

# Les Miz kids hit the stage

BY MICHELLE SMITH

AS THE cast put the final touches on Ballarat Lyric Theatre's production of *Les Miserables*, its youngest cast members are eagerly awaiting their chance to get on to the Her Majesty's Theatre stage.

Eight of the 10 children in the *Les Miserables* cast are students of Ballarat Centre of Music and the Arts so they'll find plenty of familiar faces and support to help them through their nerves before the curtain goes up.

Youngster DJ Kaess, whose role is as a side-kick, will share the stage with his dad Matthew who plays the understudy role of the bishop.

Charlie McGinniss and Anthony Holloway will share the role of Gavroche, while Isabelle Ebenwaldner will perform the role of Little Cosette and Lily Retallick and Nina Douglas will share the role of Little Eponine.

"These are major performance roles and are recognised world-wide for the well-known songs *Little People* (Gavroche) and *Castle on a Cloud* (Little Cosette)," said BC-MA director Paula Heenan.



**STAGE:** DJ Kaess, Charlie McGinniss, Anthony Holloway, Ashton Van Raaphorst, Indy Armati and (stairs) Isabella Ebenwaldner, Lily Ratallick, Nina Douglas will share the child roles in Ballarat Lyric Theatre's production of *Les Miserables*. **Picture:** Lachlan Bence

# Right to the Night returns?

BY ALEX FORD

THE Right to the Night project, which mapped out areas of Ballarat's CBD where women feel safe and unsafe, will return in 2020 with a focus on the hospital precinct.

The City of Ballarat confirmed a workshop next week with key stakeholders will "explore opportunities for a second Right to the Night project", though cautioned timing for the workshop had not been confirmed.

The award-winning 2018 project, which used an app to show places in the city where women felt threatened, and where they felt safe.

It also included space to note why they felt this way.

About 150 participants mapped out 305 locations - Sturt and Lydiard streets were considered the safest places for women in Ballarat.



**SAFE?:** The BHS car park on Mair Street. **Picture:** Lachlan Bence

A report accompanying the results of the project included several recommendations to improve safety, such as focusing on the Little Bridge Street/Coles car park area, and providing practical lighting, litter and foot-path inventions in areas deemed unsafe.

After a number of responses complaining

about low lighting in the hospital precinct - with many female staff having to walk distances to their cars - another recommendation was increasing all day parking in the area.

Ballarat Health Services chief executive Dale Fraser said he hoped the project would inform council on further investments in safety and infrastructure needs in the hospital and medical precinct around Drummond Street.

He noted the hospital had several measures, including security escorts to car parks, for employees, but the focus was on creating a safe environment for visitors and patients as well.

In a statement, a BHS spokesperson said parking was "crucial" for safety.

"We are working with a range of partners to develop longer-term projects regarding parking and public transport to address this

issue," they said. "The Right to the Night project allows people to voice their experience so that Ballarat City Council can map where our community do and don't feel safe.

"This is particularly important for late and night shift staff walking to their cars after dark who do not feel safe."

Women's Health Grampians acting chief executive Rose Durey said the project, when complete, would provide important data for council.

"Fear of violence and street harassment severely limits women's participation in what's going on in the community, particularly at night time," she said.

"We would welcome any activity by the council to improve how women experience public spaces after dark - I think there's been a growing awareness of how design of neighbourhoods impact on health and wellbeing and perceptions of safety for everyone."

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