

## Case Study: Buninyong, VIC

[www.buninyong.vic.au](http://www.buninyong.vic.au)

**Type of Location:** Gold was discovered in Buninyong several weeks before Ballarat, which is ten minutes north along the Midland Highway. First settled in 1838, the town lays claim to being one of Victoria's first inland townships. Historical buildings and scenic walks attract visitors and are core elements of its identity.



**Population:** 3,085 (2006 Census)

**Major Industries:** Tourism and agriculture (with some wine growing) along with a small retail and hospitality industry serving the locals and visitors.

**Applicant Organisation:** Buninyong Joint Library Trust Inc.

**Synopsis:** The group first heard about the Community Geographic Domain Name (CGDN) initiative in the middle of 2006, with the idea of a geographical name sparking initial interest. With Ballarat just 11km away, and being one of the test sites for the CGDNs, it was only a matter of time before the much smaller town of Buninyong established their geographic home on the net.

The website was launched on the 17th February during the 2008 Gold King Festival. The Buninyong Community Website Group manage the website (a subgroup of the applicant organisation) and hope that the website will continue to benefit from the local people's support and participation. The group hope to encourage this by developing a more interactive site using 'Joomla' in 2008.

### What they say:

#### Challenges that were overcome

"Our community network was already in place, with lots of material ready to go on the website, and we eventually got 3 valuable offers of financial help: donations to pay the initial registration fee, a small grant to cover the publicity for the launch, and free hosting for the website"

"Finding the time to put the website together and get through the required documentation, all on a voluntary basis, was possibly the main hurdle, as well as setting a workable fee structure for paid ads"

### **Benefits of the online 'community of communities'**

"Lots of encouragement and a helpful lead to find the free web hosting was great! Also looking at the other community sites was a useful source of ideas for ours"

### **Benefits of the community website**

"People feel proud of the site and are glad that our community has a distinctive presence on the net; several community groups came together to collaborate on the project; it has allowed more sharing of information though there is still scope for this to grow.

"By making the site more interactive we hope to increase the sense of 'community ownership' in the future"

### **Advice to other communities**

"Ensure that there is a core group of people who are really behind the project and willing to help out with the community consultation, collecting information, promotion etc"

"Find someone with the skills to design your website who also has the commitment to maintain it so that it doesn't just sit there without ever changing"

Liz Lumsdon, Secretary of the Buninyong Joint Library Trust and website developer