ALBERT COATES MEMORIAL TRUST

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MENTOR

Newsletter of the Albert Coates Memorial Trust

Issn 2207 - 6115 print Issn 2207 - 6123 online

Issue 15 Autumn 2025

Lunch with the Speaker
will be held on **Tuesday 13th May at 12.00 noon**
at the **Selkirk Basketball Stadium**
corner Norman and Dowling Streets, Wendouree.
(Plenty of Free Parking available)

Our speaker is Charles Zhang
Charles will be talking about *Ballarat's Chinese History – what is happening now and in the future.*

Charles Zhang is involved in three major Chinese organisations in Ballarat - the new Victory House museum project, the Ballarat Chinese Library and the Chinese Australian Cultural Society Ballarat.

His presentation will explore ongoing initiatives aimed at preserving historical sites, enhancing cultural education, and fostering stronger community engagement.
He will also discuss future projects that aim to celebrate and integrate Chinese heritage within Ballarat's diverse community, ensuring that the contributions of Chinese Australians remain a vital part of the city's identity.
Through his extensive involvement in organizations such as CNY United and the Rotary Club, Charles continues to champion inclusivity, education, and cultural appreciation, making his insights invaluable for anyone interested in Ballarat's past, present, and future.

Charles, a previous Ballarat Citizen of the Year, was born in Shanghai and has lived in Australia for thirty years, twenty-six of these in Ballarat.

In 2013, Charles and his son, Oscar, walked from Robe in South Australia, retracing the footsteps of the Chinese prospectors, who travelled from Robe to the Victorian Goldfields.

Cost of the lunch is $40 and includes a two-course meal.

To book your place, please deposit $40 per person into the Albert Coates Memorial Trust Bank account with your name/s included in the reference.

BSB 633 000;
Account Number: 144 729 282

To advise of dietary requirements or other enquiries please contact Shiley McIver on 0434 540 171 or email at shirleymacfrog@gmail.com

RSVP - 5th May 2025

The Annual Sir Albert Coates Oration, in collaboration with Federation University Australia, was delivered by Grantlee Kieza OAM.

Ballarat born Grantlee has held senior editorial positions at Australian newspapers, and has written some 20 books including biographies of great Australian figures such as Sir John Monash, Matthew Flinders, and Lachlan Macquarie. Most recently he wrote a biography on Sister Vivian Bullwinkel ("Sister Viv").

Bullwinkel was an Australian nurse who had trained in Broken Hill, and later worked at Hamilton Hospital in Western Victoria.
Among a larger group of nurses and civilians evacuating from Singapore, their boat was sunk, losing many by drowning.
After landing on Sumatra, Vivian miraculously survived the massacre of a group of 21 fellow nurses by their Japanese captors, on Radji beach.
Much like Sir Albert Coates, she then survived three years as a POW.

Grantlee told her story with excellent audiovisual support, expanding on the background of many of the nurses killed.
This included 3 nurses from the Ballarat region (Beth Cuthbertson, Clarice Halligan and Kath Neuss).
We were privileged to have relatives of Sr Bullwinkel and Beth Cuthbertson with us on the night.

Grantlee also highlighted the several crossovers between Coates and Bullwinkel, who worked together after the war at Fairfield Infectious Diseases hospital, and in establishing the Nurses Memorial Centre in St Kilda Rd Melbourne.
If you would like to watch the Oration it can be viewed at this link:
https://youtu.be/Thl3e3NQrOU

Grantlee with Vivienne Linnane - niece of Vivian Bullwinkel

Recent Awards

Mt Pleasant Primary School

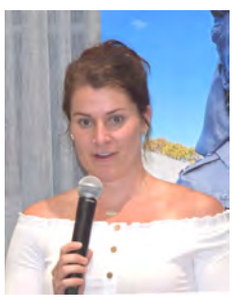
The projects completed in 2024 revealed the research work undertaken, creative presentation ideas, and thoughtful writing and ideas expressed about Albert Coates.
Each of the nine students who participated in the project receives a framed certificate and a book about Albert Coates.
Presentations were made to each student who developed their own project.
The first prize of $300 was awarded to:
Madeline Harwood – Maddy created a diorama of a room in Albert Coates' house, with accompanying information about the life of Albert Coates.
There were two equal Second Prizes. Both students in this category received $150 each.
Annabelle Stephens. Annabelle created a diorama of a medical area in a prisoner-of-war camp on the Thai-Burma Railway and prepared historical notes on the Albert Coates story.
Glennischa Op Den Buijsch. Glennischa produced a detailed printed booklet on the life of Albert Coates with a mix of text and photographs to tell the story, highlighting important aspects of his life.
There were two third prizes valued at $50.00 each:
Vincent Jenkins. Vincent produced an impressive, framed canvas with aspects of Coates life linked to the school's guiding principles of Respect, Responsibility and Resilience.
Tahliah Baltas-Brew. Tahliah created a collage-based poster with text and photos about Coates.
Participation certificates and books were presented to Ruby Lacy and Zac Conder,
Albert Coates: A Life books were presented to: Charlie Taylor and David Obadina.

Special thanks to Roger and Elizabeth Trudgeon and Shirley McIvor who worked with the students and their teacher in this endeavour and to Roger and Elizabeth for the article and photo and for various other photos in this edition.

Deakin University

Charlee Pengelly was the 2024 awardee and used her scholarship money ($3000) to help fund an elective in Darwin hospital,
Charlee has a brother currently serving in the Australian Defence Force with the Artillery Regiment (RRAA) and both her grandfathers served in World War II.
At the conclusion of her studies, Charlee hopes to work as a Rural Doctor.

The Leckie Peri-Natal Scholarship Award



Tracey Calleija was the Ballarat Health Services recipient of the Leckie scholarship for 2024.

Tracey will use her $10 000 award to support her post-graduate training in neonatal nursing.

Victoria University - Paramedicine

Sophie Hilbert was the initial recipient of this award.
Sophie moved from Rural NSW to commence her Paramedicine training.
She will receive $2500 for each of the two years 2025 and 2026.
She has been working two jobs to cover living costs and study expenses, but remains determined to complete her training and eventually work in rural areas as a paramedic.

Federation University - Nursing

Eugenio Bortolin
Eugenio Bortolin achieved very high results in his first year of nursing studies at Federation University and was awarded a $3000 scholarship to help with his studies.
In a letter of appreciation, Eugenio writes:

I would like to express my gratitude for having been selected as a recipient of the 2024 Albert Coates Memorial Scholarship.
This generous support will go a long way in helping me continue my studies in Nursing at Federation University.
The scholarship will significantly ease the financial burden that comes with pursuing higher education and allow me to focus on my studies.
I am determined to make the most of this opportunity and will continue working hard to achieve my goals of becoming a mental health nurse and helping vulnerable members of our community.
Thank you for this amazing opportunity.

The University of Melbourne Rural Clinical School

Jessica Irwin was the recipient of a $3000 scholarship award.
She has a strong family association with the RAAF and her father served in the Australian Army for 20 years.
Jess aims to work in Rural general practice, and is troubled by the difficulties of access for regional patients. She hopes to do an elective in Dermatology.
She is a skilled violinist and teaches younger pupils to help their education, as well as to help her own financial costs.
In addition Jess teaches younger medical students, and local aboriginal students.

The University of Melbourne/Royal Australasian College of Surgeons - Surgical Anatomy

The recipient of this $3000 award was David Newland
Currently David is working as an Ear, Nose and Throat registrar at the Eye and Ear Hospital in East Melbourne.

Federation University - Bio-medical Science

William Gilbert
William is an elite rower and balances his sporting activities with his academic plans for a medical degree.

Australian Catholic University Nursing/Paramedicine

Shayla Leavitt-Brown - a final year Nursing/ Paramedic presented with her award by Trustee Shirley McIver.
Shayla's Mother was a long-term RAAF medic and nurse and Shayla served her gap year in the RAN, prior to her ACU training.
Her elective was in Timor-Leste .where she assisted in a local community clinic and participated in a train the trainer program. This taught the local healthcare workers important skills and various treatments which benefit their community.
She is keen to continue her career as a rural paramedic and nurse.

Regional Emergency Nursing

Karen Stewart
Karen is an experienced and highly qualified nurse who has shifted from metropolitan Melbourne to Rural Apollo Bay.
She wished to complete the Rural and Isolated Practice Registered Nurse (RIPRN) to allow prescription of scheduled medicines needed when a GP or Nurse Practitioner is unavailable.
Her grandfather served in WW2, and Karen herself has worked part-time in the Australian Army reserve.

Notre Dame

Melissa Howlett was the awardee at Notre Dame.
Melissa's grandfather served as a Lancaster bomber pilot in WW2.
During her own honours degree in history, she undertook research into public perceptions of the Australia Defence Forces.
She then completed medical training including her final year at Ballarat Rural Clinical school. Melissa is also working towards her Masters in Public Health, and plans to use her elective in Vanuatu, studying tropical health and provision of Health Care in resource-constrained settings.

Melissa being presented with her award by Ross Phillips and Don Moss.

ALBERT COATES MEMORIAL TRUST

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Donations to the ACMT are tax deductible.

The Albert Coates Memorial Trust sponsors a range of student scholarships at Federation University Australia and the University of Melbourne.

In association with the Department of Health, Victoria, it also offers scholarships for the post-graduate training of rural emergency care nurses.

Scholarships are also offered at the Australian Catholic University (nursing/paramedics), at the University of Notre Dame (medical), Deakin University (medical) and Victoria University (Paramedics)

A Peri-Natal Scholarship is offered at Ballarat Health Services.

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