

## Civic Hall insight from a new generation

By Gwendoline Blake Oct. 25, 2013, midnight

At a coffee lounge with my granddaughter Antonella, I was sifting through news of the Civic Hall. I explained what it is and where it is.

"Grandma, I think they should use the Civic Hall for homeless people and put lovely beds and food in there for them," she said.

I was amazed that she even knew it existed. After all, no eight-year-old would ever have been inside.

Thinking cynically that the council would never use the Civic Hall as a shelter for homeless people I replied: "Well, they already have those."

Quick as a flash she replied: "But they're only for men, Grandma!"

Later I asked her over the phone, via SMS, to send me the full details she had given me of her idea. She replied, via her iPod that it was too much to type and that she'd make a video of herself talking and send it to my phone.

She said that the Civic Hall should be like a house, but a big house for all the homeless people.

I said that we could hardly have a homeless shelter in the fashionable heart of town.

"I don't understand, Grandma. Why not? It would be good for Ballarat."

Do we have a new generation of informed, compassionate, technology-savvy children growing up?

Should we accept there will always be 10 per cent of unemployed, as Joan Kirner was once quoted as saying? Should we spend mega-millions on demolitions and re-constructions when people are sleeping under bridges?