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Puzzles & Trivia - P22



Get vaccinated!
Photo by John Tadigiri

West Melbourne's cohealth vaccination clinic has reached an impressive milestone, administering more than 25,000 COVID-19 vaccinations since May, doing its bit to help Melbourne open back up. *Full story on page 9.*

Local scientist creates “brain-on-a-chip” to study brain infections

WORDS BY *Spencer Fowler Steen*
HEALTH

West Melbourne scientist Arianna Oddo has made the Victorian finals of the world-renowned FameLab competition for her ground-breaking “brain-on-a-chip”, which aims to support the discovery of new cures for devastating brain infections.

The quad-lingual PhD candidate from Italy is part of a team of researchers at Monash University which has developed a device the size of a USB drive that contains the key features of the human brain.

Made from the same material as contact lenses, the device features tiny channels in which blood vessels and brain cells are grown to replicate human biology better than animal models or Petri dishes.

Ms Oddo said she had high hopes that the brain-on-a-chip would help us understand how viruses moved from the blood into the brain, ultimately supporting the devel-

opment of new cures for brain infections such as meningitis and cerebral malaria.

“We have been using the brain-on-a-chip to study how infected red blood cells stick to the blood vessels inside the brain,” she said.

But it hasn't all been easy. Just two days before the Victorian final of FameLab – a live science communication competition run each year in Australia and 22 countries across the world – Ms Oddo experienced a family issue which made things difficult.

“At the start of my presentation, I really panicked and went blank,” she said.

“It was a really challenging day. I lost focus and asked if I could start again.”

Although Ms Oddo speaks English, German, Italian and Spanish, English is not her first language, so she turned to the North Melbourne Good Karma Network (NMGKN) Facebook group to see if anyone would help her practice her presentation.

Continued on page 2.

“Reprehensible”: Council endorses report findings on public housing lockdown

The City of Melbourne has endorsed a report recommending better planning and care be taken in the future if public health restrictions clash with human rights after last year's snap lockdown of nine local public housing towers.

WORDS BY *Spencer Fowler Steen*
COUNCIL AFFAIRS

At the Future Melbourne Committee meeting on July 20, councillors outlined the lessons learnt from the Victorian Government's hard lockdown of more than 3000 residents in North Melbourne and Flemington, which deprived them of appropriate food, fresh air and medicine.

Throughout the lockdown, the council played a role in establishing North Melbourne Community Centre as a control and distribution centre for food deliveries. It also provided on-site environmental health officers, waste services and parking and traffic management.

At the meeting, councillors acknowledged that an Incident Control Team needed to be established immediately following any future lockdown events with roles and duties being clearly defined.

According to the council, community members and organisations' knowledge should be utilised to maximise positive outcomes while minimising any potential trauma the incident may cause.

And ordering and distributing food should factor in community knowledge to ensure cultural appropriateness, after many residents during last year's lockdown were provided with food they could not eat.

Speaking at the meeting, Cr Ro-

han Leppert said the purpose of the report was to learn every lesson the council possibly could, and to share them with neighbouring municipalities and the state government.

“It was quite clear that the [Victorian] Government considered in its paternalistic wisdom that this was a special class of people, and through a race and class lens decided to make a particular decision to lock down these towers without notice. I think that is reprehensible,” he said.

“Above all else, I want to thank our constituents, the residents of nine public housing towers for their perseverance and for dealing with this situation with as much good grace and humour as they could.”

Cr Olivia Ball echoed the sentiment, and said an apology was owing from the state government.

“We shouldn't overlook the importance of symbolic reparations such as an apology. If rights have been breached, as has been found by the independent and very esteemed [Victorian] Ombudsman, then an apology is owing,” she said.

Victorian Ombudsman Deborah Glass has found the public housing lockdown violated the human rights of residents, and recently expressed disappointment that the government had not apologised.

The state government has told *North West City News* that it couldn't comment because the matter was currently before the courts ●

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▲ West Melbourne scientist Arianna Oddo with her “brain-on-a-chip”.

Local scientist creates “brain-on-a-chip”

Continued from page 1.

“It’s very hard to compete in a different language as your second language,” she said.

“I asked if anyone was willing to listen to me before the competition and give me feedback on pronunciation etc. I was really touched by how much people were willing to help!”

“I would really like to thank the NMGKN.”

Ms Oddo said one particular NMGKN member, Jenni Morris, who helps PhD students where she can, even lent her a heater for those cold, winter days writing her thesis.

Ms Oddo said brain-on-a-chip was the product of a mammoth team-effort by a group of researchers from Monash University led by Prof. Nicolas Voelcker in collaboration with Dr Sinéad Williams, Associate Prof. Darren Creek and Associate Prof. Michelle Baker from the CSIRO in Geelong.

In a country such as India where malaria is endemic, children often develop cerebral malaria which can cause fever, seizures and comas.

Ms Oddo said some malaria treatments would help but wouldn’t solve the fact that the patient’s brain was swollen, which could cause

permanent disability. But that’s where brain-on-a-chip can help.

“We got some infected red blood cells and added to the channels with the blood vessel, it was amazing! We could see them sticking to the cells of the blood vessels,” she said.

“If you were developing antimalarial drugs, they might be able to test them on this platform.”

While Ms Oddo’s brain-on-a-chip did not win the FameLab finals, in which 12 people were chosen from all of Victoria to present their scientific concepts in three minutes, she’s not letting that slow her down.

“Right now, we’re using cells which are a model of human cells, I’d like some patient-derived cells to make it more relevant,” she said.

Ms Oddo is also looking forward to visiting the CSIRO Australian Centre for Disease Preparedness in Geelong, one of the few labs in Australia where dangerous viruses such as COVID-19 can be tested.

There, Ms Oddo hopes to use brain-on-a-chip to test how harmful viruses that cause diseases such as meningitis to infect the brain.

Follow Arianna Oddo on Twitter: @oddoari

●

Firefighters contain chemical leak on cargo ship

WORDS BY *Brendan Rees*
SAFETY & SECURITY

Firefighters worked to contain a chemical leak on a cargo ship in West Melbourne on July 21 which was sparked by an electrical fault.

Emergency crews were called to Philipps St at 3.30pm after reports an incoming cargo ship had a leaking container on board.

A Fire Rescue Victoria (FRV) spokesperson said crews used drones to safely monitor the isolated container’s heat signature and its surroundings.

“The container was safely removed from the vessel and isolated on the docks concourse,” the spokesperson said, adding atmospheric monitoring was also conducted.

Forty firefighters responded including the Urban Search and Rescue unit, the Hazmat Unit, Marine Unit and Aviation Unit.

A FRV scientific officer identified the source of the leak and conducted testing on a liquid before the incident was brought under control just before 2.40pm.

“FRV’s Fire Investigation Unit investigated the cause of the incident and determined that it was caused by the electrical failure of a battery cell, contained within a shipping container,” the spokesperson said.

The Australian Maritime Safety Authority checked and cleaned the vessel before it was released.

Also at the scene was the Victorian Ports Corporation, the Environmental Protection Authority, police and paramedics.

Meanwhile, 25 firefighters responded to a building fire in a separate incident at Latrobe St, West Melbourne, on July 31.

Crews arrived on scene just before 9.50pm where they found a shed at a brick two-storey building alight. Luckily, no one one was inside.

Police are investigating ●

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▲ Left: The Australian cycling team riding for bronze at the Tokyo Olympics. Right: Alexander Porter, Leigh Howard, Lucas Plapp, Kelland O'Brien and Sam Welsford of Team Australia. Photos: Justin Setterfield.

Local athlete nabs bronze in Tokyo Olympics

WORDS BY *Spencer Fowler Steen*
SPORT

For cycling champion Luke Plapp, the Tokyo Olympics is a long way from his sporting roots in Kensington and Flemington where he first learnt to ride a bike.

But to the delight of his family and friends, the goal that he wrote down on a paper plate at a family barbecue when he was a kid has finally become a reality.

On August 4, Mr Plapp won a bronze medal in the men's team pursuit track cycling after he was called up to replace his teammate, Alex Porter, whose handlebars snapped in a shocking accident during the qualifying race.

Mr Plapp's aunt, Verica Jokic, who has watched her nephew pursue his dream of making the Olympics ever since he was a kid, said she and Mr Plapp's family were so proud of him.

"We are so rapt; his mum and dad are beside themselves," Ms Jokic said.

Mr Plapp, 20, was a spare rider in the Olympic team before Mr Porter's accident.

Three weeks out from the Olympics, Mr Plapp and his team were training in Brisbane, and everything was on track for a great performance.

But in those final weeks of preparation, Ms Jokic said two unfortunate events almost stopped her nephew from competing.

"About three weeks out, he had a big smash and lost about two weeks to recovery," she said.

"Then one week out, he found out that his

iron levels were really low because he was training so hard and had to go to hospital to get an infusion."

Despite the setbacks, Mr Plapp made it over to Tokyo, ready to support his team however he could.

Following Mr Porter's horrifying accident in which he slammed face-first into the floor at more than 60kph, Ms Jokic said no one in her family knew whether Mr Plapp would be racing until they saw him on TV lining up at the starting line before the final race for bronze.

"When we saw him on his bike we were like, 'oh my god'", Ms Jokic said.

"Given the unfortunate accident, [the team] was just shaken up by it and wanted to do Australia proud, so they said, 'okay, we'll make a change and give it our best.'"

"We were absolutely relieved because we knew they were training so hard before the Games."

But for the man with "no off switch", Ms Jokic said it was hardly surprising her nephew had come this far.

Mr Plapp used to play for the Kensington cricket and footy teams when he was younger and started getting up at 5am to go on rides throughout the area with his dad, Simon Plapp, who introduced him to cycling when he was 12.

Within a couple of years, Ms Jokic said Mr Plapp started leaving his father and all his burly cycling mates in the dust.

"All he wanted to do was exceed in sport, he's always been so incredibly driven," Ms Jokic said.

"About three weeks out, he had a big smash and lost about two weeks to recovery. Then one week out, he found out that his iron levels were really low because he was training so hard and had to go to hospital to get an infusion."



Eight years ago, as a kid, Mr Plapp told his family at a barbecue that he wanted to be in the Olympics and compete in the World Championships.

Someone suggested that he should write it down, but with no paper available, he carefully wrote his goal on a paper plate instead.

For his family, watching him win bronze from their home in Maribyrnong was a surreal experience.

"It's been his dream to achieve both of those things, and he has already," Ms Jokic said.

Currently living in Adelaide where he trains at the Australian Institute of Sport, Mr Plapp has recently landed himself a three-year road racing contract with British professional cycling team, INEOS Grenadiers.

Once he's finished up in Tokyo, Mr Plapp will keep on travelling – this time to Spain to train for the next three years – once again a long way from his cycling roots in Kensington.

But with the support of his family never far away, the sky's the limit for Mr Plapp.

"At this stage, touch wood, he's unstoppable," Ms Jokic said ●



Spencer Fowler Steen
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Kensington's iconic wool buildings up for sale

WORDS BY *Brendan Rees*
PLANNING

An ambitious project to revitalise the iconic Younghusband complex in Kensington could change hands as Impact Investment Group looks to offload the historic buildings.

The Melbourne-based syndicator which is backed by the wealthy Liberman family confirmed it would put the century-old wool store buildings on the market despite its plans to transform the site into a "beautiful industrial village".

"Younghusband is the sort of project the local community deserves, the state needs and planning authorities want, and we believe the market will respond positively to it," Impact's head of funds management, real estate, Darren Brusnahan said.

"The long-term potential for Younghusband remains strong – it is a strategic site that is benefiting from significant investment in road and rail."

Mr Brusnahan said Cushman and Wakefield had been appointed as the sales agent and Impact would consider an outright sale or a joint venture proposition.

Impact paid \$30.25 million for the 1.5-ha site on Elizabeth St in 2016 following a failed bid by EG Fund Management in 2011 to undertake demolition works and a development of a 12-storey residential tower which drew strong criticism from the National Trust and was rejected by the City of Melbourne.

A Department of Environment Land Water



▲ Left: Younghusband as it currently stands. Right: An artist's impression of what the site could look like.

and Planning (DELWP) spokesperson said a permit application for the redevelopment of the site including demolition works was "being assessed".

"The views of the Melbourne City Council have been sought and will be considered before a decision being made," the spokesperson said.

However, DELWP said the application permit remained attached to the land and would be unaffected by any future change of ownership.

Impact also confirmed an application was with planning authorities for consideration and it would be up to any future owner to determine exactly how the site was developed.

The historic red-brick warehouses were originally bought by wool giant Younghusband & Co in 1902 and are one of the last remaining



wool stores in Victoria.

Under the proposed plans, the complex would be transformed into a community hub to attract innovative businesses.

This includes an original warehouse being redeveloped into a five-storey building but with the southern and eastern facades facing Elizabeth St being retained.

Another warehouse that was built in 1957 would be demolished to create an eight-storey building hub of office and co-working spaces as well as a two-level basement carpark.

Kensington Association president Simon Harvey said residents and action groups were a "little bit nervous about what might come out of any sale", particularly that the iconic building would be converted into residential properties.

He said it was his understanding that Impact "didn't get cold feet for any other reason other than the financial backers more or less pulled out".

"We were strong supporters of the IIG plans and excited about it in terms of a development in that area and making use of an amazing building," he said.

"We're crossing our fingers and hoping that something of the vision that IIG brought to the development can be retained."

Mr Harvey said the association had held a Zoom meeting with Impact about the possibility of inserting a clause to "protect some aspect of the development" as "we felt they were on the money in terms of creating something unique I think for the area".

"It probably needs government support too because it's not going to be necessary commercially viable," he added.

"There's got to be a strong community benefit that the government sees so they will subsidise or support it in some kind of way."

Mr Harvey said his other concerns with the plans related to the amount of car parking space and the proposed height of the buildings which may overshadow nearby homes.

Impact had planned to develop the precinct in three stages over five years.

The City of Melbourne declined to comment on the matter as the application was before the state government's planning department for consideration.

The site is protected by a heritage overlay in the Melbourne Planning Scheme ●

Council announces "historic" meeting shakeup

WORDS BY *David Schout*
COUNCIL AFFAIRS

For the first time in living memory, the City of Melbourne will move council meetings away from Town Hall and into the community, with North Melbourne and Kensington looking like prime candidates.

From September, one meeting per month will take place in one of 14 neighbourhoods within the municipality in a bid to better connect with local communities.

The local meetings will also start at 6pm rather than 5.30pm to allow locals the opportunity to arrive in time.

While the announcement was for just three meetings – in September, October and November this year – Lord Mayor Sally Capp said the new arrangement would be "ongoing".

"I hope it becomes a tradition for decades to come," Cr Capp said at a July 27 meeting.

"We are bringing local government democracy to the people and we are engaging local town halls with debates and discussions that affect their lives and livelihoods."

The move had been a personal goal of Cr Capp since her election in 2018, and said it would bring council decision-making "into the heart of our community".

She encouraged anyone to attend the meetings in their communities, where the council would make a point of focusing on locally relevant agenda items.

It was likely to choose North Melbourne, Carlton and Kensington as the first three locations.

"Community is at the heart of everything we do at the City of Melbourne so we should make our meetings as accessible as possible for everyone living in the municipality," the Lord Mayor said.

"The City of Melbourne is lucky to have such diverse neighbourhoods with incredible

histories, and they all have unique needs and aspirations that locals want addressed."

Cr Davydd Griffiths said the shift would allow the council to "make better decisions in the future".

"It's an important demonstration to everyone right across the municipality that we take seriously their needs, and that we're going to do everything we can to ensure those needs are met," he said.

"This is a real demonstration of how local communities can be even more involved in the decision-making processes at the local government level and that's vitally important."

Cr Griffiths said it was also about logistically making sure the highest number of locals could attend.

"We know that not everyone is able to come into the CBD at 5.30pm on a Tuesday night, so hopefully this allows more people to be a part of that process."

Deputy Lord Mayor Nicholas Reece said

senior council staff could not recall any meeting being held outside Town Hall during the past 40 years

"This is going to be truly historic occasion," he said.

The City of Melbourne generally holds three meetings per month; one "regular" council meeting and two Future Melbourne Committee (FMC) meetings.

The neighbourhood meetings are set to take place on the second FMC meeting of each month, and locations will be announced at least three weeks in advance.

The FMC is made up of the Lord Mayor, Deputy Lord Mayor and nine councillors, each tasked with one or more portfolios.

Discussion and decisions on these evenings range from planning matters to the endorsement of wider strategies and plans that impact the local community ●



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Devastation for businesses has lockdown six bites

WORDS BY *Brendan Rees*
BUSINESS

City of Melbourne Lord Mayor Sally Capp says the latest lockdown “is having a devastating impact on city businesses” with some owners choosing to close up for good.

“Even the most resilient of small business owners are struggling to stay positive and prepare themselves for bounce-back six,” she said.

“We know that the quickest way out of this lockdown in Melbourne is for every Melburnian to do the right thing and follow the health advice.”

“And the best way to reduce the likelihood of further lockdowns is to get vaccinated and encourage someone else to.”

“However, many business owners are making daily decisions as to whether they continue opening or close up for good. We need all levels of government working together and our community supporting every local business that we can.”

Among business owners to reach breaking



▲ Duy Tran and his wife Tina, owners of the Butcher Shop Cafe in West Melbourne, are battling to make ends meet.

point was Linda Chen, owner of the café called Affinity On Errol in North Melbourne, who said, “I’m actually thinking how we’re going to survive”.

Ms Chen told *North West City News* that its daily revenue – from selling take away – was down 50 per cent on normal trade.

“There’s literally no-one on the street, and it’s been dead quiet,” she said on a Monday’s trade.

“It’s just hard. How long can we actually do this for?”

She said she and her business partner had reduced staff hours and were just trying to keep their heads “above the waters”.

Duy Tran of Butcher Shop Café in West Melbourne said it was also going through a difficult time.

“No-one is on the street, everyone stays home,” he said. “It’s just the local people.”

“I can count the people [customers] on my hand every day.”

Mr Tran said he was not turning over a profit and was paying staff “from our pocket”.

“We can’t afford [staff] but we have to because it’s not fair for them. Most of them have

a family.”

He said his daily revenue had plunged by an 80 per cent drop during the sixth lockdown and he and his wife Tina were struggling to stay afloat.

“We try as much as we can until we cannot. Not much we can do.”

Marita Smith, president of the North and West Melbourne Precinct Association, said the impact of the lockdown had been “shattering” for businesses.

“We seem to be hit a lot harder because we are missing out on all of that activity as the consequence of people in the CBD just not being able to come into work,” she said.

“We’re hoping the lockdown will end as soon as possible and we can all get back to some normality.”

“With vaccination rates going up that’s obviously going to happen soon, we hope.”

Ms Smith said a visible campaign would soon be launched to encourage people to shop locally, which she hoped will “start to create a bit of energy, which is what we need” ●

“Improved” response to public housing outbreak

WORDS BY *Brendan Rees and Matt Harvey*
HEALTH

A mother pushes her baby in a stroller with a child beside her, a pair of young girls smile, and others go about their day while soaking up the winter sun.

It was in stark contrast to July last year when a coronavirus outbreak led to a hard lockdown of the Flemington public housing estate which left many traumatised.

At the time, police swarmed in their hundreds ensuring no one left their homes.

But when COVID-19 returned to their estate on August 7, the response was different.

There was less fear and health authorities conceded things had gone “a lot more smoothly”.

There were no police and residents had access to a pop-up testing clinic and vaccination marquee set up at the estate by Cohealth.

Residents employed as health concierges were also supporting the public health effort by sharing information in different languages.

One of the towers at 130 Racecourse Rd was identified as an exposure site, with one floor classified as a tier-one and residents placed into hard lockdown.

On August 10, COVID response commander Jeroen Weimar said three positive cases were identified at 130 Racecourse Rd and 126 Racecourse Rd and moved to hotel quarantine.

“It’s very distressing to have in this case



children identified as positive cases, but they’re now in a safe and best possible place that they can be,” he said.

Mr Weimar said all residents of the main tower at 130 Racecourse Rd had been tested with “around two-thirds of those test results have already come back as negative test results”.

He reiterated that the estate continued to be safe and asked all residents of 126 Racecourse Rd (which was classified as tier-two), to get tested and isolate until they received a negative result.

Amy, a resident and mother of three at the Racecourse Rd estate, said, “We were so scared that we were going to get locked in again.”

“They seem like they’ve got it under control at the moment,” she said, but added “we got told there were supposed to be three cases in the building”.



“We haven’t even been notified or told anything about it,” she told *North West City News* after she saw a person being escorted away by a group of people in “HAZMAT suits”.

Another resident, Hareya Beley, said, “Who knows whether we are affected or not ... the thing is I heard they found a positive case in here and they are quarantined somewhere else.”

Deputy Leader of the Victorian Greens and Member for Melbourne Ellen Sandell, who slammed the State Government for its response to managing last year’s outbreak in the towers, said residents in Flemington had reported improved communication.

“Residents tell us communication with the Department of Health has improved since last year, although there’s still opportunities to do things better,” Ms Sandell said ●

Praise for Flemington Tower

WORDS BY *Rhonda Dredge*
COMMUNITY

The Flemington and Kensington Community Legal Centre has praised the way the recent exposure site at the public housing tower on Racecourse Rd, Flemington was handled by the community.

“What we’re seeing is the community organising and responding in a remarkable way,” a principal lawyer with the centre Gregor Husper said.

He said health concierges at the public housing estate were “using knowledge trees to stay on top of information.”

The recent COVID response is in marked contrast with the forced lockdown of the tower last year by 300 police.

The legal service had a 24-hour presence at that lockdown to handle the human rights abuses in terms of food, information and children.

He said the community had made it clear since then about its disgust in the way authorities behaved.

“So much trust was eroded that other agencies were viewed with suspicion,” he said ●

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A new-look precinct association for North and West Melbourne

WORDS BY *Jack Hayes*
BUSINESS

With a new board and revitalised committee, it isn't just a new visual identity reshaping the North and West Melbourne Precinct Association (NWMPA).

Spearheaded by executive officer Rebekah Symons and newly appointed president Marita Smith of North Melbourne's Gallerysmith, the NWMPA is ready to relaunch with a "new committee, new energy and new vision."

With eyes on the implementation of the precinct association's five-year strategic plan underpinning all activity, Ms Smith said the precinct was ready to welcome businesses throughout North and West Melbourne on the journey.

"It has been a really exciting process and with some extra funding from the City of Melbourne, it has been a bit of a game-changer for us," Ms Smith said.

"It has given us direction going forward, so all of projects for the precinct ass can align up to that strategy."

"The key for us is supporting our members. The more members we have, the more support we get and the more we can support them. Everything we do comes back to supporting the members of the precinct association."

Buoyed by the backing of its members, the NWMPA called on North Melbourne graphic and interior design experts, and precinct member, Studio Vico, to create new branding (pictured) for the precinct and a new identity to forge into the future.

According to Ms Smith, one of the precinct's



▲ From left: NWMPA executive officer Rebekah Symons, president Marita Smith, and committee member Erin Laird.

charters is to tirelessly support its members and use its expertise and professional services as much as they could.

"It is a change in direction and a visual launch, so that people have an identity to grab on to and see that we are moving in a different direction," she said.

"What we are trying to do is create an active community of businesses by providing opportunities for collaboration between our members and recognising that everyone who wants be a part of our association has a common purpose, and that purpose is to thrive."



"We want our members to thrive, and if they thrive, we as a precinct will thrive."

NWMPA provides small business support, professional development and networking events and opportunities to all its members, as well as free professional photography sessions and a business profile listing on the NWMPA website.

Underpinning every thriving precinct association you will find a wealth of membership, across a range of diverse businesses and professions.

Building that wealth of membership, however, is a very different challenge, and one NWMPA set its sights on eagerly overcoming.

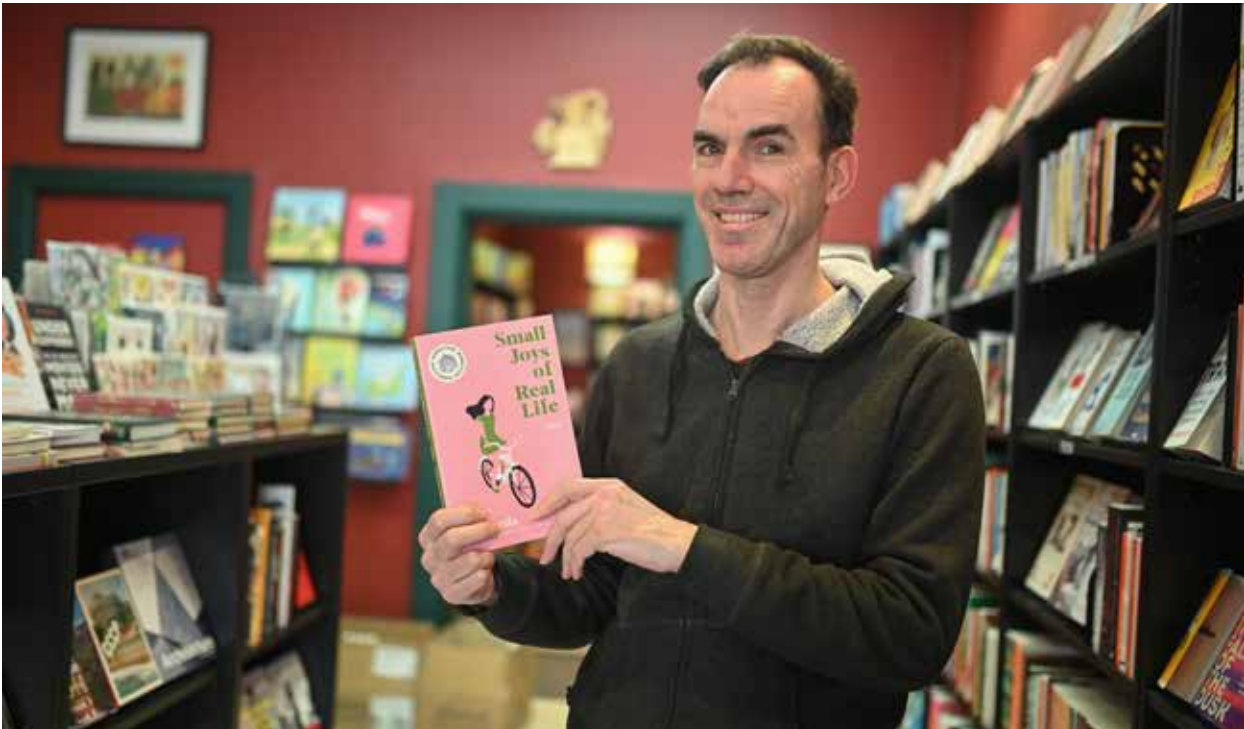
"We have shopfronts on Victoria St, Erroll St and throughout West Melbourne, who have been easy to connect with, however, we have a growing number of people and businesses working from home," NWMPA committee member and Take Off Skin and Beauty's Erin Laird said.

"We can still provide benefit to those businesses through networking events and professional development. How we tap into that section of our community is another thing."

NWMPA is now accepting membership enquiries from businesses across all North Melbourne and West Melbourne.

For more information, or to become a business member of the North and West Melbourne Precinct Association, contact Rebekah ●

northwestmelbourneprecinct@gmail.com



▲ Chris Saliba, the owner of North Melbourne Books, has joined a group of inner-city bookshops in an effort to bolster their sales.



▲ Lex and his son Wilco snap up a book just before the sixth lockdown.

Booksellers unite in new chapter to halt city exodus

WORDS BY *Brendan Rees*
KNOWLEDGE

For Chris Saliba, the owner of North Melbourne Books, finding creative ways to attract customers has been no easy feat amid repeated lockdowns.

But by banding with other bookshops he is hoping a new initiative called Melbourne City Reads will bring back readers of all kinds through their doors.

The book shops – Dymocks Collins Street, Hill of Content, Mary Martin Southbank and Queen Victoria Market, North Melbourne Books, The Paperback Bookshop, Readings Carlton, and Readings State Library – will showcase a different book each month with a 25 per cent discount on the cover price.

"Hopefully it'll bring more business in," Mr Saliba told *North West City News*.

"It's been up and down but we've got a loyal

“Melbourne's bookshops are just as much a part of our culture as our laneways and restaurants.”

”

customer base so we're very lucky that way."

This first title to be offered will be *Small Joys of Real Life*, the first novel by Allee Richards, which follows its protagonist, Eva, in her 20s, as she deals with the death of her lover, an unexpected pregnancy, a career crisis, and the joys and challenges of daily life in Melbourne's inner north.

Richards will also discuss her novel at a free event at the Wheeler Centre on September 8 as part of this year's Melbourne Writers Festival.

Other authors to be featured in the initiative – which is supported by the City of Melbourne and will run from August to November – include Miles Allinson, Emily Bitto, and Maxine Beneba Clarke.

Bookseller Mark Rubbo of Readings said he hoped the program would encourage passionate readers to buy books while celebrating a literary culture he believed to be "one of the richest in the world".

He said lockdowns and a city office exodus had had a "terrible impact" on booksellers.

"Our shop in the State Library is 60 per cent down on its pre-COVID levels, [and] our Carlton shop 12 to 20 per cent down," he said.

City of Melbourne Lord Mayor Sally Capp said she hoped the program would "bring back the buzz" to the city "and encourage everyone to celebrate their inner bookworm".

"Melbourne's bookshops are just as much a part of our culture as our laneways and restaurants," she said.

"They offer endless entertainment and knowledge while shining a light on Melburnian writers and stories set in our marvellous city" ●

For more information:
mwf.com.au



Cohealth administers 25,000th dose of COVID vaccine

WORDS BY *Spencer Fowler Steen*
HEALTH

West Melbourne’s Cohealth vaccination clinic has reached an impressive milestone, administering more than 25,000 COVID-19 vaccinations since May, doing its bit to help Melbourne open back up.

The vaccine was delivered from Cohealth’s West Melbourne clinic, one of several vaccination clinics the community health agency is currently operating across the northern and western suburbs including from Laverton and Collingwood Cohealth sites and pop-up clinics at public housing high-rise estates, homelessness services and high-risk accommodation sites.

The lucky 25,000th client was Brunswick resident, Claire Blackman, 32, who was pregnant, due in September. Ms Blackman received the Pfizer vaccine after the Victorian Government opened up eligibility to pregnant women.

“I didn’t expect this! Im still in my trackies!” she said.

“Well you’ve got the 25,000th person, plus an additional one.”

“Two for the price of one!”

In a bid to protect as many people as possible from COVID-19, Cohealth has been setting up clinics in locations and communities of greatest need, including where there are people in high-density housing, those from culturally diverse backgrounds, and people experiencing homelessness.

Cohealth chief executive Nicole Bartholomeusz said it was a proud moment for community health, and gratifying to know that many of the 25,000 vaccines had been received by members of the community who face the greatest barriers to healthcare.

“We’re thrilled to have hit the 25,000 milestone and grateful to community members for their enthusiastic uptake of the vaccine,” Ms Bartholomeusz said.

“Offering the COVID vaccine from existing

Cohealth sites means we have been able to leverage existing relationships with people in the community.”

“They trust us, so feel safe coming to get their vaccination, and we can actively seek out those clients we know might struggle to access the vaccine due to language barriers, low health literacy or other difficulties.”

Ms Bartholomeusz said Cohealth staff had done a remarkable job to roll-out multiple vaccines in an ever-changing, high pressure environment.

“It’s required enormous agility and dedication from every person in our team. We’re so proud of all the hard-working staff across all our sites,” she said.

Of the 25,000 vaccines at Cohealth, 15,000 were administered from West Melbourne. Of those, around half (55 per cent) of the vaccines were Pfizer and 45 per cent were AstraZeneca, and there was an even 50/50 split between males and females who received the vaccine ●

Tradie gutted after being robbed of tools

WORDS BY *Brendan Rees*
CRIME

A Kensington apprentice plumber has been left devastated after callous thieves stole more than \$5000 worth of tools from his van.

Marcus, 23, had parked his van at the front of his home on Southey St when his gear was taken at around 9.30pm on July 25.

“They got something like a screwdriver and wrenched the lock off,” his partner Holly told *North West City News*.

She said the culprits “took anything they could see” including an impact driver, a reciprocating saw, and a circular saw.

She said her Holden Cruz, which was also parked on the street at the time, was broken into and ransacked.

“No damage ... not sure how they got in but there was stuff everywhere, they had gone through it,” she said.

Holly, who asked not to use their surnames, said Marcus, a first-year apprentice, had been left gutted and “can’t afford to replace his tools which have taken him years to accumulate”.

“It affects his ability to do his job, he has had to borrow tools,” she said, adding without insurance his boss wouldn’t be able to make a claim for his stolen DeWalt power tools which totalled \$5350.

“

He started his apprenticeship later in life but his livelihood has been taken away. It’s just devastating.

”

Guns, drugs and chemicals seized in North Melbourne

WORDS BY *Spencer Fowler Steen*
CRIME

Firearms, cash, drugs and chemicals were seized during a police raid across three properties including one in North Melbourne last month, where a man and woman were arrested and charged with a raft of drug related charges.

On July 28, detectives from the Trident Taskforce executed a search warrant at Chetwynd St, North Melbourne and arrested a 28-year-old man and an 18-year-old woman.

Further search warrants were carried out at addresses in Lynch St, Sunshine and Sussex St, Pascoe Vale.

Police seized several items from the three addresses including two firearms, cash, drugs, pre-cursor chemicals and laboratory equipment.

A crime scene remained in place at the North Melbourne address days after the raid.

The man has been charged with several state and Commonwealth offences including importing a border-controlled drug, attempting to possess commercial quantity of a border-controlled drug, and attempting to possess drug of dependence – large commercial quantity.

The woman has also been charged with a number of state and Commonwealth offences including attempting to traffic a drug of dependence – large commercial quantity, attempting to possess a drug of dependence – large commercial quantity and bail offences.

Both appeared at Melbourne Magistrates’ Court on July 29 and were remanded to appear again on November 16.

During the search warrant, investigators seized significant quantities of GBL and one, four Butanediol as part of a joint drug trafficking investigation.

The operation, which involved Victoria

“We see the damage these drugs do in the Victorian community so to be able to make this seizure with our law enforcement partners and hold people to account is really pleasing,”



Police, Australian Federal Police (AFP), and Australian Border Force (ABF) personnel, began earlier this month after 600kg of border-controlled substance Gamma Butyrolactone (GBL) was detected hidden inside an incoming sea cargo consignment.

Two further attempted imports of one, four Butanediol were also detected by Australian Border Force as part of the investigation and seized.

The chemicals are valued at more than \$700,000.

Trident Taskforce Detective Inspector Craig Darlow said ABF detected a number of

consignments that led to these significant seizures, resulting in an extremely large quantity of harmful drugs being prevented from entering the community.

“We see the damage these drugs do in the Victorian community so to be able to make this seizure with our law enforcement partners and hold people to account is really pleasing,” he said.

“We’re also again seeing the seizure of guns during a drug investigation, which again highlights the strong links between illicit drugs and firearms.”

AFP Southern Command Acting Commander of Investigations Raegan Stewart said this investigation showed the success of authorities continuing to work together to stop illicit drugs reaching the community and disrupting illicit drug supply chains.

“Working together to use the expertise and resources of each agency has prevented this batch of harmful illegal drugs reaching our streets, and brought those we allege are responsible before the courts,” she said.

“The AFP remains committed to identifying and disrupting drug supply chains, and causing maximum damage to organised crime.”

ABF Acting Assistant Commissioner James Watson noted the expertise of the ABF in the detection of dangerous substances and its commitment to disrupting criminal activity.

“ABF officers are deployed at ports across the country to scrutinise cargo. GBL is a colourless liquid without a strong odour. Despite that, our officers successfully detected the GBL that was hidden in a sea cargo consignment,” he said.

“A detection of this magnitude protects Australia from the public health and social problems that the illicit use of GBL creates.”

“These arrests serve as a reminder of the seamless cooperation between law enforcement agencies.” ●

Holly said they reported the incident to police who fingerprinted the van, but without CCTV she had taken to social media in the hope of appealing to witnesses.

So far, a neighbour has given a brief description of a man about 30 to 40 years of age driving a black or dark coloured SUV.

Other neighbours, she said, also reported their tools having been stolen from their vehicles on the same night.

In the meantime, Marcus has resorted to parking his van behind locked gates at his workplace in Cranbourne, in Melbourne’s south-east.

“Instead of driving straight to the job now, he has to drive to base and pick up the van. He won’t be leaving \$5k worth of tools out the front again,” Holly said.

“We’re both paranoid and can’t sleep. We have both only been here a couple of months, we moved up from Mornington and it makes me just want to break my lease and go home.”

Victoria Police Leading Senior Constable Kendra Jackson said police had received a report of a theft from a motor vehicle in Kensington in July.

“Police have been told an unknown offender has gained entry to the victim’s locked vehicle parked on Southey St sometime between 7pm on July 24 and 9am on July 25 and stole items,” she said ●

Crimestoppers:
1800 333 000 or
crimestoppers.com.au

Walking to the cafe

WORDS BY Rhonda Dredge
ARTS & CULTURE

Cafes have become the centre of pandemic life and they shine in the eyes of their customers.

Crown Street Stables café off Racecourse Rd is one such haven for the community.

People come here to let off steam about their shutdown lives.

But it takes an artist’s eye to recognise what the café has in terms of its story.

Artist Parul Sen has captured the mood of what it is like to anticipate a visit in *A walk to the Café*, an exhibition of digital prints at Crown Street.

“If people had to pick and choose, they’d rather visit a café than a gallery,” Parul said. “Being a hub for so many activities.”

She has turned that sentiment into a series of limited edition giclee prints which went up at the cafe just before the last lockdown and sell, framed, for \$350 each.

Parul did not start with the idea of a cafe show in mind. The seven prints just evolved out of her feeling for these places, the buildings and their friendly staff.

Two other local cafes are in the show, including Beatrix in North Melbourne and Luncheonette in Kensington, both with loyal followings and colourful histories.

Parul has to feel comfortable before doing the creative work. Aesthetics can’t be confined to categories in search engines. She puts in the leg work, takes photographs, does sketches then fills in colours on Procreate, keeping in mind that the cafes are local and personal to many people.

“These are personal stories,” she said. “I love these cafes. They’re all really old buildings.”

Unbelievably, Luncheonette with its cracked paint and original tiles, which she has transformed, was once a post office, robbed in the 1930s by thieves who got away with the safe on a wheelbarrow.

And Beatrix was originally a butcher shop in the 1890s and later it became a fish smoking business called Lord Trout, before turning into one of the most photographed cake shops in the city.

These historical stories bring the prints alive, creating mythologies across the inner west, some related to Parul’s own journey to Melbourne.

Her artistic project began at Pepper café in



▲ Parul Sen at one of her café haunts.



▲ Beatrix in Queensberry St.



▲ Luncheonette in Rankins Rd.

Flemington. That’s where she had her first exhibition. She combined the seasons in that print, giving one tree blossom and another autumn leaves.

Her Indian feel for drama comes to the fore in the blue skies and pinks from her native city of Jaipur.

In India everything is enhanced whereas local Melburnians tend to play down their charms. When she first came here, she didn’t get the place.

“
Artist Parul Sen has captured the mood of what it is like to anticipate a visit in *A walk to the Café*, an exhibition of digital prints at Crown Street.

“In India nothing’s subtle. For many years nothing inspired me here. I stopped doing art. Then I started observing buildings, red doors, and found there was so much. It took many years.”

She was always attracted to a story. In one painting a lemon-scented gum is just about to lose its life to the widening of the Tullamarine Freeway.

Parul studied Fine Art in Jaipur and was a wedding consultant in her home city, doing set and costume design and arranging the music.

She said the biggest hurdle here was putting herself out there and being open to interpretation and criticism.

“The support I’ve received has been incredible,” she said. She was featured artist at the recent Rotary Art Show at Kensington Town Hall.

Walking to the Café, Parul Sen, Crown Street Stables Café, until December ●

The Rabble’s YES boldly seeks to dismantle what “the truth” means

WORDS BY Kaylah Baker
ARTS & CULTURE

Captivated by the meaning behind a “yes”, The Rabble aims to take its audience through a thought-provoking performance where the pressures of having a simple answer to every question is explored.

Premiering at the Arts House in North Melbourne Town Hall, from Wednesday, September 1 to Sunday, September 12, The Rabble is finally looking forward to performing its show *YES* after a long waiting period.

Like many in the entertainment industry, The Rabble’s theatre show was heavily impacted by the various Victorian lockdowns. Choosing to rise above it, the acclaimed feminist theatre group is using its opportunity to speak to the uncertain period the world is currently facing.

“After such a long gestation period, *YES* can finally have its premiere. The work looks at our relationship to truth in a post-traumatic world. It’s an overwhelming sequence of questions that rise, settle, provoke and rise again,” Arts House artistic director Emily Sexton said.

Known for their boldness and provocative performances, The Rabble have a vision to break down the idea of who we trust, why we trust and the elusiveness of reliable information. And explore the complex dynamics of power, consent, truth and knowledge in a time of great change.

According to The Rabble, between “the



bushfires, COVID-19, the Black Lives Matters protests, transphobia, and never-ending conspiracy theories, the chasm between world views is literally and metaphorically widening”.

It is this disruption and widening of beliefs *YES* aims to speak into.

Through an ever-changing set design of unpredictable manufactured weather events, dramatic lighting and sound changes, the 90-minute show demonstrates how unexpected life is.

Questioning the possibility that there is not one solution and answer for every situation.

Co-directors and co-creators, Emma Valente and Kate Davis’s provoking show is based on the concept of questions and answers, explaining, “why can’t we create a more communal process of searching? Could it be possible to understand the world where multiple conflicting ideas are all true at once?”

The Rabble aims for the audience to reach this understanding through exploring the emotions of joy, contemplation and ultimately existential dread.

Proving every “yes” has a consequence ●

For more information:
artshouse.com.au

“A lot to like”: Council endorses \$45 million development for Macaulay

WORDS BY *Spencer Fowler Steen*
PLANNING

A 203-apartment building which includes office space, a cafe, gym, and cinema is on the cusp of being developed in North Melbourne.

The City of Melbourne endorsed the building proposal for 77-83 Sutton St at the Future Melbourne Committee meeting on August 3, paving the way for final approval from the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal or the Minister for Planning Richard Wynne.

Applicant 77-83 Sutton Street Pty Ltd sought approval to exceed the discretionary nine-storey height control to 12 storeys, requiring it to demonstrate how the development would benefit the broader community.

Deputy Lord Mayor Nicholas Reece said there was “a lot to like about it”.

“I’m pleased to say this application does indeed demonstrate some broader public benefits,” he said.

“I particularly like the fact that the western lane exposes and provides views of the six-storey significant-graded heritage warehouse located to the west, and this includes the revealing of a heritage wall and heritage sign which I think will only add to the character of this area and make this a really desirable location for people to move to.”



▲ Artist impressions of the new Macaulay development.

The development will incorporate a food and drinks space, co-working centre, and cafe.

Communal facilities are provided on the ground floor and include a kitchen, games room, cinema and gym, plus open terraces at the podium top, according to the plan.

The council also acknowledged that the development demonstrated benefits to the community through the provision of publicly accessible pedestrian north-south and east-west laneways.

The development will also include a minimum of six per cent affordable housing.

Cr Rohan Leppert, who seconded the motion to approve the proposal, noted that the setbacks to Sutton St would reveal the former wool warehouse with its “iconic” sawtooth roof, which he said the council fought “tooth and nail” to stop businessman Solomon Lew from demolishing in 2015.

Cr Reece also said the setbacks in the design created an “appropriate massing” in the streetscape which avoided the “awkward, stepped-wedding cake” form seen too often in Melbourne.

The development is owned by BEG Developments Pty Ltd, and is designed by Point Architects.



Dog attack in Eastwood St

WORDS BY *Spencer Fowler Steen*
SAFETY & SECURITY

A local lady and her dog are lucky to have escaped serious injury after a dog attack in Kensington which left the woman in hospital, and her dog at the emergency vet.

The lady, who wished to remain anonymous, agreed to share her story for the safety of the Kensington community.

According to her post in the Kensington Good Karma Network (KGKN) Facebook group, a dog, which appeared to look like a Staffordshire Bull Terrier, attacked her dog, Bertie, during a morning walk in Eastwood St on August 6.

The dog was not on a lead, and ran across Eastwood St and latched onto Bertie, for around five minutes.

“It would not unlock its jaw despite my hands in its mouth trying to rip it open,” the lady said. “Bertie is lucky in this instance, and I hate to think what would’ve happened if the dog got his throat rather than his fluffy ear.”

The woman wound up in emergency with puncture wounds in her hands, but said on the KGKN that with a tetanus shot and antibiotics, she would be fine.

“A big shoutout to the amazing neighbours on Eastwood St who helped me when my dog was attacked this morning,” she said.

“Carly who drove us to the emergency vet was so lovely, the lovely man who helped rip the attacking dog off my dog and the lovely lady who helped keep my other little dog calm dog during the attack were also both amazing.”

“My boy will be okay, but is traumatised, as am I!”

According to the Victorian Government, if your dog attacks a person or animal, you may be liable for thousands of dollars in fines, or your dog may be euthanised.

Compensation may have to be paid for any damage caused by your dog.

If your dog is already deemed a dangerous dog, and it attacks a person endangering their life, you may face five- or 10-years jail.

According to the Animal Emergency Service, if a dog attacks another dog, do not try and break up the dog fight with your bare hands.

Pour water from a bottle or hose over their heads to shock them into breaking apart.

Keep calm with the other dog owner and refrain from acting aggressively, focusing on each other’s dog’s health.

Have your dog seen by a vet immediately ●

Looking sheepish in Leveson St

WORDS BY *Rhonda Dredge*
COMMUNITY

If you want to be popular in North Melbourne all you have to do is post a picture of your pet sheep on the couch to get a few likes.

But not many people had actually seen the so-called pet when *North West City News* went investigating.

“I’ve ‘herd’ about it,” said a saleswoman in a toy shop in Erroll St.

“Try the Lort Smith,” said a more practical

commentator at the nearby bookshop, “but phone first, they’re busy.”

Not everyone has time to concern themselves with pet likes and dislikes.

The enterprising woman at the game shop in Queensberry St was more willing to take a risk. “Try the Roasting Warehouse in Leveson St,” she said. “I saw a man carrying a lamb there about three weeks ago.”

The Roasting Warehouse looked mellow enough from the street but the joint was really jumping when *North West City News* took a bo-peep.

There was a queue at the counter and quite a crowd was sampling the various brews, rich and strong.

“There are no sheeps here,” said a spokesman coming forward out of the swilling lunchtime crowd.

Eventually a staff member relented and agreed to get the animal’s phone number if it dropped in.

They’re a skeptical lot down in Leveson St so if you’ve actually seen a pet lamb out and about please take a picture and send it in! ●

Spotted in the north-west

COMMUNITY

North West City News likes to keep an eye out for the weird, wonderful and shocking across North and West Melbourne, Kensington and Parkville Gardens.

Here’s a collection of photos from June, July and August which fit the brief.

In this edition, we spotted a mysterious woollen worm bringing a message of hope to an unsuspecting local during these trying times.

Also pictured is a puzzling “push-me-pull-you” van in Kensington. One local on the Kensington Good Karma Network Facebook group theorised that it could have been imported, assembled that way to save costs, then reassembled here into two vehicles. Puzzling indeed.

Finally, a spot of bad luck for a truck driver in Wellington St, Kensington after crashing into a tree just up the street from a “no trucks” sign. Got a tip? Email spencer@hyperlocalnews.com.au ●





CELEBRATING CITY BUSINESSES

Honouring small business proprietors each year is our way of saying thanks for their contribution to our city.

In 2021, businesses spanning jewellery, gaming and food and wine have been recognised in the Lord Mayor's Commendations.

Savouring a crepe on a city stroll, or settling in for a hair appointment are among many people's chief pleasures, and it seems we'll never take them for granted again.

Local businesses have faced their toughest trading conditions in decades due to the pandemic and city lockdowns, and we salute their resilience more than ever this year.

In the past year, the City of Melbourne supported local businesses with a multi-million dollar funding package. We helped proprietors shift towards digital and online platforms and to expand their operations to support a COVID-safe reopening.

Now the city is reawakening and we're welcoming visitors again, with activities that bring back the city's buzz. Melbourne is home to a vast range of city businesses, from barbers and bike shops, to jewellers, book shops, wig makers and more.



They help shape Melbourne's distinctive character – and they form a significant part of our local economy. Some family businesses have operated for many years, run by several generations.

The City of Melbourne has acknowledged their efforts through the Lord Mayor's Commendations since 2005. To date more than 620 small businesses have received commendations. Each business is a story in itself, adding to the layers of Melbourne's history.

The City of Melbourne is proud to recognise and promote them, and

each year recipients appear in a photographic exhibition and join a growing alumni of fellow Melburnians.

Independent, distinctive and local – small business is the heart and soul of our community and Melbourne is all the richer for their efforts.

The Lord Mayor Sally Capp will present Lord Mayor's Commendations to this year's recipients at a Melbourne Town Hall ceremony on 12 August.

For more information, visit melbourne.vic.gov.au/commendations

LOCALS TO LOVE

La Petite Crêperie
Enjoy the lemony, sugary tastiness at this pretty takeaway kiosk that's tiny in size but large in impact. lapetitecreperie.com.au

Kozminsky Studio
This famous studio dates its history back to the 1850s Gold Rush and remains a stylish city destination for stunning jewellery. kozminsky.com

EARL Canteen
Be very tempted by EARL's delicious displays of locally-sourced produce, from salads, sandwiches and healthy snacks to hot food and coffee. earlcanteen.com.au

Mind Games
Bringing the fun to Melbourne, Mind Games is an essential city destination for the best in board games, puzzles and roleplaying games. mindgamesmelbourne.com

Lord Coconut
With its undeniably aristocratic character, Lord Coconut offers men's wedding rings, designer cufflinks

and much more, stocking exquisite creations from more than 30 jewellers. lordcoconut.com

Docklands Health
Yoga and pilates down by Melbourne's waterside are teamed with other allied healthcare services. docklandshealth.com.au

Shakahari Vegetarian Restaurant
Dine in to enjoy fresh and surprising dishes at this iconic Carlton restaurant which makes vegetarians the special guests. shakaharivegetarian.com.au

Jissara Hair
Run by the same family in Kensington since 1954, Jissara passes on the passion for hair styling to each new generation. jissarahair.com.au

Alpha Lewis Signs
Another family-owned business, this firm makes its home in North Melbourne, producing everything from traditional signwriting to digital printing. alphalewisigns.com.au

IN-BRIEF

BUSINESS SUPPORT
Do you run a local business? For one-on-one advice, contact our Business Concierge team on 9658 9658 (press 1 for business) or enquire online, and subscribe to our Business in Melbourne newsletter for regular updates. melbourne.vic.gov.au/business

CURATED READING LISTS
Find great books to read with recommendations from our expert librarians. This month we're shining a light on Homelessness Awareness Week through a curated reading list. To browse these books and more, visit melbourne.vic.gov.au/libraries and click on 'Read'.

RAINBOW CARERS
Do you provide unpaid care to an older person, or someone living with a physical or mental health condition or disability? The City of Melbourne offers supportive programs for carers, including a dedicated group for LGBTIQ+ carers, in partnership with Queerspace. Find out more at melbourne.vic.gov.au/carers

NEW PLAYGROUND
Bring the kids to test out the leafy new playground at Lincoln Square in Carlton. It features tall play towers high up amid the tree canopy, a suspended rope bridge, large tunnel slide and equipment suitable for all ages and abilities. melbourne.vic.gov.au/cityprojects

COUNCIL MEETINGS
Watch meetings live from wherever you are thanks to our live-streaming capability. Tune in live or catch up later. Find all the details about Council and committee meetings at melbourne.vic.gov.au/aboutcouncil

ADVERTISEMENT
Your City of Melbourne community update

LOCAL CHILD CARE LOCATIONS

Give your child a great start in life at one of the City of Melbourne’s network of family-centred long day care and integrated kindergarten services.

Our staff promote early learning, diversity and resilience, and ensure children have their voices heard. We also challenge children to be creative and innovative to help nurture future leaders.

Looking to the future, we’re working to co-locate more services for children and families to make it even easier for young families to access integrated support.

In North Melbourne, Lady Huntingfield Early Learning and Family Services Centre has been rebuilt into a multi-functional centre to better meet the needs of the growing and diverse population.

The new centre offers childcare, kindergarten, maternal child health and immunisation services, parenting support services and playgroups under one roof.

In your neighbourhood

We own and manage the following services for children and families:

Lady Huntingfield Early Learning and Family Services Centre
87-93 Haines Street, North Melbourne
Phone: 03 9658 9658

North Melbourne Children’s Centre
28 Howard Street, North Melbourne
Phone: 03 9658 7888

To find out more about any of the above services, visit melbourne.vic.gov.au/childcare

We also own the following community-run centres in the municipality. Each of these centres maintains its own fee schedules and vacancy lists, so please contact them directly to find out more.

Gowrie Carlton Learning Precinct
150 Palmerston Street, Carlton
Phone: 0458 323 808
gowrievictoria.org.au/childrens-programs/carltonlearningprecinct

The Harbour Family and Children’s Centre
1 Seafarer Lane, Victoria Harbour, Docklands
Phone: 03 8624 1000
gowrievictoria.org.au/childrens-programs/docklands

East Melbourne Child Care Co-operative
Powlett Reserve Children’s Centre, Corner Grey and Simpson streets, East Melbourne
Phone: 03 9419 4301
emcc.org.au

Fawkner Park Children’s Centre
65 Toorak Road West, South Yarra
Phone: 03 9820 2758
fawknerpark.com

Kensington Community Children’s Co-op
81B Altona Street, Kensington
Phone: 03 9376 4565
kccc.org.au

Information and events in this publication are current at the time of printing. Subsequent changes may occur.



HUSTLE AND HEART DRIVES SIGNAL’S YOUNG ARTISTS

Follow in the footsteps of outstanding young artists at Signal, the City of Melbourne’s creative studio for people aged 14 to 25.

Whether you are a filmmaker, actor, visual artist or anything in between, you can find the support and encouragement you need to take the next steps in your creative career at Signal.

Since creating her one-woman comedy cabaret *LOTUS* with Signal, Chi Nguyen has secured support to develop and premiere her show *Miss Saigon-Wrong* at the Bowery Theatre and acted in Netflix series *The Wilds*.

AP Pobjoy secured investment to extend the film they made for Signal’s

Young Creatives Lab (called *Why Did She Have To Tell The World?*) for ABC TV, and an internship with Film Victoria.

Betiel Beyin received a mentorship with renowned artist Candy Bowers through the Signal program and has gone on to write, direct and act in her own web series, called *Lil CEEBS* for Instagram TV.

Head to *Melbourne* magazine online to read our interviews with Chi, AP and Betiel [magazine.melbourne.vic.gov.au/community-stories](https://melbourne.vic.gov.au/community-stories)

To get involved with Signal, browse what’s on at melbourne.vic.gov.au/signal



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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Housing equality, a better future for all Australians

Welcome to the last article of our 12-part series which will attempt to explore the role that housing can and should play within Australian society and why it is important to our economy that we house all Australians, rich or poor.

This series intends to draw on a range of perspectives centred around housing and homelessness. We hear a range of views from business, the not-for-profit sector and hopefully government, as to why they believe housing is an important social and economic building block for Australia's future prosperity.

In the last article, we were very fortunate to get Mark Steinert, the recently retired managing director of Australia's largest residential developer, Stockland, to share his thoughts around why the objective around housing all Australians is important, especially within the City of Melbourne...

Australia, "The Lucky Country", continues to offer great opportunities to the majority of its residents having experienced moderate COVID impacts and enjoying economic growth consistently above the OECD average. Australia is home to just 0.3 per cent of the world's population, but accounts for 1.6 per cent of the global economy. However, according to the last Census, 116,000 Australians are homeless and represent the most socially and economically disadvantaged. They do not feel lucky. This number is expected to have grown as COVID has created an even greater disparity between the haves and have nots, particularly for single women over 50 and indigenous Australians. Housing affordability more broadly also remains a significant social and economic issue, affecting social cohesion, wellbeing and inter-generational mobility.

This is not a new problem and it is not unique to Australia. House prices have increased by 60 per cent more than goods and services on average across OECD countries during the past two decades. How we use our land and the cost of serviced land are primary drivers impacting the supply response in areas where demand is strong, which is particularly the case in job abundant urban areas like Sydney and Melbourne. Land values have risen materially faster than construction costs with Australian house prices growing 6.8 per cent pa for the past 25 years while construction costs per square metre have tracked closer to inflation.

The reasons for rapid land price inflation are many, with the most important being an

undersupply of zoned, serviced land, which largely reflects strong demand growth, and complex, inefficient planning policies, which means rezoning can take up to 10 years, and lagging infrastructure provision. Government charges have also grown relentlessly. For example, the Housing Industry Association of Australia (HIA) estimates that direct and indirect costs associated with the planning process represent 25 to 35 per cent of the price of new housing. Two of these issues can be solved by introducing more flexible, efficient land use zoning controls coupled with much greater approval certainty at all stages of development, and reducing government charges where the derived benefits are greater than the tax revenue foregone.

It is important to remember that government policy will normally reflect the actual or perceived views of the community, with the vocal minority quite often having a disproportionate impact. Nimbyism (Not in my backyard) contributes to slow planning processes and a reactive, rather than proactive, approach to land use. Importantly things are changing with most Australian cities now having an aligned land use planning and infrastructure vision. However, the practical outcomes on the ground are still desperately inefficient.

Circular, sustainable economic and social principles applied to land use, construction and place making can create lower costs of production and maintenance, while creating more desirable community outcomes. Major enabling rail infrastructure and master planning of associated near station land use is a great example that produces significant direct and indirect economic and social benefits. Importantly all of these benefits must be counted to ensure the right decisions are made in allocating scarce resources.

Significant economic and social benefits are clearly observable from the new metropolitan rail infrastructure developed in Sydney, Melbourne and Brisbane in the past five years. This is the first significant heavy rail development in these cities in 50 years and combined with the master planning of near station land use has helped address affordability, inequality and economic growth. A new home in the west of Melbourne or Sydney is typically now only 35 to 45 minutes from the CBD and other key employment nodes by train, and costs less than half an equivalent home in the middle ring. The new stations offer significant park and ride facilities but are future proofed with

large drop-off areas, bike and scooter parking, improved pedestrian paths, security and big data analytics. In the best examples adjoining convenience stores, supermarkets and services are blended with diverse housing solutions to create vibrant town centres. Childcare, schools, medical and wellbeing centres, government service centres, flexible work spaces, community gardens, community centres, landscaping and public art combine to create a real sense of place.

The time is now, with supportive social and affordable housing policy in focus with a bipartisan government view that housing or shelter, part of the base of Maslow's hierarchy of human needs, is a common need for societal wellbeing. Proof includes the 2020-21 Federal budget estimates which forecast a 37 per cent increase in housing related expenditure to \$3.7 billion.

However, current policy will still leave thousands homeless during the next decade and without community, private sector and government support for high-quality development, this crisis will continue. This is where the private sector has a significant role to play. Trust must be built through high-quality development, placemaking and social and enabling infrastructure delivery. A more deterministic and efficient planning and approval process needs to not only deliver housing at scale but high-quality parks and open space, digitally enabled STEAM, life-long learning hubs, health and wellbeing centres, job creation, walking and riding trails, vibrant town centres and public/private transport connections.

Density done well is the key to improving affordability and liveability, enabling younger generations to buy or rent a home and older generations to downsize in suburbs where they live. Connecting public infrastructure is essential and, importantly, innovation like electric autonomous vehicles, electric shared scooters and bikes, solar-lit walking and riding paths and digital safety monitoring offer practical, non-intrusive, green solutions to getting people to central train and bus stations. Billions is lost each year in planning and building approval uncertainty and inefficient transport solutions. These can be the source of funding for social and affordable housing and integrated placemaking through fair value capture. Done right social and affordable housing issues could be solved within a decade.

However, this better future requires a new approach from all stakeholders to put the needs

of our whole community first, enabling the use of scalable master planning to develop better communities. This must not be at the mercy of the political cycle or the NIMBY trends that are so prevalent. YIMBY is the future ... yes in my back yard because I trust that sustainable, planned development that balances social and economic needs will be good for me and my community.

We have come to the last article of our series. I hope you have found them instructive and helpful in shaping your view around why we need to create housing for all our people, rich or poor.

I hope you found the above perspective by Mark interesting and insightful. It demonstrates that the private sector also has a strong view about the basic equity involved in providing our fellow Australians with the provision of safe and secure shelter. This is not just a social issue, it is a long-term economic issue for Australia and the private sector is also concerned. But they never had a voice. That is the reason why we established Housing All Australians. To represent a private sector voice in a national housing/homeless discussion through an economic lens.

While what was said may not align with your view of the world, we all need to listen and digest what is said by others in order to find common ground. This is why we are focusing on the fact that the provision of shelter is a fundamental human need (not human right) and without that need being met, we have unintended social and economic consequences that will span generations. We are leaving an intergenerational time bomb.

The language we use is communicating the issue is important, and no one can say that safe and secure shelter is not a fundamental human need. We need to use the narrative that unites a community and not one that divides it.

Doing nothing is NOT AN OPTION! We need to act and we need to act now. Any significant impact will take decades to materialise All of us need to be part of the solution so please feel free to write to me with your thoughts: info@housingallaustralians.com.au ●



Rob Pradolín

FORMER GENERAL MANAGER AT FRASERS PROPERTY AUSTRALIA AND FOUNDER OF HOUSING ALL AUSTRALIANS (HAA)

[INFO@HOUSINGALLAUSTRALIANS.COM.AU](mailto:info@housingallaustralians.com.au)

METRO TUNNEL

Designer flooded with ideas for Metro Tunnel installation

Work has begun to install the Metro Tunnel's first permanent creative installation – 360 metres long and involving 1.3 million tiles – in Melbourne's inner west.

Stephen Banham's work *One Day in our Park* is coming to life on a flood wall that forms part of the Metro Tunnel's western entrance at Kensington, opposite JJ Holland Park.

The work is the result of extensive consultation with the Kensington community and draws inspiration from their connection to the park.

One Day in our Park will use 1.3 million green glazed ceramic tiles to create stories that were inspired by public submissions. The choice of the green colour scheme was guided by community preference to soften the street landscape and flood wall.

A team of four tilers is completing the tiling by hand in an intensive process that will slowly progress across the length of the flood wall.

The use of tiling is a nod to the local



industrial heritage and to underground station designs around the world, such as the New York Subway and Paris Metro. As Stephen said, "Tiling is a beautiful medium – industrial yet poetic."

An advisory panel – including members of Rail Projects Victoria (RPV) and the City of Melbourne, along with four industry experts – selected Stephen's concept from a shortlist of five.

Stephen is a typographer, designer, lecturer

and writer with more than 30 years' experience. Some examples of his previous work include Melbourne Art Trams.

Stephen took inspiration from the Kensington community's feedback about their use and enjoyment of the park, as well as some of his own observations, to develop the concept and create the "stories" that appear on the wall. These include lines such as:

"Laps walked until a teething child falls asleep".

"Echoing thuds of cricket balls" and "Anxious glances at the football scoreboard".

"Begging seagulls pretending to have only one leg".

Stephen is no stranger to the Metro Tunnel Project; one of his designs *Here, There* (2020) was on display at the State Library Station construction site last year, as part of the project's Creative Program.

Installation started in June for the flood wall creative design and will continue in stages over the coming months.

Fifty-one car parking spaces were recently reinstated and extensive planting of vegetation, mulching and installation of street lighting has been completed along Childers St.

While Stephen's design is close to the Kensington entrance to the tunnel, the Metro Tunnel legacy station artworks will ensure the stations themselves are must-see destinations that will boost Melbourne's reputation as Australia's cultural capital ●

For more information:
metrotunnel.vic.gov.au

COUNCILLOR PROFILE

“You’re never, ever going to get bored”; Greens councillor

Elected in 2012 at the age of just 27, Greens councillor Rohan Leppert is a Town Hall veteran of sorts. But he admits that in his third term, the role is harder than ever.

One gets the sense that with Rohan Leppert, things are rarely done half-heartedly.

Perhaps it’s an innate thoroughness, mixed with a healthy level of anxiety, but the City of Melbourne councillor rarely enters discussion or debates without being fully armed with the facts.

This shines through in public forums, both at Town Hall and online.

Perhaps it’s unsurprising then that, soon after COVID-19 hit Melbourne, he felt the need to commit full-time to his role as councillor.

For Cr Leppert, life on council has changed.

“It’s a great honour and privilege to help everyone every day through council. But it’s also harder to do this job now than it has been at any other time in my nine years here,” he said.

“The role of political leadership is very different to what it was before the pandemic. We have to be champions for a city in crisis.”

Speaking with *North West City News* just as Melbourne entered a fifth period of lockdown, Cr Leppert said the pandemic had sharpened his focus.

“Taking on the trauma of people who are going out of business or whose loved ones are experiencing acute mental health issues is not easy. But I do know what my purpose is at the moment, and that at least is something that spurs me on.”

Cr Leppert was first elected back in 2012 as a fresh-faced 27-year-old.

A profile piece in this very publication around this time described him as the “hipster councillor”, who would “not look out of place on a fixed-wheel bicycle” (generously, it credited an “intellectual substance and capacity” to boot).

As with any new councillor, he had to learn the ropes quickly.

And now, nine years on, he’s thankful for a more welcoming initiation.

“I think now is the hardest possible time to start as a new councillor. If I was starting now as opposed to nine years ago I would be ... quite



“The role of political leadership is very different to what it was before the pandemic. We have to be champions for a city in crisis.”



upset,” he said, laughing.

It’s not difficult to see that a fire burns bright on a broad range of topics.

Equally comfortable speaking about social mobility as he is the finer details of planning matters, a common thread is apparent; putting people and the planet at the heart of policy.

On the former, he expresses a regret that the pandemic had severely impacted local residents, particularly in the CBD.

“I am increasingly agitated that we keep asking people to lock down, stay at home, and that’s going to keep the community safe. But we also always consider construction workers’ essential work, which makes the staying-at-home for central city residents living next door to a construction site an absolute living nightmare. That doesn’t seem, to me, to be the right balance. We need to recognise that we have tens of thousands of residents in the central city now

and if the overarching health message is ‘stay at home, be safe’, we shouldn’t make that staying-at-home experience tortuous at the same time.”

From an environmental perspective, Cr Leppert has been front and centre of the city’s accelerated rollout of protected cycling lanes.

He derives pride from the changes these projects can make.

“I still want to be part of a movement that’s saving the planet but doing that at a local level ... the ability to introduce new reforms and see those reforms actually change the way people live, is still quite exciting to me.”

Rather than being met with a sigh, the complexity of complaints he receives from constituents keeps things interesting.

“The challenges and the enquiries that come up every day are completely fresh, and I just absolutely love that. You can be working on so many things every day — you’re never, ever going to get bored in a job like this.”

While on different ends of the political spectrum to some councillors, Cr Leppert paid tribute to the “really healthy, collaborative” group at present.

A move to upper levels of government would seem a natural progression, but he is more than happy shaping policy at the local level.

“I admire those who want to be lower house MPs, but it’s something I’ve always decided is not for me.”

For this councillor, he’ll know when the gig is up.

“I still love this job, and still get a hell of a lot out of it. If that ever stopped, I’ll know I need to give the role to someone who has that energy.” ●



David Schout
JOURNALIST
DAVID@HYPERLOCALNEWS.COM.AU

STATE MP

Girls’ sports should not be an afterthought



▲ A young local goal attack netballer shooting for goals in Kensington.

“The upcoming redevelopment of the Kensington Community Recreation Centre will provide new indoor courts, including for netball, which is very welcome, but we need outdoor rings as well.”

Like so many girls across Victoria, I loved playing netball when I was growing up.

I wasn’t a superstar, but it kept me fit and having fun with my friends. I can’t wait until my daughter Ada and son Gabe can learn to play too.

I recently met up with the new president of the Kensington Junior Netball Club to discuss the lack of netball rings in our local area, and what we can do to work together to fix this.

Netball is the most popular sport among our local girls and women, but they have no public rings or outdoor half-courts to practice on in their spare time. We’ve got to fix this.

The COVID-19 pandemic has shown us more than ever how important it is to stay socially connected and fit, both for our mental and physical health, and sport is such a powerful community builder.

The Kensington Junior Netball Club was started by a group of local mums eight years ago to provide options for girls’ team sport. It started as just one team, and it’s exploded! Now there are 18 teams with 165 players from across Kensington and surrounding suburbs.

But while we have a lot of good facilities for sports that have traditionally been dominated by boys – such as basketball rings and half-courts, and football and cricket facilities – we don’t have any outdoor netball rings in our local area.

Don’t get me wrong, I think women and girls should be able to play any sport – I’m a

Richmond tragic myself and love watching a game of AFLW – but given netball is the most common sport for girls in our area, it deserves better facilities.

The upcoming redevelopment of the Kensington Community Recreation Centre will provide new indoor courts, including for netball, which is very welcome, but we need outdoor rings as well.

I’m working with the junior netball club and the City of Melbourne to make sure we can have some netball rings installed in our local area. Some of the options are pretty simple, like installing two permanent goal posts in JJ Holland Park, near the Venny, besides the cricket nets, or in the nearby Newman Street Playground and Tankard Reserve.

As always, I’m “here if you need!” Do get in touch if you’d like to discuss this or any other issue with me office@ellensandell.com or calling us on 9328 4637

Your local state MP and former goal shooter, Ellen Sandell ●



Ellen Sandell
STATE MP FOR MELBOURNE
OFFICE@ELLENSANDELL.COM

The struggles of a mum

WORDS BY Rhonda Dredge

The Golden Book is an adventurous novel by local writer Kate Ryan that has just been released and can be collected from North Melbourne Books.

There's an interview with Ryan in the bookshop's latest newsletter that addresses some of the more serious issues.

The novel is a very Australian tale idealising childhood as the source of identity (and emotional baggage).

The protagonist Eli is ambivalent, like everyone, about the restrictions of her childhood, particularly those imposed by her mother.

A mum herself at the time of writing, she has a dark secret she is carrying from a childhood incident at Mumbulla Falls near Bega.

The narrative is constructed around efforts to offload her guilt, a complex beast that throws doubt onto all of her relationships.

Implicit in this structure is the belief that the minute details of Eli's journey, its twists and turns, flash backs and memories, are relevant because of the incident.

Aussie realism does a lot of "showing". Is something lost in the process? Does the suppression of "telling" also squash a natural storytelling voice that feeds off sharply defined observations rather than excessive information?

The Golden Book attempts to present itself as a series of quests or dares but these get lost in the multiple branches of Eli's memory as she returns to NSW for a funeral.

Sometimes her flashbacks are pithy – such as the description of her mother's style, aroused by a session at the local swimming pool.

"There were so many things she insisted on, felt the need to constantly police or remind Eli about: nutritious meals eaten at the table, not too much sugar, road safety, teenage drinking, violence on TV, too much TV, sufficient sleep, bullying, the importance of reading, fresh air, exercise, the perils of peer pressure."

This passage is a welcome stopping place for the reader where summary occurs, calling for a response. There could have been more of these "telling" moments.



▲ The Golden Book, Kate Ryan, Scribe, 2021.

At its best, this novel delves into a fading hippy culture that still existed on the southern NSW coast in the '90s and into the power of landscape to shape childhood.

There are some familiar descriptions of Melbourne, as the narrator looks at places that might challenge her own daughter

"Here there was soft indeterminate stuff on the ground, ropes stretching over a pyramid-style climbing frame, wooden boardwalks everywhere, coloured footholds up a tame wall. Everything designed to avoid accidents and the possibility of risk."

"Still, of all the playgrounds, this one did have the slightest edgy feel. Perhaps it was the flying fox, perhaps it was the public housing towers casting their shadows on the grass."

"Perhaps it was the position, high up the cloudy river below with its hints of rubbish and factory, the sound of cars on the overpass, the straggly gum trees along the riverbanks, the bike paths leading away, the sense of being on the edge of somewhere."

The novel is personal and embedded in the struggles of a mum as she deals with the agency of her eight-year-old, triggering memories of her own fights for freedom and their tragic consequences ●

New life in Parkville Gardens

A small ray of sunshine has pierced the grey skies of winter and the recurring gloom of lockdowns.

Parkville Gardens has a new café and mini-mart. It's on the corner of Oak and Garrard streets and it's staffed by cheerful barista Gus. The space is small, but the service is large-hearted. It's a welcome addition to the neighbourhood.

On the other hand, there's been a loss, albeit a temporary one. The vice president of the Residents' Association, Michael Saunders, and his wife Monika and two young children have left to live in Germany for a year. We'll miss them very much but wish them well for a rich experience of European life, enjoyable adventures and an eventual safe return. In the meantime, we'll be on the lookout for fresh blood on the PGRA committee – there are openings for local residents with ideas, skills, energy and community spirit.

A brief update on the upcoming social housing development in Galada Ave. Citta report that it hopes to finalise its choice of builder very soon. The initial task of sorting out contracts and arrangements will take place off-site, so it's not expected there will be any construction work on site for a few months yet.

Not far from Parkville Gardens there are several large establishments: CSL, the zoo, youth justice and mental health facilities, and the Royal Park campus of the Royal Melbourne Hospital. But there are also important institutions within our boundaries, such as Mercy Health's retirement and aged care facility, the Parkville office of Dementia Australia, and the Mental Health Research Institute.

It's always good to get to know your neighbours, so this month here's a little information about Dementia Australia (DA), provided by Sarah Richards, its media and communications advisor...

DA was founded more than 35 years ago. It's the national peak body for people impacted by dementia, a challenging and much misunderstood condition. Estimates put the number of people living with dementia in Australia at half a million, with three times that number



involved in their care. DA addresses this need with a combination of information, education and support services. The Parkville office is situated on Oak St. Normally around 65 people work there in a range of activities across marketing, communications, client services, the Centre for Dementia Learning and consumer engagement.

It's fitting that Dementia Australia should be located in Parkville Gardens. The facility that became Royal Park Psychiatric Hospital was founded here in 1907. The hospital was closed in the 1990s but a heritage-listed building, converted to apartments, remains the centrepiece of the neighbourhood ●

Residents can find us:
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

Flemington Kensington news spring edition

Introducing RIMERN...

The Rotary Inner Melbourne Emergency Relief Network (RIMERN) has recently been established.

Flemington Kensington Rotary has joined with the Rotary Clubs of Prahran, Albert Park, Central Melbourne, Carlton, North Melbourne, Balwyn, Camberwell and Canterbury to establish the organisation.

Based at 32-34 Lincoln St, East Brunswick, this charity run by several Rotary Clubs within the inner area of Melbourne provides free household goods to people experiencing loss and trauma.

They may have suffered from a range of crises, including long term illness, unemployment, domestic violence or homelessness, refugee displacement, incarceration or other situations of hardship, such as fire or flood.

The premise is similar to that followed by current groups – Eastern Relief Network in Mitcham and Western Emergency Relief Network in Melton.

Through donations from businesses, real estate agencies and everyday people, these organisations are able to offer basic household furniture, bedding, manchester and kitchen goods.

Referrals are accepted from accredited social service organisations who support those needing aid with the process.

Agencies working in the City of Melbourne, South Moonee Valley, Port Phillip, Darebin, East Moreland, South Banyule and northern Bayside and Yarra are invited to apply for accreditation and to access resources. Access the



application form at rotaryflemington.org.au

RIMERN is run solely by volunteers so if you would like to assist, please contact

Lesley at Lillico2009@gmail.com or Susie at susie.cole@rotaryprahran.org.au

Introducing Mel (pictured) – the new Rotary Op Shop manager

Melina Caccetta began as the manager of the Rotary Op Shop at 444 Racecourse Rd in May and has settled in well despite COVID restrictions.

Well-known to many residents and business owners, she is a local having lived in Kensington all her life.



She had her own arts and craft store on Macaulay Rd and was the inspiration behind the Kensington Traders' Association. She also ran the Kensington Festival in 1998 and worked in every coffee shop back in the 1990s.

Mel is passionate about community and worked with young women in the housing estate as a mentor and in a "big sister" capacity. She also participated in many classes and events at Kensington Neighbourhood House.

Nine years ago, she started the Kensington Market at Kensington Town Hall which sadly is in limbo due to COVID-19.

Mel has many ideas to improve the Op Shop and has initiated Saturday Repair Hub sessions

and opened an eBay shop for larger and more unique and valuable items. She has also set up a Facebook page to keep people up to date on what is happening.

New volunteers are always welcomed and will join a friendly, dedicated team offering wonderful items and a friendly smile.

Call in and say hi! ●

For more information visit:
rotaryflemington.org.au or email
info@rotaryflemington.org.au

Seen and unseen: Koorie artists tell their stories through art

WORDS BY *Spencer Fowler Steen*

A new exhibition showcasing the work of trailblazing First Nations artists from southeast Australia is heading to Melbourne.

Seen and Unseen: Expressions of Koorie Identity is an exhibition run by Koorie Heritage Trust (KHT) bringing together artwork from several exhibitions from the 1990s, at a time when many indigenous artists struggled to have their work acknowledged.

KHT curatorial manager and exhibition curator Gail Harradine, who is also a teacher and artist, said the exhibition was about acknowledging that indigenous artists from southeast Australia had struggled with being seen.

“It’s difficult to imagine that it was close to 30 years ago that Koorie artists were struggling to have their art and culture acknowledged,” she said.

“The idea of being inauthentic is absurd and yet that idea was prevalent and widely held. Together these artists offer an insight into their struggles and triumphs and what it took for their voices to be heard. While gains have been made for Aboriginal people, there is still a very long way to go.”

As a Wotjobaluk, Djubagalk and Jadawadjali woman, Ms Harradine along with fellow artist and Gamilaroi woman, Dr Donna Leslie, were among the first Koorie students to go through fine art studies at The University of Melbourne in the ‘90s.

Ms Harradine said growing up, she still remembered seeing the bones of Aboriginal people on display at museums and recalls the stories of her relatives who grew up on missions where every aspect of their lives was controlled by white people, while creativity was shunned.

But while at university, she became part of a strong First Nations arts and culture community.

“To the broader community, we may have been invisible as to our culture, identity and art practice, but together we felt empowered to make change,” she said.



Seen and Unseen will bring together artwork from the *Can’t See for Lookin’* exhibition, KHT’s collection, archival material, oral history recordings along with artwork from other significant artists of the time.

Ms Harradine said the exhibition would also give voice to younger identities that were equally strong, resilient, and significant.

“Often when I was talking with people, they mention working around the kitchen table, it’s a huge theme. I think that importance of sharing knowledge and being able to be creative is a huge part of the exhibition and not being oppressed by the assumptions people hold,” she said.

Artists include Maree Clarke, the late Ellen Jose, Auntie Rachel Mullett, the late Auntie Connie Alberts Hart, Lisa Kennedy, Donna



“It’s difficult to imagine that it was close to 30 years ago that Koorie artists were struggling to have their art and culture acknowledged.”



Leslie, Dr Treahna Hamm, Karen Casey, Sonja Hodge and Gayle Maddigan. Other significant artists from that time include the late Lin Onus, Ray Thomas, Lyn Thorpe and the late Les Griggs.

Seen and Unseen: Expressions of Koorie Identity opens Saturday, August 7 until November 21, 2021. Koorie Heritage Trust, Yarra Building, Federation Square. korieheritagetrust.com.au ●

For more information:
korieheritagetrust.com.au

HISTORY

The founding of North Melbourne’s Lost Dog’s Home - 1913

WORDS BY *Felicity Jack*

Community dissatisfaction with the handling of Melbourne’s lost dogs came to a head in 1910 with the following article in Melbourne’s *Argus* newspaper...

“When we hear of a little dog being forcibly taken from between the two hands of its mistress; of another being lassoed while following its owner, a little girl, along the street, and of the tearful requests for its restoration being refused; and of a third being snatched up while in attendance upon the cart of a Chinese, it is time to protest, and to protest vigorously.”

The previous week’s edition of the *Argus* described the fate of 10 lost dogs who were being auctioned. Only one was bought, for five shillings, despite the buyer offering one shilling for a second dog. Another dog was returned to its owner, a small boy, who was forced to borrow the money to buy back his dog for the same amount. And the fate of the remaining dogs was to be drowned by council officers in the Yarra River. Drowning or poisoning were the two options used to dispose of lost or stray dogs.

There had been some individual efforts to care for these dogs but they were mainly uncoordinated and quite inadequate to the size of the problem. Perhaps the most sustained effort was by Lady Clare Lyle, the wife of Thomas Ranken Lyle, professor of natural philosophy at the University of Melbourne. She set up facilities for up to 30 dogs at her home in Irving Rd, Toorak, and established Melbourne’s first lethal chamber.

With the pressure building to take a more systematic approach to the problem, a fundraising committee was founded in the same year. In



July a highly successful theatrical performance organised by a well-known actor, Tripp Edgar, raised £150, and was followed by a public appeal that raised the fund to £860.

A committee of concerned men and women was set up in December 1910 with the aim to reunite dogs with their owners, and, where this was not possible, to arrange for their painless destruction.

The search for suitable premises took a long time. There was strong resistance to the home being built in residential areas. After much searching some vacant Crown land was located in North Melbourne which had the advantage of being close to Macaulay Station, on a direct line to Flinders Street Station. Four blocks of land were purchased in June 1912 for £257 and building began. Two honorary veterinary surgeons, Mr W. A. Kendall and Miss Bruce Reid, gave their time and expertise. Bruce Reid was the first woman in the world to graduate in veterinary science. She graduated in 1906 from

the old Melbourne Veterinary College that had been set up by Mr Kendall’s father in Fitzroy.

The home was opened in February 1913 by Lady Denman, wife of the Governor General. It had been able to attract some notable patronage: its patron was Lieutenant Governor and Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Victoria, Sir Justice Madden, and the Chairman was the influential headmaster of Wesley College, L. A. Adamson.

The home arranged with staff at Flinders Street station for already labelled leads to be made available to members of the public. The home was phoned from the station and the charge of six pence was made for a dog to be carried there on the condition that they were suitably chained. This was later extended so that dogs could be left at any Melbourne or suburban station and carried to Macaulay, with the home being charged on a monthly basis. This continued until 1923.

By 1915 the home had arrangements with

several local councils to care for their dogs but Melbourne City Council did not join the scheme until 1917. This proved to be a big problem for the home because the council had a pre-existing arrangement to supply stray dogs to the University of Melbourne. Thus, the home was held by some to be guilty by association of dogs being used for vivisection. This was a procedure that the home specifically condemned.

The large number of dogs that were brought to the home and the lack of adequate funding meant that conditions at the home were not ideal. In 1922 the home had a substantial loss and other liabilities of more than £500. The depression years also impacted on the home’s finances and in 1928, five of the seven members of staff voluntarily sacrificed a total of £200 to assist the home to stay afloat.

In 1926 Charles Lort Smith, a well-known solicitor whose clients included the University of Melbourne and the Victorian Racing Club, took over as chairman. The previous year he had married Louisa Montgomery, a pianist who had also taught some of the daughters of Melbourne’s elite to dance. Louisa and her sister, Marion, were both passionate about animal welfare and they were to have a significant influence on the development of animal welfare in North Melbourne. But to learn about this you will have to wait until the next edition.

Felicity Jack has written two books, *Faithful Friends* that deals with the early history of the Lost Dogs’ Home and the Lort Smith Animal Hospital, and the *Kindness of Strangers*, the history of the Lort Smith Animal Hospital. The former is available from the Hotham History Project website, the latter is available from Spinifex Press ●



Faces of North West City

Have you received your COVID-19 vaccination?



NATASHA
I've had both my vaccinations, I'm a nurse. I think it's important that everyone gets their vaccination. I've had the Astra Zeneca and it's all done.



TERRENCE
I think it's the responsible thing to do for the community. I've been living here for 30 years, so I love North Melbourne.



JARRED
I have not had the vaccination yet because I'm not yet eligible. When I can, I will.



MAGNUS WITH EMMA
I have taken the Astra Zeneca vaccine just because I had the chance through my work at an institute that does the coronavirus testing. I really wanted to get it to get the vaccination percentage up. I didn't have any concern even though the government changed the regulations after I had it.

NORTH WEST CITY LOCAL

Act of kindness brings a smile to isolated international student

Alone, far from family, and living in her West Melbourne home without a heater while trying to undertake her doctoral research, Arianna Oddo was feeling the winter chill.

WORDS BY *Brendan Rees*

The PhD science student who moved to Melbourne from Italy three-and-half-years ago to undertake her studies at Monash University had recently hit a challenging time in her life amid the COVID-19 lockdowns and decided to reach out for help on social media.

Her post on the North Melbourne Good Karma Network Facebook page caught the attention of Jenni Morris, a neighbour who was only too willing to loan her a heater.

"It's just doing what a lot of us do in this community and I have a particular interest in international students because I have some understanding of the challenges of their lives," Ms Morris said, who worked with international students for more than 10 years during her time at RMIT University as a support worker.

"She had a particularly gruelling week that week. It just happened that I did have a spare heater ... I thought 'oh god, the last thing she

needs is to be in a really cold house."

"It's just one more added stress on top of their already stressful lives."

The pair met up (before the fifth lockdown) and clicked straight away over coffee. Ms Morris even volunteered to be a listener so Ms Oddo could practice her oral presentation after being selected for the Victorian finals of the FameLab competition.

Ms Oddo told *North West City News* she was so grateful for Ms Morris's help, saying "It's really nice to have someone who talk to."

According to experts, Ms Oddo is not alone in experiencing social isolation with lockdowns having "massively" taken a toll on the mental health and wellbeing of PhD students.

RMIT psychologist Dr James Collett said "social links are tremendously important" as international students were "far more likely to be living in apartments," which would be "detrimental to wellbeing" during lockdowns.

University of NSW Associate Professor Melissa Hart, who works with PhD students in the field of urban climate, said a "PhD is really hard in normal times, and just to attempt to do it during this pandemic is just really horrible".

She said PhD scholarships were "incredibly low" and students who relied on field work "had to completely rework what their project looks like, which is really tough."

"Some of these wonderful benefits you get from a PhD are the travel opportunities to visit other institutions and conferences and present your work and meet other researchers – they're



not getting any of that," Professor Hart said.

Belle Lin (pictured), president of the Council of International Students Australia, said the pandemic had also caused "a lot of mental and financial stress on students", who were already isolated from their families and experiencing loss of work.

The 25-year-old from Malaysia, who is studying a PhD at the Monash Institute of Pharmaceutical Sciences and the Peter

MacCallum Cancer Centre in Melbourne, had to dip into her savings after losing her part-time university teaching role.

"During the lockdown everything is shut, and your timeline will be stretched. I'm racing against that deadline," she said.

"I'm feeling the pressure now, especially someone like myself who has a lot of lab-based work." ●

MELBOURNE ZOO



A vet for all, within and beyond the walls

WORDS BY Sarah
MELBOURNE ZOO VETERINARIAN

When people think of a zoo vet, they usually think of elephants, giraffes, lions and all the big animals. I often get asked how I can possibly know everything about so many species. And most people assume that every animal I care for lives at the zoo.

But what if I told you some of my favourite creatures are no bigger than your hand, that I am not an expert on every animal at Melbourne Zoo, and that many of my patients don't live at the zoo at all! Let me explain.

Before I came to work at Melbourne Zoo nine years ago, I thought I had a pretty good idea of what life as a zoo vet was like. But something I realised straight away is that this job is full of surprises, and there is so much more to being a zoo vet than I could ever have imagined.

It's true that we have a lot of different animals to care for at the zoo, and they really do come in all shapes and sizes. But it's also true that I'm not a leading expert on every single species here and I don't know absolutely everything about every individual animal who lives at the zoo. I do, however, have more than 100 years of combined veterinary experience in my colleagues around me. And I do work with incredible keepers who share a special bond with the animals they care for and understand them intimately as individuals. As zoo vets, it's the team around us that help us confidently care for what sometimes seems like a mind-boggling array of all creatures great and small that call Melbourne Zoo home.

I am fascinated by the relationship I have with the animals here. I spend so much time thinking about them and yet it's funny to think about how they spend so little or no time thinking about me. I adore them, but it's a very one-way relationship, and so it should be. As a vet I'm happy just being the person in the background, advocating for their health and welfare.

But there's so much more to this job than caring for the animals that live at the zoo.

Our amazing Melbourne Zoo Marine Response Unit is out at Victoria's beaches, rivers and lakes every day, helping seals, birds, turtles and all sorts of marine animals in trouble. Many of these animals are brought back to the zoo, where the vet team is involved in treating injuries, removing entanglements and helping to

rehabilitate animals after surgery. Some of the best moments of my work are when an animal that came to us injured or malnourished is fit enough to be released back into the wild with a second chance at life.

And then there's our involvement in the zoo's threatened species programs, something I didn't realise I would get the chance to be part of when I joined the zoo all those years ago. Zoos Victoria works with 27 endangered local species, and as vets we were part of these ground-breaking conservation programs. The Baw Baw Frog, Southern Corroboree Frog, Eastern Barred Bandicoot and Lord Howe Island Stick Insect are just some of the endangered species I have been lucky enough to work with. As vets we advise on quarantine and biosecurity protocols, monitor population health, and contribute to plans for wild releases. Lots of zoo vets around the world work with lions and elephants and tigers, but not many are as lucky as me and get to work with Baw Baw Frogs!

The terrible bushfires in the summer of 2019/20 also reminded me how so much of my job is about caring for animals that don't live at the zoo. I had been to bushfire triage centres before, but what we experienced at Mallacoota was on a whole new scale for me. Big fires in multiple locations, and so many animals affected. We worked such long days, and it was so exhausting, but the community of Mallacoota stunned me with their kindness, their generosity, and their passion for their local wildlife. Community members – some of whom had lost their own homes – would turn up to volunteer, all motivated by a love for Mallacoota's koalas, kangaroos, birds and other wildlife. It was incredibly heart-warming and an experience I will never forget.

After almost a decade in the Melbourne Zoo vet department, I still love the complexity and the drama of my work. Whether I am caring for one of the zoo's famous lions, gorillas or elephants, a wild seal or seabird, or a small, endangered frog that few people know about, working here is a daily adventure. Every day I walk past those meerkats near the front entrance and see how busy and happy they are, and they make my heart sing. The variety of animals can seem a bit overwhelming at times, but it's also part of the excitement of the job. I love the challenge ●

THE KENSINGTON ASSOCIATION

Adaptation in a post-COVID-19 community

Maybe it's not useful to talk about a "post-COVID-19" time, because post-COVID-19 doesn't equal post-pandemics! I think that's already clear because we've effectively got a very frisky COVID-21!

What might the future of a pandemic-aware community look and feel like? What will change as a consequence of us dragging ourselves through this dark tunnel? How will our community and our lifestyle be different when we hit the light?

Maybe we won't hit the light but just adapt to the dark; actually, that is what we have been doing, with a high degree of inventiveness.

Personal safety

Before 2020 I can remember being puzzled when I saw people (often from Asian countries) wearing masks – particularly around the city. "How paranoid is that?" I thought. How little I knew. While many Asian countries had battled with the SARS virus in 2003, and had learnt the importance of protecting themselves, like me, most Australians had remained blissfully unaware. Fast forward to 2021, maybe COVID has taught us something, i.e. in certain circumstances we need to protect ourselves from others by barriers or distance. That's really quite sad, we are such social beings, and hanker after closeness and connection; even greetings feel cold and restrained – no hands now, just elbows. Yes, we are adapting, but we're understandably a bit grumpy about it.

Transport

The need to protect and stay safe is especially relevant to our transport choices. We all have to travel at times and the safest option (from infection) is by car, but if we all move by car, nobody moves! We need to explore options, and we are, it's a work in progress. It's hard not to notice how many electric scooters are zipping around, and how the construction or creation of bike lanes has accelerated since COVID. Those who still use public transport are literally breathing more easily with a welcome relief from congestion.

Work

Does your work have a WFH (work from home) option? How flexible is your boss? How secure will your employment be when (not if) we grapple with further pandemics? There are so many variables, but at this point it's clear that certain communities (witness Western Sydney or Melbourne) are being more severely impacted. The service sector and the lower-paid casual workers bear the greatest burden under pandemic restrictions.

In a pandemic the interconnection between all communal elements is so clear, which means that a shift in variables affecting one element can radically change the outcome in the others. Just one simple example: your boss's flexibility to allow you to start later, means that you feel safer catching public transport and don't feel the need to use your car. Perhaps this interconnection is a very important lesson from our COVID-19 experience.

Families and education

Parents have been hit by the very real challenge of LFH (learning from home). The impact of COVID has especially amplified the divide between the resourced and those less resourced; the digital divide has been acute. In Kensington the Kensington Neighbourhood House and the Venny have done great work trying to close the gap through providing pads, computers and phones, but this cannot be more than a "band-aid". The "space" divide has also been critical. Imagine trying to juggle a number of school-age children in a small apartment, with each attempting to complete set tasks or communicate with their teachers.

Entertainment – business

Whether you are a footy fan, a film buff, a night-clubber, or a concert goer, COVID-19 has drastically affected your leisure time. We crave entertainment and, for many of us, our leisure time keeps us sane; loss of sanity equals a

mental health crisis! In the face of this we have become ingeniously adaptive – webinars; online streaming of sport, concerts and plays; conferences and choir rehearsals on Zoom. If that's the how consumers and participators have adapted, what about the providers? Whether it's bigger business such as concert promoters or the AFL, or smaller like a theatre or restaurant, they have severe economic challenges, even in relation to survival. Business failure impacts both owners (or providers) and consumers, and has a deadening or deflating effect on the whole community.

Community

Perhaps there are also upsides for community life from pandemics. On a personal level how many of us have got to appreciate (despite social distancing) the support and companionship of our neighbours during COVID? There have been businesses that have flourished in the suburbs while those in the CBD have struggled. All this as a consequence of the WFH and LFH effect. There's a community building possibility here. Less all-round travel could have the effect of amplifying a whole range of community activity, including the creation of more local work opportunities.

Yes, we have adapted, but must continue; our health, our sanity, and the quality of life in our community are at stake. Pandemics will be a recurrent shadow, along with the accompanying shadow of climate change.

What does the future hold?

The truth is that nobody really knows but reflecting on the above communal elements and some already established trends, there seem to be some sensible conclusions in relation to future adaptation.

Whether we are travelling, earning a living, entertaining or educating ourselves, the critical communal element in our post-COVID-19 world is **personal safety**. As I have said "we all have to travel at times", so safe and affordable public transport is a critical community requirement given that efficiency and environmental issues must be at the forefront of government policy. Among other things this will require ...

- Better masks and better compliance;
- Much more efficient ventilation systems in all forms of public transport; and
- A train/bus/tram system that is convenient and accessible to as many communities as possible.

In all workplaces, innovation must continue, particularly with respect to WFH and flexible time schedules, to minimise public transport congestion. On the family front, at some stage there will need to be business/government partnerships to bridge the digital divide. Good access to technology needs to become a human right for educational purposes, because learning places (like workplaces) must become more flexible.

The future for local communities is fascinating to reflect on. If there is a trend for people to be more confined and connected to activities in their communities (whether by choice or necessity) then that is a healthy trend; it has been said that "it takes a village [not a city] to raise a child". Whether or not a community-focused trend grows remains to be seen.

What has become bleedinly obvious during the COVID-19 crisis is that the capitalist "leave it to market forces" trope is no longer sufficient – if it ever was. Continued adaptation will require productive and creative partnerships between governments and business. These partnerships will require the discarding of some myths about government, and a willingness for business to look further than profit and returns to shareholders, towards a deeper community mindedness ●



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KENSINGTON NEIGHBOURHOOD HOUSE



Building a community? It’s child’s play

It’s never too early to start meeting your neighbours and making friends, something Jimmy and Indie (pictured) understand well.

These two friends have known each other from birth and now attend the Kensington Morning Childcare Program together. They can often be heard chatting and laughing as they arrive and depart – their parents taking the chance to “pram pool” and share drop-offs and pick-ups. This type of community connection is a regular part of Kensington Neighbourhood House life. “It’s wonderful seeing people of all different ages crossing paths here,” KNH community development specialist Esther Sadek said. “On Wednesdays, our Seniors Lunch and Bingo participants love chatting to the morning childcare children as they depart. On other days, there are kids and parents dropping in to deliver donations to our Food Share Pantry or deposit bottle lids for recycling. After school, older children come in for art classes or Code Club and their parents or grandparents gather outside for a chat. These are all really important ways to lessen social isolation.” In these times of circuit breaker lockdowns, making and maintaining social connections close to home is even more important than usual. This applies to children just as much as adults. Even the youngest children are able to pick up on the emotions of the grown-ups in

their lives. Attending something like the KNH Morning Childcare Program gives children a chance to relax, play, and make friends, while their carers have a much-needed break or get a few hours’ work done. It also provides routine and predictability for little people in uncertain times. Even during lockdowns, childcare keeps on going! In a departure from the mainstream, our Morning Childcare Program caters to children across a range of developmental stages rather than segregating by age. This means that children from 18 months old to four years are able to play and learn together – providing a beautiful homely feel to the program. Our youngest children are intrigued and entertained by the older children, while the older kids love demonstrating their skills and “looking after” their younger friends. Another difference is the “inside/outside” nature of the program. Rather than be restricted to set activities at set times, children are able to make their own choices and lead their own play – moving from indoor spaces to our beautiful backyard when they feel the need for some fresh air or sand between their fingers! Allowing this autonomy helps children develop confidence and builds their sense of wellbeing. Lead educator Carole Wigglesworth explained, “We run a child-led program, and that means letting children choose their favourite spaces. Some children love being outside and will stay there the whole session, others prefer the home corner or creative activities. Giving children choices helps them to feel safe and comfortable, and that’s really important to us.” We all want to feel safe and comfortable in



our community. Thank goodness for the amazing work happening at neighbourhood houses right across our city! If your small person would like to join the Kensington Neighbourhood House community, we have spaces available in our Morning Childcare Program. Commonwealth Child Care Subsidy applies. Call 9376 6366 or visit kensingtonneighbourhoodhouse.com for more details ●

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

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ENVIRONMENT

The value of human manure – closing the loop

The topic of our own manure can sometimes be challenging, as it seems a difficult and uncomfortable subject to talk about.

We prefer to flush it away with water down the “pipes” to be managed by someone else usually treating it with chemicals and/or dumping it into a body of water (seas, rivers), usually one that is as far away as possible from the toilet in question. The average Australian household would save 35,000 litres of water per year by switching to a composting toilet.

The inefficiency of water-based sewerage as a solution for taking away human manure has been well explored – there is better usage for our fresh water supplies.

We can harvest it rather than flushing

Joseph Jenkins who wrote the book *The Humanure Handbook* in 1999 coined the term “humanure” to describe our bodily wastes and says we can treat our manure in a number of ways – as waste and flush it away or we can remember its role in the nutrient cycle and harvest it and recycle the nutrients. Human urine and faecal matter are a rich source of essential plant nutrients. By returning the digested nutrients (from the food we have eaten, etc.) back to the soil provides replenishment and regeneration. Importantly our human manure contains a high phosphorus content for which there is a finite and dwindling supply of phosphate rock as an agricultural product. The extraction of phosphate rock is not only a very toxic and energy intensive process but it’s also a non-renewable resource that’s predicted to reach peak supply in 2033. After that the price of phosphorus will increase significantly, bringing the price of food up with it. By applying appropriately treated human manure to soil we can save water, regenerate our depleted soils and diminish the need for mining of a scarce resource and close the loop



on our human nutrient cycle. Historically, human excreta “night soils” were collected from towns and village and spread in raw or composted form on fields in the surrounding farmland. This has been practiced up until recently in places like Asia and India. However, human manure has found to contain pathogens, which can spread diseases if not treated in an effective way. Slow composting eliminates most disease organisms in a matter of months, and should eliminate all human pathogens eventually. Thermophilic composting is the only composting method than can kill all human pathogens and parasites that can exist in human excrement. Thermophilic composting creates heat-loving microorganisms by creating a high-temperature environment to ensure the destruction of all disease-causing organisms. Originally commercialised in Sweden, composting toilets have been an established technology for more than 30 years. In Australia we are adopting the use of water-less or composting toilets with states, councils and festivals providing these facilities. There are long drop toilets in NSW, SA and Victoria along roadsides, in beach-side car parks and nature reserves. The famous Glastonbury Festival has more than 1300 compost loos on site. Closer to home in 2014 Splendour in the Grass festival held



near Byron Bay in northern New South Wales installed 258 dry composting toilets from re-purposed shipping containers. In 2019 at the Kensington Community Festival as part of the Sustainability Expo, organisers asked Natural Event to provide compost loos to encourage “city folk” to start thinking about the waste they were generating, not only plastic and food scraps but their own manure. There are a number of home composting loos on the market. The most simple and basic compost loo for the home is the Loveable Loo, which was designed by Joseph Jenkins and is selling for around \$400 to \$550. It is an all-rounder composting toilet suitable for outdoor and indoor household use – no water, electricity, venting, plumbing or chemicals are required and it is totally odour free when properly managed.

▼ Here is a short film on how it works.



If you have the space, building your own compost toilet can be relatively easy and cost efficient. Owner-built designs are usually cheaper to install and have been used widely for many years. For more information about the type of home composting toilets available visit waterwally.com.au Each council has its own regulations and guidelines for at-home compost toilets. Check with your local council and/or the supplier to confirm the design has approval in your area. Common off-the-shelf units have state health department approval. Apart from the huge amount of nutrient wealth we could be adding to the soil if we composted our manure, apparently there are potentially millions of dollars’ worth of precious metals being flushed away each year, which could be recovered. One sewage facility in Tokyo was reported to have recovered a higher yield of gold from human faeces than the world’s top gold mines! ●

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TRADER PROFILE

North Melbourne’s new Mauritian wine bar keeps locals local

WORDS BY *Spencer Fowler Steen*

Nagesh Seethiah simply loves North Melbourne. So much so that when he noticed an exodus of locals “Ubering” out to suburbs such as Collingwood and Carlton for casual fine dining, he decided to take a stand.

That’s why he’s opening Melbourne’s first contemporary Mauritian wine bar, Manze Melbourne, right in the heart of Errol St with business partners, Jason Phu and Osman Faruqi, in a bid to keep locals local.

Mr Seethiah said it would be a “casual vibe”, where diners could walk in for a wine, and ease into a delicious dinner inspired by tropical flavours leaning towards South Indian and African influences.

“It’ll be like you’re walking into our living room, we’ll be bringing food out to tables and chatting to guests,” he said.

“I feel like everyone really enjoys eating in their own suburbs, so we want to get to know everyone who comes in.”

The restaurant will sit 25 inside, and 15 outside, with an open kitchen and hopefully a charcoal barbecue.

The menu will feature an abundance of seafood and vegetarian dishes with just the right amount of complementary meat meals.

As an “easy lunch option”, Mr Seethiah said there would most likely be a set menu featuring

vegetable- or fish-based biriyani, pickled vegetables, fresh fruit, and homemade yoghurt.

But the dish Mr Seethiah is positively jumping out of his skin to introduce to North Melbourne’s collective palate, is his grilled fish with tamarind and curry sauce.

“It’s based on a fish curry my mum and dad would make after we’d go fishing – it’s really fragrant!” he said.

“Even now when I see Mum and Dad in Mauritius it’s a go to.”

A chef by trade, Mr Seethiah has recently turned his hand to carpentry with Mr Phu and Mr Faruqi to renovate the beautiful, old building which will be the site of Manze Melbourne in Errol St.

It’s a skill, like cooking, which was also inspired by his parents.

But while his father may have taught him to know his way around the tool-shed, COVID still managed to throw an unexpected spanner in the works.

“I didn’t really give COVID-shortages as much credit as they deserved,” Mr Seethiah said.

“It’s sort of a black market for timber at the moment.”

With a few promising leads on Facebook marketplace, Mr Seethiah said a fruitful trip to Bunnings saved the day, securing just enough timber to build the walls.

“It was dicey for a few weeks,” he said.

Despite the setbacks, Mr Seethiah has seized



on the opportunity to lend a hand to the North Melbourne community he’s been thrilled to be a part of since moving four years ago.

“I really love North Melbourne and how you can see the same people every day,” he said.

“It’s real country living here.”

“But sometimes it’s a bit lacking, we know people who Uber to Collingwood or Carlton for fine dining or a drink.”

During previous lockdowns, Mr Seethiah cooked up big batches of soup to distribute to locals in need, using the North Melbourne Good Karma Facebook group as a platform.

It’s this love for food and the local community which has inspired him, along with Mr Faruqi

and Mr Phu, to bring the vibrant flavours of Mauritania to North Melbourne.

Mr Seethiah said Manze Melbourne, which was a continuation of their pop-up food trucks which have been such a hit around Melbourne, would be open in early September provided all went well.

Shop 2, 1-5 Errol St.

For more information:
Instagram: @manze_melbourne

SATELLITE FOUNDATION

Talking with children about their parent’s mental health



Parents often worry that talking openly with their children about mental illness will make things worse. However, when supported to have these conversations and offered accurate information, the opposite is true.

Rose Cuff, executive director of Satellite Foundation offers some ideas on how parents, carers, and family members can discuss mental illness or mental health challenges with their children.

Parenting, mental health and shame

All parents struggle in their parenting role at some point. Life throws up big challenges and can test parents, their relationships inside and outside the family, and their life goals. Experiencing mental health challenges is often accompanied by feelings of shame, judgement, blame and fear. This can be amplified as a parent and assumptions can be made that you will automatically not be a “good enough” parent.

Why discuss mental health with children?

All parents will come across issues that are challenging to talk about with children. Many

issues that used to be taboo such as sex, death, and substance use are more openly discussed and therefore less confusing. However, mental health and in particular mental ill-health are still poorly understood by most. Combined with the stigma of mental illness, this can prevent people from talking about it and asking for help when it might be needed most.

Children’s understanding

Children worry less about something if they understand it. Providing children with opportunities to talk with their parent(s) or other trusted adults about times parents struggle or are unwell, may help reduce their worries. Children often express great relief at knowing that their parent is safe and receiving help, and to know that it is not their fault.

Some key messages for children:

- You are not the cause of your parent’s mental health challenges.
- It is not your job to fix things.
- You are loved, strong, and cared about.
- Your parent will have ups and downs like any person.
- All your feelings are okay! It’s important to find ways to express them—through talking, sport, music, art, drama, writing, play.
- You will not automatically have the same mental health challenges as your parent.

Setting up and preparing for conversations

If children ask questions about their parent’s mental health, this usually means they want answers and offers a good window of opportunity.

- Choose a space and time that is comfortable for everyone involved.
- Involve family members wherever possible.
- Be realistic about what can be achieved.
- Check out with children what they think and already know.
- Reassure (children may feel awkward when



talking about these kinds of things).

- Listen carefully! Don’t try to “interpret” what they are asking.
- Ask “open” questions, encourage children to put things in their own words.
- Be yourself.
- Be honest.
- Have ready some paper, coloured pencils, modelling clay or playdough, art or craft materials.

Using examples and checking-in

Talking to children about mental health using a well-recognised analogy such as the weather can be helpful; the weather is often unpredictable and is something we can’t control. But we can decide how we want to feel about it. While living with and around someone who experiences mental health challenges can sometimes feel like being in a wild storm, it can also be as varied as the colours of a rainbow (after the storm!). Keep checking in to make sure the child understands what you are saying, and that you have heard them correctly.

Above all, remember you are the expert in your child’s life and know them best. Take time for yourself, think about self-care and self-compassion as integral parts of your life, and celebrate your role as a parent in all its complexities.

Satellite Foundation is a not-for-profit based in Victoria St that connects and empowers children and young people where a parent, carer or family member has a mental illness or experiences challenges to their mental health and wellbeing.



Satellite has two upcoming online programs which are currently open for registration:

Satellite Connect Youth is a fun, program for young people aged 14 to 17 years. Over the course of six weeks, participants will have the opportunity to make new friends, and share their stories with others who may share similar experiences. Participants attend one workshop each week. **Dates:** Wednesday, October 13 to Wednesday, November 17 from 4.30pm – 6.00pm.

At Home with Satellite is a fun-filled program where children and young people aged 8 to 14 years old (approx.) can let their imaginations run wild and make new friends at the same time. Participants receive an activity-based package in the (snail) mail filled with items that they can use to create and share magical stories in the Zoom room. Workshops may involve music, songwriting, photography, storytelling, and craft. **Dates:** The next “At Home” workshop is a two-part series that takes place on Monday, September 20 and Monday, September 27 from 10am to 11am (for ages 8 to 11 years approx.) and 1pm to 2pm (for ages around 12 to 14 years).

All programs are free ●

For more information and to register visit:
satellitefoundation.org.au

What's On: August 2021

Community Calendar (please check current covid restrictions)

The Winter Village

FEDERATION SQUARE SKYLINE TERRACE
RUSSELL ST EXTENSION
MAY 13 TO AUGUST 29

All day, seven days a week
This magical winter wonderland is a must-visit destination that's perfect for the whole family.



Animals at Home: Live Stream Melbourne Zoo

ONLINE, FREE
ALL DAY, AUGUST 11 TO SEPTEMBER 6

While Melbourne Zoo is currently closed to visitors, animal lovers can still connect with their favourites via the Zoo's 'Animals at Home' live stream page.

Comedy Upstairs at Bobbie Peels

BOBBIE PEELS
351 QUEENSBERRY ST, NORTH MELBOURNE
EVERY SATURDAY UNTIL AUGUST 21, 6 TO 8PM, FREE

See Melbourne's best comedians perform each Saturday, taking risks and having fun.

Language Factory Exhibition Dulux Gallery

GLYN DAVIS BUILDING, UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE, PARKVILLE
JULY 24 TO SEPTEMBER 9, 10AM TO 4PM, FREE

Melbourne-based artist Alex Selenitsch connects poetry and architecture in an exhibition of drawings and word-works.

PassionPOP - Kylie & Dani Minogue

Fringe Common Rooms

Saturday, August 28. 9pm.

There'll be Video Hits-worthy, iconic pop choreography to have you spinning around (move out of my way...), and the party kicks on 'til late spinning hit after hit.



Frenchy Fed Free Workshops

FEDERATION SQUARE
AUGUST 23 TO SEPTEMBER 4

Fed Square is celebrating all things French this winter, with the arrival of The Knot – a large-scale immersive artwork by French artist Cyril Lancelin.



Parkville Tennis Club

151 ROYAL PARADE
PARKVILLE 3052
MONDAY – SUNDAY, 6AM – 11PM
BOOKINGS: 0412 279 156

Play tennis on synthetic clay courts, day and night. Free social tennis events are also on each month. Check covid restrictions.

Neighbourhood afternoon tea

KENSINGTON NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRE, 18 ANTHONY ST
FRIDAY, AUGUST 27, 2.30PM TO 3.30PM (LAST FRIDAY OF THE MONTH, FREE

Connect with others from your community for a cup of tea or coffee and a light afternoon tea.



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



La Tortilleria

72 STUBBS ST
KENSINGTON

La Tortilleria is a casual dining space serving up quality Mexican on their house-made tortillas using centuries-old methods established by the Aztecs. Try your hand at cooking for yourself.

Business Directory

Association

North & West Melbourne Precinct Association

w: northwestmelbourne.com.au
e: northwestmelbourneprecinct@gmail.com

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