

Residents sceptical Works to prevent flooding

By PAT NOLAN

DELACOMBE residents are sceptical of flood prevention plans drawn up by the City of Ballarat.

A 1.2-metre wide pipe will be laid under Delacombe's Banyule Drive to alleviate flooding that has plagued the small suburban pocket.

The pipe will also run underneath the Glenelg Highway. This will require a culvert to be dug under the existing highway.

A tender for the project is expected to be finalised by the end of next week.

About 70 metres of the road will be dug up with the massive pipe to connect with an existing pipe that runs under the road, effectively doubling the water flow capacity.

A water retention basin, or wetlands area, will also be dug at the northern end of Doug Dean Reserve, adjacent to Lumen Christi Primary School.

Physical location of the pipe is immaterial to how it functions.

City of Ballarat manager infrastructure development Ross Cowie said the project was expected to protect houses against future flooding.

He said the water retention basin should be able to hold most of the water during storm events but if the amount of water was too great, the pipe under Banyule Drive should account for the overflow.

Residents say they are not convinced the location of the new drains and pipe will be able to handle the water.

But council's director growth and development Eric Braslis said the "physical location of the pipe is immaterial to how it functions".

Works will start in May.



PARTYING: South Street president Brian McInnis begins the 120th birthday celebrations.

A true cultural masterpiece

By TOM MCILROY

AT 120 years of age, it's the grand lady of Australia's cultural calendar.

Ballarat's 2011 Royal South Street Competition is open for entries and Society president Brian McInnis says the milestone year promises to be the biggest yet.

"It certainly is a true Ballarat institution and we are very excited about this special anniversary," Mr McInnis said.

Preparations for the event began in November with the Society hosting a special exhibition of South Street "Costumes and Collectables" at the Gold Museum from August.

While organisers have been collecting historic artefacts since 2009, spokeswoman Emma Sbardella said more items were wanted.

The inaugural competition took place in 1891.

Royal status was granted by

the Queen in 1962 and South Street is Australia's longest running eisteddfod.

Last year's competition attracted an audience of more than 30,000 people and 10,000 competitors.

With the help of a small staff and an army of volunteers, the event brings more than \$7.5 million to the Ballarat economy every year.

Enter at www.royalsouthstreet.com.au.

NAB suffers meltdown

NAB said it had begun processing the account balances of millions of customers who have been left without their pay and will open 100 banks today to assist any it has failed to credit.

A bank spokeswoman said yesterday the fault that crashed its payments system had been identified and that customers of other banks whose accounts had been affected should be restored overnight.

NAB's ATM network is still working and cash can be withdrawn from NAB accounts but many payroll and other transactions had not been processed as of yesterday evening.

Stokes donates VC to war memorial

BUSINESSMAN Kerry Stokes has spent more than \$600,000 for a Victoria Cross medal then donated it to the Australian War Memorial.

The VC was awarded to Corporal George "Snowy" Howell for astonishing bravery during the battle of Bullecourt on May 6, 1917.

His medals, which included a Military Medal awarded for gallantry a month earlier, sold for \$600,000 plus 15 per cent buyer's premium at the Nobles auction of coins and medals earlier this month.

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