

EASTERN ENTRANCE SIGNAGE REPORT



Ararat Rural City

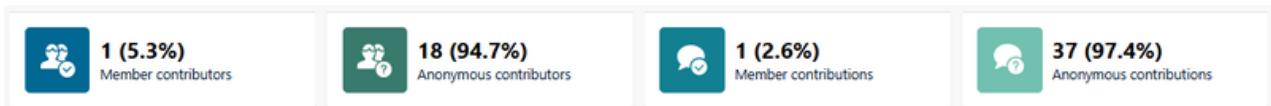
6 May - 4 June 2026



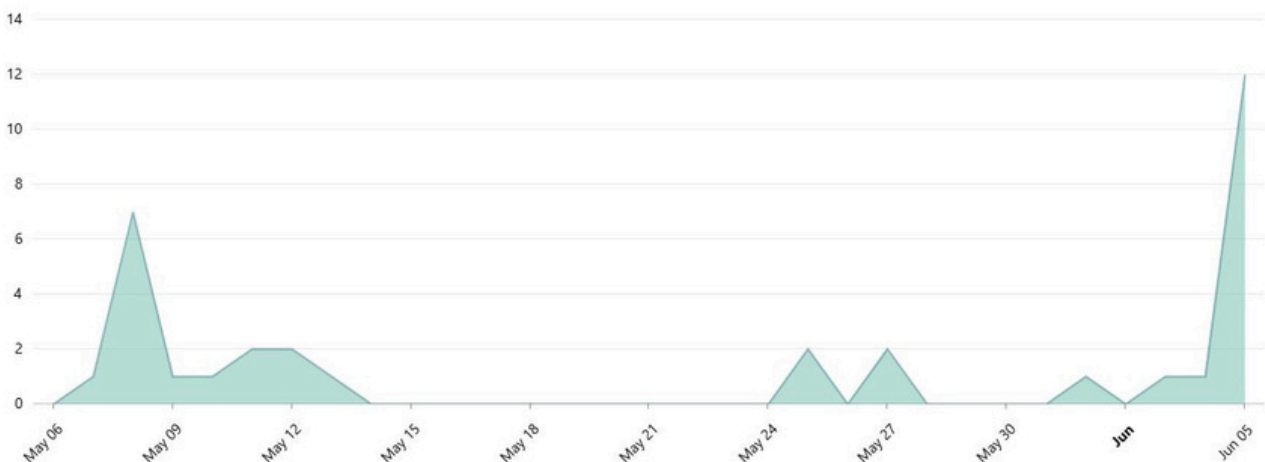
Engage Ararat Campaign Snapshot

- The **30-day consultation** on Council's Engage Ararat platform called on residents to share ideas for a town gateway that best captures Ararat's local identity, welcomes travellers, and inspires visitors to stop and explore the region.
- Council received a total of **37 submissions**, with the feedback highlighting a strong desire to reflect Ararat's unique character.
- Key themes focused on **agriculture, manufacturing, and local history**, with a strong emphasis on the **natural environment** and acknowledgment of the **Grampians region**.
- Submissions also highlighted the vital importance of honouring the region's rich **Indigenous heritage** and **Chinese gold rush past**.
- Many practical design suggestions also emerged with residents expressing strong support for **utilising regional materials**, particularly **local bluestone**.
- Residents drew inspiration from neighbouring town entry signs, such as those in Beaufort and Stawell, with many suggesting the final concepts should prominently and **proudly feature the Ararat name**.

Key Statistics



Contribution Activity





Community Contributions Snapshot

"Garden edge from the bluestone blocks waiting for repurposing at J Ward. Welding in tone with our local Gasons"

ARARAT
TOWN ENTRY SIGNAGE UPGRADE
DESIGN BRIEF

Welcome to Ararat

A welcoming, enduring, and distinctly Victorian entry statement for the town of Ararat that reflects local character, heritage and landscape.

- STRONG IDENTITY**
Bold, human-scale letters create an iconic gateway.
- LOCAL MATERIALS**
Bluestone and weathered steel reflect the natural and built heritage of the region.
- LANDSCAPE INTEGRATION**
Native planting softens the structure and celebrates the local environment.
- BUILT TO LAST**
Quality materials designed to age beautifully and stand the test of time.

PRINCES HIGHWAY ENTRY
ARARAT, VICTORIA

SITE PLAN (CONCEPT)
12000mm x 2000mm

ELEVATION (FRONT VIEW)
12000mm x 2000mm

LETTER DETAILS
2000mm x 1200mm x 300mm

- 2.0m high corten steel letters
- 300mm deep box section
- Weathered steel finish
- Concealed fixings

MATERIALS PALETTE
Weathered Corten Steel, Bluestone, Native Mulch

PLANTING PALETTE (NATIVE & DROUGHT TOLERANT)
Kangaroo Paw, Lomandra, Correa, Grevillea, Dianella

Creating a welcoming gateway that celebrates Ararat and its landscape.

"I would love to see the old J Ward bluestone currently in a pile in the community garden reused to edge a garden bed around the sign in a similar fashion to Beauforts town entry signals.

I would like to see native plants around the signals. I think welded rust look Ararat lettering would be in keeping with the town."



Community Contributions Snapshot

“I would like to suggest that we keep the key features of our district front of mind when considering the design of our town entrance. Ararat sits within a large and productive farming region, and agriculture contributes significantly to our local economy.

This contribution comes directly through our farmers and local businesses such as Gason’s, which manufactures farming equipment and supports jobs in our community.”



“You want to embrace the history of Ararat with the Chinese gold rush, farming, and wine

A good stone like sandstone and some laser cut steel to make a silhouette to represent the different aspects of what makes up our town.”



Community Contributions Snapshot

"I believe less words may be better from doing a couple drafts, to mainly spark interest they can stop and find out more if they choose. I come up with, "Created by Bunjil, Settled by Chinese" maybe a third line, "On the hunt for gold and prosperity" or "Welcoming to All" or something that greets people. I didn't add an image with a third line."

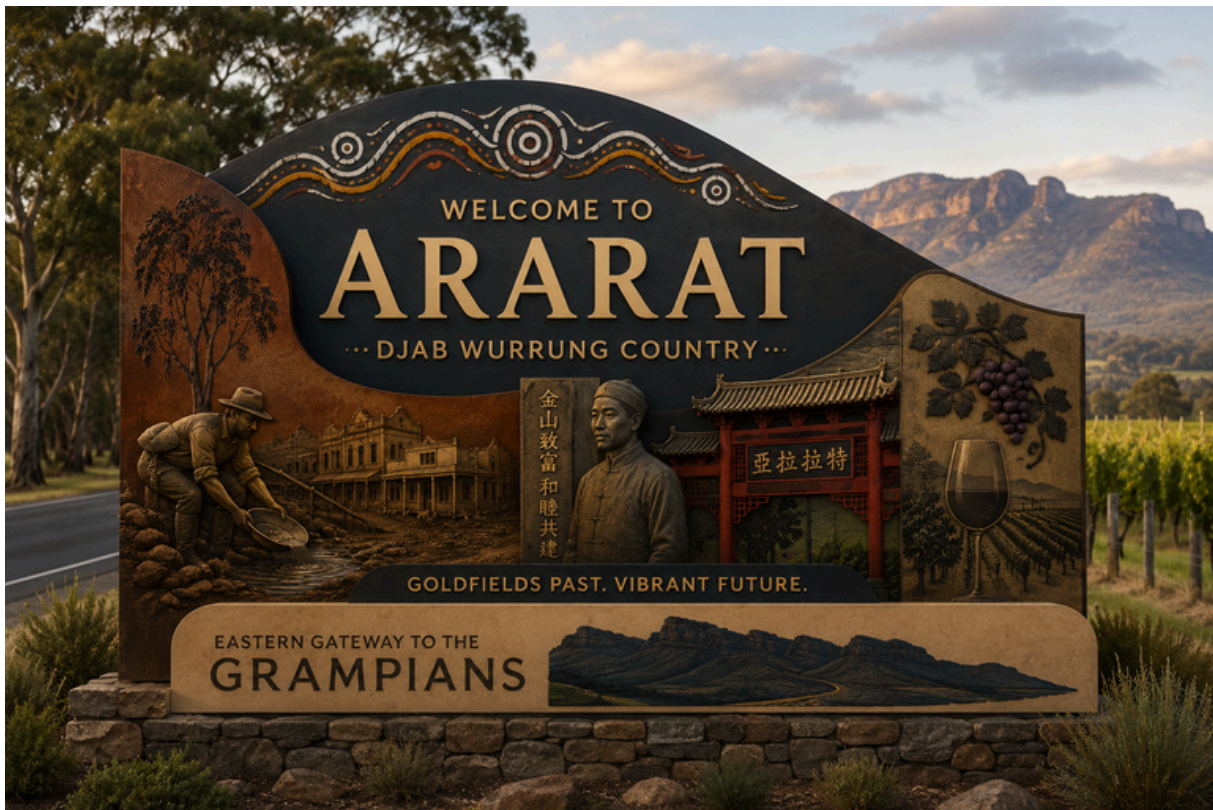


"Ararat is a town with a story unlike any other in Australia — shaped by ancient Djab Wurrung Country, the Chinese gold rush, the rise of a regional centre for farming and produce, and the dramatic landscape of Gariwerd - the entry to Gariwerd.



Community Contributions Snapshot

“Above all, the sign should clearly announce to travellers they are entering Ararat so the city name should dominate. The sign should be durable and constructed using blue stone to reflect the local stone used to construct some of our most iconic buildings. The photos below of entrance signs for Beaufort and Stawell are examples of this approach. Ararat was founded by Chinese miners, and the sign should reference that.”

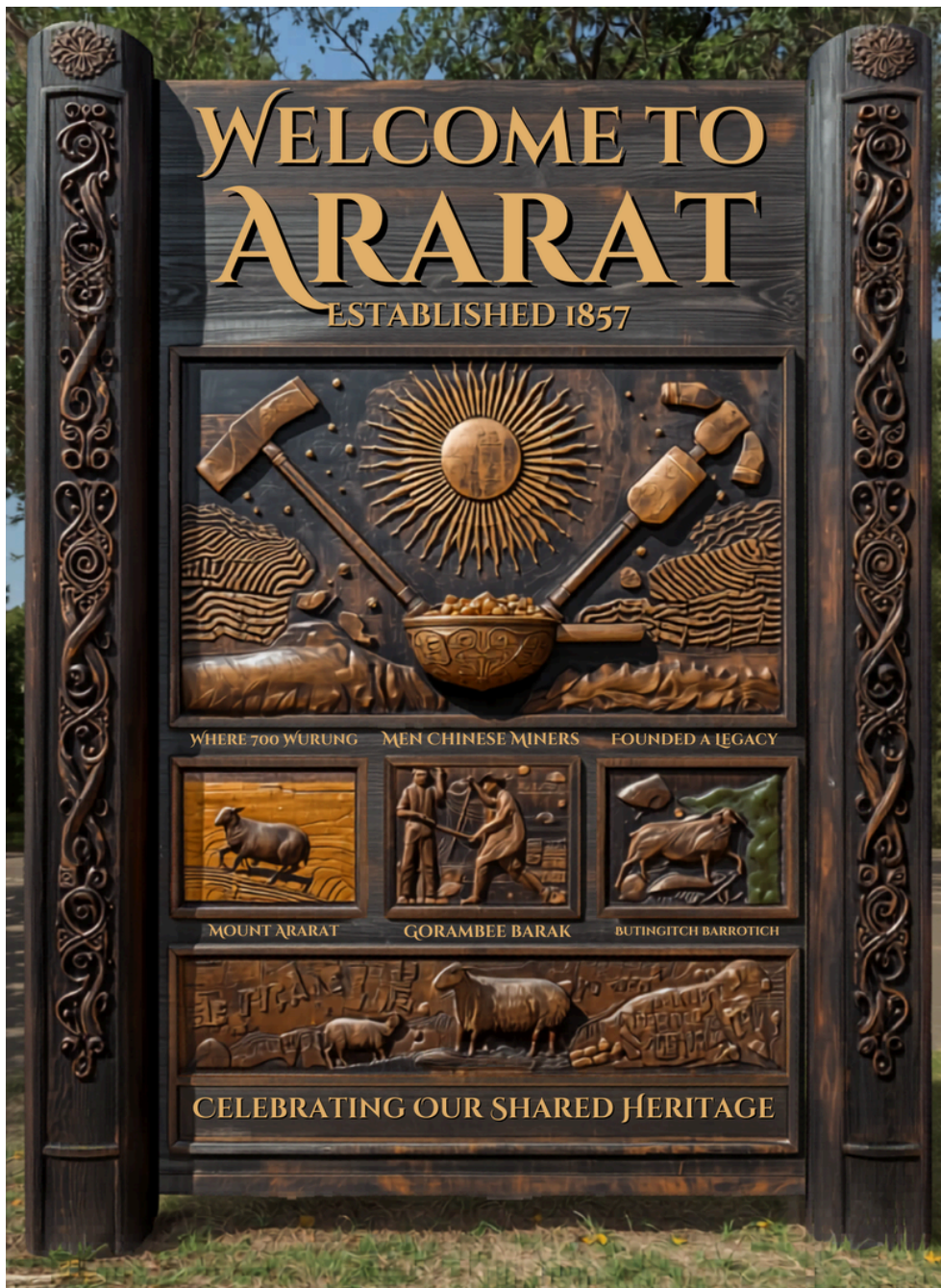


“It was built with the wealth generated by gold mining then agriculture (wheat and sheep). Ararat sits at the junction of two major rail lines, and the railway played a major part in the city’s development. The city is home to major manufacturers AME Systems and Gasons. I suggest the sign should be similar to Beaufort’s but with a pillar either end.”



Community Contributions Snapshot

“This sign design is built around a dark timber frame with carved structural posts, giving it a strong, grounded presence that reflects Ararat’s rural character and long-standing craftsmanship traditions. The deep timber tones create a natural backdrop that allows the carved details and gold accents to stand out with warmth and dignity.”





Community Contributions Snapshot

St Mary's Primary School, Ararat - Grades 3 & 4 Students





Community Contributions Snapshot

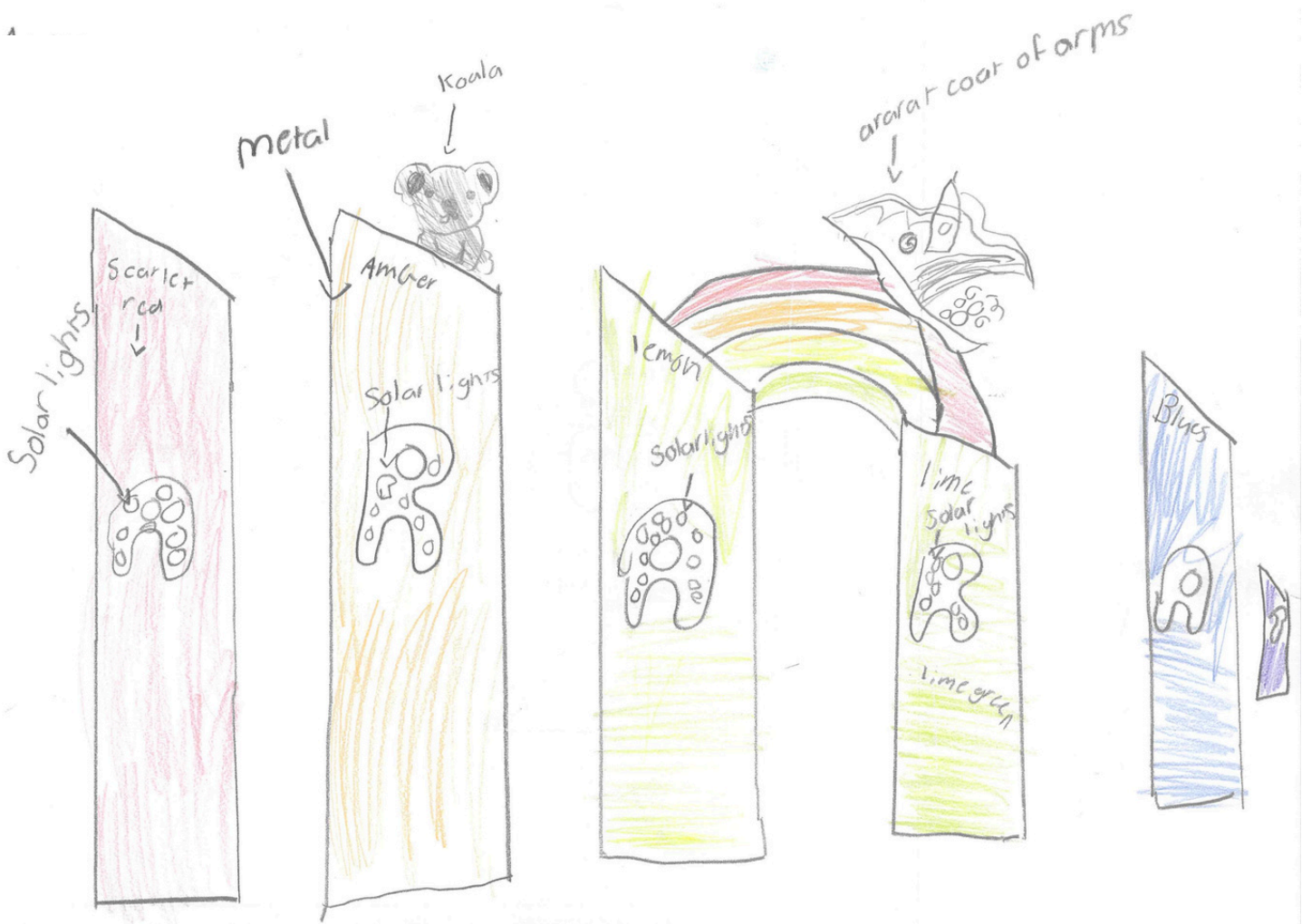
St Mary's Primary School, Ararat - Grades 3 & 4 Students





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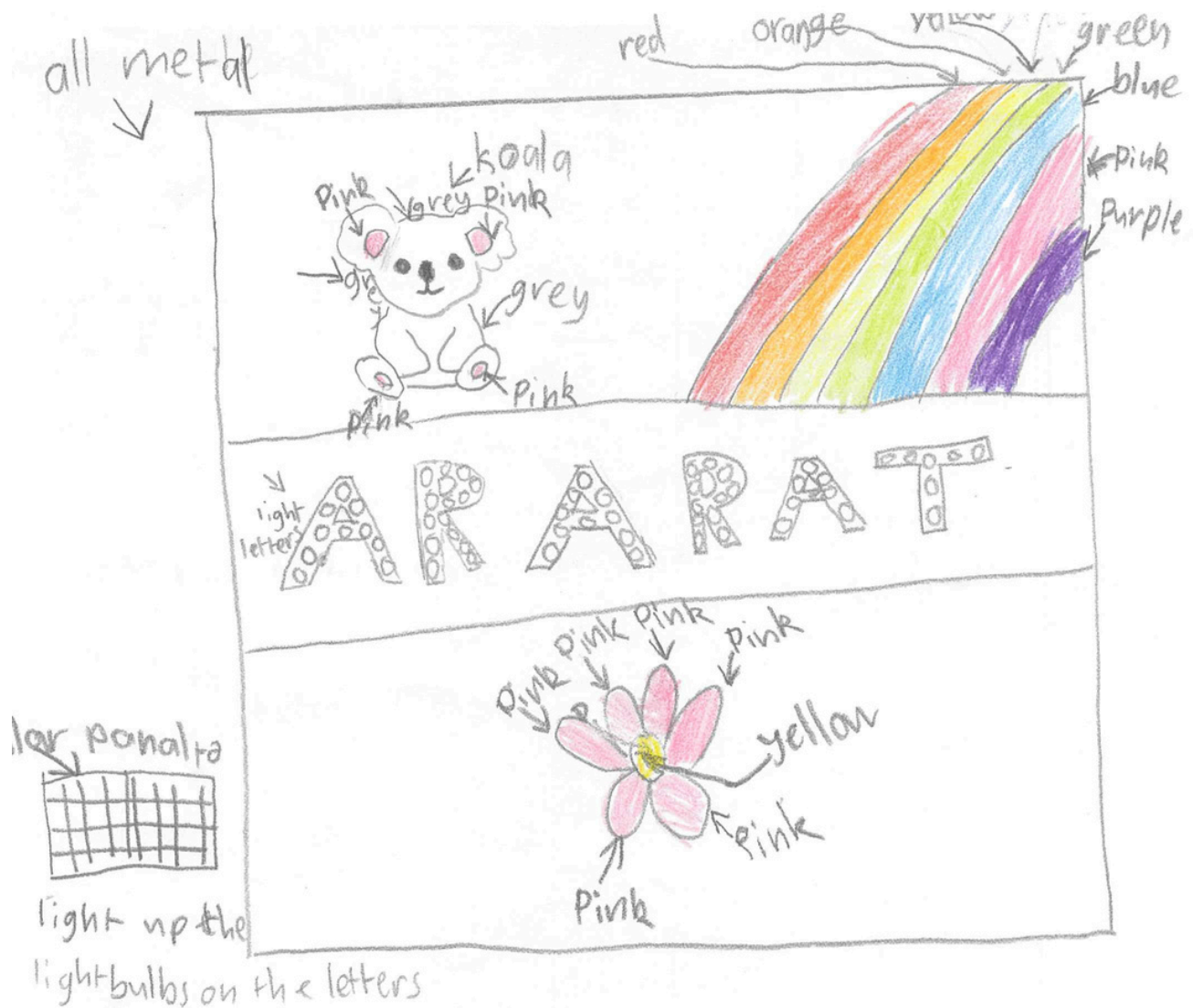
St Mary's Primary School, Ararat - Grades 3 & 4 Students





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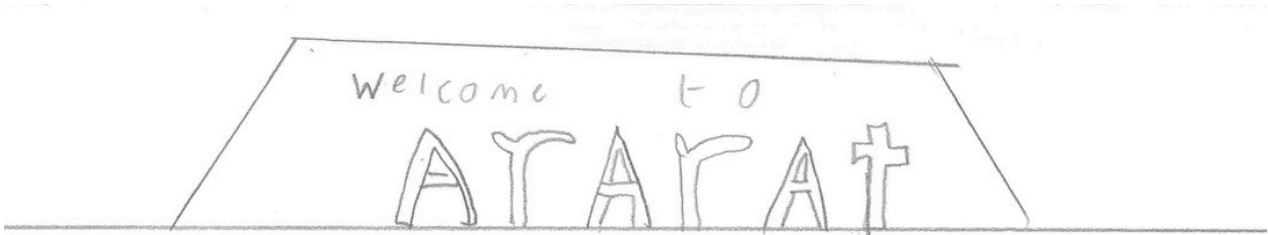
St Mary's Primary School, Ararat - Grades 3 & 4 Students





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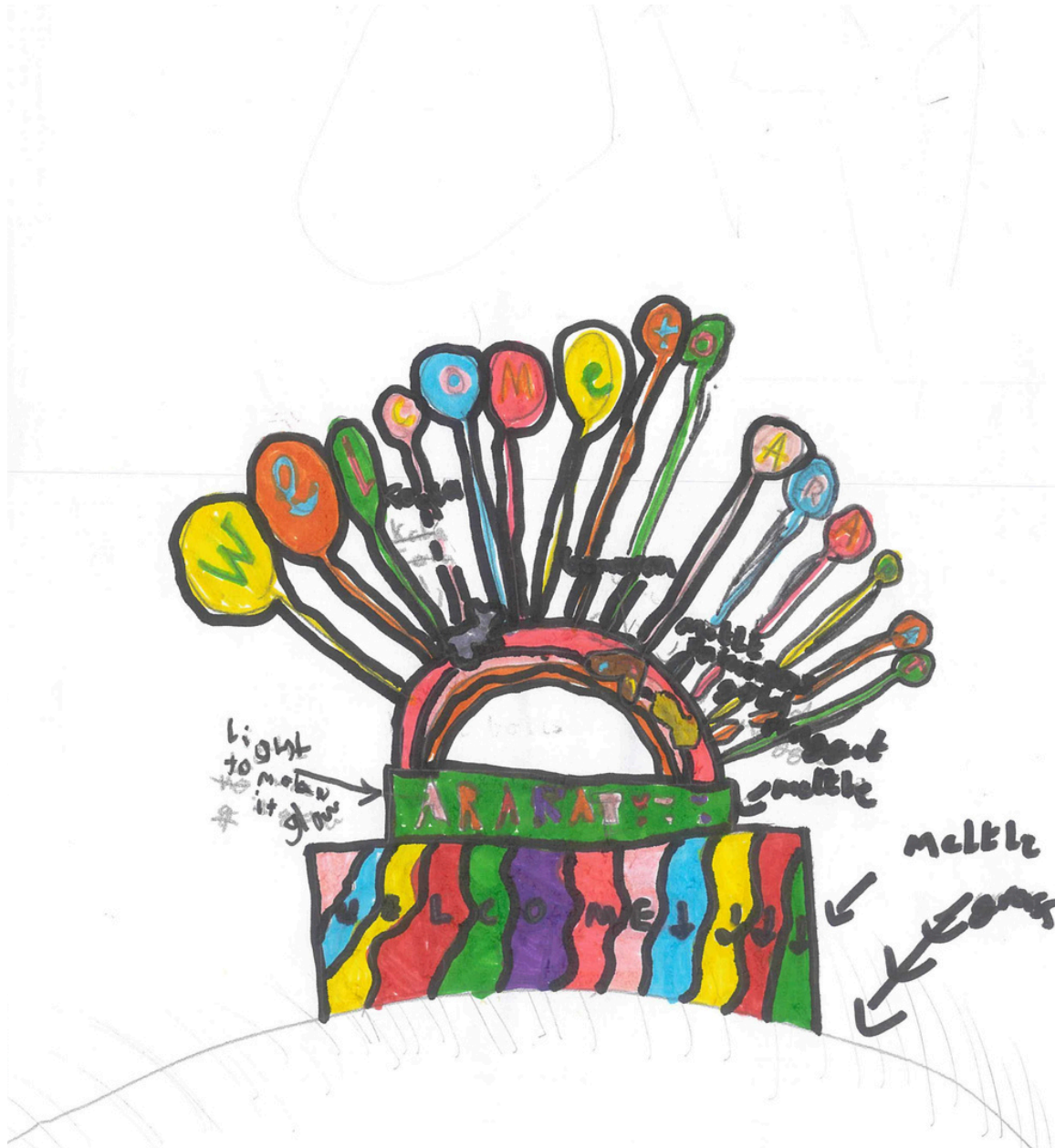
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Community Contributions Snapshot

St Mary's Primary School, Ararat - Grades 3 & 4 Students





Social Media Campaign Snapshot



Ararat Rural City Council
Published by Hootsuite · May 8 ·

Help us reimagine Ararat's eastern welcome. We're refreshing the town's eastern entrance on the Western Highway and want your ideas for an arrival experience that tells our story, sparks curiosity and encourages people to stop, stay and explore.

Over the next 30 days, you can jump onto Engage Ararat and share your concepts – from design sketches, artwork ideas and potential artists, through to examples of town entrances you've seen elsewhere and loved. We're especially interested in ideas that reflect Djab Wurrung country, our gold rush and Chinese heritage, nearby wine regions and our role as the eastern gateway to the Grampians.

Whether you're an artist, designer, maker, local business owner or you just have a great idea for how Ararat should say "welcome" to people arriving from Melbourne and Ballarat, we want to hear from you. Visit Engage Ararat to read more and upload your ideas:

engage.ararat.vic.gov.au/eastern-entrance-signage. See less



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Women Men Unknown



Interactions

89



Reactions 45

Comments 38

Shares 2

Saves 4

38 Likes 38 Comments 2 Shares

Most relevant

Stephen Martin
Use local stone and town name, Stawell and Beaufort both have the right idea. Local bluestone sitting behind J ward. Nice Wrought iron lettering.
4w Like Reply Hide 29

Isabel Nancarrow replied · 5 Replies

Rob McKinnis
Maybe make it a competition, like they did years ago, like for the naming of Aradale. Or get something similar to Stawell entrance and Beaufort Entrance. Maybe have the "Home of Shane Kelly" sign as well. He was a world Champion cyclist. Geelong still has references and at Kardinia park - a giant big lovely tribute to Simone McKinnis (Australian etball player & successful netball coach)and Sir Hubert Opperman, another Champion Cyclist. And some nice Wrought iron lettering would be fantastic
4w Like Reply Hide 2



Local Media Coverage Snapshot

9 May, 2026

Help reimagine Ararat's eastern entrance

HAVE YOU Ever wanted to design a town's welcome sign? Ararat Rural City Council is asking the community to help shape a new look for the town's eastern entrance, creating an arrival experience that reflects Ararat's unique story and encourages travellers to stop, stay, and explore.



Mayor Bob Sanders is encouraging local residents to play a part in the look of Ararat's new town entrance signs. Photo by Craig Wilson.

25 May, 2026

Community ideas shaping a fresh look for Ararat's eastern entrance

ARARAT Rural City Council say it has received a strong response to its call for ideas to reimagine the town's eastern entrance, with early submissions highlighting Ararat's layered story and a strong appetite to improve the arrival experience for locals and visitors.

By Craig Wilson



Mayor Bob Sanders is delighted with the response to council's plan to rejuvenate the eastern entrance sign to Ararat. Photo by Craig Wilson.