

THE
MEMORY
ATLAS



HISTORY IS NOW



Acknowledgement of Ballarat's first peoples

The City of Ballarat is proud to acknowledge the Traditional Owners of Country which includes Ballarat today, the Wadawurrung and the Dja Dja Wurrung peoples, and pays respect to all Elders, past, present and emerging, as well as Elders from other communities who reside here today. They hold the memories, traditions, culture and hope of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people around Australia.

Our Partners



Memory Atlas would like to thank the Victorian Seniors Festival and the Department of Premier and Cabinet, Veterans Branch, for project funding from 2015 to 2018.

Garry Snowden with his cousin Butch,
Fishing in Ballarat





WHAT IS THE MEMORY ATLAS?

The Memory Atlas is a local community project, capturing social and cultural heritage with a focus on the stories and memories of people in the community, linking them to places in our city.

It all started when local Ballarat resident Mick Trembath partnered up with the City of Ballarat for Ballarat Seniors Festival on a project that would celebrate the stories of older Ballarat residents.

Across 2015 and 2016, the Memory Atlas received funding of \$100k through the Victorian Seniors Festival and the Department of Premier and Cabinet Veterans Branch. This funding helped to establish the project as a means to crowd-source social heritage.

What's developed from this modest idea is an exciting local innovation under Ballarat's Historic Urban Landscapes initiative, using modern technology to document heritage as it happens, capturing different voices and their memories, piece by piece, story by story.

The aim of the Memory Atlas is to build historical and contemporary narratives, that raise community voices in our social and cultural history.

About the Historic Urban Landscape Approach

In 2013, Ballarat became the first local government in the world to join the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation's (UNESCO's) international pilot program on the Historic Urban Landscape (HUL).

HUL is a new approach that puts citizens and their local governments at the centre of managing the complex challenges presented by change in historic cities. It's a long-term approach that acknowledges the fundamental role heritage plays for local communities, visitors and businesses, as well as in contributing to place identity and sense of belonging.

HUL requires that the many and interconnected values and vulnerabilities of place – whether they be natural or cultural, tangible or intangible – are holistically understood. HUL defines the stories and experiences of local community members as essential in this knowledge-gathering process.

The project adds a fresh, personal layer to the traditional bricks and mortar of Ballarat by acknowledging the lives that have been led in this city. Every space, park, garden, window, door, wall and roof in this city has been the setting for love, loss, risk and reward. The Memory Atlas allows people to see what has happened in these places, to hear these stories and to relate them back to their own experiences.

The Memory Atlas helps people connect with who they are and where they've come from, placing their stories on a timeline of the past, present and future. This creates a living heritage that pinpoints the time and place of change, brings different perspectives on events and trends and help us add depth to our understanding of local heritage.

What's more, The Memory Atlas makes these stories, memories and our rich cultural and social heritage accessible to a global audience, linking our city with others and giving us a deeper understanding of who and where the Ballarat community are.

It is hoped that the citizens of Ballarat embrace the Memory Atlas and contribute to our past, present and future social and cultural narrative.

Top to bottom:
Geoff Hassell, Brian Nicholls, Kevin Coleman,
Phil Roberts, Robynn Sedgwick, Kate Herry.



The Memory Atlas is an open source, community-led initiative and includes:

- ❖ An online platform to record and share memories and stories through images, video, audio, creating an interactive digital map linking people and places
- ❖ Collaborative community partnerships designed to expand Memory Atlas content and build social connections
- ❖ Workshops and development sessions to help community members engage with technology and contribute to the Memory Atlas
- ❖ Do it yourself (DIY) toolkits to empower community members to contribute to the Memory Atlas

The Memory Atlas is about:

- ❖ Putting community voices at the centre of our past and present social and cultural heritage
- ❖ Helping make our social and cultural heritage diverse and representative
- ❖ Bringing together older and younger residents through social connection and storytelling
- ❖ Getting people interested in local heritage and encouraging community connections
- ❖ Making community knowledge and memory a part of our civic practice

WHY DOCUMENT SOCIAL HERITAGE?



Telling the real story

When we talk about our heritage, we tend to focus on notable figures, events and buildings. Our recollection of heritage closely follows a single story.

This does not always represent the diversity of experiences and we miss an opportunity to understand our past more deeply because we don't have ready access to a first-hand source of heritage – the everyday people who lived it.

It's important to recognise that people ARE the place – everything in our community has been created by 'someone' – and these are the stories that help us to understand the true, authentic identity of place.

We have an opportunity to tap into our collective memory, celebrate the influence of 'seed growers' in the community and document the lesser known but illuminating community stories that bring the past to life.

We also have an opportunity to get on the front foot and document our heritage as it happens.



Talking to real people

For our social and cultural heritage to be authentic, it needs to be representative.

Ballarat has a rich and important Aboriginal heritage and sharing the stories of our Aboriginal community is a vital part of our past and present. Ballarat is also home to many migrant communities that enrich the social and cultural fabric of our city.



Ted Lovett (centre), Gunditjimara elder and his mates

By sharing these stories and memories, we can learn about the experiences of others, gain important knowledge and perspective on our past and grow together as a community.



Connecting generations

One of the major areas the Memory Atlas has achieved success to date is its work with older Ballarat residents. We know that memory, storytelling and sharing are positive contributors to health and wellbeing.

The Memory Atlas has successfully encouraged new social connections among older residents by getting them up to date with technology. In addition, the project has developed relationships with Dementia Australia and there are exciting opportunities to use the Memory Atlas to benefit people experiencing dementia.

There is also an opportunity to contribute to the health and wellbeing of younger residents, among whom issues like mental health, bullying and social isolation are common.

By focusing on building intergenerational connections, new social connections and developing skills and confidence, we can improve the health and wellbeing of both older and young residents.



Igniting a passion for history

Despite the advantages of digital life, the way we use our technology sometimes means we're becoming more disconnected from traditional forms of social and cultural heritage.

There is an opportunity to provide new and meaningful connections with social and cultural heritage – igniting our interest via digital technology and providing new ways to source and navigate traditional methods of accessing heritage and stories.

By doing this, we can inspire the community to take the reins on documenting social and cultural heritage. In addition, increasing participation in local heritage and the process of capturing it through the Memory Atlas can help build important skills like critical thinking, active listening, networking and developing interpersonal relationships.



Using community knowledge to change how we work

A big part of civic practice is understanding what's important to community, but sometimes the answers about what might be valued – or have provenance, importance or attachment in our community – aren't always easy to uncover.

Community knowledge is the key to understanding what makes our city special. By bringing community memories and stories to the fore, we can provide historical and contemporary context to understand the value and meaning of the places in our community.

This community knowledge can also add depth and richness to the heritage that makes our city a destination of choice for local and international tourists.

In turn, this has the potential to change civic practice, integrating community values into how issues are researched, how plans are developed and how decisions are made on civic policy, urban design and more.

WHAT THE MEMORY ATLAS HAS DONE SO FAR

Talking to locals is what the Memory Atlas is all about. Over the course of the project we have:



Produced **100** Memory Atlas social heritage documentaries available on HUL website, Facebook and Youtube

Spoken to **200** people about the project, including interviewees, partners and community members



Garry Snowden, Bill Fry

Taken over **90** hours of video

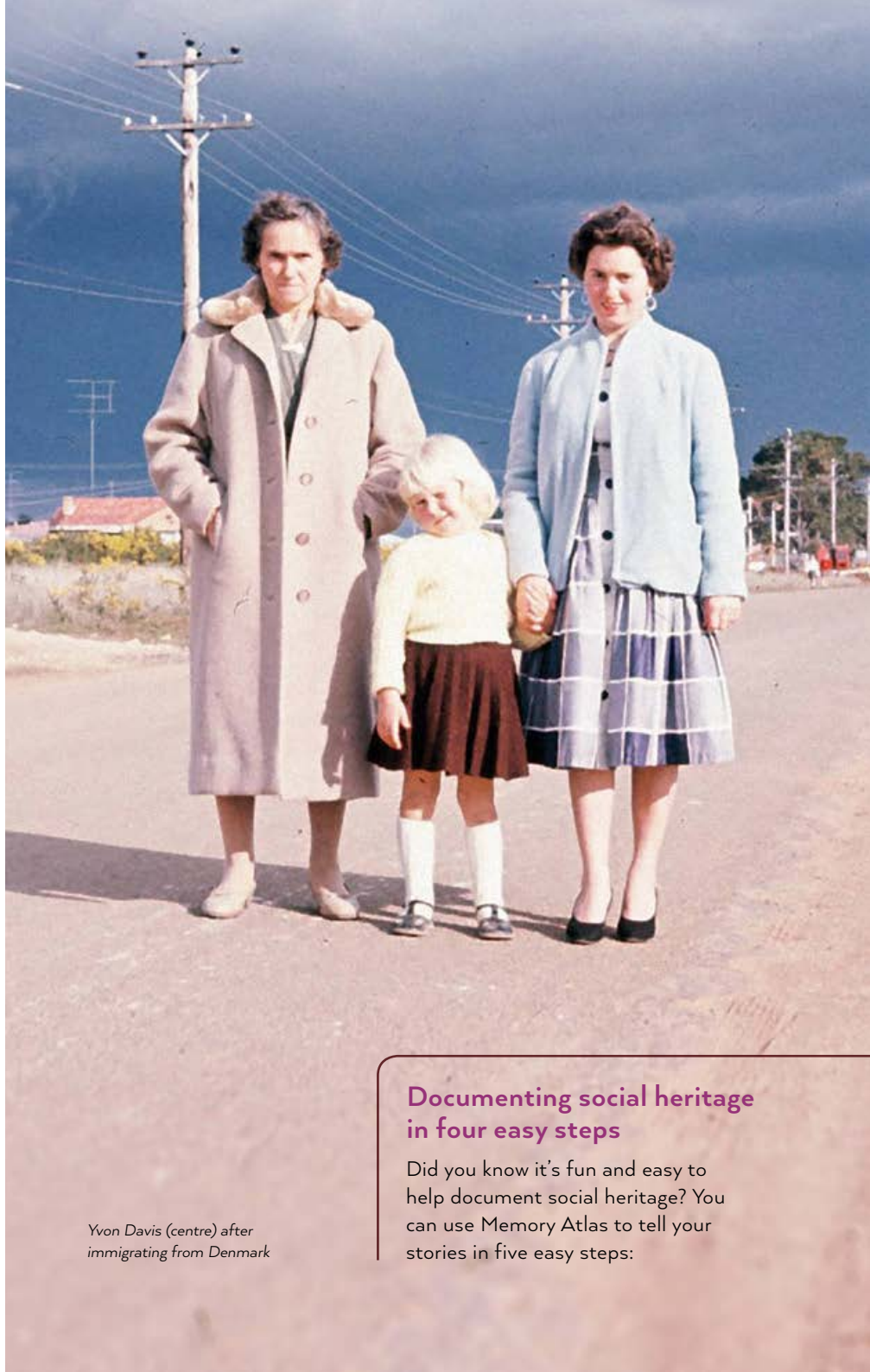


Received over **17,000** video views on Facebook

Catalogued over **1000** photos



Brian Pola, Patricia Prendergast, Adam Gray



Documenting social heritage in four easy steps

Did you know it's fun and easy to help document social heritage? You can use Memory Atlas to tell your stories in five easy steps:

Yvon Davis (centre) after immigrating from Denmark



Left to right:
Bennita Hough, A. Crawshaw, Danny Williams

Running workshops on how to tell your story

An important part of the Memory Atlas is about demystifying technology, making it accessible to everyone. Here are some of the workshops we've run:

- Interview framework workshops - how to interview and produce Memory Atlas videos
- Memory revival workshops - preparing participants for interviews and to revive their memories
- Smart phone self-recording workshops - how to use smart phones to take notes, record audio, record video; file management, format transfer and back up; digital editing; uploading to HUL
- Podcasting workshops - Converting written material to audio files workshop
- Outside filming workshop - Place-based or site - specific interviewing and recording



STEP 1

Check out the Memory Atlas website: memoryatlas.com.au and see what others have done



STEP 2

Record your story on your camera, smart phone - you can use any equipment you already have access to. You can talk for as long or little as you like - share a small memory or your whole life story!



STEP 3

Did you know you can add photos to your story? You can scan or photograph them and upload it to the website. You can pop in dates, locations and links to other sites. You can also add 'tags' or drop pins on the map to link your story to different places.



STEP 4

Upload to the Memory Atlas website



THE IMPACT OF THE MEMORY ATLAS

What the Memory Atlas means to participants

- Helps create new social connections
- Increases engagement with technology
- Improves health and wellbeing through participation in the project

What the Memory Atlas means for our social and cultural heritage

- Gathers information about important cultural and social institutions through undocumented memories and stories
- Engenders a mainstream culture of storytelling
- Increases the contribution of young people to document social heritage
- Increases community engagement with social and cultural heritage

What the Memory Atlas can do for our community

- Conserve identity across diverse communities
- Promote social connection and inclusion for new residents and migrants
- Document and promote Aboriginal heritage and experiences in Ballarat
- Break down intergenerational barriers and strengthen cross cultural and inter-generational connections
- Improve community engagement research information and activity
- Support civic planning and decision-making
- Support self guided tourism

Creating a digital platform

We are excited about the Memory Atlas Digital platform. So far we've:

- Embedded videos into online interactive maps and developed search algorithms
- Uploaded stories and photos, linking them to locations across Ballarat and the world

PARTNERING WITH INCREDIBLE LOCAL ORGANISATIONS



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



World Heritage
Convention



The World Heritage Institute of Training and
Research for the Asia and the Pacific Region
under the auspices of UNESCO



GET INVOLVED!



I would love to share
my stories on the
Memory Atlas!



I'm a school or community
organisation! How can I
get on board?



We've got some funding
and we'd love to support
the Memory Atlas!



Then get in touch!

Contact the Memory Atlas team
for more information:

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