

NORTH WEST CITY NEWS

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Puzzles & Trivia P22



Back in business!
Photo by John Tadigiri

After a tumultuous year, businesses in the city’s north-west, including owner of Heartland Records in North Melbourne Paul Cook, are rejoicing after finally waving goodbye to the world’s longest lockdown. *Full story on page 7.*

New public housing resident action groups created

WORDS BY *Spencer Fowler Steen*
COMMUNITY

New resident action groups have been established for public housing residents in North Melbourne and Flemington, ensuring locals have a say in decisions impacting their homes and communities.

The new resident groups form part of the Victorian Government’s \$7.5 million Paving the Way Forward Program (PWFP), which is designed to assist public housing residents to achieve improvements in health, education, and employment through a range of projects.

Residents hope the new groups will fix a range of serious amenity problems at the towers, which in the past have included a lack of clean water for weeks, broken heaters in winter, lifts not working and faulty stoves, washing machines and dryers.

The groups will also work towards improving communication at the towers, potentially through providing translators and better signage in more languages.

The announcement follows sharp criticism earlier this year from the Victorian Ombudsman who said it was “disappointing” the Victorian Government had not apologised to public housing residents in North Melbourne and Flemington, who were without warning plunged into lockdown last year in breach of their human rights.

North West City News understands there are five groups, each covering a different issue – improving communication, COVID-19 responses, maintenance, Holland Court redevelopment, and access to community rooms.

North Melbourne public housing resident Mohamed Sudi is a member of three of the resident action groups; improving communication, COVID-19 responses and maintenance.

Continued on page 2.

Council delivers Macaulay Structure Plan

After nearly a decade of frustration and difficulty, the City of Melbourne has released its highly anticipated Macaulay Structure Plan for a new urban renewal precinct in Kensington and North Melbourne.

WORDS BY *Spencer Fowler Steen*
PLANNING

The plan, which was endorsed by councillors at the Future Melbourne Committee (FMC) meeting on November 9, outlines the council’s vision for the 90-hectare precinct, which will be home to more than 10,000 residents and 9500 workers by 2051.

Lord Mayor Sally Capp said the Macaulay Structure Plan 2021 created a once-in-a-generation opportunity for the City of Melbourne.

“We’re transforming Macaulay into a vibrant, bustling and sustainable new neighbourhood right on the doorstep of the CBD,” the Lord Mayor said.

“Our vision is for a mixed-use, mid-rise precinct within Kensington and North Melbourne that has lush green streets, world-class amenities, and superb cycling, walking and public transport connectivity.”

Unlike the recently-released Arden Structure Plan, which is being led by the Victorian Planning Authority (VPA) in consultation with the CoM, Macaulay is being entirely spearheaded by the council with no involvement from the VPA.

As a mid-rise, mixed-use precinct straddling either side of the Moonee Ponds Creek, the area will include affordable housing, a mix of shops, offices and spaces for small- and medium-sized enterprises and start-ups.

Residents and visitors will be sup-

ported by new community services including two community hubs, a government secondary school in Macaulay and a government primary school in Arden.

According to the council, the plan provides a vision for a climate-ready neighbourhood that prioritises walking, cycling and public transport as well as the revitalisation of the Moonee Ponds Creek.

Environment portfolio lead Cr Rohan Leppert said a key component of the structure plan would deliver more green open spaces for residents.

“With backyards shrinking and our population growing, it’s never been more important for us to provide green open spaces for the community,” Cr Leppert said.

“A key feature of the Macaulay Structure Plan includes future-proofing against the impacts of climate change. We’ve strived to create a climate-ready precinct and adaptable neighbourhood that prioritises accelerated emissions reduction actions and supports the transition to renewable energy.”

Speaking on November 9, the council’s director of city strategy Sophie Handley said that although there was widespread support for the draft Macaulay Structure Plan, there were several issues raised during the consultation process which the council had worked to address.

Some submissions raised concerns regarding density, built form controls at residential interfaces, greater

Continued on page 3.

FEATURE, PAGE 05

A Michelle’s world of music and medicine

PLANNING, PAGE 09

B Arden arches in place at Metro Tunnel

ARTS & CULTURE, PAGE 10

C Tale of a swashbuckling hero

COMMUNITY, PAGE 11

D You can cry your heart out

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CONTACT

Suite 108, 198 Harbour Esplanade
Docklands 3008
northwestcitynews.com.au
Tel: 8689 7980

EDITOR

Spencer Fowler Steen

PUBLISHER

Hyperlocal News Pty Ltd
ABN: 57 623 558 725

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New public housing resident action groups created

Continued from page 1.

Mr Sudi welcomes the initiative, but hopes the groups will fix serious problems that arise at his tower, which in the past have included dirty drinking water which left residents with no option but to go to other units to shower and drink.

“For a few residents – the tap water has a problem where it’s dirty and they had to call a contractor, who had to delay, which meant they couldn’t have a shower or drink water,” he said.

“Some residents had to wait three weeks which meant they had to go downstairs to get better water.”

Mr Sudi said his maintenance group was working towards getting a repair person to be on stand-by to fix communal laundry facilities such as washing machines and dryers which were crucial for a majority of residents who often couldn’t afford their own.

“Each level has a laundry to use for residents, and some of them, level 10 in particular, the washing machine or dryer doesn’t work, and you’re not allowed to go down to use the other ones on other levels,” he said.

“Most levels have two washing machines and two dryers, but you have to queue to use them.”

Mr Sudi said PTWF was talking to housing contractors to employ more repair people.

He said there were only one or two contractors, who also worked on other buildings across Melbourne, available for the entire building to fix broken amenities such as electrical stoves and elevators.

“And sometimes the heaters don’t work, which is bad in winter. How are we going to heat the whole house? It’s tough during winter,” he said.

There are more than 35 members involved across the five groups which are for residents only, with each group meeting once every two weeks over Zoom for now.

The resident action groups started in October with an information session allowing residents to ask questions about the process and



▲ Mohamed Sudi is a member of three resident groups.

to nominate themselves to specific groups.

Mr Sudi said the resident action groups had also been discussing hiring out community spaces for residents who send their kids to homework clubs, as well as having interpreters on-site to communicate vital information about COVID-19 to residents.

According to the state government, all issues raised by the groups will be directed to the relevant program area within the Department of Families Fairness and Housing (DFFH).

They will then be raised directly with other relevant government departments, local government and community agencies and be a key part of local action plans for each housing precinct.

A DFFH spokesperson said residents at the Flemington and North Melbourne public housing precincts would benefit from a range of health and wellbeing projects through the PWFP.

“An important part of this program is the establishment of Resident Action Groups, which will ensure residents have a major say in decisions impacting their homes and communities,” the spokesperson said.

“These groups will strengthen the

diverse communities at Flemington and North Melbourne – helping them address important issues and develop a greater sense of belonging.”

Last month, Minister for Housing Richard Wynne announced 25 community-led projects supporting residents across the Flemington and North Melbourne public housing precincts would soon begin with funding through the \$200,000 Paving the Way Forward Community Grants program.

According to the state government, the projects include:

- \$10,000 to deliver a pop-up after-school play program to help with recovery from the social, emotional and developmental impacts of COVID-19 lockdowns and remote learning;
- \$4750 for the Resident Skills Development Project, which will offer nationally recognised training, credentials and valuable volunteer experience to provide pathways to employment; and
- \$4400 for a digital literacy course for refugee and asylum seeker women to fill the education gap and provide students with practical skills to confidently live, learn, and work.

Community development workers will also be employed through community partner organisations in Flemington and North Melbourne to improve access to services and enable residents to be more involved in decisions about their homes and neighbourhood.

Mr Wynne said the state government was giving public housing residents the “power” to make decisions about their housing and local neighbourhood.

“From after-school play programs to digital literacy courses and employment pathways, these programs will ensure public housing residents are not left behind as we recover from the pandemic,” he said.

The state government has not yet apologised for the snap lockdown in July last year which left many without food, essential medicine, and no access to fresh air, surrounded by police ●

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Council delivers Macaulay Structure Plan

Continued from page 1.

protection of amenity, heritage and character, as well as floor area ratios and heights considered too low or prescriptive.

Kensington Association (KA) chair Simon Harvey said there was “a lot” in the plan that the association was “very happy” with, but raised three main concerns centred around Macaulay Station, population growth and the need for more public open space.

Mr Harvey said the frequency of train services along the Upfield line servicing Macaulay Station would need to increase, but that this would not be possible without a line upgrade.

“[Macaulay Station] will be a central hub, but very little attention seems to have been paid to that in the structural plan as we read it as to the way it will be developed to cope with the growth in population and activity,” he said.

Mr Harvey said that he also had “grave concerns” about what KA called the “Macaulay Rd dilemma”.

“This points to a very unique constrained quality of Macaulay Rd between two railway lines, and it feeds into the population issues and through-traffic issues along the road, which are of grave concern to us all in the area,” he said.

Mr Harvey said a KA member calculated that there were more than 2300 apartments in the current pipeline of approval and new planning applications for Macaulay.

He said based on this trend, there was “no way” under the present policy settings that the forecasted 10,000 population increase would not be exceeded.

Finally, Mr Harvey said he appreciated the council's recent move to purchase a \$5 million parcel of land in Chelmsford St for green space in Macaulay but urged it to sort out Moonee Ponds Creek.

“Moonee Ponds Creek is like a joke to us because it's been going on for so long,” he said.

“We ask you to please sort out the governance, of course finances, and management issues of the creek and make the revitalisation



▲ Artist impressions of Macaulay. Indicative for illustrative purposes only.

Pictures: City of Melbourne.

of the creek happen.”

Cr Leppert said the Minister for Planning and the Treasurer were on record in Parliament saying they would entertain handing over committee of management status from VicTrack to the City of Melbourne so the council could “unlock” the creek.

Former Lord Mayor and president of the North and West Melbourne Association

(NWMA) Kevin Chamberlin said it was essential that the council and government provided “all-important” infrastructure in Macaulay to meet the growing population.

“It is important to remember that in many of these areas where the council and government have significant redevelopment plans, that they

have already undergone significant population increases within the existing built form of the area,” he told *North West City News*.

“Even in parts of Kensington, the census between 2011 and 2016 tells us areas have increased substantially, and one as much as 40 per cent in population. So, it's really important that council and government provide the all-important infrastructure and mobility capacity.”

“As we find, the schools are already full, there is insufficient open space, and other essential services and community facilities are at capacity or under stress. The government and council needs to keep in mind they're not just there to approve developments, they're there to approve sustainable communities.”

Cr Leppert also moved 14 sets of amendments to the Macaulay Structure Plan which were all supported by councillors at the November 9 FMC meeting.

The amendments addressed submissions and concern from the North Melbourne and Kensington communities and included the creation of a specific action plan for building two new crossings of the Moonee Ponds Creek, rather than leaving it to the state government.

Among Cr Leppert's other sets of amendments was the clarification of proposed street wall and setback controls for the boundary of the precinct at Shiel St, ensuring that the massing of new building is focused towards Macaulay Rd, rather than Shiel St.

Cr Leppert also moved another significant amendment on public reporting to increase transparency around the structure plan.

It creates a new obligation to report publicly on the progress of the structure plan implementation, including the known and estimated number of actual and approved dwellings and overall residential job numbers.


Deputy Leader of the Victorian Greens and Member for Melbourne Ellen Sandell said although the process of planning for Macaulay had been “very frustrating” for members of the local community, she was pleased Cr Leppert was able to get support for his amendments.

“This is a huge new suburb in our area and governments really need to work with the community to get these right, so that we don't end up with overly bulky and badly designed homes and workplaces,” Ms Sandell said.


Deputy Lord Mayor Nicholas Reece said the Macaulay Structure Plan 2021 was an incredibly important document for the future of the city's northern suburbs.

“In creating this structure plan we've looked carefully at some of the leading new urban development projects around the world – from Barcelona to Copenhagen and Manchester,” Cr Reece said.

“Macaulay will be the best new medium-rise suburb Melbourne has ever seen.” ●



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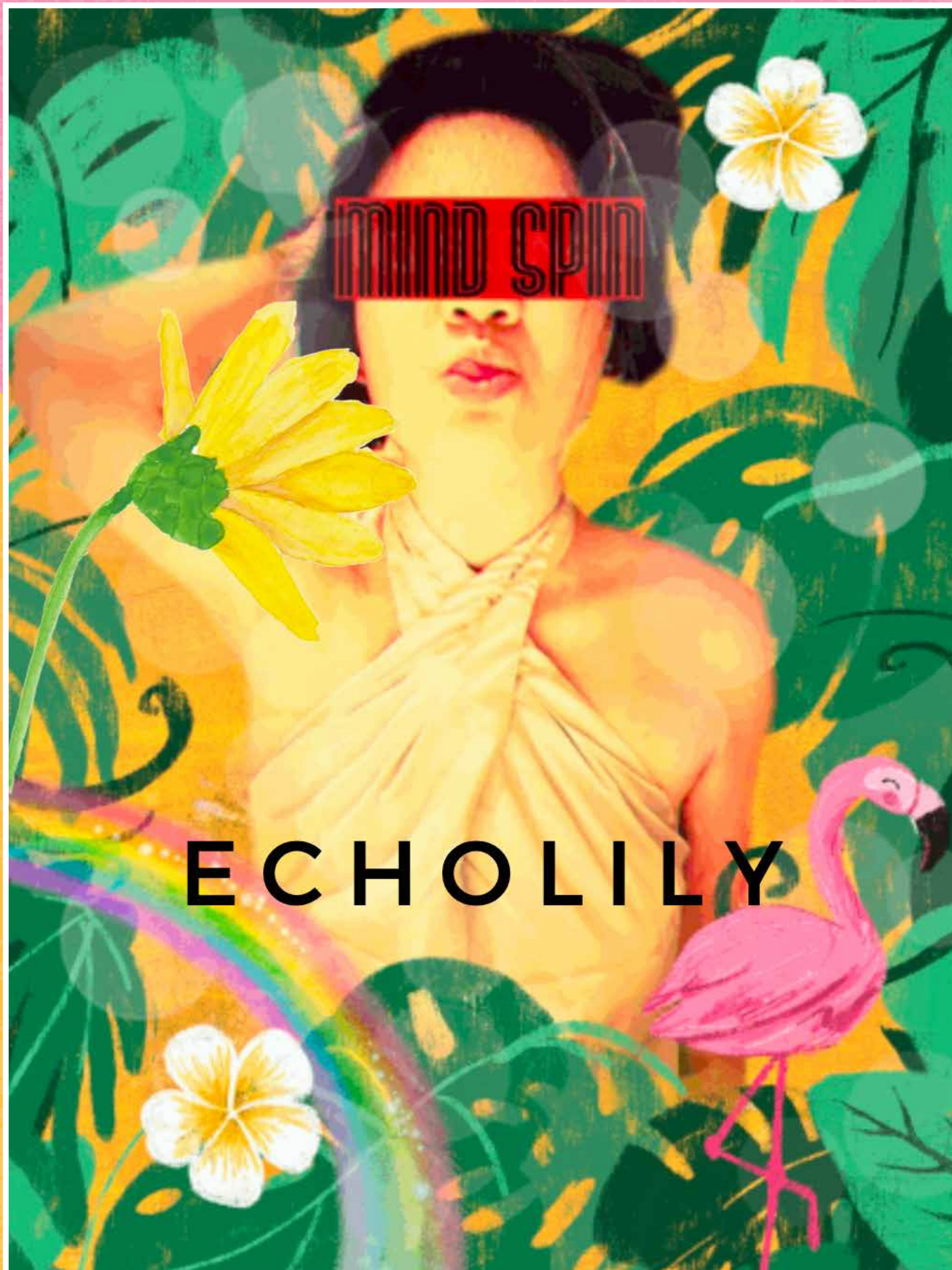
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Michelle’s world of music and medicine

Music and medicine may seem like disparate disciplines, but Dr Michelle Chong manages to excel in both while keeping the two quite separate.

WORDS BY *Spencer Fowler Steen*
FEATURE

When this local physician musician isn’t busy working as an anaesthetist at two major public hospitals, you’ll find her singing, playing keys, and producing down-tempo, electronica music from her DIY home studio in West Melbourne.

And now, after years of honing her skills, Dr Chong has released her fourth single, *Mindspin*, under her artist name, Echolily – a catchy, electronic dance song which she wrote after a night out on the town with her girlfriends who were all going through breakups.

But while she’s been keeping busy in Melbourne, like many of us, she has sadly missed being there for some important life moments due to COVID travel restrictions – namely the death of her father, and her sister’s marriage and pregnancy.

Born in Malaysia, Dr Chong was raised by her single mother who inadvertently kick-started her passion for music by buying her a radio cassette player as a kid.

Although they didn’t have much in the way of possessions growing up, Dr Chong remembers listening to cassettes of artists such as Whitney Houston and the Sound of Music soundtrack, while her mother also tuned in to teach herself English.

“I was kind of broke when I was young and didn’t have many toys,” she said.

“My mother brought home this radio and I remember playing cassettes every day and trying to copy them to learn how words were being put together to convey things like love.”

Wherever Dr Chong goes, music seems to follow.

When she was 18 years old, Dr Chong moved from her hometown to Kuala Lumpur to study medicine.

But when she didn’t have her head in the books, she was out exploring the “massive” jazz scene in the city, also getting lessons from the famous Malaysian singer Junji Delfino.

Already an adept singer and piano player, Dr Chong took up the double bass for a six-month stint when she first arrived in Melbourne to work as a doctor.

But she said it was the “toughest instrument” she had ever learnt.

“It doesn’t have any frets and it’s a lot to do with listening to what the other people are playing and trying to lay the bass down – it’s lots of responsibility!” she said.

The irony of someone who uses chemical cocktails to render people unconscious without killing them for a living saying that double bass is a “big responsibility” was not lost on this publication.

Dr Chong’s first song, *Under the Clocks* was released in February this year on St Valentine’s



Day. It’s a lo-fi banger with soaring synths and echoing, harmonic vocals punctuated by samples of sounds from Flinders Street Station.

“It was essentially a love letter to Melbourne,” she said.

When she first arrived in the city, Dr Chong said she loved listening to the sounds of the clocks and trains at Flinders Street.

“One day I was busking there, and there was a trumpet player, and he started telling me about the clocks and said people used to say: ‘meet me under the clocks’ as a way of communicating times and dates for dating, so I turned that into a song,” she said.

Having been a healthcare worker throughout the entire pandemic, Dr Chong said she was one of the few people who was permitted to leave the house – a lonely experience she tried to capture in the song.

“I could hear my own thoughts and the sounds of the clocks, and the song was internalised produced to echo that sense of emptiness and the sounds echo and bounce off each other,” she said.

Throughout COVID, Dr Chong said she, and every medical professional she knew, threw

themselves out onto the frontline with the instinct to protect and treat patients.

She said because anaesthetists often managed the airways of very sick patients, the pressure fell on her and her colleagues to treat people infected with COVID-19.

“A lot of the stress was in the unknown,” she said.

“There’s an expectation for the medical and science people to be the ones that the world community is looking for answers from, when we are also learning about the disease as well.”

Dr Chong said she was never afraid of catching COVID-19 herself, but she feared for her mum, stepdad and grandma back home in Malaysia where the effects of the pandemic were felt severely.

Dr Chong sadly lost her biological father to stroke last year but was unable to travel back to Malaysia with her brother who lives in Sydney.

“My younger sister had married and is having a baby soon, and I still haven’t been able to congratulate her [in-person] – I’m sure many people have this situation,” she said.

While juggling her twin jobs at two public hospitals in Melbourne where she’s often

on-call day and night, Dr Chong wrote her second song, *Blue*.

“It was this really difficult time for me creatively, I had the worst writer’s block sitting in my bedroom studio just staring into my microphone, which by the way is blue!” she said.

“I thought I’ll write a song about my microphone.”

“And then, at the end of the writer’s block, there was this really cool feeling of something breaking and there was this explosion of ideas.”

“*Blue* is about what’s at the end of the writer’s block – the explosion of ideas, chords, synths.”

Three years ago, Dr Chong built her own music studio at home complete with speakers, Logic Pro, an audio interface, synthesisers, and mini keyboard.

Although she is a solo artist, she said she felt extremely connected with Melbourne’s music community, which had helped her through friendship and support when she’d needed help with a song.

She wished to give credit to Michael Cooper, a keyboardist and producer who Dr Chong said taught her “everything” she knew when it came to synths, as well as Andrew Beveridge, her guitar teacher.

Asked whether she ever thought about music at work, Dr Chong said she maintained two very separate worlds.

“Usually at work it’s non-stop and I focus on being a doctor,” she said.

“It’s a different side to me. I can split the two different worlds – the only limiting factor is time.”

Dr Chong said the idea for her most recent song, *Mindspin*, came to her while on a night out with her girlfriends after “a lot” of wine when they were all going through processes of breakups.

“The song includes my observations of how people handle different stages of being drunk and breakups,” she said.

“If you listen to the lyrics, it’s different mumbles and rumblings about love and how people made you feel.”

“I had the idea while I was out and went home and just smashed it out until morning, had a nap, then woke up and called it *Mindspin*.”

Aside from music and medicine, Dr Chong has been enjoying the end of lockdown, catching up with friends and venturing out to cafes and restaurants in North and West Melbourne.

She said she had recently had her friends over for drinks, but one of them left a lemon behind.

A few days later, she noticed an unpleasant smell emanating from behind the couch and found the lemon in a state of decomposition.

“Even though it smelt bad, it was still nice to be in a position to be able to have friends over who could leave lemons behind!” she said.

In the past, Dr Chong has had her songs played on ABC Radio, SBS Radio, as well as the Community Radio Network.

She said from here, her plan was to eventually release an album.

“But releasing a song at a time I’ve realised is a better way to release music. Trying to get people to connect with a song rather than an album of 10 songs is easier,” she said.

“Songs are like your children; you want each child to have the same amount of attention.” ●

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Macaulay Rd, next to The Premises

● North Melbourne 6 Dec 4-6 pm

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REIGNITING MELBOURNE AS THE CITY REOPENS

Melbourne is open. Thanks to so many Melburnians getting vaccinated to help stop the spread of COVID-19, there is lots to look forward to in the city in the coming months.

A big, bold events line-up is set to welcome visitors back to Melbourne, reigniting design, sport, arts and entertainment right across the city.

The City of Melbourne has been working hard to ensure people can experience the city safely, while exploring and connecting with family and friends.

Melbourne is famous as an events capital, the home of superb theatres and galleries and the best place to discover the finest in live performances and art.

As Melbourne opens up, visitors have more reasons than ever to come into the city and see the streets and laneways in a new light, while enjoying art and events in a COVID-safe way.

Here are eight ways to make the most of Melbourne as we reignite the city with activations and events.

FLASH FORWARD LANEWAY ART

Feeling starved of art? Visit the city to see the best of Flash Forward, a program that casts laneways into a creative canvas.

Having commissioned 40 of the city's finest, most experimental and provocative artists to create brand new large-scale works, Flash Forward welcomes Melburnians back into the CBD to reinvigorate and re-energise our world-renowned laneways.

Extraordinary murals, shimmering colours, an ominous digital clock and a figure striking dozens of poses now enliven the walls of many Melbourne buildings.

All the artworks are new and free to visit.



MELBOURNE MUSIC WEEK

Melbourne's signature music event supports the live performance sector that helps make the city unique. As music venues reopen and live music returns, keep an eye out for a program celebrating local artists.

Melbourne Music Week from 3 to 12 December will take over Melbourne's venues, partner with iconic cultural organisations and spill out onto the streets and laneways to revel in the local music scene.



MELBOURNE MONEY

We're working with the Victorian Government to bring back a second course of the Melbourne Money dining scheme to help the city bounce back from the latest lockdown.

Melburnians claimed millions in cash back through Melbourne Money when it launched in June, with funds from the \$8.4 million scheme exhausted in less than five weeks.

More than 270,000 meals were rebated, amounting to \$40 million flowing to more than 3000 city restaurants, cafes and bars.

Watch this space for more information coming soon
melbourne.vic.gov.au



OUTDOOR TRADING, DINING AND ENTERTAINMENT

The city is being turned inside out to bring indoor trading, dining and entertainment outdoors and into the streets of Melbourne, leveraging the city's iconic laneways and eclectic, thriving nightlife.

Inside Out is designed to capitalise on the Victorian Government's roadmap out of lockdown, which will allow retail and hospitality businesses to trade outdoors.

Look out for all the fun of Inside Out on Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights around town.



NEW YEAR'S EVE LIGHTS UP

Plans are underway for a safe and creative City of Melbourne celebration to ring in 2022, Lord Mayor Sally Capp said.

"We know locals and visitors love our annual New Years' Eve celebration. The event showcases our city, our identity, and our sense of community," the Lord Mayor said.

"We are definitely planning to deliver a celebration - because more people in the city means keeping people in jobs and our restaurants, bars and cafes full.

"We're in active discussions with the Victorian Government and will ultimately be guided by the health advice to ensure the safety of everyone."

Revellers are encouraged to book in to city venues and celebrate responsibly at one of the many cafes, bars and restaurants that are throwing open their doors for a night of fun and festivity.

Or perhaps plan a staycation at one of the many new city hotels and make it the ultimate Melbourne holiday.

MELBOURNE FASHION WEEK

A springtime highlight, Melbourne Fashion Week from 15 to 21 November shines a light on local designers and retailers.

Half the program is free so look out for pop up runways across city locations as well as eight Fashion Capsule exhibits, which showcase the work of local designers, weavers, artisans, Aboriginal artists, stylists and more.

To view the full program or to purchase tickets, visit
melbourne.vic.gov.au/mfw



MELBOURNE ATTRACTIONS KEYPASS

This summer, the City of Melbourne is teaming up with local tourism operators to offer discounts at some of the city's most exciting attractions and experiences, like the SEA LIFE Melbourne Aquarium and the Old Melbourne Gaol.

From fun family activities, to walking tours and foodie experiences, the Melbourne Attractions Keypass will unlock great deals for a terrific day or night out.

There's never been a better time to rediscover the city and visit the world-class attractions right here.

FESTIVE FAMILY FUN FOR CHRISTMAS

Melbourne can look forward to a COVID-safe Christmas experience in the city, to lift spirits after a difficult year.

The City of Melbourne's Christmas Festival is being expanded by an extra fortnight this year, for maximum enjoyment.

The six-week \$5.8 million festival features free and family-friendly entertainment, including lighting projections, festive installations and an outdoor Christmas cinema.

A 16-metre tall Christmas tree is a real showstopper, glowing with more than 30,000 energy-efficient LED lights and 500 baubles.

Come into the city to see the decorations, do your Christmas shopping and enjoy a meal at a favourite eatery.



Information and events in this publication are current at the time of printing. Subsequent changes may occur. All photos taken in line with health and safety guidelines.

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Businesses celebrate after world’s longest lockdown ends

WORDS BY *Brendan Rees*
BUSINESS

After a tumultuous year, businesses in the city’s north-west are rejoicing after finally waving goodbye to the world’s longest lockdown.

As the city emerged from its sixth lockdown October 22, traders wasted no time opening their doors as people flocked to cafes, pubs, and hairdressers to celebrate their newly returned freedoms, providing a much-needed cash boost for long-suffering businesses.

Manfred Schopf who runs Boots and Barbers in North Melbourne was among many traders relieved to see “a bit of turnover again”.

“The barbers were definitely busy,” he said after clients rushed to get a trim for the first time in three months.

“It’s definitely started to change and it’s great to be busy.”

Mr Schopf said the lockdown had been “very, very tough” on his Errol St business which has been in operation for 22 years, adding “it was a backward slide for a long period”.

“We had to ask for relief on the rent, we had to ask for government grants – without that I wouldn’t be here anymore.”

But since lockdown had ended, Mr Schopf said he was now thankful to say he was “working flat out at the moment” with “everything going back to normal”.

Paul Cook, who owns Heartland Records, also in North Melbourne, said there had been a “mad rush” of customers eager to get their hands on vinyl records.

“We didn’t have a chance to not get back into the swing of things – we just got smashed from day one,” he said.

Mr Cook said records were “more popular than ever”, with people now regretting having thrown out any record players they may have previously owned, with some people “paying a lot more”.

He said he was grateful to have survived during the uncertain times as his online record sales remained strong.

Mr Cook said the first few days of reopening his shop had been “nerve-wracking” but “everything has been pretty smooth” with density limits proving not to be an issue with people following the rules.

In Kensington, Tushar Bhatnagar, co-owner of The Premises café, said it was a “good feeling” to see the end of lockdowns.

“Since we reopened, we were pleasantly busy which was good after a lot of months [in lockdown] and it’s continuing to look busy so far,” he said. “It’s good to see all the familiar faces back with their families.”

Mr Bhatnagar said he was currently extending his Bellair St café after acquiring a neighbouring shop to accommodate an extra 45 seats – with renovations expected to wrap up by mid-November.

“Hopefully having more seats will help us grow our business and have customers especially on those busy weekend hours.”

However, some businesses told North West City News that they hoped trade would pick up after a slow first few weeks back from lockdown.



▲ Ele Troise, right, owner of Sassy Italian Restaurant in West Melbourne, celebrates the return of diners with head chef Trent Kerr.



▲ Left: Paul Cook, owner of Heartland Records in North Melbourne, has had a “mad rush” of customers. Right: Co-owners of The Premises café in Kensington, Tushar Bhatnagar and his wife Amanda Pinto, look forward to growing their business.



Ele Troise, who runs Sassy Italian Restaurant on Dryburgh St, West Melbourne, said while he was excited to welcome back diners, it had been “nowhere near as busy as it once was”.

“The opening has been great because we can actually sit people down, but at the end of the day it’s also tough,” he said.

“Everyone is screaming for staff and we just can’t find any. We’re just making sure we don’t overbook; I lost a couple of functions because we don’t have the manpower to be able to do that.”

He added it had also been a “little bit unfair” for the hospitality businesses to conduct “spot checks” on customers to ensure they showed proof of their COVID-19 vaccination certificate.

“We’re here to run a restaurant and not police people,” he said.

“Apart from that, reopening has been good, we can finally actually have people sit in.”

“I love our customers, so I’m really happy to see customers come in and can actually physically speak to them and have a laugh, and not talk about COVID.”

Sia Kaveh, who was forced to close his Hotham Juice and Gelati shop in North Melbourne for two months after revenue dried up, said trade was “still very, very quiet”.

“We had a good few days but after that they’re all gone,” he said. “Hopefully it gets better.”

Mr Kaveh, who spent \$300,000 on renovations before launching his Errol St shop in May last year, said the precinct needed to find ways to attract new visitors.

“We don’t have any more overseas students, we used to have a lot, and tourists, backpackers ... they’re all gone.”

“All the businesses around here are all suffering. Somehow we have to bring people from other suburbs.”

This month, the Victorian Chamber of Commerce launched a “Safe In Our Hands” campaign which aims to reinforce that the business community is ready to welcome back customers and clients in a COVID-safe manner.

Melbourne Lord Mayor Sally Capp said she was proud of “what we have achieved together as a city”.

“We’ve shown resilience, we’ve shown strength, and we’ve shown courage,” she said.

“Now, the buzz is back in Melbourne and it’s time to celebrate. We are soon welcoming back Fashion Week, the Australian Open, Test Cricket, arts events such as the Lume and Rising, our Christmas festival and much, much more.”

Melbourne Money is back

In what will be a major boost to businesses, the City of Melbourne has announced it will bring back its popular Melbourne Money discount scheme from November 15.

The revamped scheme will allow diners to claim 30 per cent off their bills – up to \$150 – between Monday and Thursday each week when they spend between \$50 and \$500 at cafes, bars and restaurants where meals are served across the municipality.

The incentive scheme, which pumped \$40 million into the city’s economy when it was launched for the Queen’s Birthday long weekend, is part of a \$44 million package to help businesses recover from the COVID-19 lockdown ●

Kensington development deal adds to more affordable housing and jobs

WORDS BY *Brendan Rees*
PLANNING

A six-storey residential development in Kensington will form part of a new landmark state government program aimed at boosting affordable social housing.

The 34-dwelling development was purchased by the state government through its \$5.3 billion Big Homes Build, the largest single investment in social and affordable housing in Australia’s history – which is delivering more than 12,000 new homes and stimulating the economy.

Construction on the Macaulay Rd complex by Bridport Property Group will begin before the end of the year and be completed by mid-2023.

Under the Big Homes Build, the government is “spot-purchasing” established properties in metropolitan and regional Victoria as well as new homes in construction projects that are either in progress or ready to build.

Of the more than 1100 homes purchased, 590 are in ready-to-build projects – many of which the government said were “struggling to make pre-sales and wouldn’t have got off the ground”.

It has also bought 514 already built homes, to help get people into a home faster.

Bridport Property Group, the developers behind the Kensington build, could not be reached for comment, however, the company told the Herald Sun the project was “clearly of great benefit to the economy”.

According to the government, 432 of the homes are currently tenanted or ready to be tenanted, with “more coming as properties go through settlement”.

Minister for Planning Richard Wynne said the Big Homes Build initiative had created jobs across Victoria – “from Whittlesea to Warrnambool – while creating much needed homes for people who need them most”.

“

These new homes are already changing the lives of hundreds of Victorians.

”

“Whether that’s providing a safe place to call home or creating new jobs – we’re getting on with delivering the projects Victoria needs,” he said.

An average of 10,000 jobs per year will be created during the four-year program while boosting Victoria’s social housing supply by 10 per cent.

The homes are being made available to those in the most need, including people living with mental illness or disability, escaping family violence, indigenous people, and those experiencing homelessness ●

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Once a satirist, always a satirist

WORDS BY Rhonda Dredge
ARTS & CULTURE

Cartoonist Michael Leunig was apparently recently axed from The Age for making an anti-vax jibe at the state government for its handling of the pandemic.

The job of a political satirist is to tackle controversial events and there's no denying that mandatory vaccination has been divisive.

But there are other ways of looking at political issues than tackling them head on.

Michael Nicholson, in one of his lockdown paintings, The birdseed of time, demonstrates how other species have benefitted while humans have been off fighting the virus.

In an amusing depiction of our COVID times, the hourglass is broken, and the birds are in charge, a happy circumstance for a native species not as addicted to progress as humans.

The North Melbourne resident has a strong sense of the ridiculous, which should make his presence at an upcoming group show at the Meat Market gallery worth a look.

Michael is naturally upset about Leunig's



demotion from political commentary to life-style. "The media is a funny animal," he said, but he didn't want to buy into the debate directly.

The offending cartoon, posted by Leunig on Instagram, shows a small, bewildered figure cowering before a giant syringe protruding from a tank and references Tiananmen Square.

The point is that visual gags are different to political messages. Mr Nicholson should know. He's an expert, as one of the team behind

Rubbery Figures, a pioneering political satire screened on the ABC in the '80s.

The series lampooned the political events of the day using animation and puppets, focusing on ridiculing the appearance of the politicians themselves.

"My brother made the puppet," Michael said. "The front two rooms were editing suites. We were doing six to eight films a week."

The team did animations then inserted puppets caricatures of Hawke, Keating and Bjelke-Peterson into them. "We did one of Gorbachev walking into the Kremlin, then we cut to the puppet and scattered Lux soap, so it looked like snow."

The skits of old still inform Michael's paintings which are piled up in the hall of his Victorian house in Melrose St. With 45 destined for the exhibition, there's not much hanging space.

Michael also wrote for Graham Kennedy, Bert Newton and Ernie Sigley back in the day. The difference is that not all of his paintings have a punch line.

Mountain Climber shows a woman helping her husband out of a volcano, Surf Beach a

gunman on a surfboard and Tipped Over Vase a man climbing stairs behind a bunch of flowers.

He still remembers some of the lines from his stand-up comic era when jibes were the currency. Nunawading, where Channel 10 moved, was said to be "Aboriginal for no ratings".

In one of Michael's recent works, Matthew Flinders is arriving on a boat. The date is 1802. The moon looks like a spaceship. An indigenous warrior is looking out on the scene mouthing the word "gybe" in a speech bubble.

Michael makes a distinction from the American word jibe. "Gybe is English for turning a boat," he said.

The politics is more subtle than the jibes of old, but Michael can't help himself. Once a satirist always a satirist.

Group Show, New North Melbourne Museum of Modern Art, Meat Market, December 3-13 ●

For more information:
michaeljohnnicholson.gallery

Lockdown weary kids embrace orienteering fun at Parkville Gardens

WORDS BY Brendan Rees
COMMUNITY

After months of being confined to their homes, the children of Parkville Gardens have wasted no time soaking up the outdoors while enjoying a fun day of orienteering.

The event, which coincided with Children's Week, saw 50 kids accompanied by 20 adults traverse Royal Park and Parkville Gardens under blue skies on October 31.

Organised by the Parkville Gardens Residents' Association and following COVID-safe rules, the participants broke up into groups as they used a compass and map to navigate their way around the 3.2km course.

Along the way the groups completed various activities such as finding numbers written on blackboards and throwing tennis balls towards a flag.

To add some fun, the groups also used to chalk to write messages at checkpoints for other participants to read.

Michael Thom, a committee member of the Parkville Gardens Residents' Association, said the day was a success and a good opportunity for kids to learn navigation skills without using digital devices.

"There were lots of smiling faces and everyone seemed to enjoy the hour or so that it took to complete the course," he said.



▲ Kids enjoy a day of orienteering at Parkville Gardens.

"We included a bag with everything they needed to complete the course and they got to keep the compass. There were also snacks and bottled water provided."

"The weather was perfect, 21 degrees and sunny, which helps."

Parkville Gardens resident Ajith Vasanthakumar said his nine-year-old son had a "great time" on the course after forming a group with his friends.

"It was actually fabulous and a bit refreshing for them to get out and do something with their friends after a long time [in lockdown]," he said ●

New adult education centre for West Melbourne

PLANNING

West Melbourne residents are concerned by a proposed reduction in car parking and waiver of bike spaces for the use of a Spencer St building as a new adult education centre.

Registered training organisation Oscar Academy has lodged a planning permit application with the City of Melbourne to use a former office space at 496-500 Spencer St for an adult education centre.

According to the permit, the ground floor will include six classrooms to accommodate 120 students, a boardroom and recreation areas, while the first floor will include areas for 20 staff.

The proposed reduction in on-site car parking would take the number of spaces from 36 to 35, while the seven required bike spaces at the site will be waived due to the presence of bicycle hoops along Spencer St.

According to the permit, the reduction in car parking is appropriate because the site already includes a disabled car park and is located close to public transport.

However, three locals voiced their concerns about the reduction in car parking to the council, with one claiming "any reduction" for "any application" was "simply unsustainable".

"The existing on-street parking is already oversubscribed, local residents are unable to find parking for themselves or for those who come to

visit such as tradespeople or people to provide support to those living here," Pooja Sengupta said.

"With the vast amounts of constructions in the vicinity, increase in apartment towers, proximity to the CBD, Festival Hall, Marvel Stadium and North Melbourne Station, already put immense pressure on our street parking."

Another concerned local, Jeremy Kruisheer, said with apartments being developed at the former Rose's Furniture site, any reduction in parking would make parking even more difficult.

"There should be adequate parking for bicycles as well," he said.

"This site does not really have sufficient spaces for bicycles to be parked away from the footpath then they will end up on the footpath."

Another nearby resident, Joy McNamara, said she was "very concerned" by the removal of "so much marking" in the centre of Melbourne.

"People are being asked to return to the city so that our beautiful city and shopping area is alive once again, but all the council has done is remove parking making it harder to get a park," she said.

"Not everyone wants to ride a bike into the city or park in a multi-storey carpark costing them lots of money when they would have been quite happy putting money in a meter for a couple of hours. I think the council needs to seriously look at the issues they have caused with parking!" ●



New chestnut trees pop up in Kensington

PLANNING

New trees have been planted along a street in Kensington as part of a City of Melbourne renewal program.

Three Japanese Chestnut Oak trees were planted in Parsons St last month after replacing two small existing trees, which the council said had barely grown in 13 years.

According to the council, the median renewal program aims to apply best practice soil preparation before tree planting "by rejuvenating urban soil that has been impacted by compaction, damaged soil structure and contamination".

"New tree planting soil mix was used to replace the old soil and to provide an improved growing environment," the council said. "We expect the replacement trees to now have a greater chance of establishing into healthy, mature specimens which will provide future shading and amenity benefits to the streetscape."

Japanese Chestnut Oak trees are considered a hardy, medium to large deciduous tree with attractive glossy dark green foliage ●

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New bike lanes set to positively reignite Melbourne’s city transport

WORDS BY *Kaylah-Joelle Baker*
PLANNING

As many city businesses reopen, the City of Melbourne (CoM) is actively assessing the amount of protected bike lanes and bike-friendly streets on offer and North Melbourne is next on its radar.

Following the December 2020 completion of kerbside protected bike lanes on both sides of Abbotsford St, Arden St and Macaulay Rd are also set for upgrades in early 2022.

The new bike lanes are part of the council’s 10-year transport strategy which looks at having more than 50 kilometres of protected bike lanes in the municipality, making it “the country’s leading bicycle city”.

Connecting into already existing bike lane networks, the upgrades will provide safe and sustainable transport methods for commuters and benefit the environment.

“Melbourne’s transport is one of the major contributors to our carbon footprint and there are only positives from making it safer and more convenient for people to ride their bicycles,” Cr Rohan Leppert said.

“It’s good for the planet, people’s health and our hospital system. And it frees up space on the road.”

While a majority of people surveyed in a 2021 independent transport review commissioned by the council viewed the protected bike



lanes favourably, there was some hesitancy from 26 per cent of the 866 respondents whose main concern was repurposing roadways and kerbside areas.

Noting there would always be “challenges” when facilitating one mode of transport over another, Cr Leppert said the “tweaks” being made to the city were constantly being “monitored by the council”.

And despite the minimal concerns outlined in the review, the consensus agreed with continuous development of the lanes.

For North Melbourne commuters, the new year will begin with bike lane developments on Arden St in the first half of the year continuing on to Macaulay Rd, which is still being designed and reviewed.

“In 2022, we will have some shiny, new, safe and physically separated bicycle lanes on the full length of Arden St and the full length of Macaulay Rd. It is exciting,” Cr Leppert said.

“[The developments] will make it safer and more convenient to ride a bicycle and it’s just going to benefit everyone.” ●

Arden arches in place

WORDS BY *Zak Wheeler*
CAPITAL WORKS

Unbeknown to most in North Melbourne, an incredible feat of engineering was happening high above their heads as they went about their daily business in November.

The first 60-tonne arches at Arden Station have been carefully hoisted into place with a mammoth 350-tonne crane as part of ongoing construction for Melbourne’s new Metro Tunnel.

The 15 arches are made from precast concrete lined with more than 100,000 bricks, each one laid by hand. They are made up of 45 individual segments, each weighing up to 60 tonnes.

Arden Station will be the first destination for Metro Tunnel passengers travelling west on the Sunbury line and will become a centrepiece in the renewed Arden-Macaulay precinct.

The project is expected to include up to 35,000 jobs and be home to around 15,000 residents by 2050, according to the City of Melbourne.

Victorian Premier Daniel Andrews shared his excitement for the project which will become a landmark of the city’s north and is part of Victoria’s broader “Big Build” initiative.

“It’s wonderful to see Arden Station’s arches taking shape,” he said.

“The Metro Tunnel team has been working around the clock in 2021 despite the challenges of the pandemic.”

“We work towards opening a year ahead of schedule in 2025.”

Construction of Arden Station has followed a “cut and cover” method, which began with the excavation of the station box before any work on the surface-level structures began.

The process began in June with the construction of several support columns and a temporary steel wall which provided further support as the building’s arches were lowered into place via a 350-tonne crane.

“The Arden arches are now in place – as works across our five sites moving forward to deliver a turn up and go train network that will slash times,” Minister for



Transport Infrastructure Jacinta Allan said.

Upon completion, the Metro Tunnel will open train lines for more than half-a-million additional passengers a week during peak hours in Melbourne’s train network.

Former Lord Mayor of Melbourne and president of the North West Melbourne Association, Kevin Chamberlin hailed the project as “a great development for North Melbourne, West Melbourne and Kensington.”

“It’s great to see the passenger hall component taking shape and the finished structure promises to be very exciting. Our local community will be easily linked to all parts of the Melbourne public transport network. You’ll even be able to catch the fast train to the airport,” he said.

The station will be within walking distance of North Melbourne shops, Arden oval and the No 57 tram line. Green spaces, wide pedestrian paths, drop-off zones, taxi bays and more than 120 bike parking spaces will also be included in the completed community hub area.

The station’s entrance will be located on Laurens St, providing direct access to existing residential, retail, and commercial areas east of the site.

Provision has been made for an additional entrance in the future at the western end of the station.

The arches of Arden Station were designed to reflect north Melbourne’s rich industrial history, with plans for broader urban renewal throughout the Arden-Macaulay precinct underway ●

New representation for Parkville Gardens

WORDS BY *Spencer Fowler Steen*
POLITICS

Deputy Leader of the Victorian Greens and Member for Melbourne Ellen Sandell will soon be the new MP for Parkville Gardens after the Victorian Electoral Commission (VEC) set new boundaries for the state seat of Melbourne.

Ms Sandell takes the reins from Greens Brunswick MP Dr Tim Read, who successfully campaigned in Parliament earlier this year to have more 505 bus services run to the former Commonwealth Games Athletes’ Village.

Speaking to North West City News, Ms Sandell said she was pleased to have inherited the role, and had already been working with Dr Read to identify issues that needed addressing.

“The area is only serviced by the 505 bus, but no trains or trams,” Ms Sandell said.

“It’s still a bus that still runs pretty infrequently so it needs additional improvements.

Residents have raised there’s no actual paper timetable for the bus, and because it goes so infrequently, they have to rely on the timetable.”

Ms Sandell will replace Dr Read at the next Victorian election in November 2022.

Parkville Gardens Residents’ Association (PGRA) president Tom Knowles said he was “very grateful” for the interest Dr Read and Ms Sandell had taken in the suburb given its relatively small size and isolated nature.

He said one of the biggest problems still facing Parkville Gardens was that the state government still had authority over all planning issues rather than the City of Melbourne, after planning control was ceded to the Minister for Planning for the construction of the Athletes’ Village in 2006.

“We’re concerned that at some stage in the future, the East West Link will proceed, and we would love her [Ms Sandell] to champion our concerns about the route that will take,” he said.

“We don’t know what the route will be, but we’re concerned it will greatly affect the amenity of the area in terms of Royal Park and where the traffic will be routed, so it’s going to be a concern that parkland will be torn up and

“

The area is only serviced by the 505 bus, but no trains or trams. It’s still a bus that still runs pretty infrequently ...

”

become and part of this monstrous network.”

Ms Sandell said many Parkville Gardens residents relied on their cars for transportation, highlighting a growing shortage of parking in the area.

“We need more reserved electric vehicle charging stations and car sharing reserved spaces so families don’t need to have multiple cars, they may have one car or no cars,” she said.

Ms Sandell said another issue Parkville Gardens residents had raised with her was school zoning.

“Most schools around there zone to Flemington,” she said.

“Residents have to cross Citilink to get to them, whereas there’s public transport to schools such as Brunswick High, Princes Hill High, and University High.

“So, we’ll look at rezoning issues for those schools, or easier ways to get students there.”

Mr Knowles also said a new community centre was high on the agenda for Parkville Gardens, as the PGRA had been using a variety of temporary places for meetings including Mercy Health and the Park Club.

As part of the Parkville Gardens electoral boundary shake-up, Ms Sandell will no longer be the MP for the suburbs of Carlton North and Princes Hill with both suburbs going to Dr Read.

Ms Sandell will remain the State MP for Kensington, Docklands, the CBD, North and West Melbourne, Carlton and Parkville ●

Mailbox thief caught on camera

WORDS BY *Brendan Rees*
SAFETY & SECURITY

A Kensington Banks father has spoken of his frustration after a person walking their dog was caught on CCTV allegedly helping themselves to a parcel from his mailbox.

Ben McAllister, who posted footage of the alleged theft on the Kensington Neighbourhood Watch Facebook page to warn others, said the culprit could be seen stopping outside his home with their dog before reaching into his mailbox about 5.30am on September 24.

“The package did not appear to be sticking out but would’ve been visible in the lower part of the mailbox which has a round opening roughly the diameter of a tennis ball and is not lockable,” he said.

Mr McAllister, who did not wish to identify his street due to not wanting to draw attention to his neighbours, said although the parcel was of low value it was “frustrating nonetheless.”

“It’s not the actual theft that bothers me, the world has bigger issues at the moment, it’s the fact that someone who lives close by has taken their dog for their morning walk and decided to steal from their neighbour while they’re at it.”

He said due to the parcel’s low value and the identity of the alleged offender not being clear on camera, he didn’t believe it was worth reporting to police.

Mr McAllister said he had decided to check his security cameras after receiving a message that the parcel had been delivered.

“This is the first time we’ve had anything stolen from our mailbox but from previous conversations with local residents over many years it seems to occur two to three times a week that I know of,” he said.

It comes as another resident, Matt Rodgers, expressed his frustration after his pet food delivery worth \$70 was stolen from the front of his now former home in Derby St, Kensington, after having recently moved out of the property.

“It’s been confirmed it was stolen. I received a photo from Pet Circle showing that it was left



▲ CCTV footage of a person helping themselves to mail.

in the front yard,” he said.

“The new tenants and a neighbour have checked the front yard and there is nothing there.”

“I would describe it as shock and disbelief that someone would enter the property to remove a parcel, and even more so given the nature of the item.”

“I am pretty certain that it would have been dumped/discarded when the person realised what it was.”

According to the latest Crime Statistics Agency data, there were 9135 theft offences recorded in City of Melbourne in the year ending June compared to 11,869 the previous year.

Local police have advised residents to lock their mailbox and if possible, not to have banking and utility statements sent via mail as personal details may allow a thief to gain this information.

For those in apartment buildings, police say the mailbox area should be in an internal secure area with either key, swipe or fob access.

Mailboxes should be designed so people are not able to remove mail from within by reaching in through the mail slot on the front, police say ●

Green-fingered thieves take off with pot plants in Kensington

WORDS BY *Brendan Rees*
SAFETY & SECURITY

Angry Kensington residents are installing home security cameras and padlocking their gates as they seek to ward off low-life thieves targeting their gardens.

Multiple reported incidents of pot plant theft have sparked fury among residents – with many taking to social media to blast the “plant bandits”.

Andrew Gilbert, who recently had a pot plant taken from his front garden on Macaulay Rd, said he was shocked by the incident.

“I know it’s only a pot plant ... but it’s the fact that someone’s come onto your property and taken something that you’ve taken great pride in,” he told *North West City News*.

“It was a shame, because it was quite an unusual plant. It started off as a small seedling and has grown over 12 months,” he said of his stolen plant which was in a terracotta pot.

Mr Gilbert, who has lived at his property for 19 years and never been targeted by thieves before, said he had security cameras set up but unfortunately it didn’t catch the culprit.

“It’s just annoying that’s it’s happening,” he said after learning other residents had also been victims, including his neighbour three doors down.



▲ Kensington resident Andrew Gilbert is at a loss as to why his garden was targeted by thieves.

“I assume it’s always at night that someone is doing it. Some of the reports I’ve read on Facebook, people have actually had shrubs ripped out of their garden, particularly newly planted ones.”

Another resident Gail Jones of almost 36 years, said she was left devastated and “violated” after thieves made off with her two-foot garden statue and two pot plants that had “beautiful orange flowers” after entering her front garden.

“I noticed one morning that it was missing [the statue] and so were a couple of plants in the pots,” she said.

“I thought, ‘hang on a minute, why is the latch not closed [on the gate]?’”

“You feel a bit uncomfortable and violated. I ended up getting a Lockwood lock ... and I put it on the gate every night.”

“I just feel more secure that if I go to Bunnings to have a bit of a spend-up, plants aren’t going to go missing.”

Ms Jones said the plants had been a gift from the local post office for her birthday, and when she told staff of the theft they said, “someone else was complaining [of plant theft] in Gower St”.

Ms Jones said although she didn’t report the matter to police, believing it was a small offence, she wanted to tell of her experience to not only call out the behaviour but to warn others.

“It’s good to make these things visible to the

community so they can be aware of it. They [offenders] may be from a whole different area, who knows.”

Another resident posted on Facebook to express their frustration after their garden was targeted last year, and had since upgraded their security cameras to 4K with heat detection.

“If anyone tries to come into our front yard, the cameras will shine bright lights and capture much better details,” the resident said.

Neighbourhood Watch Victoria said while it had not received reports of plant theft, it said most crime was “opportunistic”.

“More effective than CCTV are sensor lights. Crims don’t want to enter your home if they think they will be spotted,” it said.

“And leaving lights and TVs on inside when you go out will make it tough for the criminal to know whether there is someone home.”

Victoria Police crime prevention officer Glenn McFarlane said anyone who was a victim of a plant thief should contact police. He also recommended residents to install motion sensor lights and CCTV to deter possible offenders ●

Call Crime Stoppers:
1800 333 000



▲ Charlie Hunnam acting in 1980s period drama.



▲ Pick the extras from the locals in Errol St remake.

Tale of a swashbuckling hero

WORDS BY *Rhonda Dredge*
ARTS & CULTURE

What was actor Charlie Hunnam, of *Sons of Anarchy* fame, doing running down Errol Street at 2.30pm on a Tuesday afternoon in November with a gun and a paper bag?

He passed the physio, sprinted towards the library then disappeared into a lane beside the Town Hall.

North West City News noted his escape from three burly policemen who were in hot pursuit.

Extras were milling around and before the dramatic chase it was difficult to tell the difference between reality and fiction in this well-endowed setting with wide verandas and historic shop fronts.

The street looked normal enough but why were women wearing calf-length skirts and carrying handbags and why was a sign for Fabrice’s Hair Salon hanging outside the shoemakers?

Headline banners in the newsagents were telling of drug busts but hang on, didn’t *The Truth* newspaper fold a couple of decades back? And what about parking meters?

The clever 1980s remake of *Errol St* was for a new Apple-TV series with Charlie playing the part of Gregory Roberts, one-time bank robber, prison escapee, small-time hood in Bombay and best-selling author.

His hair was long and straggly on the day of filming, and he was wearing baggy beige pants and a two-tone stretch top, marking him as a bit of a desperado in a fashion sense.

No wonder the wardrobe mistress was having a laugh. The real Roberts was called the “gentleman bandit” for robbing banks with a toy gun and the scene appeared to be a re-enactment.

Roberts’ memoir-come-novel *Shantaram*

became a hit when released in 2004. It was no ghost-written account of a petty criminal but contains some of the best adventure writing, up there with *Tom Jones* and *The Three Musketeers*.

By the time Roberts appeared on the literary stage, he had turned himself into a literary man, led into a life of crime by a heroin addiction.

The book recounts the hero’s clandestine journey to Bombay to work with the Untouchables and to Afghanistan to fight with the Mujahadeen. The description of his escape from Pentridge over the front wall using an electrical cord is sublime.

The part of Roberts was first coveted by Russell Crowe, then by Brad Pitt but earlier options to turn the book into a movie stalled.

Now, with funding from the state government among others, the production will be aired as a 10-part series.

Commentators say that the pandemic thwarted plans to shoot in India and that Thailand is now the favoured destination but the secret is out.

If Errol St can be transformed with the judicious use of Helvetica into 1980s Melbourne for the police chase, Queensberry St can become Bombay with a few fruit stalls, a bus and some taxis where Roberts is forced to drop his swashbuckling arrogance ●



Rhonda Dredge
JOURNALIST
RHONDA@CBDNEWS.COM.AU

Residents invited to have their say on proposed flood overlays

WORDS BY *Brendan Rees*
CAPITAL WORKS

The community is being invited to view and comment on a proposed planning amendment, which revises the City of Melbourne’s proposed flooding overlays.

The council has been given approval by Minister for Planning Richard Wynne for Amendment C384 to be prepared, which aims to identify areas prone to flooding, sea level rises, increased rainfall intensity “that are predicted to influence inundation in the near future”.

The City of Melbourne has partnered with Melbourne Water to update its flood modelling for a number of areas in the municipality.

The proposed changes to Land Subject to Inundation Overlay and Special Building Overlay apply to land affected by riverine flooding and drainage flooding respectively, including corresponding changes to the relevant schedules and mapping in the Melbourne Planning Scheme.

The amendment also includes a background document, the Design Guide for Flood Affected Areas in Fishermans Bend, Arden and Macaulay which seeks to provide guidance for how to design flood resilient buildings in these areas.

According to a letter sent to residents by the council regarding the proposed amendment, the “patterns and intensity” of rainfall and possible flooding has changed “over the years”, with climate change and more intense development being contributing factors.

“This needs to be accurately shown in the Planning Scheme,” the letter read. “Amendment C384 has been prepared to require that any new development is designed to ensure safety and minimise flood impact.”

All affected property owners have begun receiving letters advising them of the changes and are encouraged to view the amendment and documents online.

Associate Professor Andrew Butt from RMIT’s Centre for Urban Research said the council’s review of flood overlays was “very timely” given the proposed development at the Arden and Macaulay precincts, which would need to be “very clear of the flood controls and the flood impacts”.

“A good response would be something like in Arden and Macaulay, we should be looking for permeable surfaces wherever possible,” he said, which would allow water to filter through the ground below.



▲ Proposed new flood overlay extents within the Kensington, North Melbourne and West Melbourne precincts. Picture: City of Melbourne.

“Once you start building up things and putting in hard surfaces, you also alter the flood habits.”

“Arden and Macaulay are flood prone, but the main issue is what do we do about it if we start development? It shouldn’t preclude development, but it should mean it’s sensitive to that risk.”

Associate Professor Butt added what planning controls were applied and what it might mean for development “aren’t clear but they’ve got a lot of options and they aren’t all about stopping development occurring”.

“Modelling is dynamic in a number of ways, we’ve got unknowns around things like climate change ... but equally in urban areas of course, small interventions that get made have implications elsewhere too.”

The closing date for submissions is November 29 ●

To attend a virtual information session or make a submission:
participate.melbourne.vic.qov.au/amendment-c384.

What does a Neighbourhood House do when the neighbours are in lockdown?

“This was the big question for 2021: Kensington Neighbourhood House is “a place to meet, share information, develop skills and break down isolation ... “So, what happens during lockdown? How do we support people when we have to close our doors?”

WORDS BY *Rebecca Smith*
MANAGER,
KENSINGTON NEIGHBOURHOOD HOUSE

Rather than crawling back under our doonas (and believe me, that was tempting), our team rose to the occasion and came up with innovative ways to provide support.

Some things moved online. The weekly “Kensingers” community choir and our Study Support Program switched easily to Zoom.

For other programs, it was not that easy. Many of our adult English students don’t have the technology for online learning. To overcome this, our intrepid EAL teacher prepared work for students every week and emailed or posted it out along with a reply-paid envelope. She then followed up with individual phone conversations. Every. Single. Week. These calls helped with language learning but were also a wellbeing check – making sure people were okay, offering support if needed. Not a single student left class.

In the office, our printer and photocopier worked overtime. Do you know how hard it is to get things printed when workplaces, libraries



and Officeworks are shut? To help out, we offered a “click and collect” printing service to the community. People emailed their documents, we printed them, and put them on the verandah for collection. VCE practice exams, homework, job applications, authorised worker permits, the list goes on. Overall, we printed more than 3100 pages for the community.

Sometimes it was all a bit too hard. That’s when we called on others. Feeling daunted by the idea of organising a remote afternoon tea for Adult Learners’ Week, we reached out to the Kensington Good Karma Network for help with baking.

Well! Before you could say “caramel slice”, we were inundated with offers. We were able to provide more than 60 packs of beautiful baked treats to our students, our Wednesday seniors group and our Study Support families. Way to go K-Town!

Continuing the community generosity is the McCracken Street Food Share Pantry. This “give what you can, take what you need” pantry is run by a group of amazing volunteers. Dozens of people visit every day to donate supplies and to collect much-needed food. We’re currently




providing more than 500 items a week to people in need.

The most requested item? Coffee! It’s Kensington after all.

Another volunteer program – Conversations Over The Front Fence – made sure that isolated community members received regular phone calls. Sometimes just one person checking in for a chat makes all the difference.

Lockdown six was hard. However, the daily efforts of our staff and our community members reminded me that people are kind, generous and basically amazing ●

For more information:
kensingtonneighbourhoodhouse.com.au or call 9376 6366

 *Rebecca Smith*
MANAGER KENSINGTON
NEIGHBOURHOOD HOUSE
INFO@KENHOUSE.ORG.AU



Historic stock route in Kensington could be home to fruit picking

WORDS BY *Brendan Rees*
PLANNING

Visitors to a historic shared pathway in Kensington may be able to pick their own fruit and nuts from trees under a project being considered by the City of Melbourne.

The community is being invited to have their say on the proposal, which would see fruit trees and other edible plant species planted along the popular Kensington Stock Route, which runs from Racecourse Rd to the Maribyrnong River.

Under the project, which would be called Kensington Stock Route Food Walk, walkers would be able to pick their own fruit including citrus, nuts, and figs – with the council aiming to establish a long-term planting plan for the stock route.

The City of Melbourne said the 1.5km shared pathway which winds through the precinct would provide a “unique location” to introduce edible trees, increase species diversity and improve local food production.

“The harvesting of the fruit would be undertaken by the local community and we want to hear from you to ensure we’re planting the types of trees that you would like to harvest and eat,” the council said.

“It is also a quiet area where locals can safely harvest fruit away from vehicle traffic and provides a link to the local community gardens.”

If approved, the proposal would introduce “a very gradual transformation of the landscape,” with edible trees being planted when existing trees required replacement.

City of Melbourne councillor Rohan Leppert said enthusiasm among the community was growing for the project.

“As a Kensington resident I’m particularly excited about it,” he said. “The stock route is being used more than it ever has been because of lockdowns and people working from home.”

Cr Leppert said the council would not “uproot any of the heritage Peppercorns or anything like that”, but rather “this is a long-term vision to make the Kensington Stock Route somewhat more edible”.

“The plan that we’re floating is to gradually change the character of the area by planting edible trees as existing trees come to the end of their lives,” he said.

“Locals have been pretty excited about this so far, the feedback that I’ve been getting is we should really focus on natives so we can use the stock route to educate people about Indigenous plants and how they can be used.”

Greens state MP for Melbourne Ellen Sandell said edible plants would be a “wonderful thing for all the community to share”.

“I’m really excited about the idea of potentially planting native edible shrubs and fruit trees along the stock route,” she said, adding it would be a great educational tool for children who may not have a garden at home.

The project, which forms part of the council’s Urban Forest Strategy, would also see “character zones” of edible deciduous, edible evergreen and edible native trees to guide species selection.

Prior to the 1960s, the old stock route was once used for cattle and sheep, which were led between the saleyards and abattoirs.

Consultation for the project closes on December 3 with plans to be finalised by January/February 2022 ●

You can cry your heart out

WORDS BY *Rhonda Dredge*
COMMUNITY

As the city emerges from the world’s longest lockdown, it’s a miracle that there are still songwriters with a trace of optimism and students keen to learn the art of putting thoughts and feelings to music.

“People say things. I’m attracted to the words,” said Andrew McSweeney, who runs a music school in the back lanes of North Melbourne.

When Andrew was in Murwillumbah to the north between lockdowns the words were hopeful.

He recorded a song with his daughter in the kitchen of their house *Life is Beautiful* and uploaded it on YouTube. It was a romantic moment capturing the magic of the place.

But after rushing back to Melbourne when the borders closed and witnessing some desperate behavior on the road, he was more attuned to a silent protest.

“I’m going to wait under the shade of a tree and watch the passing parade go by. I think half the world has gone mad. I don’t know what half.”

Andrew is not alone in bearing scars from the pandemic and is encouraging other songwriters to find the words to describe them.

The School of Living Music in Little Baillie St never closed during the pandemic, teaching students over Zoom, right from the beginning in March 2020.



▲ Andrew McSweeney singing in the voice booth.



▲ Students return to the School of Living Music.

“It’s interactive,” Andrew said of online teaching, which has some advantages. “Kids are practicing more. Sight-reading has improved.”

But he said there were some challenges with the sound, particularly bass. “It didn’t like the bottom-end frequency.”

The school dropped a third of its students but they are now seeing a return. At 4pm after their school day finishes, students are once again rocking up to the door for their lessons.

Living Music is not exactly the School of Rock and Andrew doesn’t have Jack Black’s shock of hair but students can get together in bands, as well as learn instruments.

There are recording studios, voice booths, a wall of guitars to choose from, lessons in violin, guitar, piano, drums, saxophone, singing and hip hop plus a wealth of teaching experience.

Life is not all sweet and light, even if tuneful voices give that impression. Andrew also runs retreats for men and recorded an EP based on the experience called *Hiding in Plain Sight*.

It will take some time for the sorrows of the pandemic to work their way out into the music culture. In the meantime, Andrew keeps on writing.

“I can’t stop writing songs,” he said. “I’m letting go of needing to have a vehicle or purpose.”

The songs arise out of everyday life, express the moment plus reach out to those in trouble.

“When I was away, my daughter came to stay at our house. She needed some space. It’s a place to let go. Go there. There’s no one there. You can cry your heart out.” ●

Have your say: participate.
melbourne.vic.gov.au/food-walk

ADVERTISEMENT
Your City of Melbourne community update

VIBRANT LIFESTYLE, STAMP DUTY SAVINGS TO ATTRACT PEOPLE TO LIVE IN MELBOURNE

Whether you're a first home-buyer, an upsizer or an empty-nester there's no place like Melbourne to call home.

The vibrancy, atmosphere and sense of community in the city are proving to be huge drawcards for property buyers.

Research commissioned by the City of Melbourne found more than half (56 per cent) of first home buyers surveyed are likely to consider buying in Melbourne, with many citing the allure of the city and a desire to be close to the action.

While 48 per cent of those already living in Melbourne said they were also considering buying property in the area.

Nearly half (43 per cent) of those looking to buy in the city were in the market for an apartment or unit, with features such as natural light, views and communal areas.

Lord Mayor Sally Capp said Melbourne continues to be one of the world's most liveable cities, despite the challenges it has faced during the pandemic.

"These results show that Melbourne has maintained its allure," the Lord Mayor said.

"This city has so much to offer, from its beautiful gardens and eateries, to the incredible festivals and sporting matches that will return now that we are out of lockdown.

"Nothing compares to Melbourne, and future home buyers know that."

With more than 6000 apartments in Melbourne for sale and rent, there's never been a better time to live in the city.

Until 30 June 2022, a 50 per cent stamp duty concession is available for new residential properties valued at up to \$1 million within the City of Melbourne.

A full 100 per cent stamp duty exemption is also available for new residential properties that have been on the market for more than 12 months.

Plus, if you're a first home buyer purchasing an off-the-plan property, until 30 June 2023, you qualify for a duty concession if the home is valued at up to \$1 million.



Enviably city skyline views

The discounts could amount to tens-of-thousands of dollars in savings.

"Now buyers have an even better shot at purchasing a home here, and we welcome them with open arms," the Lord Mayor said.

.....
"56 per cent of first home buyers surveyed are likely to consider buying in Melbourne."
.....

TAKE ADVANTAGE OF STAMP DUTY SAVINGS AND ENJOY INNER CITY LIVING

Take advantage of great stamp duty savings when you buy eligible properties in the city between now and 30 June 2022, and enjoy extraordinary everyday living. To find out how you can make the city your local, visit realestate.com.au/thisisyourlocal

CITY APARTMENT OASIS ATTRACTS DESIGNER DUO

A vibrant city lifestyle combined with the ability to retreat to their own space within it, proved an offer too good to refuse for designer duo, Josh and Matt.

Hailing from the suburbs of Sydney, the couple moved to their brand new apartment on the 50th floor of 380 Melbourne in February and say they have never felt more at home.

"Apartment living suits us perfectly. We love the views, the amenities and just having more time to enjoy our home," they said.

"We love the energy of the city. As soon as you step out of our building you're at the doorstep of amazing restaurants, beautiful art galleries and great shopping destinations. Not to mention all the greenery and parks throughout the city.

"We love exploring all the laneways in the city, there's so many great small businesses to discover and the street art you come across is always interesting and evolving. Being within walking distance to pretty much anything you need is also so handy. The city lifestyle is very convenient and can be really tailored to your individual passions and interests.

"We were able to sell both our cars and we now just walk everywhere or catch the free tram to points of interest."

Their apartment at 380 Melbourne in the heart of the CBD affords the pair an incredible 270-degree view of the city.

"We wanted to enjoy the city lifestyle and at the same time have an oasis we could retreat to. We chose our apartment specifically for the floor to ceiling windows."

Their enviable views of the city skyline feature prominently in the interior design and styling videos they share with their 157,000 followers on TikTok.

The couple run their home décor business [joshandmatt.com.au](https://www.joshandmatt.com.au), hand-making and shipping all their wares from their CBD apartment, which serves as a source of inspiration for their eclectic creations.

When not in their apartment creating designer décor, the pair can be found enjoying the city's enviable lifestyle.

"NGV is our favourite art gallery, we love all the beautiful plants in Guildford Lane, Vintage Sole for great clothing, Uncle Tetsu's cheese tarts are so yummy, the Botanic Gardens is always beautiful to explore, and the Queen Victoria Market has an amazing selection of food and vendors," they said.

"A perfect Melbourne day for us means waking up in the morning to

see the hot air balloons flying over the city. Taking Louis, our cockalier, for a run around at Flagstaff Gardens, a little shopping at local vintage stores, an afternoon exploring the amazing art at NGV and then coming home to watch the sunset from our apartment with some pizza.

"We really think the future of Melbourne is bright and exciting. We are especially excited about the Melbourne arts precinct transformation and think it's going to be an awesome addition to this beautiful city. Melbourne is definitely the place to be."



Josh and Matt in their 50th floor apartment in the heart of the CBD.

Photo: Josh and Matt

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Your City of Melbourne community update

THE CITY IS THEIR PLAYGROUND FOR THIS YOUNG FAMILY

Lighting designer Michael Chazan had never considered living in an apartment until he met his now wife Ying Ang.

Having spent most of her adult life flying around the world for work as a documentary photographer, apartment living had become the way of life for Ying, who valued the convenience of being able to lock up and leave at a moment's notice.

"When we decided to make a home together we resolved to do it in Melbourne, but in an apartment, as dipping in and out of town was still a big part of our lives and the relative convenience of apartment living was undeniable," Michael said.

"Despite this, I was initially sceptical about many other aspects of the apartment lifestyle and as such aspired to get a house somewhere as our family grew. Somewhat ironically, it was only with the birth of our son Oska Shūbi that I really became an inner-city apartment convert."

A three-bedroom apartment at the top end of town on Spring Street is now home for the young family who "love feeling entrenched in a vibrant, diverse and stimulating community".

"The city is a melting pot and exposing our family to such cultural and experiential diversity in the course of our daily routines is something we really value," Michael said.

"Over the years I have enjoyed living in many suburbs in Greater Melbourne, but often found a certain homogeneity to them. Living in the heart of a metropolis like Melbourne tends to expose you to a more diverse set of people and more fluxing set of experiences.

"As our son grows, it has also been amazing to see him claim the city's streets as his own urban playground. To me it seems like a pretty amazing and stimulating environment to grow up in.

"During lockdown, the centre of Melbourne has taken on an altogether different feel. It has been interesting to see neighbourhoods transform and embrace this new identity. Likewise, the way we engage with our environment has changed too and we have found ourselves venturing to parts of the city we had not previously explored. As a consequence, we have stumbled across some favourite new little spots, like Bakemono on Drewery Lane, where we get our daily coffee and pastry fix.

"After our morning coffee, we usually wind our way up to the courtyard of the Melbourne Museum, where Oska Shūbi likes to skateboard. After that we might grab a banh mi for lunch and debate where our afternoon adventures should take us - Fitzroy Gardens, the Botanical Garden, the Tan, or a meander along the Yarra. Then at night, we head

downstairs to grab some amazing food. Even though eating out hasn't been an option lately, eating at home overlooking the city skyline isn't such a bad back-up plan."

And while their apartment is adorned with Ying's photography and Michael's bespoke furniture and lighting from his design studio, Moda Piera, it's also the urban masterpieces they can see from their windows that makes their space like no other.

"We're incredibly fortunate to have an amazing view across some of the most beautiful and iconic parts of Melbourne. From our windows we look directly on to Treasury Gardens, Parliament, the Royal Exhibition Building, the MCG, and all the way out over the Dandenong Ranges.

"We are also really lucky that some of our favourite bars and restaurants are literally downstairs from us: Kenzan, Cecconi's, Cumulus and Di Stasio Citta are all within a 30-second walk from our front door and we are glad to now call many of these people our friends.

"One thing people might not think about living in such a big city, is that there is a real sense of community. We have so many 'local' cafes, bars and restaurants where we feel like part of the furniture."

Suffice to say that after a reluctant start to apartment life, Michael now finds it difficult to imagine living any other way.



Michael, Ying and Oska Shūbi love the sense of community that comes with living in the city.

IN-BRIEF

KENSINGTON STOCK ROUTE FOOD WALK

Have your say on the edible trees to be planted along the Kensington Stock Food Walk.

What edible trees would you like to see planted? Would you harvest the fruit for your own use?

Your feedback will help increase tree diversity and improve local food production by contributing to planting plans for the Kensington Stock Route.

Have your say until 3 December at participate.melbourne.vic.gov.au/projects

MELBOURNE AWARDS

The Melbourne Awards are the City of Melbourne's highest accolade, celebrating inspirational people and organisations that help make this city a world leader.

The awards recognise significant contributions in areas including community, innovation, arts, events, LGBTIQ+ and sustainability.

See the winners announced in a television special on Channel 9 at 2pm on Saturday 13 November. melbourne.vic.gov.au/melbourneawards

ANNUAL REPORT OUT NOW

Find out how the City of Melbourne supported the city and the community in the 2020-21 Annual Report, available to read online now at melbourne.vic.gov.au/annualreport

SPRING CLEAN BEFORE SUMMER

Spring clean your place before summer.

Clean up, reduce waste, detox your home and think about what you put in your bins.

For more on hard rubbish, e-waste, disposing of household chemicals, food and garden waste, visit melbourne.vic.gov.au/springclean

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KEEP IN TOUCH

To stay connected with all the latest news from the City of Melbourne, follow us on social media and subscribe to *Melbourne* magazine online at magazine.melbourne.vic.gov.au

You can also join conversations to influence plans for your neighbourhood through Participate Melbourne at participate.melbourne.vic.gov.au

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COUNCILLOR PROFILE

Thinking big, acting local

For second term councillor and Deputy Lord Mayor Nicholas Reece, the ability to deliver on big ambitions at a community level is what inspires him most about working in local government.

As a father of three and husband to wife Felicity, Cr Reece is first and foremost a family man. But second to that, he is a self-described “workaholic”. And with the number of hats he wears in the community, it’s easy to see why.

When it comes to the City of Melbourne, Cr Reece is considered an influential figure within the current council team not only as Deputy Lord Mayor, but as chair of the “extremely busy” planning portfolio.

He is also the deputy lead of the finance, governance and risk portfolios, and represents the council on the Committee for Melbourne, Melbourne Action Plan Implementation (IMAP) Committee, Melbourne Sustainable Society Institute Advisory Board and the Melbourne Art Trust.



But away from the council, it doesn’t stop there ...

In continuing his “Melbourne” theme, Cr Reece is an executive in Chancellery at the University of Melbourne, holds an academic position of principal fellow and teaches at the Melbourne School of Government as his day job.

Having also previously served as a director of the social enterprise street magazine *The Big Issue* for more than a decade, he continues his passion for giving back today as the current chairman of global men’s health charity Movember – a not-for-profit founded by his friends here in Melbourne.

With his sense of duty to the community manifesting in so many ways, he said he had been raised from a young age to appreciate the importance of social justice – something which he carries into every aspect of his role as a councillor.

“I grew up in quite a religious family, so I would characterise my dad as a big influence on me,” Cr Reece said.

“He was very much part of a Catholic social justice tradition. He still works as a volunteer for St Vincent De Paul to this day and those values of community service were instilled in me from a really young age.”

“I think I was very much brought up to see that as part of who you are, you serve your family, you serve your community. So, I hope when I look back across my working life, people will say he was a person who dedicated his life to the service of the community. I really hope that’s seen as something that defines me.”

Cr Reece said his favourite part about serving as a councillor at the City of Melbourne, often considered as somewhat of a quasi-state government, was that “we get to think big, but act local”.

It’s a mindset that perhaps stems not only from his many community service roles, but from a more decorated history in politics than what many readers may know about ...

While having never been elected to political office prior to becoming a councillor, he’s spent his fair share of time working in them as a highly regarded figure with the Australian Labor Party (ALP).

Not only has he previously served as state secretary and campaign director of the ALP’s

Victorian Branch, but he was also a senior advisor to former Prime Minister Julia Gillard, and former Victorian Premiers Steve Bracks and John Brumby.

Before entering the political domain, he worked as a lawyer and a journalist, and he continues to keep his hand in the media with regular appearances on Sky News and contributions to *The Age*.

That ability and desire to always “think big” has had a significant effect on his approach as a councillor, and he said he was “fired up” to bring Melbourne back better than ever from the COVID-19 pandemic.

“The joy I get from serving at a local government is just as much as those other tiers of government, the work is different but it’s just as satisfying and rewarding,” he said.

“Melbourne is a great city. The world’s best city because we’ve always had big ambitions for ourselves but those ambitions get delivered through actions that are taken at a local level and so I love the fact that you can bring those things together.”

“Melbourne should see itself as a global hotspot, a global leader for architecture, design and sustainability. I’m really fired up. I’ve never been more fired up in my life. It’s my mission to help Melbourne bounce back better.”

But while he’s so far enjoyed a successful career in public service, it didn’t necessarily start off that way ...

In a stunning admission to *North West City News*, he said that while he’d held many jobs over the course of his career, there had been few as important than his very first – dressing up as a fibreglass Smartie kid in the Moomba Parade in the ‘80s!

Working for the former chocolate company Rowntree-Hoadley, he said his promising career as a Smartie parading down Swanston St was tragically cut short after his “poo brown” colour was voted out in the “Great Smartie Elections” in favour of a new blue smartie.

“It was my first taste of election defeat,” he said.

Nevertheless, that same thrift for events and passion for Melbourne will no doubt serve him well as the city recovers from COVID, and when it came to the city’s north-west, he said the opportunities presented by urban renewal in Arden and Macauley should give locals



▲ Photo evidence of Cr Reece during his days as a Smartie!

plenty to feel excited about for the future.

“Most people through West Melbourne and North Melbourne have probably not realised how much new green open space is coming in Arden. This is going to be a fantastic new recreational area, which will create parklands that are every bit as beautiful as the Carlton Gardens or Royal Botanical Gardens,” he said.

“The question I’m always asking the team at the City of Melbourne is, ‘how do we get to Barcelona?’ How do we get beautiful, mid-rise suburbs which have a lot of character and world-class liveability? That’s what I want to see in Arden, and that’s what I want to see in Macauley and in a city like Melbourne that is very achievable but it will only happen if the City of Melbourne continues to play a strong role, an active role, in ensuring that only appropriate development meets the high standards that we rightly demand.” ●



Sean Car
EDITOR
SEAN@HYPERLOCALNEWS.COM.AU

THE KENSINGTON ASSOCIATION

The Macaulay drama

Melbourne’s Deputy Lord Mayor sings an aria of lyrical beauty, Melbourne’s Lord Mayor joins him in a heartfelt duet, Cr Leppert wipes his brow, and someone sings a song from the wilderness. The story unfolds, the boat is launched, the crowd applauds.

I logged into the Future Melbourne Committee meeting (from my home office) at about 5.30pm on November 9 and waited for the committee to reach item 6.3 – the Macaulay Structure Plan. I had applied to address the committee about some things that the Kensington Association continued to be concerned about in the plan. When my time came, I crammed what I could into my allotted three minutes; God, those three minutes go quickly! Then the Director of City Strategy, Sophie Hanley, responded to what I had raised, following which the meeting proceeded to the “moving” and “seconding” stage, when four councillors (including the Mayor and Deputy Lord Mayor) spoke.

Councillors spoke with various levels of spin and sincerity about their association with – and feelings about – the plan. One felt there was a genuine sense of achievement that the plan had finally been exhibited after a stop/start decade of patchy planning regulation. Cr Davydd Griffiths (who lives nearby) recalled his battles to protect Moonee Ponds Creek when Citylink

was being designed, and reinforced a point I had made about the importance of the creek to the community. All speakers were effusive in their praise for Cr Rohan Leppert, who had spent countless hours preparing a raft of amendments to the plan. It made me wonder what LGAs do if they haven’t someone with such planning nous and dedication to plough through weighty documents ... 140 pages no less! For his part Cr Leppert, (having been involved since 2012) describing himself as a [planning] nerd, said the plan was a “leading example of urban design”. The Lord Mayor Sally Capp said it was “fundamental to the way we build back better”. Deputy Lord Mayor Reece waxed more lyrical – he said it was “a very important document for the entire northern suburbs” and “a showcase for gentle density done in an inner Melbourne way”. To top it off, he said that it was “urban planning policy at the absolute highest and best standards in Australia, indeed, anywhere around the world”. If there was spin in that, I forgive him, I feel

that he (and the Lord Mayor) are doing their very best to gee-up the community to feel excited about what is ahead. Good on ‘em!

I must admit, I did grimace a bit when I heard the words, “very significant enhancement of Moonee Ponds Creek”. In my three minutes I had been quite scathing of the lack of progress towards revitalisation of the creek, but I was somewhat heartened that each councillor underlined its importance. Cr Leppert said it was “dear to my [his] heart”; he also made another very significant comment, indicating the management of the creek could well be rejigged to facilitate some action. Let’s hope so! I felt that everyone genuinely expressed their aspirations (their hopes, their visions) about how Macaulay could be.

Well, you say – “cut the drama – what will the Macaulay Structure Plan produce for the community?” Sorry, nobody really knows, the execution of a “plan” – no matter whether it’s a “leading example” or “the highest standard ... in the world” – can be great or horrible. Of course, we all hope it’s great. One of Cr Leppert’s amendments was to put in place a public reporting mechanism to monitor progress in terms of new dwellings, population, and employment in the area. A great move: we’ll keep an eye on that!

At the Kensington Association we are still concerned about density – i.e., too many residents with inadequate infrastructure. We are still concerned about building height and shape. We are still concerned about public open

space. We dream of Moonee Ponds Creek being returned to a haven for native flora and fauna. Yes, I understand they actually did that in South Korea; can you believe it!? I haven’t seen it, but apparently in Seoul they actually pulled down a freeway and returned a creek to its former natural beauty.

The Macaulay drama has not concluded however! When a boat is launched you expect that to be the denouement, but not so! At the beginning of 2022, there is a “planning scheme amendment process” in which it is possible that some of the good work could be compromised by further “processes”. We need keep an eagle eye on that, we wouldn’t want the Macaulay Structure Plan to slip down a rung to be the second-best urban planning policy in the world. The other thing to note, which is praiseworthy in our world of short- term politics, is that this plan (like that wonderful Zero Emissions Feds “Plan”) will unfold over 20 years.

We will then (with luck) be living in our Macaulay paradise; or perchance, some of us might (through grace) be in another more lofty paradise – with pearly gates ●



Simon Harvey
CHAIRPERSON
INFO@
KENSINGTONASSOCIATION.
ORG.AU

Arts House return: From percussive sounds to bubble art

Home for contemporary performances and interactive art, Melbourne's Arts House is gearing up to entertain live audiences in what will be a show-stopping end to the year.

WORDS BY Kaylah-Joelle Baker

Ready to make the stage their own is musician and architecture academic Simona Castricum and projection artist Carla Zimblar with their show *SINK*.

After dealing with two cancelled production dates due to COVID restrictions and lockdowns, *SINK* is now set to hit the stage for four days straight, premiering on December 1.

It's a moment that Simona Castricum is "excited about", after having to "warehouse" a lot of her creative work due to the absence of live performances.

"The tactile element of music and live performance is so important and there is no substitute for it," she said.

"This particular work does rely on an 'in real life' experience. It's about having that line of sight and physically sinking into your seat and experiencing the heaviness of the music and the content."

Blending percussion, electronic music and projection, the 35-minute abstract show leans in to both Castricum and Zimblar's expertise. Centred around Castricum on a drum kit, a three-metre drop string curtain hangs above the stage and is used for the projection elements.



The combination of the various ideas aims to display to the audience the deeper themes of gender nonconforming perspectives and their importance in cultural and urban landscapes.

"It's about moving through some adversity and hostility and dancing through it. It's about resistance, celebration, community and relationships," she said.

Exploring the chaotically unique blend of multiple elements, Castricum believes the Arts House space allowed for *SINK* to be reimagined into the production the audience will now get the privilege of witnessing.

"The Arts House studio space presents a really unique opportunity to embark upon ideas

and they end up somewhere you didn't think they were going to go at all," she said.

Also ready to surprise and entertain audiences after a long time spent rehearsing and waiting is three smaller and more intimate shows; *ENTITY* by Back to Back Theatre, *Soap Bubbles and the Forces Which Mould Them* by Brian Lipson, and *Love Me (Bar) Tender* by Stage Mom.

While *ENTITY* is a short and sharp solo work focused on the hypnotic engagement with an ever-changing autonomous life form, *Love Me (Bar) Tender* is an intimate work centred around secret conversations over custom-made cocktails.



And because life can inspire art, *Soap Bubbles and the Forces Which Mould Them* centres around the science and chemistry of bubble art experiments. An idea which stemmed from the increased need of sanitisation during the pandemic.

While all the shows at the Arts House differ in content, they all aim to repair the audience and performer relationship that has been missed in Melbourne's creative industry over the past 18 months.

All four shows premiere on Wednesday, December 1 and will be showing at various times until Saturday, December 4 at the North Melbourne Town Hall ●

PARKVILLE GARDENS RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

City Life



"Our readers love a complex character."

Errol Street

Latest news from Parkville Gardens

“

Trees and shrubs abound in Parkville Gardens. They're a great feature of the neighbourhood. No wonder there was plenty of debris to be seen on the morning of Friday, October 29.

”

The wild storms of the night before left a trail of damage. Some trees fell down and many branches were strewn on paths and streets. Fortunately, it appears there were no human casualties and no homes damaged. So, there's much to be thankful for, not least the council workers tackling the massive clean-up job.

Melbourne's spring weather being what it is, two days later Sunday, October 31 turned out to be a glorious calm and sunny day with brilliant blue skies. A perfect day for the Parkville Gardens Residents' Association's Children's Week event – an orienteering adventure for children aged eight to 12 planned by committee member Michael Thom.

In the course of the day some 30 children plus parents set out, equipped with compass, map, a set of instructions, fruit and sweets. They had to find their way through part of Royal Park and Parkville Gardens and complete a number of tasks. Well done, everyone, and thanks to the Children's Week Council for the funding.

It's good to be free to move around and meet



up with friends and neighbours in person again, especially when the weather is fine. Plans are under way for two more events before the end of the year. The first is a music gala as part of the program of the City of Melbourne's 2021 Summer Festival, featuring two splendid jazz ensembles, the Julianna Clark Quartet and Breakout. This will be an outdoor event from about 3pm to 7pm on the afternoon of Sunday, December 5. We're hoping for a repeat of

the beautiful weather we had on October 31. Residents are being invited to enjoy the entertainment while they relax with a BYO picnic on the grass of the Galada Ave Reserve. Thanks to the City of Melbourne for its support.

The second is the Annual General Meeting (AGM) of the Parkville Gardens Residents' Association. This will be held at the Reggio Calabria Club at 6.30pm on the evening of Thursday, December 9. This is a special opportunity for local residents to come together, celebrate the year's achievements, look ahead to 2022, and elect the committee to take matters forward. There will definitely be some vacancies to be filled, so if you live in Parkville Gardens and have ideas and energy to contribute, please consider offering your services. We'd love to hear from you at members@pgra.org.au. AGM attendees will be welcome to stay on for a meal in the bistro.

Excavation work has begun on Galada Ave for the 16-storey apartment building to be owned and managed by social housing operator Housing First. The joint development partners Frasers and Citta have selected Buxton Construction as the builder. Construction is expected to continue throughout 2022 with completion early to mid-2022 ●

Residents can find us:
[facebook.com/groups/pggrass](https://www.facebook.com/groups/pggrass) or
email secretary@pgra.org.au.



Tom Knowles

TOM KNOWLES IS THE PRESIDENT OF PARKVILLE GARDENS ASSOCIATION.

PRESIDENT@PGRA.ORG.AU

ABORIGINAL MELBOURNE

Indigenous artist creates jewellery to unite community

WORDS BY *Spencer Fowler Steen*

Indigenous artist Cassie Leatham’s exhibition at the Koorie Heritage Trust’s (KHT) *Blak Jewellery – Finding Past Linking Present* weaves together her experiences as a Taungurung woman in more ways than one.

As a bonafide master weaver, music teacher, traditional dancer, former paramedic and mother, Ms Leatham’s jewellery is delicately made by hand using ornate bone, organic thread and silver using techniques she has learned over a lifetime.

And despite facing multiple obstacles along her journey including racism, a medical condition in her right arm which requires surgery, and various accidents, Ms Leatham is as devoted as you can be to helping local communities – indigenous and non-indigenous.

Apologising for side-tracking the conversation, Ms Leatham begun the interview with *CBD News* with a story about how a car crash stopped her from teaching a Zoom lesson that morning.

“We live in a farming community rurally, and one of the farming trucks came flying past,” she said.

“I can see everything from my house, and I was setting up for my Zoom, and that’s when I saw the [Toyota] Camry coming down [the road]. Then I heard squealing brakes and then a bang.”

“An old farmer I know who’s half-blind drove around the corner and clipped the truck, bumped his head and got a bit of a concussion. He’s okay, but he’s 92.”

Having previously worked as a paramedic for 11 years in a small town where she was the first Aboriginal paramedic, Ms Leatham said the adrenaline kicked in, and before she knew it, she was running down the road to make sure everyone was alright.

Caring for people, art and teaching are all things Ms Leatham has always done exceptionally well.

It’s how she’s managed to become only the second indigenous artist ever to be commissioned to do a jewellery collection at the National Gallery of Victoria (NGV).

Her journey to the *Blak Jewellery – Finding Past Linking Present* exhibition currently showing at the KHT began in 2020, when the design team at NGV suggested she should apply for KHT’s Blak Design program.

Blak Design is an initiative to support First Nations Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists, craftspeople and designers living in Victoria through a targeted professional development and mentoring program, developed



▲ Indigenous artist Cassie Leatham is dedicated to helping communities through art and teaching. Picture: Kelly Coleman.



▲ Cassie Leatham’s jewellery made from silver, bone and organic thread on display at the Koorie Heritage Trust. Pictures: Fred Kroh.



in partnership with the NGV and RMIT University.

Ms Leatham was accepted, and she immediately put her head down and started creating.

She said what started as three pieces of jewellery “manifested” into 80, selecting the ones on display today due to the stories and connections behind them.

“It’s called *Past Reflections* because when I look in the mirror, I see spirit with me,” she said.

“Spirit is with me every day – even when I’m asleep. Today I did weeding, I went hiking, and I collected crow feathers. I’ve come home and now I’m going to be weaving – every day is culture for me.”

Ms Leatham began her career as a music teacher in the coastal town of Loch Sport.

But as she moved from school to school, she noticed culture was lacking in the curriculum.

“From there, I became an ‘ambo’ and found racism was bad on the job, and I thought I

needed to heal the community and bring them art,” she said.

Ms Leatham was at one stage simultaneously working at the East Gippsland Aboriginal Art Corporation, as a paramedic and music teacher while raising a child as a single mother.

After finding something “had to give”, she dropped music teaching and started her own business, Wild Blak Arts, where she sells her artwork and teaches various indigenous workshops including traditional weaving, possum skin drum making and bush tukka.

“I’m here in the present to teach the future generation. It’s about the children, I want to be a great role model to non-indigenous and indigenous children,” she said.

Ms Leatham has a PhD and lectures at various universities. She also has degrees in archaeology, ampathology and has recently taken up silver-smithing. Her work has been exhibited around Australia and internationally, including the Melbourne Magistrates Court.

But when she’s not making artwork, weaving or teaching, Ms Leatham loves riding her bike.

She’s almost completed a 5000km bike ride raising funds and awareness for suicide in the Aboriginal community, as well as for cancer.

Ms Leatham said a large portion of the money she makes from her artwork goes towards Oonah Health and Community Services Aboriginal Corporation in Healesville, Beyond Blue, Lifeline and the KHT.

“I’m also donating three artworks to the hospital in Sale because they saved my dad’s life,” she said.

“I’d like to acknowledge specifically how grateful I am for the opportunity from the KHT, Laura Deakin, Blanche Tilden, Lindy McSwan, the NGV and RMIT. Without them, I wouldn’t have had this opportunity.”

Although a medical condition has left Ms Leatham needing surgery in her right arm, which she cannot use to weave now, she said luckily, she was ambidextrous and could still use her left arm. And if all of that wasn’t enough, she’s currently working on a book about her blue budgie, “Mr Beaky” who she said could speak in three different Aboriginal languages and liked to keep her company while she weaved traditional, Aboriginal mats.

The exhibition *Blak Jewellery – Finding Past, Linking Present* is open until Sunday, February 27, 2022 at the KHT, Fed Square ●

For more information:
koorieheritagetrust.com.au

METRO TUNNEL

Deadly designs bring colour to City Square for Melbourne Fashion Week

The Metro Tunnel’s City Square art space has had a costume change for this year’s Melbourne Fashion Week.

A riot of colourful images and text decorates the temporary fencing around the Town Hall Station building site, with First Nations designers Haus of Dizzy and Gammin Threads taking over the space until November 28.

Brightly coloured love hearts, butterflies and flowers jostle with jars of “blackfulla” Keens mustard, devon lunch meat and donuts, along with playful and proud messages such as “Sistahood”, “Digeridoo the right thing” and “Always was, always will be”.

You can even take home a piece of the artwork – all the designs are available as clothing or accessories. Head down to the pair’s pop-up shop on the lower ground of Melbourne Central, open until February 20.

Mary Parker, who runs the program of temporary public artworks that feature across the Metro Tunnel’s building sites, says she’s been keen to work with Haus of Dizzy and Gammin Threads for some time.

“Both labels have designs that are contemporary, bold and colourful, which work really well on our hoardings,” she said.

“We were thrilled when the opportunity came up to do something with them for Melbourne Fashion Week 2021.”

Mary said the collaborative artwork was a joyous explosion of colour to welcome people back into the city after lockdown.

“My favourite thing about the artwork is the way it cleverly delivers progressive messaging and humour, packaged up as an engaging design,” she said.

“People will find it irresistible to walk past



without stopping to smile and take a pic.”

Kristy Dickinson is the Wiradjuri woman behind Haus of Dizzy, known for its playful pieces of statement jewellery that celebrate indigenous culture and feminism.

Her goal, she said, was to imbue a sense of empowerment and joy to those who wore her creations, and to “bring social, political and environmental issues to the forefront” through her vibrant accessories.

As for fashion label Gammin Threads, proud Yorta Yorta and Taungurung designer Tahnee Edwards cites culture, community and cool aunties as her biggest influences.

The label was born from her love of typography, language and Blak pride for people who believe in living colourfully, paying respect and empowering women.

You can follow Tahnee and Kristy on Instagram at @gamminthreads and @hausofdizzy, or visit their online shops at gamminthreads.com and hausofdizzy.com.

Melbourne Fashion Week 2021 is on from November 15 to 21 ●

For more information:
metrotunnel.vic.gov.au

The locals helping to ensure the city is one for all

In an effort to prioritise the importance of architecture, design and urban amenities in the city, the City of Melbourne has established a new Design Excellence Advisory Committee, which includes two locals from North Melbourne.

WORDS BY *Kaylah-Joelle Baker*

This forward-thinking move from the City of Melbourne is one enriched with hopes of “cementing” Melbourne as a “world leading design city”.

“We want to see streets and squares as beautiful as Amsterdam, a skyline that is as classy as Chicago and a design culture that is as hardcore as Copenhagen – all done in a Melbourne way,” Deputy Lord Mayor Nicholas Reece said.

Consisting of eight technical experts and three technical advisors, the committee is complete with five community members. All of whom will actively work through design challenges and opportunities facing Melbourne.

And North Melbourne community member and “critical friend” of the city, Lara Brown is determined to help Melbourne become more “inclusive and accessible”.



▲ Community members Lara Brown and Ben Milbourne have been appointed to the City of Melbourne’s inaugural Design Excellence Advisory Committee.

Immigrating from the United States, the Ohio-born member lived in Chicago before making Melbourne her “home” 10 years ago. And she now works as an outreach and communications manager for Australian Urban Research Infrastructure Network (AURIN).

While quick to acknowledge Melbourne’s abundant green spaces, world-renowned laneways, convenient public transport (minus the fees attached) and architecture, she urges for



more work to be done in helping vulnerable community members.

“As a parent of a disabled child I can offer mine and my son’s personal experience. I notice a lot of things being offered to disabled people that are not up to the standard of what non-disabled people receive,” she said.

“We still have a way to go with accessibility for disabled people. My son likes to run off and so I would feel more comfortable if I could go to

a park that was actually enclosed. I would like to see that improved.”

Joining Ms Brown on the committee is North Melbourne resident and academic Ben Milbourne.

A lecturer in the Master of Architecture Design course at RMIT and director of an urban design and architectural studio, Mr Milbourne plans on bringing both his industry experience and personal interests to the committee.

“To be able to contribute to the maintenance and development of the whole city, including the precincts outside of the central city, through design strategy and policy is very exciting,” he said.

“Sustainability and climate response is a pressing and urgent issue of our time and I am quite interested in how we transform a policy or an attitude about reducing environmental harm into one of regeneration and restoration of environmental systems.”

With the committee including a balance of “high level expertise” members and those with “lived experience”, Mr Milbourne also notes the potential for the city to become a place for everyone.

“One of the issues I have is around equity and who gets to benefit and access the city and infrastructure,” he said.

“We need to find a way to make sure that the very rich infrastructure and facilities that we have in the city are accessible to everyone.”

The committee’s first meeting will take place before the end of 2021 ●

STATE MP

Safety upgrades at Docklands Primary, and news about the new North Melbourne Primary

With kids and families returning to the school routine, I recently popped into our newest local school, Docklands Primary School, to talk about safety upgrades needed to the roads around the school.

Many kids from West Melbourne now attend this great school but getting to and from school can be a challenge given the state government has no traffic management plan for the school, footpaths are often very narrow, and the road crossing on Footscray Rd is quite dangerous.

I regularly meet with Principal Adam Bright and parents to discuss these issues, and I’ve been pleased to recently help get 40km/hr signs installed outside the school as well as help get an additional crossing supervisor on Footscray Rd.

However, there are a number of safety issues that the state government and the council still need to urgently address. The state government still doesn’t have a traffic management plan for the school, meaning it’s difficult and often unsafe for kids and families walking on the busy roads around the school – especially the Footscray Rd/Docklands Drive intersection. Solutions are also needed for narrow footpaths where kids are exposed to trucks and cars, and for the safety of cyclists and school kids on the cycle path outside the school.

I’ll keep working to get the state government and the council to address these issues to make this area as safe as it possibly can be.

I also wanted to invite anyone with questions or concerns about the new North Melbourne Primary School campus (on Molesworth/Abbotsford streets) to get in touch with me.

I was pleased we were able to get a commitment from the state government to ensure the school will be a second campus of North Melbourne Primary (rather than a segregated separate school). However, there are still a lot of issues around traffic management for the school, how kids will walk safely between the two campuses, the building form of the school, how such a large student population will be managed, and more, that have not been released to the public.



▲ Ellen Sandell with Docklands Primary School’s principal Adam Bright, and local West Melbourne parent Mary.

I’m working with a group of local residents and the school council, to get the state government and Victorian School Building Authority to be more transparent in their plans and make sure this school is the best it can be, as well as making sure residents around the school have their ideas and questions answered. If you would like to hear more about this, please get in touch: office@ellensandell.com.

I also wanted to say a special hello to all the residents of Parkville Gardens who will be joining my electorate of Melbourne at the next state election in November 2022, after a boundary change by the Victorian Electoral Commission. It will be a pleasure to represent you in the Victorian Parliament and I encourage you to get in touch with me anytime ●



Ellen Sandell
STATE MP FOR MELBOURNE
OFFICE@ELLENSANDELL.COM

SATELLITE FOUNDATION

Men who care: What it’s like being a male in a caring role

To honour International Men’s Day on November 19, Satellite spoke to four men within our community to get a better understanding of what it’s like to be a male carer within a family experiencing mental illness or mental health challenges. They share how it can have an impact on their own mental health, and make you stronger, more resilient, and more compassionate.

Chris, 23, Satellite participant

“Being a carer is a gift, it has taught me so much of who I am today. In Vietnamese culture, caring for your parents as they age is an act of honouring and respecting your ancestors, of being of service to those who have given you the ultimate gift of life. There is such tenderness, patience, kindness and empathy that comes with being a carer.”

“However, this is not to romanticise things. Being a carer from a marginalised background can also be scary and confusing. Due to deep social isolation, compounded intersectional minority stress, institutional abuse, historical intergenerational trauma and structural barriers preventing people from diverse backgrounds to access mainstream support services, I often feel very alone and scared.”

“Being a carer is also my superpower. It has taught me to find community and friends who love me. It has taught me to find creativity. It has taught me to take care and love myself. It has taught me that with love, all pain becomes medicine and healing.”

Henry, 24, Satellite participant

“I have taken on a caring role for Mum, she has depression – this involves keeping a check on her and encouraging her to be active and doing things, getting her out of bed. Mum has more depression and I have more anxiety. It does ebb and flow especially when I have been at home in lockdown.”

“I haven’t accessed services; I haven’t felt the need to. I’ve more just reached out and talked to people about it. Some of Mum’s friends, I could call them and talk to them about it, they are very understanding. I have a pretty strong

network of people I can turn to if I need to.

I think I am a more compassionate and accepting person because of my experiences.”

Joel Kleber, 33, digital professional

“I am my mother’s medical guardian due to her cognitive decline from decades of ECT and other treatments related to her BiPolar 1. She has recently been diagnosed with Sub-Nuclear Palsy (Steele Richardson Syndrome) which required me to put her in a nursing home. I drive down every weekend from Melbourne to Warrnambool to be with her.”

“Now I am a carer, however, growing up I didn’t consider myself one. She was just my mum with a serious mental illness and that was the way it was.”

“I throw myself into work and deliberately keep myself busy so that I don’t have to think about the situation. I think growing up with a parent with a mental illness builds an internal resilience, so I haven’t had any mental health concerns regarding the situation.”

Henry von Doussa, 52, Satellite’s family and community engagement person

“My siblings and I did a lot of care for my mum who was very anxious and depressed a lot of the time. We didn’t see it as a special ‘caring role’, we just saw it as how you love your mum when she is struggling. Me and my brothers fought a lot as teenagers, and all had our own private worries, but when it counted, we pulled together, and we have strong relationships today.”

“I see that there is a lot more carer support available nowadays, and I encourage all men to reach out for emotional and practical support when they are caring for a loved one with mental health struggles or mental illness.” ●

For more information:
satellitefoundation.org.au



Faces of North West City

What couldn't you do in lockdown that you are most excited for now?



PHILIPPA BELL
I'm just so excited to be going to the theatre again. I had a chance to go to Malthouse Theatre to check out the space yesterday and it was awesome!



JANE MARSHALL
I'm most excited to be back in Melbourne when all the theatres are open everybody is going out eating and celebrating.



KELVIN G
Going to the city as I live in Clayton and during the lockdown I couldn't go out of the 10km range. It's good because now I can return to the city and hang out with friends.



FAY MAO
I really want to go to the library so I can be efficient as I can't focus when I am studying at home. It's exam period currently so it's nice to go to Victoria's State Library to prepare.

ENVIRONMENT

Taking care of pests naturally

Being able to harvest and consume something that you have cultivated can be a very satisfying experience, so when a pest comes along and takes a share this can be disheartening.

When insects feed on plants that we as humans don't want them to and cause damage they then become pests. Aphids, beetles, borer, flies, grasshoppers (dry season pests), nematodes, scale insects, slugs and snails are some of the pests found in inner city gardens, and let's not forget the possum.

Pests have a role in the overall system of nature and are part of the diverse life on this planet. Everything created has a purpose. Pests are often an indicator of unbalance, which then calls for measures to control and cure – not eliminate.

Not all plant problems are caused by insects. Sometimes plants suffer from nutrient deficiency, which often manifests as foliage discoloration or distortion. Soil that is too wet can discolor foliage and cause wilting as well.

Regularly check your garden to keep across infestation levels. Allow a certain threshold for pests. Ask – how much damage is occurring? I.e. is it chewing (caterpillars, snails and slugs) or is it sucking (aphids, thrips, scale). Does it matter? Then discern to do nothing, take action or improve the habitat – for example red spider mites increase under conditions of heat and dryness so watering lightly will reduce the infestation.

Below are the Integrated Pest Management (IPM) strategies I use. Some may work for you depending on your garden size, what you are growing and the conditions on your site.

The best pest management cure is prevention. By understanding what attracts pests, how

they operate and breed you can then confuse them, interrupt their breeding cycles and set up barriers.

Building a resilient balanced garden that encourages biodiversity and provides habitat is a good start. Mixed plantings encourage predatory species and perennial plants provide homes for beneficial insects to winter over in, such as hoverflies, lacewings and ladybirds that feed on aphids, leafhopper and mealy bugs. Inter-planting varieties of plants can reduce the incidence of pests by masking the plants' colour, leaf shape and smell.

Plant aromatic herbs and companion plants with vegetables such as tansy, pennyroyal, rue, mint wormwood, rosemary, sage, lavender, basil, peppermint and southernwood. As insects are attracted mainly by smell, creating a diversity of plants with various smells you can deter pests from finding your productive vegetables. Using companion and guild planting will go a long way to ensure pests bypass. Apply appropriate water and mulch.

When your garden is busy with all sorts of life natural pest management is happening. Predators will work for you and carry out the valuable work of pollination and fertilisation of fruit and vegetables. They can live in wind-breaks, living fences and insect hotels.

Larger predators such as insectivorous birds are a big help in the garden eating grubs, weevils, moths, larvae and flies. To invite them in plant fruit trees and provide several types of



water and remember small birds need dense small leaved shrubs for protection.

Keep plants as healthy as possible to reduce plant stress so plant them in the right place in the right season. Keep your soil fertile, better-quality soil means better produce with more nutrients and more resistance to pests.

Select strong locally grown species of plants. I mainly choose heritage and heirloom plants and organic veggie seedlings to plant and then collect seed from those whom perform best.

Placing fresh sawdust, sharp sand, soot, cinders or as a barrier around special plants of beds, deters snails and slugs. These barriers are abrasive and/or dehydrating. Put a collar such as a cut-off plastic milk carton around small seedlings outside until they are stronger – to deter cutworm and snails. Uprturned citrus shells and beer are all good traps.

Lures and baits like milk, beer attracts slugs and snails. Yeasts sugars and proteins are bait for fruit fly. Put vinegar and sugar solution in traps and hang them in your trees – ensure neighbours are on board.

Net veggie beds when the cabbage moth starts appearing and start to visually look under the leaves for their eggs and caterpillars and remove them by hand. Factor in when the flowers of vegies have been pollinated. Other people use exclusion methods of paper bags on fruit.

Rotate crops to stop build-up of soil pests. Crop rotation helps break the pest cycle. Sometimes planting onions and garlic helps



to clean the soil of the pests attracted by the previous crop.

Organic sprays work on insect anatomy and are usually a last resort measure because some of them will kill beneficial insects as well. I know people, who take the bugs they want to get rid of, mix them up in a blender and leave for one to two days to encourage pathogens then mix with water and spray.

Natural homemade sprays such as vegetable oil, soap, neem, chilli and pepper garlic weed brews and tomato leaf sprays are effective as repellents or insecticides. But do your homework, as they can be harmful. Scan the QR code below for recipes and more information.



Then there is the possum ... well that will have to wait for another day ●



Jacqui van Heerden
CO-CONVENER OF TRANSITION TOWN KENSINGTON
JACQUIVANHEERDEN@GMAIL.COM

MELBOURNE ZOO

From the zoo to you, welcome back!

What a joy it is to be able to say that Melbourne Zoo is back open to visitors!

WORDS BY Michelle Bruggeman, MELBOURNE ZOO DIRECTOR

For me, as Melbourne Zoo director, some of my favourite moments are seeing the looks of joy on the faces of children and their families as they surge through our iconic front entrance, giggling and talking excitedly about what special animal they want to visit first.

I have so missed those moments during the many months we have been closed since this pandemic began. And so, to reopen the zoo and see those smiling faces once more is a delight.

It became clear to me as soon as I joined the zoo that it really is a sanctuary – both for people and wildlife – in the heart of Melbourne. And I believe the zoo’s importance has only grown in this regard while we have been closed. We have all spent so much time at home that rediscovering the joy and wonder of nature is more important now than ever. We know how valuable time outdoors among wildlife is for our mental as well as our physical health. And the Melbourne Zoo team is so thrilled to be able to offer our Zoo Members and visitors the opportunity to reconnect with our amazing animals and our glorious gardens again. To the 280,000 Zoos Victoria members, many of whom live locally around the zoo, who have supported us throughout, I want to say an enormous thank you.

The level of interest from the community in our reopening has been awesome. A ticket to the zoo is among the hottest tickets in town right now. We appreciate the patience and understanding of our members and visitors as we have reopened with limited capacity. More tickets



will become available as we carefully move through the staged phases of our reopening.

COVID has presented us with some incredible challenges. The zoo has been closed for more than 290 days since the pandemic began, and we have closed and reopened the zoo six times during that period. But I am now incredibly hopeful that we will not need to close again.

Our staff have been amazing throughout. While we haven’t been able to welcome visitors to our zoo, our keepers, veterinary team and other essential property staff have continued to care for our animals and our grounds. Our healthcare programs have continued. Our enrichment programs have continued. Our animal rescue work has continued. Our vital conservation and threatened species breeding programs have continued. Despite all the disruptions, all the challenges, all the impacts, the passion and dedicated of our staff has been a constant. As director, I couldn’t be prouder.

Animal lovers of all ages have been on our mind this whole time. Our “Animals at Home” livestream service has been an incredible success. Millions of people have tuned in from home to spend time with the otter family, snow leopards, giraffes, zebras and penguins. Our virtual keeper tours and online zoo tours

have been watched and re-watched in many thousands of households across Victoria and Australia. Hundreds of thousands of school students have engaged with our education resources online, and I do hope this has brought some joy to children studying from home and some relief to their parents through the many months of remote learning.

And now, finally, these animal lovers can return to our zoo and reconnect with their favourite animals in person. What a thrill it has been for so many people to come back to the zoo and say hello to the otters, snow leopards and other animals that they have spent so many hours with online during the past 18 months. What a joy it has been to see children exploring our new nature play spaces.

Spring has sprung, summer is near, and the zoo grounds are looking amazing. We have 22 hectares of adventure, learning and excitement right in the heart of Melbourne. It is such a privilege to be director of this extraordinary place. Next year we celebrate 160 years since the zoo opened, and I truly believe it has never been more relevant and more vital.

Thank you for your support through the pandemic, and we look forward to welcoming you back! ●

ROTARY CLUB - NORTH MELBOURNE



Rotary is engaging with our local refugee community

During the past month the Rotary Club of North Melbourne have had some great speakers on Zoom and are so happy that we are now getting back to meet in person at the Mercure Hotel.

Two recent speakers we had were from the River Nile School and Ames Australia.

The River Nile School (RNS) offers full time programs delivering the VCAL curriculum to re-engage Refugee and Asylum Seeker school-aged young women who may have experienced disrupted schooling and are newly arrived to Australia.

This school is right in the centre of the area our Rotary Club serves in Capel St, North Melbourne.

Ames Australia is an organisation that is responsible for supporting the Afghan refugees that have arrived after fleeing the Taliban. They are currently coordinating a donation distribution centre from the Drill Hall opposite Queen Victoria Market currently and they are looking after about 3000 people.

Our members were really impressed with the work both organisations are doing and have decided we will get more involved with both of them on an ongoing basis to aid.

Our club has our final meeting of the year as a fun in-person break up “Xmas Party” at the Mercure Hotel and we have invited both organisations to make up a table from the refugee community they work with so that they can interact with our members with a view that ongoing positive relationships will ensue.

And we are still looking for volunteers

We mentioned last month about our new venture as a founding member of RIMERN being the Rotary Inner Melbourne Emergency Relief Network.

This organisation collects and distributes household goods to people that have just been provided housing. The recipients are referred by various other organisations that assist people who have been homeless or possible even victims of family violence. Some may have just come out of prison.

One of these organisations is the River Nile School. From our article in last month’s edition we did receive a few contacts from volunteers who have been working with our own members.

Our club is doing a three-hour shift every two weeks on a Saturday afternoon and we would still love to have more volunteers to share the load.

So, if you are interested in volunteering or finding out more about Rotary please give our volunteer coordinator Judy Page a call on 0425 741 624 or email her at judypage3@gmail.com ●

HISTORY

Brettena (also known as Bridgetena) Smyth – a passionate crusader for good


She was large in stature, nearly six feet tall, and her heart and generosity were enormous.

Her reputation spread widely throughout Australia. At a time of growing interest and experimentation in medicine, Brettena was at the forefront of advances in healthcare, with a particular interest in the health and wellbeing of women.

Born in Kyneton in 1840, Brettena was 33 when, after 12 years of marriage, she was widowed, leaving her with four children to support. Her husband owned a fruit and confectionery shop on North Melbourne’s main shopping street and Brettena took over the business. Her shop evolved into a millinery and gift shop, attracting female clientele. Thus, she would have come across women from all walks of life, giving her insight into the hardship, poverty and domestic violence that many women endured at that time.

Brettena lived behind her shop at 51 Errol St and it was here that she ran her practice of what today would be referred to as alternative medicine. She practised, among other things, electrotherapy and phrenology, the study of the conformation of the skull, from which the practitioner purported to ascertain the patient’s mental faculties and temperament. She had an interest in medical science and it was her ambition to study medicine at the University of Melbourne.

Unfortunately, these plans were thwarted when she lost her savings in the financial crash



MRS. B. SMYTH,
Delineates Character
AT HER PRIVATE RESIDENCE,
51 ERROL ST., NORTH MELBOURNE,
AND
Gives a Chart for the Small Sum of 2/6.
DISEASES TOLD AND THEIR CURES
WILL BE GIVEN.
TRADES AND PROFESSIONS POINTED OUT.
Adaptation in Matrimony a Specialty.
INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES WAITED ON AT THEIR
RESIDENCES BY APPOINTMENT.

of the early 1890s. She wrote pamphlets that sold widely, provided consultations, and lectured on her health theories and, to audiences confined to women, she advocated the use of birth control, particularly condoms and the contraceptive “cap”, a “French pessaire

preventative”, which, she said, was the only form of contraception that a woman could use without the knowledge of her husband.

Brettena had a vision of the ideal family: while she held progressive ideas she believed that a strong family unit, where roles were shared between the sexes, was fundamental to social reform. She advocated birth control to assist families limit the number of children, but also to prevent the number of unwanted pregnancies. She acknowledged the role that alcohol abuse played in violence against women and was involved in the temperance movement.

The title of her several books, *Love, Courtship and Marriage* (1892), *The Limitation of Offspring* (1893) and *The Social Evil* (1894). *What Every Woman Should Know: Diseases Incidental to Women* (1895) demonstrate her various interests. She enjoyed public speaking and she gave up her shop in order to go travelling and propagate her ideas. Unfortunately, she developed Bright’s disease and died on February 15, 1898 at the age of 58.

She was also an early proponent of votes for women, having been an early member of the Victorian Women’s Suffrage Society, and in 1888 she formed a breakaway group, the Australian Women’s Suffrage Society. She was a freethinker and opposed to orthodox religion. So, it is ironic that she was buried in the Roman Catholic section of the Melbourne General Cemetery.

An excerpt from her obituary in the *North Melbourne Courier* sums up her contribution to society: “Her unvarying good nature, urbanity, and readiness to oblige, disarmed her critics of anything like a personal bias towards her. A true and tender womanly heart” ●

Pet's Corner

The local husky living by her own rules

“

Adapting to the surroundings around her, Tilly is a local husky not afraid of meeting new people and making friends.

”



WORDS BY *Kaylah-Joelle Baker*
PHOTOGRAPHY BY *John Tadigiri*

Born in the Southern Highlands of New South Wales, Tilly was no stranger to cooler climates upon moving to Melbourne seven years ago. Now living in North Melbourne with owner Pierre Bobillier, she is not afraid to keep him on his toes with her “demanding, very vocal” personality.



“She isn’t great at obeying commands [and] can hear a packet of cheese opening from two blocks away,” he said. Always on the prowl for extra food, Tilly has Mr Bobillier constantly watching out for what she’ll manage to find next on her regular walks through the streets of North Melbourne. “Once on our way to the dog park, I had to pry her mouth open trying to pull out a discarded chicken wing she found on the ground and quickly tried to scoff down,” he said.

“She will eat almost anything”. Living life to its fullest, when Tilly isn’t spending her time searching for food, she is more than happy to run around with other dogs she meets at the local dog park. “Tilly is always excited to meet new dogs, especially ones that will chase her around and vice versa,” Mr Bobillier said. “She’s also extremely friendly with people and there are plenty of other friendly dogs and owners in the area to meet”. Cheeky and energetic in social environments, Tilly rejuvenates with days spent at home lounging around. “Once she’s home, she turns into an old lady who has no qualms about lazing on the couch,” Mr Bobillier said. It’s an attribute that Mr Bobillier is grateful for given his location of living in an apartment. With no patch of grass in close proximity, it can prove difficult when raising a puppy. “We’d love a path of grass closer to our place to take her to do her business,” Mr Bobillier said. “But I guess it does force us to get out of the apartment and walk a couple of blocks a few times a day”. And the excitement of the walks are not lost on the loveable, forever-hungry husky, described as “a bit of a tease with her affection” ●

HOUSING TOWERS

City of Melbourne moves on affordable housing provision

An Affordable Housing Strategy 2030 was adopted at the end of last year and out of this, the City of Melbourne (CoM) has decided to directly engage in affordable housing provision.

WORDS BY *Cory Memery*
Greens councillors Rohan Leppert and Olivia Ball worked with Deputy Lord Mayor Nicholas Reece to include the establishment of Homes Melbourne in the council’s four-year plan to coordinate and facilitate more affordable housing for key workers and people on low incomes starting with ...

- A demonstration project on council-owned land;
- Supporting the Make Room accommodation project and new homeless support hubs for vulnerable citizens to access essential support services including food, showers, lockers, and information; and
- Provision of advice on other homelessness support services.

Homes Melbourne’s inaugural CEO will be the City of Yarra CEO Vijaya “VJ” Vaidyanath. VJ has led Yarra’s administration since 2012 and before that was CEO of local councils in New Zealand. She worked for the Reserve Bank of India before moving to New Zealand and shifting from banking to local government.

Inclusionary zoning

The City of Melbourne’s advocacy to the state government for more public housing and inclusionary zoning (IZ) will continue and public housing supporters have campaigned for it to be in the state government’s 10-year housing strategy that is expected to be released before the end of this year.

The Labor for Housing group made up of Labor MPs and party members is actively campaigning for mandatory inclusionary zoning:



Mandatory IZ is when new developments of a certain size – determined through legislation – have to set aside land and make financial contributions to build affordable housing.

IZ is not new in Victoria. The current planning rules have a provision for voluntary agreements to be reached between developers and local councils. However, there hasn’t been a rush of developers to volunteer, so a mandatory provision is necessary if we are to make some headway on more affordable housing through Victoria. Priority, though, needs to be given to public housing in mandatory IZ. More public housing is needed in the City of Melbourne, starting with constructing it to reduce overcrowding in existing high-rise buildings.

Work and skills development opportunities for public housing residents

There is a lot of talk about the shortages of construction and other skilled and essential workers in Melbourne. Many have escaped extended lockdowns and have gone to Queensland. A new program should start up that offers training to public housing residents in inner Melbourne to take up these jobs rather than wait for workers to return. The vast majority won’t return, so why not offer the opportunity to those who want it and remain living in Melbourne?

There are residents who can start up their own businesses and thrive as well with some support from the CoM and the state government.

Big Housing build

The state government continues to make announcements under this program. A recent one is the construction of four new community housing towers (eight floors each) on carparks in the Collingwood public housing estate in the City of Yarra. Public housing tenants will not be able to park onsite during a two-year construction period starting next year.

Why doesn’t the government rapidly introduce mandatory IZ and spread new housing throughout our greater metro Melbourne? Seems public housing tenants have no rights or say in a matter like this. A similar development in private housing suburbs would receive considerable opposition ●

NATURE



Summer drummer

Later this month when you hear the thunderous roar of cicadas in the Flagstaff or Parkville Gardens remember they have probably been working up to it for seven years.

WORDS BY *Howard Birnstihl*
That’s how long most species of Australian cicadas sit in their tiny holes underground as nymphs, sucking sap from their host tree in the dark, waiting for their environmental alarm clock to ring, slowly growing from one month to the next. If you think that’s a long time to live such a life, some American species take up to 17 years to mature (obviously slow learners).

Every year, like the cicadas, I wait for the first really warm night in November. As soon as it’s dark I pop over to one of the local parks with my torch and camera gear and examine the ground around the trees. If I’m lucky, I might see a five-centimetre-long adult using its specially designed front legs to dig its way to the surface, climb doggedly up the trunk and set itself for its coming of age. The back of the brown casing splits down the middle and like a slow-motion version of the mild-mannered Clark Kent emerging from his phone booth as Superman, out struggles a somewhat crumpled adult cicada. Usually yellow, less often green and occasionally black, its wings still to unfurl, quite some time transpires before the cicada is ready to fly. Generally, content to climb its way up into the canopy it will soon be completely hidden from view and safe from most predators.

Bumbling, loveable and harmless, these insects live only a few weeks – just long enough to mate, the female laying a couple of hundred eggs, employing the pointy ovipositor on the end of her abdomen to neatly deposit each egg into its own individual slit in a tree branch, and then die. When the eggs hatch, the nymphs fall to the ground, burrow into the ground and begin the cycle all over again.

There is a theory, well, it’s mine actually, that male cicadas have a strong genetic link with boys, both the young and teenage varieties. The noise the male cicadas make with their abdominal plates act like the clackers of our childhood,

except a cicada clacks at 600 times per second which, thankfully, even the most diligent eight-year-old thankfully cannot manage. Cicadas possess the most complicated auditory system in the insect world and like most teenagers, are actually oblivious to their own noise. The level has been measured at 120 decibels, which at a distance of one metre or so, is actually on the threshold of human pain. Reminiscent again you might say of the noise permeating all homes which have paper thin doors leading to teenage bedrooms. With eyesight which can only distinguish between light and dark and an ability to fly only about as well as the Wright brothers, cicadas are easy prey for birds, and although their sound has a ventriliquistic nature in the bush, making it almost impossible to determine their exact location, once on the wing that incredible sound makes them an easy target. Australia is the cicada capital of the world with more than 700 species and I’ve noticed, like most insect species, there appears to be a cycle of good and bad years. In the past, on occasions, I have found literally hundreds within an area of about 100 square metres, whereas in recent times I’m lucky to find a dozen. I wonder if global warming is having an effect? What function these chubby chaps have in nature is a mystery, but along with tadpoles and ladybirds they certainly fill a need in all keen young collectors. What would we do without them? If you would like to see more of my work, scan the QR code below or check out my YouTube channel under my name ●



Eat, work, stay, play at The District Docklands

As Victoria’s largest open air, weather protected shopping, dining and entertainment precinct, The District Docklands presents a unique, and quintessentially, Melbourne experience as we accelerate out of lockdown.

WORDS BY Jack Hayes

Armed with an action-packed schedule, kick-started with a return to District favourites like Australia’s first trick-art gallery ArtVo, arcade fun at Archie Brothers Cirque Electriq, HOYTS cinemas, ice skating at O’Brien Icehouse, and the future playground at IMAGINARIA, summer at The District is shaping as an unmissable city experience.

The District is celebrating Melbourne’s love of festivities and live music with a series of pop-up events and interactive experiences including the first use of its new pop-up and interactive space, District X, with the *Pasted and Wasted* rock music poster exhibition.

Featuring more than 800 original music posters from decades of Australian live music from Nick Vukovic’s private collection, *Pasted and Wasted* in the first exhibition at the new immersive space slated to support Melbourne’s creative industries and local talent.

The District Docklands chief executive officer George Karabatsos told *North West City News* the exhibition was just the tip of a very large iceberg of exhibitions, activations and events throughout the precinct this summer.

“From a strategic point of view, we have always been very conscious of creating new experiences and new destinations and celebrating everything that is cultural in Melbourne,” Mr



Karabatsos said.

“Our major attractions are now open, with the return of visitors to The District to enjoy new experiences, and spend time in our entertainment, leisure, food and beverage precinct.”

“Nowhere else in Australia can you go bowling, ice skating, play glow golf, see a movie, experience immersive art and choose from 30 dining options in one place.”

While the past 20 months have been challenging for the precinct, particularly as one who has built its name on entertainment and retail offerings, The District has evolved from its early iteration, with the help of the fresh food and essential service destination, Market Lane, into a full-service precinct for locals and visitors alike.

Market Lane has continued to provide essential services to the local community throughout lockdowns – along with several food and dining retailers offering takeaway and delivery services.

“We have been able to pivot a lot of those [Market Lane] retailers to deliver the daily needs and essential services for locals, along with a lot of our food and beverage businesses evolving their takeaway capacity,” Mr Karabatsos said.

“It has been very rewarding the role the precinct has played in supporting the local community, and we are excited to welcome everyone back.”

In partnership with the City of Melbourne,

The District will welcome an interactive Giant Christmas Maze activation running from November 27 through to Christmas Eve.

The summer months will also see the return of the street market, with a series of weekend markets including a pop-up music fair and a special Christmas market on Friday, December 17 from 4pm to 9pm.

Rounding out the summer of fun you’ll find District Live. Launching at the end of November, there will be three days of live music headlined by Daryl Braithwaite, Joe Camilleri and The Black Sorrows.

District Live will continue in January with free live music performances across the outdoor precinct every Friday to Sunday.

“Our focus over the coming months is to work closely with state and local governments, our stakeholders, and precinct partners, as we further develop and build on our positioning as Melbourne’s newest modern urban village – a place to live, work, stay, play, and visit,” Mr Karabatsos said.

“We have the infrastructure, we have the amenity and we have the opportunity to continue to work closely with the City of Melbourne and the Victorian Government to continue to create one of Melbourne’s newest urban village, and it takes a lot of people to make a village come to life.” ●



For more information visit:
thedistrictdocklands.com.au

A turning point for local real estate

There is no doubt Melbourne’s residential property market has been tracking on an unprecedented upward trajectory since the start of the pandemic.

WORDS BY Jack Hayes

Record low interest rates, stamp duty concessions and pent-up supply have all contributed to the strongest performing property markets in history, resulting in Melbourne’s median house price soaring north of \$1 million.

Locally, the market paints a similar picture.

According to Jellis Craig Essendon and Kensington director Simon Mason, clearance rates in North and West Melbourne, Kensington and Parkville are at an all-time high; days on market for property have dramatically decreased and with a distinct lack of properties on the market, we are seeing fierce competition.

“Every key indicator in the market is as strong as I have ever seen it,” Mr Mason said. “Next year there are signs of an interest rate increase and Australian Prudential Regulation Authority (APRA) has come out to restrict certain markets with lending criteria, which will likely have a dampening effect on the market at some point.”

“It’s really difficult to crystal ball where values will sit between now and 12 months’ time, however I am starting to see some signs in the market to suggest we are at the upper end of the current property cycle. Record low interest rates, resulting in speed I’ve never seen before where buyers are willing to make quick decisions, in some cases sight unseen. This is unsustainable in the long term.”

“I think there is enough strength in the market locally to suggest there won’t be any significant changes in the near future, but you will at some point start to see a slight cool in terms of fast-paced enthusiasm among buyers which will create a more balanced market.”

Mr Mason said the inner north-west property market has seen a considerable shift over the previous decade away from a notoriously insular market to one where buyers are more open to moving suburb if it fits their requirements and the property suits what they are looking for.

Although the median house prices for both North Melbourne and Kensington have surged past \$1 million, the suburbs present an attractive prospect for buyers with the convenience of proximity to the CBD, attractive lifestyle and outstanding value for money, compared to its counterparts in the eastern suburbs.

Jellis Craig sales consultant Carmel Morganti told *North West City News* that the growing allure of a move into the area came down to a few simple elements.

“The village and community atmosphere are the main drawcard for buyers moving into the area,” Ms Morganti said. “Strips like Bellair St, Pinoak Cres and Errol St with their cafes and bars, all of the elements you’d find in Northcote, Carlton or Brunswick, you are finding here with the same or closer proximity to the city.”

“It’s a beautifully paced area and I think people appreciate the authenticity of the area which has a distinct lack of pretention.”

Having serviced the inner city and Moonee Valley areas for more than 20 years and covering the suburbs of Kensington, Flemington, Moonee Ponds, North Melbourne, West Melbourne, Parkville, Essendon, Strathmore, Ascot Vale, Maribyrnong and surrounds, the team at Jellis Craig continues to forge strong bonds with local sellers, buyers, renters, and the



▲ From left, Jellis Craig’s Simon Mason, Carmel Morganti and Jerome Feery.

wider community.

A culmination of hard work and an incredibly active property market, Jellis Craig Essendon and Kensington saw record sales in October, with sales in excess of 50 properties for the month.

“We pride ourselves on being a source of truth for clients in the area, to provide the right advice as they are considering their options,

either short, mid or long term, they have that sound ear to run through suggestions that crystallise what the best options are for them,” Mr Mason said.

“We are here for the long haul from a business perspective, we all live in the district and want to add as much value to the community as possible.”

“Having that local experience as people come into the area, being able to offer the right advice for clients and assist them through that buying and selling journey is where we see our benefit to the community.”

Further afield from the confines of this masthead’s remit, Jellis Craig has continued its record-breaking ways, with a reported suburb smashing sale in Ascot Vale.

With the final figure still undisclosed, Jellis Craig Essendon and Kensington sales consultant Jerome Feery confirmed the sale of the Rothwell Hill property had surpassed the previous record of \$4.6 million.

“It’s a simply extraordinary home with no expense spared as you would expect when you plan to live in a home for a very long time,” Mr Feery said.

“Unfortunately for this particular family’s case, COVID seemed to change their perspective and they wanted to live with a bit of acreage.”

The owners listed the five-bedroom house following a complete transformation, with \$4.95m to \$5.445m price tag ●

For more information visit:
jellisicraig.com.au/office/kensington

PUZZLES & TRIVIA

Quiz



- 1. Green tea is made from the leaves of what plant?
- 2. A North Melbourne local recently won a huge Powerball prize. How much did he win?
- 3. Which century-old Kensington building is set for a massive revamp?
- 4. What is the actual name of the titular character Pedro Pascal (pictured) plays in the Disney series *The Mandalorian*?
- 5. Through what part of the body do dogs sweat?
- 6. What is the postcode of West Melbourne?
- 7. Held in Adelaide since 1999, what is the biggest cycling race in the Southern Hemisphere?
- 8. Parkville Gardens is a suburb on the former site of the Commonwealth Games Athletes' Village. Which year were the games held?
- 9. Who won a Grammy for Album of the Year in 2021?
- 10. What is the fastest growing land plant in the world?
- 11. Which piece of well-recognised art moved from Queen Victoria Market to Kensington recently?
- 12. What is the name of the upcoming urban renewal precinct that will be built in North Melbourne and Macaulay?

QUIZ SOLUTIONS

1. Camellia sinensis 2. \$80 million 3. Younghusband and Woollstore 4. Din Djarin 5. Their paws 6. 3003 7. The Santos Tour Down Under 8. 2006 9. Taylor Swift 10. Bamboos 11. Island Wave by artist Lisa Young 12. Arden

5x5 No. 005

Insert the missing letters to make 10 words – five reading across the grid and five reading down.

B		I		K
	A		I	
A		O		N
	I		E	
L		S		S

SOLUTIONS

BRISK, RADII, ADORN, WILED, LOSES, PUZZLES AND PAGINATION ©PAGEMASTERS PTY LTD PAGEMASTERS.COM

Nov 2021

Sudoku

No. 005

Fill in the blank cells using the numbers from 1 to 9. Each number can only appear once in each row, column and 3x3 block

EASY

		9		1	3		8	
	7		6	8				
3				9				7
	6				9	2	1	
	4	3				8	9	
	9	1	3				5	
9				5				8
				2	7		6	
	2		8	3		9		

HARD

			8			2		
					4	7		6
	7		3				9	4
				4		3		
3	4						2	5
		2		9				
8	5				1		3	
2		4	7					
		9			2			

SOLUTIONS

EASY

9	7	6	1	8	8	4	7	2	9
1	9	4	7	2	6	5	5	8	8
8	2	8	9	5	4	7	1	1	6
4	5	7	8	9	8	1	6	2	
9	6	8	2	7	1	1	8	4	5
8	1	1	2	6	4	5	8	9	7
7	1	4	1	5	6	2	9	8	3
6	8	5	4	7	8	9	2	7	1
2	8	6	8	3	1	7	6	5	4

HARD

1	7	8	2	9	4	7	6	8	9
6	9	9	8	8	7	4	7	1	2
2	8	7	1	9	6	7	5	8	
7	4	1	8	6	9	2	8	9	
9	2	6	7	8	1	9	4	8	
8	9	8	5	4	4	1	2	1	6
4	6	9	9	2	8	8	7	1	
9	8	7	4	1	1	4	8	2	6
8	1	1	2	6	7	7	5	9	4

Wordfind

Theme: Classic Cars

The leftover letters will spell out a secret message.

E	C	I	T	R	O	E	N	E	R	N
C	E	O	L	O	A	F	T	I	I	C
Y	S	O	E	I	E	T	O	T	F	M
O	A	I	C	M	E	G	R	R	E	B
R	E	N	T	V	O	A	U	R	D	I
S	A	H	R	A	M	R	C	E	T	R
L	F	O	C	N	R	E	A	T	P	A
L	C	I	O	S	D	E	A	F	I	U
O	Y	T	A	E	R	G	S	D	L	G
R	S	G	S	T	U	O	U	A	O	A
A	N	E	A	B	G	A	P	E	M	J

- ALFA ROMEO
ASTON MARTIN
AUDI
BUGATTI
CITROEN
CORVETTE
FIAT
FORD
JAGUAR
- LANCIA
MASERATI
MERCEDES
PEUGEOT
PORSCHE
ROLLS ROYCE

Secret message: Relics of a bygone age

Crossword

No. 005

ACROSS

- 1 Uncovered (7)
- 5 From Stockholm, say (7)
- 9 Layer that absorbs most of the sun's UV radiation (5)
- 10 Grant (9)
- 11 Female name with three syllables (8)
- 12 Bug (6)
- 15 Vacations (5)
- 16 Insincere or untrustworthy person (9)
- 18 Tupperware, for example (9)
- 20 Prefix meaning more than one (5)
- 21 Most recent (6)
- 23 Male name, also an ABBA song (8)
- 25 Language created in 1887 (9)
- 26 US state (5)
- 27 Perform surgery (7)
- 28 Convent (7)

DOWN

- 1 Self-centred (11)
- 2 Test period (9)
- 3 Searchers (7)
- 4 Establishing (10)
- 5 Squalid district (4)
- 6 Improve (7)
- 7 Boring (5)
- 8 Garden tool (3)
- 13 Nomenc-lature (11)
- 14 Neighbourhood in Washington DC (10)
- 17 Outline (9)
- 19 Country with capital Vienna (7)
- 20 Refer to (7)
- 22 Conical tent (5)
- 24 One time (4)
- 25 Prefix related to the environment (3)

1		2		3		4		5		6		7		8
9						10								
11								12					13	
								14						
15						16						17		
18				19						20				
21		22				23								
						24								
25										26				
27								28						

SOLUTION

A	B	E	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
9	7	6	1	8	8	4	7	2	9					
1	9	4	7	2	6	5	5	8	8					
8	2	8	9	5	4	7	1	1	6					
4	5	7	8	9	8	1	6	2						
9	6	8	2	7	1	1	8	4	5					
8	1	1	2	6	4	5	8	9	7					
7	1	4	1	5	6	2	9	8	3					
6	8	5	4	7	8	9	2	7	1					
2	8	6	8	3	1	7	6	5	4					

Codeword

No. 005

17	20	6	11		11	6	23	10		19	23	11	
23		2		8		20		18		15		E	
6	22	15	13	16	23	18	7	6		15	3	E	
24		5				22		3		8		5	
6		E	E	14	6		10	3	E	6	15	14	E
E					22		9		4		7		
17	E	12	E	10	22		8	23		B	20	10	18
		4		B		1		18					15
6	E	10	6	23	17	E		7	24	6	22	6	
21		14		8		6				22		23	
24	18	23		23	18	22	E	6	22	10	22	E	
10		18		6		E		15		5		6	
3	23	7		E	18	4	15	8	14	E	18	22	

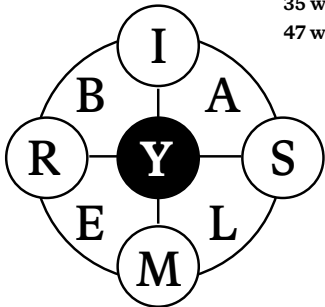
SOLUTIONS

E	B	E	I	O	T	Y	Z	N	K	D	M	O	K
36	35	34	33	32	31	30	29	28	27	26	25	24	23
J	W	R	V	S	G	L	X	A	P	F	C		
13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	

9-Letter

No. 005

Using the nine letters in the grid, how many words of four letters or more can you list? The centre letter must be included and each letter may only be used once. No colloquial or foreign words. No capitalised nouns, apostrophes or plural words ending in "s".



Reference: Collins Concise English Dictionary

Today's Focus:
23 words: Good
35 words: Very good
47 words: Excellent

SOLUTIONS
abby, abysm, airy, army, aryl, bailey, balmy, barely, barley, basely, bays, belay, belays, berry, beary, bray, brays, byre, early, easily, easy, layer, layers, lmy, lyre, maybe, mealy, measly, mity, MISERABLY, miserly, misery, mslay, rays, relay, relays, rely, rlyal, seamy, sibyl, slay, slayer, slimy, slyer, smearly, yale, year

What's On: November 2021


Community Calendar (please check current covid restrictions)

SINK: SIMONA CASTRICUM AND CARLA ZIMBLER

Arts House
521 Queensberry St
North Melbourne 3051

December 1 - 4, 8pm - 8.40pm.

Sink reimagines the experience of stadium techno, percussion and projection.



SCIENCE GALLERY MELBOURNE

Enter from Grattan Street
Science Gallery Melbourne
700 Swanston Street
Parkville 3052, free.
Open January 20.

Science Gallery Melbourne involves, inspires and transforms curious minds through arts and science.




TREASURES OF THE NATURAL WORLD

Melbourne Museum

Everyday until January 16 2022.

Some of the world's biggest, rarest, oldest and most fascinating treasures have landed at Melbourne Museum, all the way from London, for the whole family to enjoy.



THE NEW NORTH MELBOURNE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

Meat Market Stables
3 Blackwood St
North Melbourne 3051
December 2 - 12, 12pm - 8pm.


This group exhibition features works including modern art, Indigenous dot paintings, ceramics and landscapes.



FUTURE U

RMIT Gallery
344 Swanston St
Open until February 26, 2022
Free

Future U explores what it means to be human during a time of rapid technological acceleration.

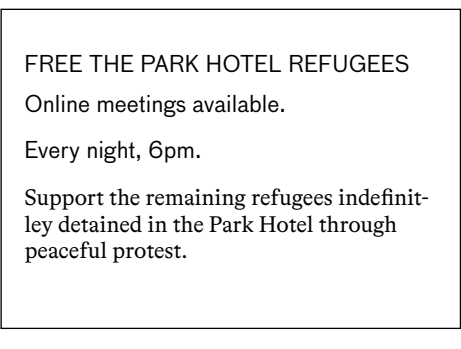


CHILDBIRTH EDUCATION FROM THE ROYAL WOMEN'S HOSPITAL

Online

Wednesday nights. 6pm-9pm

Childbirth education via online livestreaming.

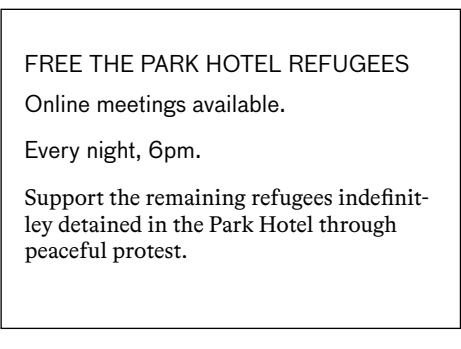


FREE THE PARK HOTEL REFUGEES

Online meetings available.

Every night, 6pm.

Support the remaining refugees indefinitely detained in the Park Hotel through peaceful protest.



TRANS AND GENDER DIVERSE WRITING GROUP

Fortnightly on Tuesdays 5-6pm


Online writing group via Zoom for trans and gender diverse young people. The workshop will also be for any other queer-identified people between the ages of 13 to 25 to connect and get writing. FREE



PARKVILLE TENNIS CLUB

Parkville Tennis Club
151 Royal Parade
Parkville 3052
Monday - Sunday, 6am - 11pm

Parkville Tennis Club on the edge of the central city is small and friendly, with three synthetic clay courts.



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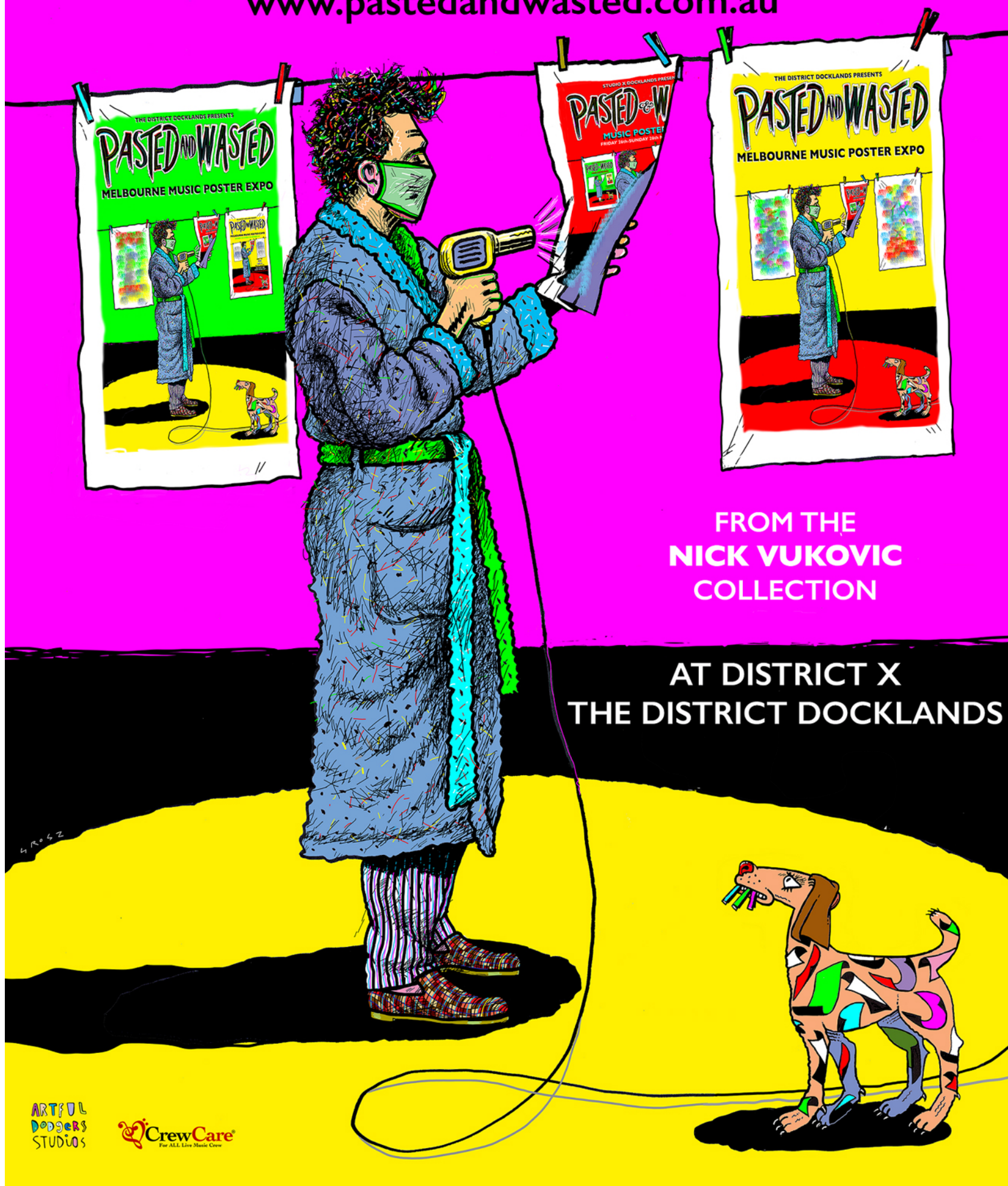


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