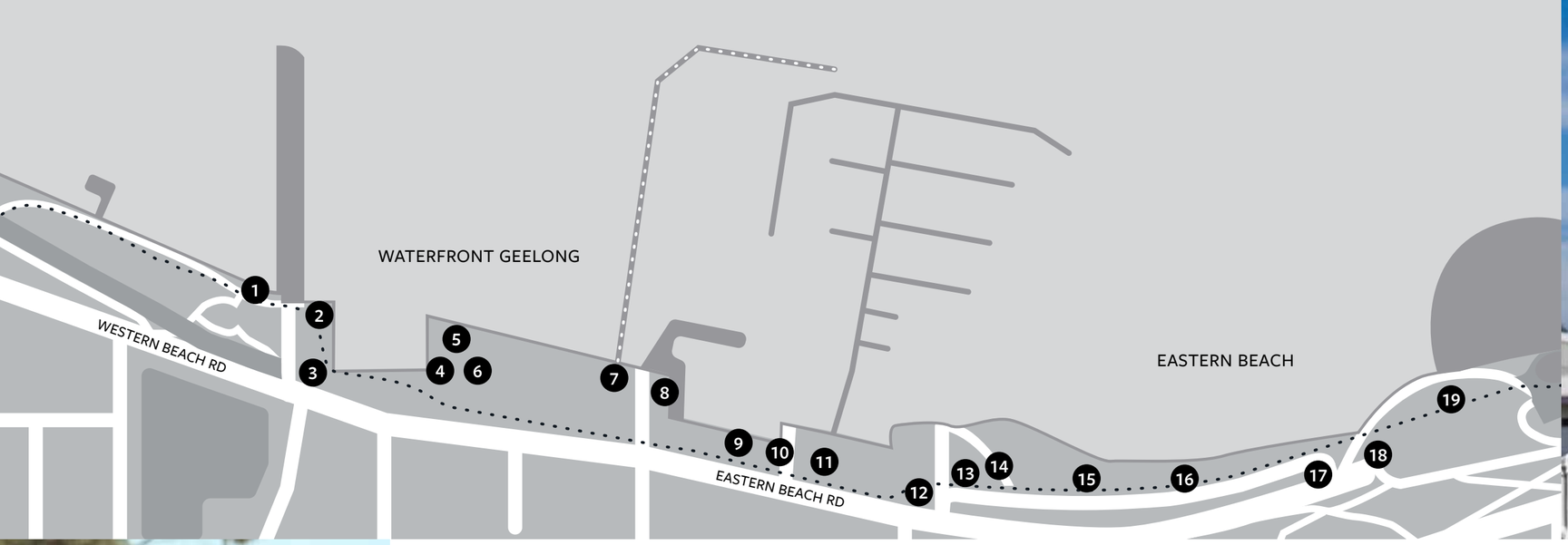












About the Artist

Raised near Healesville, Victoria, Jan Mitchell spent 18 years at Irish national television and radio broadcaster (RTÉ), where she designed the iconic title character for the preschool series *Bosco*.

Returning to Australia in 1986, she settled in Geelong in 1990 to focus on painting, printmaking and illustration. Mitchell pioneered her famous bollard art from reclaimed wharf pylons, installing over 100 colourful historical figures along Geelong's foreshore by 1999. In 2006, she was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) for transforming the waterfront.



1 VICTORIA BATHS SWIMMERS

Cunningham Pier

Created by local artist Jan Mitchell between 1994 and 1999, the Victoria Baths Swimmers are a playful series of painted bollards that pay tribute to the city's 1870s seaside history. These figures, dressed in vintage swimming costumes and colourful caps, serve as a beloved, light-hearted landmark celebrating Geelong's enduring connection to the water.



2 SAIL AND STEAM CAPTAINS

Cunningham Pier

Standing at the entrance to Cunningham Pier, the Sea Captains are a vibrant tribute to the sailors and workers who shaped Geelong's rich maritime history. This colourful pair features the captain of the historic *SS Edina* steamship alongside a wool clipper captain, both iconic symbols of the city's bustling port past.



3 SAILOR AND WOMAN

Waterfront Steps

These colourful bollards depict a sailor and a local woman capturing the lively spirit of Geelong's waterfront during World War II. While playful in design, the figures include intricate historical details that honour both the local port community and the brave crew of HMAS *Geelong*.



4 GEELONG BATHS SWIMMING CLUB

Carousel

The Geelong Baths Swimming Club bollards capture the competitive spirit of early 20th-century waterfront life, commemorating the boisterous contests and chaotic "duck hunts" of pre-First World War swimming clubs. These vibrant figures celebrate the determination and sporting culture that once defined the city's historic regattas.



5 BIRD MAN

Carousel

The Bird Man bollard honours former Mayor and department store manager Morrie Jacobs, highlighting his legacy of sharing his private aviary with the local Geelong community. Though now relocated indoors, this vibrant figure remains a playful tribute to the joy Morrie brought to children who visited his garden every Sunday.



6 VOLUNTEER RIFLE BAND

Steampacket Gardens

The Volunteer Rifle Band bollards celebrate the part-time soldiers who entertained Geelong locals with Sunday performances from 1861 to the 1920s. These interactive, colourful figures invite visitors to join the performance, serving as a playful and enduring tribute to the city's musical history.



7 TRAM CONDUCTRESS

Wharfshed

Affectionately known as 'Connie', this lively bollard pays tribute to the women who served as tram conductresses in Geelong from 1912 until 1956. Featuring cheeky details like a knitting project and hidden symbols, the artwork celebrates their independence and spirit, and the vital role they played in keeping the city moving.

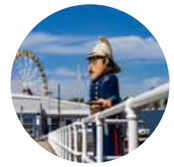




8 SCALLOP FISHERMEN AND WOMAN

Fishermen's Pier

This colourful trio depicts a 19th-century waterfront scene featuring a dredger, fishmonger and woman, recalling an era when fresh seafood was sold directly from boats. The artwork is a lively tribute to Geelong's historic fishing industry, with a charming connection to the present day as local mussels are still sold nearby.



9 FIREMAN

Fishermen's Pier

The 1869 Volunteer Fireman bollard commemorates the historic scuttling of the wool clipper *Lightning* following a catastrophic fire in Corio Bay. The figure also serves as a poignant tribute to the five Geelong West firefighters who tragically lost their lives in the 1998 Linton bushfire.



10 YACHT CLUB LADY

Yacht Club

Elegantly positioned near the Royal Geelong Yacht Club, the Yacht Club Lady features a trophy modelled after a historic cup once awarded to the yacht *The Paddy*. This graceful figure pays tribute to Geelong's longstanding sailing culture and the fiercely contested regattas that defined the city's early maritime history.



11 MRS DE CARTERET

Yacht Club

The Kitty De Carteret bollard honours the beloved proprietor of a popular 1960s tearoom who served as a cherished local figure for generations of Geelong children. Depicted with a glass of her famous house-made lemon squash, this vibrant artwork serves as a sweet, enduring tribute to one of the city's most memorable everyday heroes.



Bollard Bunnies

Look closely as you explore the Geelong Waterfront Bollards and you might discover one of their best-kept secrets – hidden rabbits. Tucked beside a character's feet or peeking from beneath a dress hem, these hand-painted bunnies act as a clever historical clue.

The rabbits mark a turning point in local and Australian history. Bollards representing life before 1859 are rabbit-free, while those depicting later years feature a furry companion. The date refers to Thomas Austin's famous release of 24 rabbits at nearby Winchelsea in 1859, an event associated with the rapid spread of wild rabbits across Australia. Their numbers grew at an extraordinary rate, contributing to one of the country's most significant environmental challenges.

These playful "fuzzy footnotes" add another layer of storytelling to the waterfront, giving visitors a fun detail to spot while discovering Geelong's history through Jan Mitchell's iconic bollards.

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Hidden Symbols

The Geelong Bollards are full of hidden details waiting to be discovered. Look closely and you'll find visual clues that bring the city's history to life, from carefully chosen props and tools to changing fashions and everyday objects from different eras.

Every detail has been thoughtfully included to tell a story, helping visitors uncover the people, places and events that have shaped Geelong over time. As you stroll along the waterfront, see how many clues you can spot and uncover the stories behind them.

The more closely you look, the more Geelong's history reveals itself. How many can you find?



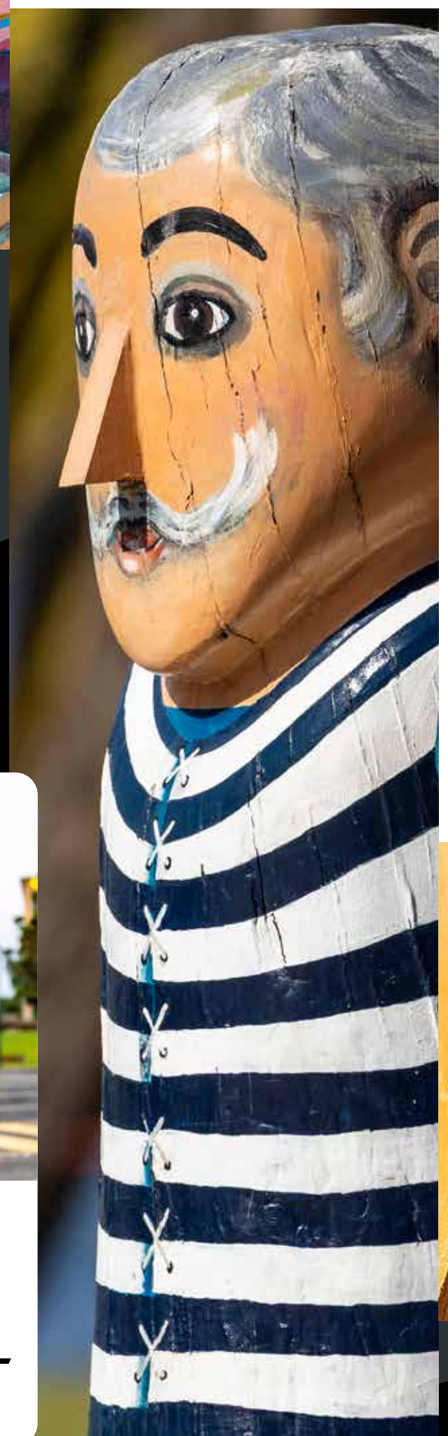
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CITY OF GREATER GEELONG





12 EARLY GEELONG FOOTBALLER

Ferris Wheel

Standing guard at the end of Swanston Street, this bollard celebrates the early history of the Geelong Football Club, formerly known as the Pivotonians. The figure commemorates the team's original waterfront training grounds and their transition to the iconic blue and white hoops in 1876.

13 PIERROT

Ferris Wheel

This bollard depicts Pierrot the clown to commemorate the Joy Ark, a grand 1912 entertainment venue and dance hall that once stood over the waters of Corio Bay. Although the theatre was demolished in 1926, this nostalgic artwork captures the theatrical spirit of the seaside celebrations that defined Geelong's early entertainment history.



14 JOY ARK SANDWICH BOARD MAN

Ferris Wheel

The Sandwich Board Man bollard commemorates the historic Joy Ark, a 1,400-seat silent movie theatre built on timber piles over the bay in 1912. The artwork features a vintage advertisement for Rudolph Valentino's *The Son of the Sheik*, serving as a clever reminder of the popular waterfront venue that ultimately struggled to survive the social shifts of World War I.



15 TOWN BATHS SWIMMERS CLUB

Eastern Beach

Tucked near the Ferris wheel, the Town Baths Lifesavers bollards use a humorous visual timeline of evolving swimwear to capture the history of Geelong's beach culture. Together with the Sandwich Board Man, these artworks celebrate the city's resilient entertainment heritage, tracing the transformation of iconic over-water venues into the beloved landmarks that remain today.



16 BATHING BEAUTIES

Eastern Beach

The Bathing Beauties bollards celebrate Geelong's lively summer tradition of New Year's Day beauty pageants held during the 1930s and 1940s. These colourful figures capture the playful spirit of an era when the popular events drew massive crowds before eventually moving from the beachfront to the Palais dance hall in 1946.







17 CAR RALLY PICNICKERS

Eastern Beach

The Car Rally Picnickers celebrate the adventurous spirit of early motorists who embarked on exciting, self-sufficient journeys along the Geelong seafront before the construction of modern coastal roads. These detailed figures capture the charm of a bygone era when wealthy enthusiasts braved unpredictable weather in open-topped tourers, equipped with little more than a picnic hamper and a toolbox.



18 IAN MCDONALD AND ROBERT JOHNSTONE

Eastern Beach

The bollards of City Engineer Ian McDonald and Mayor Robert de Bruce Johnstone bring together two influential civic leaders who, despite never meeting, helped shape Geelong's iconic public spaces. Highlighting McDonald's development of the Eastern Beach 'People's Playground' alongside Johnstone's 19th-century preservation of the city's parks and gardens, the artwork pays tribute to their shared vision and enduring legacy.



19 EASTERN BEACH LIFESAVERS

Eastern Beach

Standing near the Eastern Beach swimming enclosure, these bollards honour Bill Coyte, a local hero who spent 25 years teaching generations of Geelong children to swim. The vibrant figures capture his watchful, community-minded spirit and serve as a lasting tribute to the countless Saturday mornings he dedicated to the water.



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We Acknowledge the Wadawurrung People as the Traditional Owners of the Land, Waterways and Skies. We pay our respects to their Elders, past, present and emerging. We Acknowledge all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who are part of our Greater Geelong community today.

Geelong
ARTS, CULTURE & HERITAGE TRAILS



Waterfront Bollards

Discover Geelong's iconic Bollard Trail, where whimsical figures and historical characters transform reclaimed timber into a unique outdoor gallery.

Explore fascinating stories of 19th and 20th-century life, everyday heroes and local culture, and experience Geelong's past through new perspectives.

CITY OF GREATER GEELONG