

	Income	Expenses
Corporate Sponsorship	\$10,000	
Ticket sales – Author talks	\$10,528	
Merchandise / Book sales	\$1,288	
Creative Victoria SIF-3 grant	\$81,774	
Welcome to Country and Smoking - Dja Dja Wurrung		\$850
Advertising & Marketing		\$10531
Ticket sales online fee		\$277
Event Producer		\$14304
Media consultant fee		\$10375
Program and advertising graphic design		\$5400
Entertainers Fees		\$1853
Equipment Hire / Purchase		\$307
Postage		\$266.75
Venue Hire		\$480
Artists fees – in person and online		\$14243
Artists Travel, Accommodation and Hospitality		\$3655
Printing		\$5037
Catering and Training		\$ 602.83
Book vouchers for primary school		\$ 470
COVIDsafe officer/ event planners		\$ 6500
Total	\$103,590.00	\$86,608.30