



ZONTA
CLUB OF
BALLARAT INC
MEMBER OF ZONTA INTERNATIONAL
EMPOWERING WOMEN
THROUGH SERVICE & ADVOCACY



THE ENDURING STORY OF EMPOWERING WOMEN AND GIRLS

Every good story has a beginning, and the Zonta saga began with a conversation between five women attending a Christmas party in Buffalo, upstate New York, in 1918. They were reflecting on the vitality of men's organisations serving the needs of their communities which were expanding rapidly following the horrors and deprivations of the newly-ended World War.

Why, they asked themselves, was there not a similar organisation serving the special needs of women, for many of whom life had changed as they entered the work force to assist in the war effort, or had been left destitute due to the ravages of war. What would the future hold for them?

The conversation might have ended there, but in 1919, the Confederation of Zonta Clubs was born.



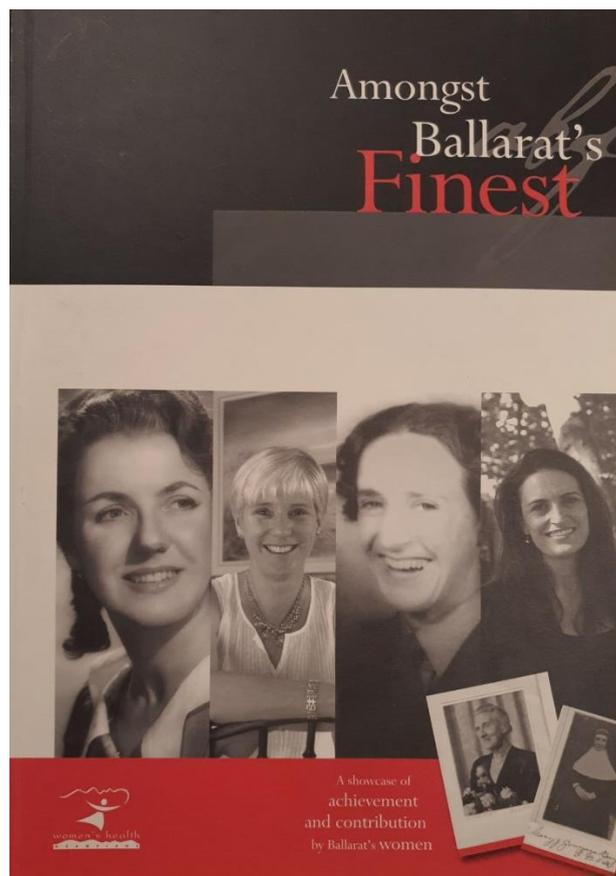
Founding Members in 1919

Now, over a hundred years later, it flourishes in 63 countries worldwide. Members including both men and women are active in their communities addressing a myriad of issues through service and advocacy, foremost among them stopping violence against women and children, striving for gender equality and climate action.



The flagship of the Zonta Club of Ballarat has been the celebration of BALLARAT'S GREAT WOMEN, those who have lived, been educated or worked in our fair city and in doing so have made a significant contribution to our community.

An initial collaboration between Women's Health Grampians and Zonta in 2006 resulted in the publication of a book titled *Amongst Ballarat's Finest* profiling 113 local women nominated by their peers. The Zonta Club of Ballarat now holds an Honour Roll of 196 women, whose names appear on the separate list.



Cover of Amongst Ballarat's Finest

Sadly, due to COVID, the program has been suspended for 2022. Nominations are being held over, but are still welcome when the program resumes for 2023.

Since its inception in 1978, members of the Zonta Club have been creating toiletry bags containing essential care items for women, many with young children, who need to leave the security of their homes due to domestic violence and find shelter in Berry Street; they also create breast cushions offering comfort for men and women recovering from breast surgery in local hospitals, and enjoy Assembly Days working with community groups to create Birthing Kits which have saved the lives of thousands of mothers and their new born babies in remote areas of 30 countries worldwide.



Breast Cushion and how it is worn

Young women in Ballarat aged 16 to 19 have also been recognised for superior leadership skills and a commitment to public service through the Young Women in Public Affairs Award. The current Award recipient, Eloise Amirtharajah not only received the Club and District Award, but also one of 10 prestigious International Awards from Zonta International.



Eloise Amirtharajah

Lasting gifts to the City of Ballarat have included the Zonta Art Collection of art by Australian women Artists at the Art Gallery of Ballarat, and the Zonta Sensory Garden in the Botanical Gardens which offers a space for gentle reflection with the changing seasons.



**One of the Zonta Roses at the Sensory Garden in
the Botanical Gardens**

As Zonta is an International service organisation, members also contribute to the Zonta Foundation for Women, supporting a diversity of programs in partnership with UN Agencies. Largely based in the Southern Hemisphere, the current projects focus on adolescent girls' health and protection in Peru, response to gender-based violence survivors in Papua New Guinea and Timor-Leste, together with education and gender equity issues in Madagascar, one of the poorest countries in the world.

Of global significance is the Program to End Child Marriage, located in Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Ghana, India, Mozambique, Nepal, Niger, Sierra Leone, Uganda, Yemen and Zambia.

In summary, members of the local club are concerned with issues such as health, education, climate action, equity and human rights, economic empowerment, gender-based violence, child marriage and human trafficking, among others. They recognise and celebrate high achievers of all ages and strive to support those who have no voice or power to offer opportunities for self-help and hope for the future.

See www.zontaballarat.com for information, or contact the secretary@zontaballarat.com