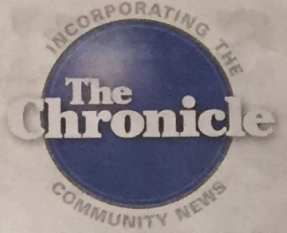


THE HEART AND SOUL OF QUEANBEYAN AND DISTRICT SINCE 1860

The Queanbeyan Age



FREE

Bee in it to win



MY COMMUNITY PROJECT: Helen and Simon Ferguson hope to establish the Hive as an art and culture centre. Photo supplied.

BY CLARE MCCABE

THE future of 21 projects benefiting people living in the Monaro electorate is up to the community.

Voting is open for residents to prioritise projects that may receive grants of up to \$200,000.

There are 15 eligible projects in the Queanbeyan-Palerang local government area including a group

transport bus which can be used by sporting teams and groups, a new playground for Queanbeyan Schools as Community Centres and a cultural hub at the Queanbeyan Hive.

The Hive's Helen and Simon Ferguson have applied for \$150,000 to open the building as an art and cultural area.

"It's such a beautiful and centrally located place," Ms

Ferguson said.

The Fergusons will use the money to provide a space for artists and groups to present art and cultural activities. The grant money would pay for rent for an entire year, lessening the cost to hire.

"The grant could pay the rent so artists don't have to. It would also help us properly host and promote their works for everyone to come here and enjoy," she said.

"They can fill the building with amazing things that everyone can come and enjoy in this beautiful building.

"We will be able to properly promote and support our local arts community while also providing the Queanbeyan community and region with a truly unique place to come and sample the amazing creativity that our artists produce."

In 2018, the Fergusons

matched dollar for dollar a \$130,000 grant to restore the building. They plan to build a pergola for workshops and events and continue the landscaping.

"At the moment we are doing occasional events. We've had three art shows and our first musical concert.

"We really don't want to turn the place back into an office.

"If we do get the grant I'm

confident it will be enough to make the Hive really hum."

See the full list and vote at mycommunityproject.service.nsw.gov.au or a Service NSW centre. Voting closes on August 15.

People can vote for up to five projects.

■ A free open day will be held at the Hive, 274 Crawford Street, this Saturday between 10am-4pm.