



# ADVOCATE

## BYA Youth Advisory Group 2020 (YAG)



### Introduction from Chairperson

I am absolutely thrilled to present the first edition of BYA Advocate. This newsletter has been a longstanding dream of our Committee's and it is very exciting to see it come to fruition!

Every day, the BYA team is working hard towards supporting young people to 'be the best they can be'. This newsletter invites you, our BYA extended family, into our world. BYA has many programs and projects on the go. This edition will focus on what we have been up to over the first quarter of this year. We are often asked by interested members of the community about things we are doing, so we hope this will be of interest.

BYA would not be able to support the young people of the Warren Blackwood without the support of YOU. So, thank you to each individual, business, community group and other organisation who supports BYA to help others.

Sarah Youngson



### Youth Space

During 2020 BYA was finally able to secure the lease for 21 years on the old Officer-in-charge house at 24 Steere Street, Bridgetown. This is a big step for BYA and along with the change of use from residential to commercial approved by the Shire of Bridgetown-Greenbushes in November 2020 BYA is now in a position to move forward with application for funding through Lotterywest. Early April an expression of interest was accepted by Lotterywest to proceed to the next phase of submission.

There has been a great deal of work put into the progress so far and BYA Youth Space committee have done a fantastic job of getting the lease in place, preparing plans and putting in the applications.

BYA has incredible volunteers and delivering this building even this far is quite an achievement and we are looking forward to more progress to come.

Updates on the progress of the youth space will be included in future editions of this newsletter.

# *The Rotary Tour of The Blackwood*

On the 13th March, 2021 close to 400 enthusiastic cyclists arrived in Bridgetown for the 5th annual Rotary Tour of the Blackwood. After the disappointment of having to cancel in 2020 due to Covid 19 it was great to welcome the cyclists to this beautiful area of our state.

The Rotary Tour of the Blackwood starts at the picturesque Blackwood River with the Full Tour Ride of 135 km going through Bridgetown, Balingup and Nannup returning to the river. Cyclists have described this event as challenging with over 2000m of climbing and category 4 ascent. There was also a 65km ride and 30 km ride taking in some stunning views, jarrah forests and farmland. The weather was perfect and cyclists enjoyed the conditions. The enthusiasm shown by the participants was gratifying to see.

For all the fun that was had on the day there is a serious side to this event. The Rotary Tour of the Blackwood raises funds for Blackwood Youth Action to assist BYA in addressing youth mental health. Blackwood Youth Action Inc (BYA) is a registered charity that was established in 2013 by community members concerned about the lack of support for marginalised and at-risk youth in the Blackwood region. BYA identified that, as in many rural communities, there were significant barriers to youth accessing mental health services. BYA is involved in running a range of programs to provide mental health education and early intervention for all young people across the Warren Blackwood region.



The generosity of all involved with the event went beyond expectations with over \$50,000 raised. From cyclists who participated and the people who sponsored them, donations to The Tour provides BYA with resources to support our young people in countless ways. It supports BYA's adolescent specialist psychologist, Rebecca Jones, to provide one-on-one counselling to young people with no out of pocket expenses. She is able to provide them with case management and holistic support which is not otherwise funded by Medicare.

She is also able to travel across the Warren-Blackwood region to allow young people living in outlying communities to get assistance. Funds raised also support BYA Connect – a single entry point mental health service for young people aged between 12 and 25 looking for support. Our psychologist triages each young person's needs and links them efficiently and directly with services, agencies and professionals within the community.

Furthermore, funding from the Tour has contributed towards a youth worker traineeship, as well as provide seed funding for the development of a youth space in central Bridgetown.

The Tour makes an immeasurable difference to the lives of so many young people in our community. The funds raised create priceless life changes.

In keeping with the spirit of the Rotary Tour of the Blackwood, students from Kearnan College in Manjimup decided to jump on their bikes and ride the distance equal to the longest leg being 135km. The Years 3 to 12 ended up riding an incredible 451km. The effort raised \$160 for BYA and they deserve a big THANK YOU for not only the funds but also for getting involved and caring. BYA hopes that other schools in the region will be inspired by their achievement and get involved next year.

Rotary, Blackwood Youth Action and the Bridgetown community looks forward to welcoming all supporters and cyclists next year for the 6th Tour of the Blackwood on the 12th March, 2022.



## **BYA would like to thank the following 2021 Rotary Tour of the Blackwood sponsors , supporters and volunteers.**

Rotary Club of Bridgetown – an extraordinary group of caring people.

All the volunteers who made it happen, apologies to anyone that has been left out.

Motoscouts

Traffic management volunteers

Water point volunteers

People running the registrations

People running the timing

Masseuses

Rural Clinical School Medical Students

Musicians



BYA's Youth Advisory Group

Steele Bishop, the Ride Ambassador

Professor Fiona Stanley AM

Rebecca Cotton and Brendon Morrison from RideWA

Daniela Tommasi Photography

Lee Steinbacher Flying Eye Photography

The Shire of Bridgetown-Greenbushes



### **Rotary Tour of the Blackwood 2021 Sponsors**

#### **Platinum**



#### **Gold**



#### **Silver**

Clovers General Store

Flying Eye Photography

Oaktree Barn

Lifesports

Pharmacy 777

AJB Autos

Glen Holst Furniture

#### **Bronze**

Shire of Bridgetown-Greenbushes

Coca Cola Carlton United Brewery

# ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH



Manjimup Senior High School was the venue for the for YARN (Youth Action Regional Network) about Mental Health Expo held on the 24th March, 2021. The Expo was run by Blackwood Youth Action and was delivered to about 260 year 9 students from across the Warren Blackwood Region. Also in attendance were representatives from Headspace, LAMP, Jobs Southwest, GP Downsouth, Forrest Personnel, WA Country Health, Talk to a Mate, South West Community Alcohol and Drug Service, Revolution Youth, Rainbow Friendship Group.

Bridgetown local musician and song writer, Tracy Barnett, not only entertained the group with incredible songs and music but also talked about her own personal struggles with mental health from a young age, in what could only be described as raw and incredibly brave. Dr Sarah Youngson, Blackwood Youth Action chairperson said “she spoke incredibly well and very passionately about seeking help and her experiences and the support that is out there.”

There was a morning break with muffins provided by the students from Big Picture of Manjimup Senior High School. During the break the riders from Hawaiian Ride for Youth, who were on a fundraising ride from Albany to Perth, joined in and engaged with the young people. One of the cyclists gave a heartfelt account of dealing with mental health issues after losing his brother to suicide and he has a son who also suffers from Mental Health issues. The Hawaiian Ride for Youth raises funds for Youth Focus.

This day is all about encouraging young people to “Yarn” about issues concerning them so after the presentations and lunch, the students broke off into small groups to cover topics such as LGBTQI, cyber safety, sexual consent, legal issues, body image, lived experiences and drugs and alcohol. Conversations are encouraged and it is hoped that young people struggling reach out and seek help from each other, families, supportive staff at school or organisations such as Blackwood Youth Action.

Three quarters of mental health issues all develop in adolescent years so that is why programs as important as this need to receive more funding. It is so important to work on prevention, early intervention, educating about resilience and talking about mental health problems.

The event was coordinated by James Dewing on behalf of BYA. Presenters who delivered the workshops were, SWCADS, Talk to a Mate, Felicity Lukins, Bronte Page, Kim Crotty, Headspace, RU Legal.

Blackwood Youth Action, Youth Advisory Group (YAG) was there to help with handing out the drink bottles, information and cooking the sausage sizzle but they were also showing other young people that they can have a voice. The BYA YAG is a group of young people who meet regularly to discuss and present issues that affect them and is an forum for them so they can be heard.

This Expo was funded by BYA with proceeds from an auction of a cow donated by the Hughes Family and which John Awcock fattened. Other contributions came from Manjimup Rotary and Manjimup Op Shop, Woolworths Manjimup. BYA are always very grateful for the community support received.

BYA will be sourcing funding so that this Expo and other programs run through BYA Mental Health can continue.



Tracy Barnett performed at the YARN About Mental Health Expo



# 2021 BYA Skate Competition

## Rolled Out the Rad

On 14th January, 2021, Blackwood Youth Action presented a competition at the skatepark and what an awesome day it was. With a great turn out of over 35 competitors and many spectators the young people rolled out their impressive skills in scooter, BMX and skateboard.

There were lots of prizes on offer and everyone that entered took home some great products.

It was great to see Jayden Sammit, a local now living in Perth, return to his hometown to support this event.

This event would not have been possible without the support of some amazing local sponsors. The Rotary Club of Bridgetown for their time and Relationships Australia for the food on the day. BYA received donations from Barney and Fleur, on Hampton Street, Bridgetown and the Shamrock Hotel Sporting Club from Greenbushes. Nick Maxfield of Maxfield's Towing in Bridgetown provided generators. Life Sports Bridgetown donated helmets for the prize pool.

The support of these business and organisations enabled BYA to bring on board Shane Jarvis and the Freestyle Now crew to run this event.

BYA are already working hard on the event for 2022, so watch this space.

Bridgetown skatepark competition 15th January 2021 – Official results

Scooter beginner – 1st Max Munday, 2nd Jacob Almond, 3rd Chevy Maxwell, 4th Max Self, 5th Noah Almond

Scooter intermediate – 1st Kelly Egertoh, 2nd Riley Kelly, 3rd Kaden Gough, 4th Max Power, 5th Jacob Dupe, 6th Declan Frey  
Scooter open – 1st Jayden Sammit, 2nd Luke Gorey, 3rd Joshua Sloan, 4th Harry Stevenson

Skateboard – 1st Jasper Porteous, 2nd Daniel Rogers, 3rd Max Self, 4th Jackson Dudley, 5th Cooper Claus

BMX beginner – 1st Riley Kelly, 2nd Max Varnavites, 3rd Bayden Miller, 4th Hardy Vitali

BMX intermediate – 1st Seth Giblet, 2nd Kade Humble, 3rd Lex Wright



Shamrock  
Hotel Sporting  
Club



Maxfield  
Towing



On the 15th January, 2021 organisers Nick Maxfield and Mark Kestell from the not for profit charity "Bridgetown Scramble" presented to BYA Youth Advisory Group members, Bridie Kenworthy and Kaden Gough a cheque for \$1,700.00 from the proceeds of the Bridgetown Scramble event held 26th and 27th September, 2020.

Motocross riders from all over the state travelled to Bridgetown for the fun charity event. There were more than 60 riders, most being members of either the Classic Motocross Club or the Vintage Motocross Club of WA. All the proceeds from the weekend were donated to BYA.

Blackwood Youth Action are very grateful for the support of community organisations such as Bridgetown Scramble. "Services like Blackwood Youth Action just wouldn't be able to exist without this kind of funding." said Dr Sarah Youngson Chairperson of BYA

## Meet a BYA Volunteer

In 2020 BYA commenced an Outreach Program at the Youth Precinct. This program is delivered by our BYA volunteer Jaye Herring. Before moving to Bridgetown in 2019, Jaye spent many years working as a carer.

She had also spent time in the North West caring for indigenous young people. Jaye along with BYA Trainee Youth Worker, Bridie Kenworthy, spend time with young people every Wednesday from 3pm and are very welcomed by the young people with toasted sandwiches and icy poles depending on the weather. Jaye and Bridie are fully supported by Lisa Burgess, Youth Services Coordinator for BYA.

BYA Outreach service is invaluable for the delivery of information, advice and advocacy in areas where young people can't access or do not feel comfortable enough to attend fixed locations. Outreach delivers tangible, meaningful and local connections for young people.

To find out more about Outreach or about becoming a volunteer please call Kaye Davies on 97993364.



**Outreach Volunteer Jaye Herring**



**Bridie Kenworthy and Kaden Gough receiving cheque from Nick Maxfield and Mark Kestell**



## Paying It Forward

A summer initiative launched by BYA for the holidays was the "pay it forward" program. The idea came from Bridgetown local Roxy Adamson who wanted to find a way of making the pool accessible for more young people should they wish to use it.

Members of the community were able to pay the \$3.60 which would provide entry. This initiative received over 70 donations made from the community.

There are many ways that the community can become involved in providing support to the young people of Bridgetown and this is just one of them. BYA hopes that this will become an annual program.

BYA would like to thank all involved in giving more young people access to this facility during hot summer days.



## Need Support?

### Helpful contacts and websites

There are many organisations dedicated to providing support for young people. If you don't feel comfortable talking to anyone you know, you might feel better calling a helpline, or trying an online program.

**Blackwood Youth Action** Lisa Burgess Youth Services Coordinator 0400939266  
bya@westnet.com.au

BYA Connect is available to young people aged 12-25 years old. The call will be answered by a psychologist to assist the young person to receive the help that they need or to put them in touch with agencies in their region where required.

BYA Connect 0417173558

#### beyondblue

[www.beyondblue.org.au](http://www.beyondblue.org.au) [www.beyondblue.org.au/who-does-it-affect/young-people](http://www.beyondblue.org.au/who-does-it-affect/young-people)  
1300 22 4636

#### Lifeline Australia

[www.lifeline.org.au](http://www.lifeline.org.au)  
13 11 14

#### Kids Help Line

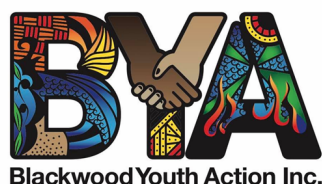
[www.kidshelp.com.au](http://www.kidshelp.com.au)  
1800 55 1800

A number of children and youth may also need emotional. Kids Help Line is a free and confidential, telephone counselling service for 5 to 25 year olds in Australia.

#### Suicide Callback Service

1300 659 467

The Suicide Callback Service is a free nation-wide telephone support service available to support people at risk of suicide and their carers, and is well suited to people who are geographically or emotionally isolated.



## Did you know??

### That Blackwood Youth Action offers an Interest Led Learning Centre (ILLC)

BYA Interest Led Learning Centre focus is to provide programs to reengage young people into learning. BYA provides a supportive environment for young people to learn based on an interest they may have or to give them the opportunity to “learn about learning” and that there are alternatives to or work in conjunction with mainstream education. BYA also has a computer library where young people can borrow a desktop computer or laptop.



- Short courses to retain interest
- Focusing on courses that young people have a specific interest in
- Providing programs that help young people cope with Mental Health issues
- Mentoring programs
- Creating entry pathways to further courses ie: university or TAFE courses.
- Computer Library

If you would like further information on this call Lisa Burgess, Youth Services Coordinator on 0400939266.



If you would like to support Blackwood Youth Action then follow the link to our My Cause page.  
<https://www.mycause.com.au/charity/20188/BlackwoodYouthAction>

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