



AN INITIATIVE OF:



To all our members, site holders and stakeholders,

Reference: Cancellation of the Ballarat Swap Meet Event February 24 and 25, 2023

The Ballarat Swap Meet is, and has been, an entrenched institution on the annual Ballarat Events Calendar, since 1989. The combined Rotary Clubs of Ballarat take seriously their obligation to all our stakeholders and to the City of Ballarat, which receives enormous benefit from the conduct of this iconic event.

Unfortunately, due to a range of factors, the Board of the Rotary Ballarat Swap Meet Incorporated sadly advises that the 2023 Swap Meet has been cancelled.

The Swap Meet site we have leased since 2015, located in Airport Road Mitchell Park, is under contractual arrangements for the further development of the Ballarat West Employment Zone. Despite the efforts of a dedicated Swap Meet team, in collaboration with the City of Ballarat, a long term venue has not been located.

Potential alternative sites, of sufficient size to conduct the Swap Meet in its present format, are indeed rare and the proposed venue for 2023, off Blind Creek Road, has been severely impacted by the recent heavy rains and some localised flooding, rendering the site unsuitable.

The time remaining before the event dates is limited and we are conscious of late preparation, access needed by heavy machinery to prepare a quality site and the forecast of continual rain events over the next months.

Further to the dilemma surrounding a physical venue, is the fact that much of the infrastructure such as toilets, generators and lighting is simply not available, because there is greater priority of need for other severely flood affected parts of our State and beyond. A considerable number of our site holders are from interstate, and they too are combatting multiple flood events.

The demand for equipment and contractors at these broader community levels influences the ability of the Swap Meet organisers to obtain the necessary equipment and resources to run the event effectively.

The Ballarat Swap Meet Board proposes to continue to research and investigate viable options for 2024, and the future of the Ballarat Swap Meet, but as we are unable to guarantee the immediate future of the event, it has been decided to offer a refund of all pre-paid site fees applicable to the 2023 event.

Details of this process are still to be finalised and further dialogue and consultation with our many loyal site holders will occur in the coming months.

Naturally, we are extremely disappointed to announce the cancellation of the 2023 Ballarat Swap Meet and we thank you all for your support over time, your understanding and patience as we work through the issues relative to the refunds, as well as the future of the event.

Rotary has been able to contribute to the funding of many community projects and organisations through your support of the event and we regret we cannot do this for 2023, especially when the need is so great.

Yours sincerely,

L. Florence
Chair, Ballarat Swap Meet Board