

**MEDIA RELEASE**  
**Tuesday 17 October 2006**

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**Ballina Community Striving to Nurture its Heritage**  
VIA Ballina's 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Gala Dinner

Ballina will not only be celebrating its 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary as a town at a very special gala dinner on the eve of November 6 (the town was officially gazetted on 7<sup>th</sup> November 1856), it will be a community joining together to nurture its heritage.

In fact, the major purpose of the special gala dinner, proudly coordinated by the Ballina Chamber of Commerce & Industry Inc and Ballina RSL Club Ltd, is to focus Ballina's attention on its rich and diverse heritage. Funds are being raised through the gala dinner – a significant community event that is set to support and launch an exciting 'Community Heritage Fund'.

The Community Heritage Fund will initially fund an Oral History Project. This project will seek to record the stories or histories of a number of Ballina's residents who represent the diverse elements of Ballina's heritage. The various histories may include those associated with the river and its shipping, Ballina's beach culture, retail and business, sporting and other community organisations, wartime in Ballina, and the Bundjalung people.

The oral histories will form a valuable resource that, reproduced in numerous formats, will make these stories available to the whole of the Ballina Shire community. The proposal to fund an oral history project was developed following consultation with community stakeholders and Ballina Shire Council staff.

Ballina Shire Council's Heritage Officer, Kate Gahan, has welcomed the Community Heritage Fund initiative and its first project. "The establishment of a Community Heritage Fund can significantly assist the Ballina Shire community to work together towards the important goal of documenting and conserving our heritage. Oral history is an important means by which to capture histories that are not otherwise well represented by documentary evidence. The everyday lives of people and community organisations is a good example of the types of histories that are not always well documented", Kate said.

Stories and oral histories have already been gleaned in the lead up to the staging of the special gala dinner. As part of the event program research, interviews have been conducted with community representatives associated with the 1964 Miss Summerland Competition (the gala dinner is themed around elements of the 1964 Miss Summerland Competition).

Kate further explained that, "Already, as a direct result of the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary event, we have recorded histories from the Winner and the organisers of the 1964 Miss Summerland Competition and a well-known Lifesaver who was in the audience at the 1964 event. Each of these personalities will now feature in a key part of the gala dinner program on November 6. Aspects of their stories have also assisted the event's entertainers for the evening in creatively interpreting some wonderfully moving and humorous surprises for gala dinner guests!"

"Nurturing our heritage nurtures our community; so all members of the Ballina community are strongly encouraged to attend the gala dinner as it's set to create some more fabulous memories. It will certainly be a unique celebration that should not be missed," Kate concluded.

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**Ballina's 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Dinner ...  
'Celebrating 150 Years of Boom Town Ballina!'**

6pm Monday, 6<sup>th</sup> November @ the Ballina RSL Club

Prepare yourselves for a fabulous evening of nostalgia, giant beach balls & good, old fashioned fun!

At just \$75 per head, tickets are selling fast so book now!

Call the Ballina RSL Club today on 6686 2544

Bookings can be made for up to 10 per table

Dress for a glamorous beach party!

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**For further details on this Media Release, please contact Cathie Johnston (Marketing Manager, Ballina RSL Club Ltd) on 66819 504 or Kate Gahan (Heritage Officer, Ballina Shire Council) on 66861 284.**

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