

NORTH WEST CITY NEWS

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Puzzles & Trivia P22



Helping Afghan arrivals

Photo by John Tadigiri

For Amelia Tauoqooqo, a Cohealth nurse on the COVID-19 frontline, the call to assist Afghan refugees has been heartbreaking but concedes “you’ll never find a more pragmatic, resilient group of people”. *Full story on page 9.*

Residents weigh in on Shiel St housing plans

WORDS BY *Spencer Fowler Steen*
PLANNING

North Melbourne residents have voiced their concerns over a proposed community housing block in Shiel St which will be exempt from normal planning requirements as part of the Victorian Government’s “Big Housing Build” blitz.

Many locals who will be affected by the nine-storey, 77-unit block at 3-15 Shiel St nearly missed out on a vital government-hosted information session about the proposal after only receiving invitation letters on the day of the presentation.

The presentation outlined the last chance residents will have to submit feedback before Ministerial approval in November.

With construction mooted for the middle of 2023, the

community housing units will be delivered by independent, not-for-profit housing provider Housing Choices Australia (HCA) and will provide affordable rental homes at 75 per cent or less than the market value for people on low incomes.

But instead of being assessed under the normal planning requirements, the community housing units will be subject to final approval by the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP), meaning it is not assessed under the mixed-use zone and overlay requirements, according to urban planner Andrew Thornton.

Mr Thornton, who represented town planners Tract at the September 30 meeting, said under Clause 52.20 of the Melbourne Planning Scheme under which the project will be assessed, there was no opportunity to appeal the final decision at VCAT.

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“As big as it gets”: City of Melbourne clashes with State Government over Arden Precinct

Bulky buildings, a lack of affordable housing and no way to achieve zero emissions are just some of the grievances the City of Melbourne (CoM) has flagged with the Victorian Government’s final Arden Structure Plan as it stands.

WORDS BY *Spencer Fowler Steen*
PLANNING

In a major submission endorsed at the Future Melbourne Committee Meeting on October 5, the council slammed the Victorian Planning Authority’s (VPA) recently released Arden Structure Plan with one councillor labelling it as “misleading at best, and deceitful at worst”.

The council’s submission highlights a stark disconnect between the three key stakeholders set to deliver the Arden Precinct to the North Melbourne-Macaulay region, which is expected to accommodate 15,000 residents and 34,000 workers by 2050.

Speaking at the meeting, Cr Rohan Leppert said the CoM, the VPA and the Department of Transport (DoT) were still “miles apart” and raised concerns that the proposed discretionary floor area ratios would create bulky buildings that would negatively impact sustainability, heritage, walkability and transport.

“The final version of the structure plan and illustrations that are the basis for the community consultation are misleading at best, and deceitful at worst and we need to fix that,” he said.

“The planning controls absolutely need to be fixed or we won’t end up with a precinct that is environmentally sustainable in its design.”

The VPA considered submissions from the council and the community before finalising the Arden planning

package, but due to a number of matters remaining unresolved, the council has released the plan in “consultation with” the VPA rather than “in partnership”.

However, there has been confirmation from within the DoT, which is the client for the Arden Precinct, that affordable housing in Arden will exceed 10 per cent despite the current six per cent target.

On October 1, the council’s Deputy CEO Alison Leighton received a letter from the DoT deputy secretary, policy, precincts and innovation, Natalie Reiter.

The letter expressed that, while subject to confirmation within government, a greater proportion of affordable housing within Arden Central was being pursued and was expected to exceed 10 per cent of all housing on government land.

Deputy Lord Mayor Nicholas Reece also welcomed a commitment in the letter from the DoT to look at state government funding to cover a shortfall of around \$47 million identified in the Arden Development Contributions Plan (DCP).

Cr Reece said the council fully supported the provision of new open space in the Arden plan, the “terrific” strategies to green the public realm, the transport network, and the zero emissions by 2040 target.

“This is big. This as big as it gets in urban planning. This is a truly city-shaping proposal that is before us this evening,” Cr Reece said.

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Passionate about travel

WORDS BY Rhonda Dredge
COMMUNITY

It could take a while before the pleasure of overseas travel beats the uncertainties of permits, vaccination passports, quarantine, bubbles and ticking complications but don't give up.

Local travel agent Andrew Allen has taken a punt himself and booked a ticket to London on Emirates for December 6.

He'll be back on December 22 on Qantas, the round trip costing him \$2800 but it was worth it.

North Melbourne's convivial travel agent is going home at long last to see his parents, both in their 90s and survivors of the pandemic.

"They're in hood health," he said. "They've stayed indoors. Next week they're going in for boosters for the winter."

As the travel industry moves into recovery mode, those in the know are still doing their sums.

Some 20 per cent of the \$10 billion owed by foreign airlines to Australian travellers still hasn't been returned and there is currently just one carrier with availability on return flights, namely Qantas.

Andy, as he is known to his local customers, has been forced to trade from his home in Taylors Lakes, with just a small notice on his former Queensberry St office reminding his clients that he still exists.

In a bizarre twist of fate, Hello World did a deal with the government so that Andy and his colleague found themselves working four days a week in a COVID call centre giving people advice on vaccines and how to get permits to go interstate.

That makes Andy the go-to man for travel, both internal and external. He was forced to pay top dollar for his own fare back to the UK because he had to buy two one-way tickets.

Andy has worked in North Melbourne for 24 years and has plenty of clients, but he still hasn't



▲ Local travel agent Andy Allen working from his home in Taylors Lakes.

“

As soon as Morrison makes an announcement, I'll make the bookings.

”

made one single leisure booking for them, even though Qantas has announced it will be flying out of Melbourne on December 18.

He's advised travellers to start planning but not to book yet. "You still need a permit to leave Australia," he said.

He predicts that there'll be more certainty by the end of October. "I've put my clients on a list. As soon as Morrison makes an announcement,

I'll make the bookings."

Corporate clients and VFR (visiting friends and relatives) travellers will be first off the rank, he predicts, even though there is nothing actually stopping holidaymakers from making a booking now.

A Qantas fare to London in mid-March, returning a month later, costs \$1816, with no financial risk because all current fares are governed by a COVID code and can be changed at a cost of \$25.

There is no denying that potential travellers are both wary and weary. They've had too many local holidays cancelled at the last minute and some have been forced to use all their annual leave when stood down.

"People are nervous but they're planning," Andy said. He predicts that holidaymakers will be heading to Bali and Fiji in early '22 with the long-haul traveller not until '23.

He said he'll be returning to set up his office in the second half of '22 and expects a boom in business "when people realise the value of [agents doing] all the admin of travel." ●



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Residents weigh in on Shiel St housing plans

Continued from page 1.

Shiel St resident Kaye Oddie said it was “extremely worrying” that planning requirements for the site regarding setbacks that respect the low-rise, heritage built form of the opposite side of Shiel St, would be ignored.

“The five-storey street wall is not what is appropriate for Shiel St I think,” she said.

“Please respect the planning scheme – you can’t just bulldoze these developments in. I respect the need for social housing, but I think you could do a better design that doesn’t bulldoze the planning requirements.”

Under current plans, the front facade will be the same height as the five-storey building at 1 Shiel St despite planning controls stipulating a three-storey maximum. Eight storeys will rise behind a decreased setback of six metres, exacerbating the “in-your-face” impact of the building, Ms Oddie said.

At the meeting, locals voiced their concerns over the proposed setbacks, brick facade, safety around vehicle access, soil contamination and lack of community consultation.

Residents also fear the project will be a reversion back to the “bulk and scale” of the ‘60s, which many locals fought against in other nearby developments.

“Local residents fought for years to achieve planning controls that would see developments on the southern side of Shiel St respect the existing low-scale residences and neighbourhood character of the northern side,” Ms Oddie said.

One local also flagged concerns that the building would breach the newly proposed C728 Amendment to the Planning Scheme prohibiting overshadowing of parks by casting a shadow over Gardener Reserve – something he said was not accounted for in the architectural drawings.

But in response, the City of Melbourne Deputy Lord Mayor Nicholas Reece, who also owns a property in nearby Dryburgh St, said the amendment had not yet been gazetted and that the building’s design was “terrific”.

“I want to say some positive things about it. The previous application was for over 90 apartments – it looked like a disco ball with a tropical rainforest draped over it – it was an investor project,” he said.

“This is different, it’s community housing.



▲ Many local North Melbourne residents are concerned about the proposed design for community housing in Shiel St.

We [the City of Melbourne] are delighted to partner with Housing Choices Australia. I think this building looks terrific in terms of design.”

In response to a question from a nearby resident about how much thought had been given to the location of the proposal, Tract Consultant senior principal town planner Luke Chamberlin said there were “strategic locational advantages”.

Mr Chamberlin said the community housing would be situated 200 metres from the route 57 tram, 850 metres from Macaulay Station and 610 metres from North Melbourne Primary School.

Clare Cousins Architects director Clare Cousins said there were views across North Melbourne, Royal Park and Melbourne Zoo, with two large, open-air spaces and three communal gardens.

In response to a question from Ms Oddie about who would be preparing and managing the construction plan, HCA general manager of property and assets James Henry said HCA would be taking out a tender for building and providing oversight over construction.

Mr Henry also said an auditor had been appointed to oversee the remediation of the site, with initial ground water testing carried out earlier this year after another local at the meeting raised the issue of possible site contamination.

However, he said he was not certain whether the remediation plan would be available for the public to see.

After apologising to residents at the meeting who only received an invitation to the September meeting on the day, Tract principal urban designer Carley Wright sent an email to locals extending the deadline for feedback from October 11 to October 17.

After that, there will be no more opportunities for community feedback before the final determination of the application by the Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change in November 2021 ●

Submissions by 5pm, Oct 17:
shielstreet.info

Black panther of North Melbourne rescued

WORDS BY *Katie Johnson*
COMMUNITY

North Melbourne cat Diablo – or the “black panther of Plane Tree Way” as local kids call him – found himself in a predicament when he went for a wander in early October.

The four-year-old rescue cat was missing for six days before he was rescued by firemen from a storm water drain on Haines St.

Owner Sarah White said that she and her nine-year-old son were “very relieved” when they found him after days of searching.

“We decided to go out for a walk late, because my son was keen to go for another walk to find him,” Ms White said.

“We shook his food bag and called his name and all of a sudden heard this frantic meowing.”



“We followed the sounds and using the torch looked down and found him trapped in the stormwater drain.”

Ms White dropped food down the drain to keep Diablo calm and attempted to move the grate to no avail.

With the late-hour animal management services no longer open, she called 000.

“The operator said to me that he could hear



that the cat and the child were very distressed, so he sent the fire rescue out,” Ms White said.

“The fire rescue guys were absolutely terrific; they used a ladder and Diablo was remarkably calm because he must have known they were trying to help.”

“He was very muddy but quite content to be wrapped up in a blanket and be taken home.”

Ms White said that while Diablo was lost,

the encouragement from locals in the North Melbourne Good Karma Network Facebook page was priceless.

“I was out each night until midnight or 1am calling for him at the Arden Street Oval and all over North Melbourne,” Ms White said. “Since he wanders around during the day, a lot of people know him, so I posted him on Facebook.”

“The words of encouragement from the Karma Network were really helpful – lots of people kept their eyes peeled and gave advice.”

Although he lost almost one kilogram from the ordeal, Diablo is happy to be home and is inseparable from the family.

“Diablo has stayed very close, and it has been quite difficult to sleep with the cat almost draped over my chest,” Ms White said.

“He’s very happy to be home and has been giving lots of love bites.” ●



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“As big as it gets”: City of Melbourne clashes with State Government over Arden Precinct

Continued from page 1.

However, he said since earlier versions of the structure plan, the developable area in Arden had decreased due to issues with soil around Arden Station and expansion of green space related to water catchment areas.

According to the council’s submission, the loss in developable land combined with the same gross floor area across the precinct has led to sky-rocketing density which will result in poor amenity outcomes.

In response to questions from *North West City News*, VPA CEO Stuart Moseley said its plan set a range of controls, including height limits, density and scale transitions which operated together to ensure “high design quality”.

“Building controls including height limits and built form are carefully managed to avoid overshadowing of public open spaces and sustainability is embedded into every element of the Arden Structure Plan,” he said.

North West City News understands that the provision of social, affordable and key worker housing is set to exceed 10 per cent, and that the DCP has not yet been finalised. The State Government is still considering how to cover the \$47 million shortfall.

A DoT spokesperson confirmed that further details about the precinct, including social, affordable and key worker housing would be finalised at a later stage.

“We are working to create more opportunities for affordable housing within Arden,” the spokesperson said.

The DoT along with the VPA, will review public submissions and identify where and how the plans should be refined in light of community input.

Final Arden plan “exacerbates” community concerns

In July and August 2020, the draft Arden Structure Plan was released for community engagement.

According to the council’s submission, key feedback included “overwhelming” support for higher than six per cent affordable housing in Arden, concerns over the proposed building heights and the importance of development that complements the heritage surrounds.

However, the VPA’s most recent Arden plan varies “significantly” from the draft sent out for feedback, and “exacerbates” rather than addresses the concerns raised by the community without providing sufficient justification, the council stated.

“For example, the permitted densities and building heights have increased rather than been moderated,” the submission read.

According to the council, the community remains concerned about outstanding issues such as excessive density and scale, associated impacts on wind and overshadowing, promoting indigenous biodiversity and a greater focus on Moonee Ponds Creek.

The need for more local schools, insufficient affordable housing and maintaining local character and heritage were other issues raised through community engagement with the CoM.

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



▲ Artist impressions of the Arden Precinct showing the proposed landscape.

(NWMA) Kevin Chamberlin said the concept of the underground railway and the development of the area was “good”.

“However, the current Arden Precinct project needs a lot more work, and the [state] government needs to engage directly with the community to ensure we get a sustainable outcome,” he said.

“A lot more work is required on built form, the lack of open space, the lack of affordable, social and public housing, to name just a few.”

“The community is keen to work with the government to fix this. A reincarnation of the Docklands in North Melbourne is not a good outcome.”

“For example, the concept of a 60-storey building on the banks of the Moonee Ponds Creek is a bit of surprise. Hardly a waterfront allotment. We’re dealing with an area that needs to respect the built form of North and West Melbourne and Kensington, not trying to stick to Docklands thinking for the area.”

Kensington Association chair Simon Harvey said the association supported the way that the Arden plan opened up public transport options, and how connections through the precinct would be facilitated.

However, he said it was “totally unacceptable” that affordable housing was expressed as “aims” or “recommendations” rather than “requirements”.

“

A lot more work is required on built form, the lack of open space, the lack of affordable, social and public housing, to name just a few.

”

“The same applies to the lack of a firm provision for new public housing,” he said.

“While there is recognition that a secondary school will be required into the future, there appears to be no detailed planning about where that might be located.”

“In our view, because of the arbitrary setting of the Floor Area Ratio, which had the potential to put limits on developer profit expectations and guard against bulky CBD

type development, it has been transformed from a ‘tool’ to help foster liveability into a ‘trick’ to preserve profits for developers.”

Mr Harvey also said one of the “biggest disappointments” was the “failure” of the VPA to include any details of planning developments along Moonee Ponds Creek for which it was responsible – an omission he said was “inexcusable”.

The council also contends that the ambitious 15,000 resident and 34,000 worker population targets evolved from a population estimate to an “aspiration”, to a delivery target that is being prioritised by the VPA at the expense of important policy objectives for Arden.

In addition, the CoM rejects the VPA’s built form analysis for Arden as the justification for the built controls which set higher density limits than previous plans.

“The VPA Built Form Analysis recommends greater densities and building heights than were contemplated by detailed built form testing reports,” the council’s submission reads.

While the CoM is broadly supportive of the strategies in the revised plan to recognise the Aboriginal cultural heritage and values in the area, the council raised concerns that it still does not incorporate sufficient feedback from Traditional Owner groups.

In terms of sustainability, the CoM believes the VPA’s plan does not deliver the Arden vision, which states Arden’s sustainability should “demonstrate best practice standards”, “be at the forefront of sustainable development” and “set new standards for urban renewal”.

“The environmentally sustainable design for Arden and zero emissions by 2040 and all of the things the structure plan says is mandatory are great, but the planning controls don’t make those things mandatory at all,” Cr Leppert said.

Lord Mayor Sally Capp said one of the main aspects about Melbourne which differentiated it from other cities around the world was its proximity to two urban renewal precincts in Fishermans Bend and Arden.

“We have a chance to deliver something really special that can drive our revitalisation, and we need to take the care to ensure we do it well. We want a bold and ambitious plan for Arden,” Cr Capp said.

“It’s reflected in the submission put together by our team. A plan that is robust, in an economic, social, and environmental sense and really sets benchmarks on key issues where our community have told us over and over again, they want to see a dedication to progress on issues like affordable housing.”

Community consultation closed on October 11. The VPA will now review submissions before consideration by the Minister for Planning before finalisation in the second quarter of 2022 ●



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Toy library finds new, larger home

WORDS BY *Matt Harvey*
COMMUNITY

A new 100sqm toy library has set up in North Melbourne thanks to support from the City of Melbourne after the previous site in Kensington closed, helping one thrifty local save \$10,000.

The toy library was relocated to the Hotham Hub Children's Centre in early October due to the previous toy library site, the Kensington Community Recreation Centre, recently closing for redevelopment.

Community Toy Library (CTL) president Emily Corcoran said she was "very grateful" for the assistance from the council.

"Because there's no space in Kensington to put a toy library, the council has very generously given us this incredible space in North Melbourne," Ms Corcoran said.

The toy library is a space for parents to borrow toys for their children for a two-week period allowing low income families and families with small storage space to have a variety of toys accessible to their children.

Toys are currently aimed at children aged from birth to six or seven years old, but the CTL is aiming to expand its range of board games for older children and adults as well.

There are currently three toy library locations including Carlton, Docklands, and the new North Melbourne site.

Ms Corcoran said she also loved bringing her two children along to the toy library. "I live in a two-bedroom apartment, and one of the reasons I joined the toy library is because in a two-bedroom apartment, you have limited storage," she said.

"In the last five years I have borrowed



▲ Community Toy Library resident Emily Corcoran with her toddler, Rosalie and son Edwin, with Merinda Miles.

\$10,000 worth of toys, and so that's a whole lot of toys we haven't had to purchase, I haven't had to store, we've just been able to enjoy things and try things that otherwise wouldn't be available to us."

The CTL has "fallen off a bit of a funding cliff" as ongoing crises and evolving situations have seen the funding that the library usually is able to gain via grants go to other projects.

"We're currently not being funded at all by the CoM and we're in negotiations with them about what that might look like going forward," Ms Corcoran said.

Toy libraries are reliant on the generosity of the local community, with roughly 90 per cent of the toys in the library being donated, helping the library meet one of its major goals – reducing waste.

Ms Corcoran hopes that the negotiations with the council can find more stable support for the toy library.

"Realistically, \$100,000 would give us four amazing toy libraries, which in comparison to the cost of what we spend on fireworks or something, is a drop in the ocean for an incredible benefit year round for families," she said.

"Because there's no space in Kensington to put a toy library, the council has very generously given us this incredible space in North Melbourne."



CTL is looking to its local community and members for support as it opens its new location.

The organisation is offering discounts to new members and encouraging people who use the service to write to Lord Mayor Sally Capp to let her know about the difference the toy library has made to their lives.

"If people want to help, the best way to do that is to contact council, so the council knows the service is valued but if they want to donate or volunteer we'd appreciate that as well," Ms Corcoran said.

The toy library will be operating with click and collect services until COVID restrictions ease ●

Thieves steal car from cash-strapped hospitality worker

WORDS BY *Brendan Rees*
SAFETY & SECURITY

A Kensington man who has lost work due to COVID restrictions has been left reeling after his car was stolen and later found burnt out last month.

Will, who asked that his surname not be used, said he woke to find his car, a white 1988 Honda Civic, missing from the front of his home at the corner of Bateman Rd and The Crescent on September 19 despite it being locked and having a flat battery.

"I was so angry at the time; all I was thinking was pure anger. I just had to accept it was just gone because there was nothing that I could do," he said after reporting the incident to police.

"I was literally about to move it within a day or two into the carport, just bad timing really."

Fortunately, a vigilant neighbour who witnessed the incident about 7.15am from her window provided Will with CCTV which has been passed on to the police.

"I was asleep at the time. They've basically just got in ... they would've just jemmied the door or something and you can see them [on footage] push-starting it to actually get it going," Will said.

He said his car, which was worth around \$5000, was his pride and joy after he spent two years restoring it as a hobby, but because it was an older model it didn't have an alarm system and until recently had a flat battery.

After viewing the footage, Will said he was shocked to see a hooded bandit jump in his car while his associates used another car, which appeared to be Volkswagen Golf hatchback, to help bump-start it before both cars drove off in broad daylight.

"One of them is fully masked, he's got gloves on and everything. Another doesn't even care, he's smoking a cigarette," Will said.

About a week later after his car was stolen, Will said he got a call from police to say they had recovered it in a "burnt out shell" in Melton, and that the number plates had allegedly been used in another crime.

To make matters worse, Will, 30, said he hadn't insured it due to him being strapped for

"I was so angry at the time; all I was thinking was pure anger. I just had to accept it was just gone because there was nothing that I could do."

cash as his shifts in hospitality had been drastically reduced during repeated lockdowns.

"The restrictions mean when I have had work it's been a really reduced capacity to the point where I'm only getting a couple of shifts a week," he said.

"One shift a week or two shifts a week, you can't live on it. It's like \$150 to \$200; it's way less than Centrelink [payments]."

In the meantime, Will said he had luckily had another car, also a Honda Civic, to get around in, but conceded "I'm just really cautious about what I have now and locking up everything".

Police have been contacted for comment regarding the incident.

Meanwhile, in a separate incident, Melbourne Embona Taskforce detectives have released CCTV in the hope of identifying two men following an attempted aggravated carjacking and armed robbery in West Melbourne on August 28.

Police have been told a 36-year-old man was parked on Roden St with his baby in the back seat about 12.35pm when it's believed two men approached and opened the driver side and passenger side doors.

"The man on the driver's side brandished a knife and demanded the victim get out of the car," a police spokeswoman said.

"The victim told him his son was in the back seat and he stepped away."



▲ Kensington local Will was left reeling after his car was stolen last month. Luckily, he has a Honda Civic to get around in.



▲ CCTV footage of the car thieves.



▲ Police are searching for two men following an attempted carjacking and armed robbery in West Melbourne.

Crime Stoppers:
1800 333 000



▲ Michele Cardamoni, who runs Armicono Restaurant, is critical of strict patron limits.

Road map offers “glimmer of hope”, but traders fear strict limits will hamper business

WORDS BY *Brendan Rees*
BUSINESS

Melbourne Lord Mayor Sally Capp says Victoria’s road map out of lockdown offers “a glimmer of hope for traders” as pandemic restrictions are set to be eased by late October.

Pubs, restaurants, cafes and entertainment venues would be able to open to outdoor dining on October 26 with a limit of 50 fully vaccinated people when 70 per cent of the Victorians aged 16 and over are fully vaccinated against COVID-19.

Hairdressing would also return for the fully vaccinated with a maximum of five people in a salon at one time.

Cr Capp welcomed the news saying it “outlined the first few important steps towards reopening”, but added the council was “doing everything we can to get Victorians vaccinated as soon as possible so we can bring forward the steps in the road map”.

“We are determined to turn the city inside out by bringing indoor hospitality and trading outside onto our beautiful streets so that traders can welcome back more patrons and customers sooner,” she said.

Michele Cardamoni, who runs Armicono Restaurant in West Melbourne, said while it was “great to have an opening date”, the strict limits on patrons would mean he would only be able to seat 25 people outdoors which he labelled as “ridiculous”.

“We’re handicapped in the way that we can operate,” he said.

“The bureaucrats should actually sit down with people like me that know the mechanics of running a small business rather than come up with ludicrous alternatives to opening up.”

Similarly, Jodie Johnson, the owner of Hot Poppy Café in North Melbourne, said she was “pretty excited” to reopen to outdoor dining but feared strict capacity limits would hamper trading.

“We make more money in doing takeaway than we would opening up with the restrictive seating,” she said.

“It’s only for a couple of weeks, we hope. We just have to suck it up basically.”

Ash Benson, owner of Local Folk in Kensington and the Kensington Food Hall, said he was relieved to have some rough dates to work towards after having to pivot his business model.

“It’s exciting ... it’s almost like opening a new restaurant again. There’s a few teething problems, it’s going to be interesting,” he said.

Mr Benson added that both businesses were based on a “pretty substantial takeaway service” and had dropped their prices “on everything to support the community a bit and just get through”.

Meanwhile, the Lord Mayor said the council would “look forward to more information regarding the reopening steps beyond December”.

“This will be integral for businesses going forward so they can look forward to operating more normally,” she said.

Once Victoria reaches its 80 per cent double-dose target, which is predicted to be around November 5, retail and beauty services can reopen for the fully vaccinated, and hospitality can resume indoors for up to 150 people.

Last month, City of Melbourne councillors voted unanimously in support of introducing a “health pass” system to safely reopen hospitality, arts and entertainment venues sooner.

And in early October, councillors endorsed a proposed City Activation Grants program to support the activation of retail, hospitality and entertainment precincts across the municipality.

It comes as a joint-funded package of grants from the Commonwealth and Victorian Governments announced on September 30 would also support thousands of businesses until Victoria reopened.

Victorian Chamber of Commerce and Industry chief executive Paul Guerra said, “financial support is crucial, but the best support we can give business is the ability to trade”.

“We want to get back to doing what we do best, which is serving customers and servicing the community,” he said ●

Council sends statement on violence against women

WORDS BY *David Schout*
COUNCIL AFFAIRS

The City of Melbourne has pledged to improve women’s safety and participation in its latest violence against women strategy.

A report underpinning the latest Prevention of Violence Against Women Action Plan 2021 - 2024 concluded that women had been disproportionately impacted by COVID-19 and – given that typically they earn less, have lower savings and often work in less secure roles and industries – women are more vulnerable to economic crisis.

This inequality was “directly linked to violence against women”, and Lord Mayor Sally Capp said the council was committed to driving change.

“Everyone deserves to feel safe in our city, and this action plan will help us to tackle the problem head on,” she said.

“We know one in three women have experienced at least one incident of violence in their lifetime, and more than half have been sexually harassed. That’s simply unacceptable.”

“The City of Melbourne is committed to transforming the underlying causes of violence against women, and disrupting the drivers of that violence, through targeted actions and initiatives.”

The plan identifies four key areas to target within the next 12 months, including:

- Advancing women’s leadership;
- Promoting the safety of women and girls in public spaces;
- Engaging men and boys in conversations about healthy masculinity, and;
- Achieving primary prevention.

Dr Olivia Ball, councillor and chair of the health, wellbeing and belonging portfolio, said the pandemic had further focused the City of Melbourne’s attention on the issue.

“There is emerging evidence that gender equality is getting worse, with the COVID pandemic disproportionately affecting women,” Cr Ball said.

“Having already started from a position of unequal pay and superannuation, more women have lost their jobs and working hours during the pandemic than men. Fewer women have accessed income support to get through the crisis.”

“The action plan recognises the link between gender inequality and gender-based violence and provides immediate actions we can take to turn the tide, to ensure women feel safe and supported in our city.”

The council recently invested almost \$3 million in security maintenance and upgrades in the CBD, including \$1.8 million to maintain 16,000 street lights.

However, Cr Capp said they also wanted to “do more to promote safe and healthy interactions”.

“Our action plan will complement these important infrastructure projects, with initiatives to address violence against women and support gender equality at a community level. The City of Melbourne must and will show leadership in efforts to reduce, and ultimately end, violence against women.”

Due to the impacts of COVID-19, the council will prepare annual action plans rather than a three-year plan.

Action plans for year two (2022-23) and year three (2023-24) will be prepared and presented to the Future Melbourne Committee at a later date ●

For more information:
participate.melbourne.vic.gov.au



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Hospo help on outdoor dining fees, infrastructure

WORDS BY *David Schout*
BUSINESS

Local cafes, restaurants and bars won’t charged outdoor dining fees until April 2022, after the City of Melbourne waived permit fees for another five months.

Hospitality businesses will also be gifted parklet infrastructure such as bollards and planter boxes to ensure they can continue trading on repurposed parking bays.

The move is in response to traders’ concerns about their ability to pay upcoming outdoor dining fees, which were set to be reintroduced on November 1.

Many owners suffering under Melbourne’s extended lockdown were also worried about their ability to absorb the cost of parklet infrastructure.

As a result, councillors voted unanimously on October 5 for both a five-month fee waiver, and to purchase the parklet materials (at a cost of \$1.1 million) to permanently pass onto hospitality businesses.

Ongoing costs — including cleaning, maintenance and repair — have now been transferred to parklet permit holders, however graffiti cleaning will remain a council responsibility.

Businesses that opted to remove outdoor dining parklets in July and August due to future cost concerns will also be given the opportunity to have the infrastructure reinstated in time for an expected outdoor reopening of the hospitality sector later this month.

Lord Mayor Sally Capp said that outdoor dining had been a city success story and was keen to help businesses get back on their feet.

The fee waiver was included in the Melbourne City Revitalisation Fund ●

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Spring nesting in full swing at Royal Park

WORDS BY *Katie Johnson*
ENVIRONMENT

With spring nesting season in full swing, inner city locals are enjoying the array of native birds on display at Royal Park.

Local birdwatchers have found everything from Boobook Owls to Red Wattlebirds and are keeping a keen eye out for chicks as they begin to hatch in the new season.

Local birdwatcher Scott Baker spotted eight Tawny frogmouth nests and a chick during September and said it was “exciting” to monitor them.

“They nest in some very public spots and come back to the same place the following year – last year we found six breeding pairs in Royal Park, so we’ve been keen to monitor them and plot where they’ve been living,” Mr Baker said.

“It’s become like a little project for the people down there.”

Mr Baker said that although frogmouths were extremely adept at camouflage, they tolerated a lot of attention and had become somewhat of a “minor celebrity” at the park.

“Most people don’t notice them but when you do actually see them it’s quite exciting,” Mr Baker said.

“I only started looking for them at Royal Park during last year’s lockdown and it took me ages to spot one, you’ve got to look very carefully and get to know the types of trees and branches that they would like.”

In non-COVID times, Mr Baker would usually be running bird watching tours and venturing out into the bush to find night birds, but lockdown has forced him to explore his local area more.

“It’s become my local patch since lockdown last year and it’s become quite the scene as there’s a lot of other people who have taken up birdwatching during this period,” Mr Baker said.

“In the past 18 months alone, we’ve recorded close to 130 species in Royal Park.”

Among those species is the Red Wattlebird, one of which ran into some trouble at the end of September.

After getting its head stuck in the fork of a tree the bird was rescued by inner city local Phillip Gao who climbed up and freed him.

Mr Gao said that it was “fortuitous” that he and fellow birdwatcher Rodger Scott were there to save the bird from a grim fate.

“While Rodger and I were walking, all of a sudden we heard all of this commotion and saw about 15 noisy minor birds – which are quite territorial – going mad,” Mr Gao said.

“When I took a close-up photo, I could see this red wattlebird with his head stuck in the fork of the branch and that the minors were attacking him.”

“I decided to climb the tree, which was fairly tall, and tried to dislodge him with a stick but eventually was able to grab him and gently lift his head out before he flew away.”



▲ *Love is in the air! A Rainbow Lorikeet couple (top) and a mating pair of Sparrowhawks. Photos by Stuart Riley.*

Although he sprained his foot on the way down, Mr Gao said rescuing the bird was worth it.

“The whole backstory is that I’m a wedding photographer out of work and I recently

became interested in bird watching after seeing the council’s Superb-fairy wren research project,” Mr Gao said.

“The crazy thing is I never knew about the Trim Warren Wetlands even though I’ve been in Melbourne my whole life – so I met with some birdwatchers including Rodger and they introduced me to the Friends of Royal Park Facebook page.”

“Birdwatchers are so friendly and welcoming, and I’ve been going to Royal Park every day since then.”

Long-time birdwatcher Rodger Scott, who snapped the image of Phil, said that it was only their second time meeting when the bird rescue occurred.

“We had met only a couple of days beforehand as Phil had wanted to learn more about Royal Park and what birds were there,” Mr Scott said.

“We were walking in the upper area of the park near the railway line when we heard the commotion and found the wattlebird and chased the minors away.”

“Another couple had come along with a stick and had tried to lift it out but as the tallest of the four of us Phil decided to climb up and was able to reach it.”

Mr Gao said that after having all of his work cancelled or rescheduled after being a wedding photographer for 15 years, “it was great to be amongst nature” in Royal Park.

“The crazy thing is I only started taking bird photos a few weeks ago,” Mr Gao said.

“In an hour you can see 40 to 50 birds, I’ve already seen plenty of the Superb Fairy-wren, which is the little bird that opened this up for me and is my favourite.”

Parkville local and birdwatcher Stuart Riley has also been getting in on the action.

Recently he’d seen a Boobook Owl, dozens of rainbow lorikeets, and a mating pair of Sparrowhawks, which he was careful not to spook.

“Sparrowhawks are quite shy birds and right now they’re trying to build a nest to mate in which has been difficult because it’s been so windy,” Mr Riley said.

“I’ve been trying to keep it quiet to make sure

a million long lens cameras don’t show up to Royal Park.”

“It’s a difficult oral dilemma because you want people to enjoy the birds, but you don’t want too many people there to frighten them off until they’ve established a nest.”

For rainbow lorikeet lovers, Mr Riley said that virtually half of the elm trees at Melbourne Cemetery and the north end of Princes Park were full of them.

He also said that the Reed-Warbler bird was also starting to come out at the Trin Warren Wetlands, and he currently was on the lookout for the rare Spotted Crake.

“It’s frustrating because I have heard them but haven’t seen them yet,” Mr Riley said.

“I’ve also been watching the Fan-tailed Cuckoos, which are beautiful birds that wait until spring to go into the nest of other birds when they’re not there, flick out their eggs, and then put their own eggs there so that other birds raise the Cuckoos as their own.”

For Phillip Gao, the experience photographing wildlife at Royal Park has brought him closer to his local community.

And as a Kensington local, he was inspired to share the joy with his neighbours.

“The overarching theme is the pandemic has brought us closer to our local communities and we’ve discovered our local area because of the five-kilometre restriction,” Mr Gao said.

“In Kensington we have the Newells Paddock where I recently saw an owl, so I created a Facebook page for locals passionate about conservation.”

Since starting the group, Kensington locals have spotted a number of swan families, Rainbow Lorikeets, Starlings, wild bunnies, and an Eastern Barn Owl near Kensington Community High School.

“Sometimes we don’t know what’s beautiful in our backyard,” Mr Gao said ●



To join visit:
facebook.com/groups/newellspaddock

Mailbox smashed in hit and run, leaving \$5000 damage

WORDS BY *Brendan Rees*
SAFETY & SECURITY

A truck that is believed to have hit and destroyed a brick mailbox in Kensington before driving off has left an estimated \$5000 damage bill.

North West City News has been told that a small unmarked white truck backed into the mailbox at a block of units on Westbourne Rd sometime between 2 pm and 4 pm on September 26, causing significant damage.

Eugene, who lives at one of the units, said two neighbours had witnessed the incident where a “couple of guys” got out of the truck and “moved some of the bricks” before driving off and making no attempt to leave their details at the scene.

“I was home, but I didn’t hear it. My neighbour walked out and saw it ... I just remembered being really shocked at the time that someone

would just drive off,” Eugene, who asked not to use his surname, said.

“It was really brazen ... it sounds like they drove in and cleaned it up a bit and drove off so it made it look like they had taken responsibility.”

When he was first told of the incident, Eugene said he initially thought it was “delayed aftershock of the earthquake” which had hit Victoria four days earlier.

He said unfortunately no witnesses were able to obtain a registration number of the truck which was described about the size of a “Coles delivery truck”.

It meant residents were left to foot the bill for the damage which was estimated to be \$5000 to match the bricks and “just to put back the structure”.

Eugene said temporary letterboxes had been installed after workers were called to tidy up the wreckage.

But he and his three neighbours at the block



▲ *Eugene hopes the damage will be covered through their body corporate insurance.*

of units hoped the repairs would be covered through their body corporate insurance.

However, Eugene said he was disappointed after he called police to make a report of the damage but was told they couldn’t investigate

due to there being “no offender’s details” or “registration of the vehicle”.

In the meantime, Eugene posted a photo of the damage to the Kensington Neighbourhood Watch Facebook page in the hope to appeal to anyone with information.

A local said their partner saw the truck pull into a carpark soon after hitting the mailbox before “two guys” got out and “picked some of the bricks”.

“We didn’t get too concerned over it as they didn’t rush off,” they responded in Eugene’s post.

According to Eugene, the occupants of the truck “did a pretty good cover up act of pretending to take responsibility and then drive off”.

Whittles Body Corporate Management Services, which manages the units on Westbourne Rd, declined to comment saying it was company policy not to speak to the media ●

“All hands-on deck” to help Afghan refugee arrivals

WORDS BY *Brendan Rees*
HEALTH

For Amelia Tauoqooqo, a Cohealth nurse on the COVID-19 frontline in West Melbourne and the CBD, the call to assist Afghan refugees has been heartbreaking but concedes “you’ll never find a more pragmatic, resilient group of people”.

“I’ve been working in the migration health space for 10 years and I definitely think this is probably the worst I’ve seen in terms of immediate separation of immediate family members,” she said of the hundreds of Afghans who fled the Taliban for Australia.

“All the scenes you saw on the news four or five weeks ago were a fairly accurate depiction of what we’re hearing firsthand.”

Ms Tauoqooqo, who is part Cohealth’s Refugee and Asylum Seeker Health team, which has been working in partnership with other agencies, said it had been “all hands on deck” in supporting several hundred Afghan refugees who arrived last month and were currently staying at hotels in Melbourne’s CBD after



completing their quarantine period.

“Everything has been really difficult the past couple of weeks, getting their immediate needs met because the services were quite overwhelmed,” she said.

“We’re hearing lots of stories ... there are mums who have been separated from young dependent children, and husbands and wives who have been separated.”

It comes as thousands of Afghan people endured a traumatic evacuation from their home country in the chaotic days after the Taliban stormed the capital Kabul in August.

While interview requests with Afghan refugees were declined due to security reasons, Ms Tauoqooqo spoke of the heartbreaking scenes she had witnessed among the new arrivals with some carrying just a backpack of belongings including their mobile phones and birth certificates.

“People are arriving really cold ... they weren’t prepared for Melbourne weather,” she said.

“It’s obviously devastating but you’ll never find a more pragmatic, resilient group of people who are seeking asylum,” she said, adding “they’re excited to get on with it and get jobs and start their lives”.

In addition to vaccinations at pop-up clinics at the Melbourne Multicultural Hub and in West Melbourne, Ms Tauoqooqo and her team have been providing telehealth consultations as well as creating individualised health plans and liaising with case managers to get the Afghan arrivals the care they need.

“A lot of the work has been around trying to coordinate build relationships with local providers who are happy to see this group without Medicare,” she said.

As the needs of the Afghanistan refugees become more apparent, Cohealth chief executive Nicole Bartholomeusz said it was vital that the wider community was able to “extend their support, understanding and assistance to the Afghan community”.

Among those stepping up to help has been Wyndham Rotary Club which has teamed up with community organisations to distribute meals, toys, clothing, and other essentials for the Afghan refugees.

“We provided to Wyndham Park Community about 180 packs of Indian-style food which was five kilos of rice, one kilo of lentils and another kilo of broad beans and dried peas plus a few packets of biscuits, and a jar of Indian pickles,” community director of Wyndham Rotary Club Phil Harcher said.

A further 150 family-size toiletry packs and a hundred individual toiletry packs donated by Pinchapoo were also distributed by Rotarians.

“We just do it because we know we can make a difference,” Mr Harcher said.

“We don’t need accolades, the accolades we get are by knowing we’ve done a good job.” ●

Why does Melbourne have the state’s lowest vaccination rate?

WORDS BY *David Schout*
HEALTH

Federal figures indicated that, in mid-September, the City of Melbourne had the lowest vaccination levels in all of Victoria. A deeper dive into the figures, however, suggests there could be an explanation for this.

By mid-September, the City of Melbourne had the worst rate of COVID-19 vaccination in the state.

As one of just two local government areas with less than 30 per cent of its population double-dosed (alongside the City of Hume), the area was lagging.

Its fully-immunised figure of just 28.4 per cent was also well below bordering councils of Stonnington (43.9 per cent), Port Phillip (41.6 per cent) and Yarra (39.7 per cent).

Why had locals been slow getting jabs into their arms? Were they holding up the rest of the state?

Well, it appears the answer might not be so simple.

To start with, both the City of Melbourne and state government suspect the percentage of vaccinated people in the area could, in fact, be higher than reported.

And that’s because of the way data has been compiled.

Local populations in vaccination data is based on 2019 figures.

Crucially, it fails to take into account the exodus of overseas residents in Melbourne, in particular international students.

Since the pandemic hit in early 2020, a sizeable percentage of international students, who made up a large chunk of the local population, are believed to have departed Melbourne.

Estimates vary, but some believe it could be as much, or even more, than half of all students.

However, the federal figures have not reflected that.

And that means that those who returned home up to 18 months ago are still being counted in population figures.

They are, according to the data, contributing to the “unvaccinated” percentage — except they’re not in the country.

Questions of data accuracy aside, the council also believes its low percentage of fully-immunised residents is somewhat unfairly skewed given the area’s demographics.

“The City of Melbourne has a much younger population compared to other municipalities, with many of them only becoming eligible for the vaccination in June. It’s likely this is a contributing factor to the lower vaccination rates.”



With a median age of 29, the municipality has one of the youngest age profiles in Victoria.

Many residents only became eligible to receive a COVID-19 vaccination recently.

As such, the lower levels of vaccination — rather than laziness or vaccine hesitancy — might be because many have had to wait for eligibility.

“The social and demographic makeup of our city is like no other,” Lord Mayor Sally Capp said in response to queries from *North West City News*.

“Almost three quarters of our residential population is below the age of 40, most of who would have been ineligible for COVID-19 vaccinations until mid-June — with Pfizer only becoming available to this age group in August.”

This was confirmed by Nicole Bartholomeusz, the chief executive of Cohealth, a community health service.

The good news is, since eligibility has opened up, vaccination rates are improving.

A Department of Health spokesperson said that immunisation rates in the City of Melbourne had “risen rapidly since people aged 16 and over became eligible for Pfizer”.

Cr Capp said the race was on.



“We’re catching up quickly now that young people can get a jab. It’s inspiring to see their rush to get vaccinated.”

She said no one could question the council’s push for everyone to get the jab.

“We want to get as many people vaccinated as quickly as possible — and as a municipality, we’re doing everything we can — more than most — to get people vaccinated.”

Finally, the Department of Health also noted that the City of Melbourne was home to many diverse communities, including those with language barriers or experiencing homelessness.

This too could also have contributed to lower-than-average vaccination rates.

“Melbourne is home to many young and diverse communities — including some of our most vulnerable. We’re doing everything we can to boost vaccine supplies, get doses to where they’re needed and give people the support they need.”

However, this was being addressed. Cohealth has partnered with the City of Melbourne to deliver vaccinations at Melbourne Town Hall

Ms Bartholomeusz said the key goal of this facility was to ensure no one slipped between the cracks.

“It’s critical that vulnerable people aren’t left behind,” she said.

“We’re working hard to close the vaccination gap, so that no-one misses out on vaccination due to low English literacy, homelessness or no Medicare card.”



Tradie gutted after tools stolen from ute

WORDS BY *Brendan Rees*
SAFETY & SECURITY

An apprentice arborist and volunteer firefighter has been left shattered after \$5000 worth of tools were stolen from his ute in Kensington last month.

James Sutherland said he had been preparing to head to work on September 1 when he discovered the canopy of his ute had been left “wide open” and his work gear missing.

“I didn’t hear anything ... they forced the T-handle locks of the canopy and cut a steel cable securing the equipment,” he said after his ute had been parked on Bluestone St overnight.

He said the culprits pinched three professional chainsaws and a hedge trimmer.

“I was shocked when I went to my car to go to work to find \$5000 worth of tools had been stolen and not being able to do my work.”

Mr Sutherland, 41, who changed careers after he lost work last year due to the lockdown, said he was further disappointed after his insurance company told him they wouldn’t be covering the theft or damage to his ute.

“It’s made life difficult and all the stress of fixing the locks which I’ve now had to replace all them, they cost \$700.”

He said he had reported the theft to police and was in the process of replacing his stolen tools, but some would not be available until January.

He said police had told him to check local pawn shops and to keep an eye on Gumtree and Facebook Marketplace in case the thieves were

selling his stolen equipment.

“Being an apprentice, the cost to replace the tools I need to earn a living with makes me extremely angry,” he said.

“And considering these low-lives are breaking the Chief Health Officer’s orders by being out after curfew ... the scum of society seem to get away with everything and law abiding hard working people suffer.”

It’s a devastating blow for Mr Sutherland who has been a volunteer firefighter of 25 years at Berwick Fire Brigade in Melbourne’s south-east where he lives.

He also gave up his time helping the community in the clean-up of fallen trees and debris after a wild storm destroyed homes in the Dandenong Ranges in June, leaving hundreds without power.

He said he had been staying at his partner’s house in Kensington when the thieves targeted his ute.

He has since posted details of the incident on the Kensington Neighbourhood Watch Facebook page in the hope to warn others.

One Kensington resident told *North West City News* they recently found the registration plates of their car had been swapped for a completely different set.

“There’s definitely some sketchy people targeting the area,” the resident said.

Local police have advised residents to lock their vehicle before leaving it, even if they are only five metres away.

Police also said people should not leave their keys in the ignition as well as lock their car when paying for fuel, never leave valuables visible, and if parking in a street, find a well-lit area ●

Art hot spot for the ‘hood

WORDS BY Rhonda Dredge
ARTS & CULTURE

There’s a stretch along Victoria St, West Melbourne, where artists, known and unknown, have been at work during the pandemic. The wall of Common Ground was painted by someone who dropped into the café one day. And the window of One Star Lounge just up the street has a sign saying “Group Show.” Passers-by have these local art patrons to thank; a gallery with a changing window display and a café owner with an artistic bent. “He was just off the street,” said Anthony Yap about the guy who did the graphics on his wall 18 months ago. The large illustration of a smart-looking woman drinking coffee reminds locals of Velma out of *Scooby-Doo*, probably because of the glasses. In Group Show at the One Star, a more sombre aesthetic is at work. Often you have to peer through the window to catch the gallery’s latest take on life. The latest exhibition has been extended because of the lockdown and captures the ghost in the machine we’re all struggling with. There’s a casual painting on a stand, a couple of photographs and an abstract in the



▲ Anthony Yap, art patron at Common Ground.

right-hand bottom corner. In the background a figure sits next to a hunk of metal on a pedestal, legs dangling over the side. The work is called *Monumental Failure* by Brendan Noonan. This ability to laugh at your own pretensions is a hallmark of outlaw art and also a site-specific response to the cowboy setting, the wide verandahs and empty streets of the One Star Lounge. The commissions inside Common Ground have a casual aesthetic where other artists have



▲ Group Show at One Star.

been invited to make their mark. Raymond Lim has painted a mural of food around the door to the kitchen. “He’s another friend who comes in for coffee,” Anthony explained. “I like some of his drawings. He designs tins for a brewery in Brunswick.” Anthony used to have a Subway franchise but he branched out two years ago to give his wife, a pastry chef, a chance to practice. Her beef rendang pies, fragrant chicken



▲ Mural by Raymond Lim.

dumplings and coconut slices are also on display and are part of the attraction. Anthony’s own photographs are up on the wall, one of a Japanese maple in the Dandenongs that turns pink during a particular week in autumn and one of Hardware Lane turned into a fantasy shot. “I’m just an amateur,” he said, but at least he has struggled on during the lockdowns creating an art hot spot for the ‘hood ●

Green shoots sprout hope of theatre return

WORDS BY Brendan Rees
ARTS & CULTURE

With the end of lockdown looming, theatre director Catherine Ward has been planting the seeds for her next show – literally from her Kensington home. The 24-year-old has collected a trove of goodies – from hard rubbish to plants and “anything that might look unusual” – which are set to feature in her upcoming production called *Sprout*, a play by Melbourne playwright Jessica Bellamy. Her independent theatre company 7th Floor Theatre, which runs out of Brunswick, is producing the play which explores an environmentally ravaged Australia of the future whereby one of the characters uses seeds to “make the world around her green and beautiful again”. Like many in the live performance industry, 7th Floor Theatre has been shut down during the pandemic – but depending on where live performances fit within the state government’s road map out of lockdown, Ms Ward hoped the curtain would go up for their play which is scheduled to begin its run in November at The Williams Hall in Princes Hill.



▲ Theatre director Catherine Ward has been planting the seeds for her next show – literally from her Kensington home.

“I’m hopeful that audiences are going to come back to our stages because they’re hungry to see live theatre,” she said. “Our revenue has dropped immensely. We’ve gone entirely online which is very difficult for our industry, and had to pull back and make our focus about survival.”

In the meantime, Ms Ward has been busy during the lockdown foraging as many hard rubbish items as she can for the show, thanks to a huge effort by the community. After putting a call-out on the Kensington Good Karma Network Facebook page, Ms Ward said she “never expected” such a “wonderful

response” with residents happily dropping off old items from shoes and broken pottery to an abundance of plants which had “covered” her home. “I’ve got house plants and Australian natives and beautiful full-grown succulents that will all be starring in the show.” “The show’s ethos is a ‘buy nothing new’ production so we are sourcing donated and recycled materials for set, costumes and other design elements including the plants appearing in the show.” Ms Ward said 7th Floor Theatre had also begun an “Adopt a Sprout” campaign for anyone who would like to support the show and plant an Australian native at the same time. “The day they donate we will plant their sprout and audiences can choose to collect it when attending the show,” she said. “We cannot wait to present this fantastic Australian work to audiences post-lockdown.” **For details on the “Adopt a Sprout” campaign: 7thfloor.net/adoptasprout ●**

For tickets:
tinyurl.com/4de3wyyw

Locals back the park at Flemington

WORDS BY Rhonda Dredge
ARTS & CULTURE

The rose garden at Flemington Racecourse might be closed to the public but the pig face is blooming near the wetlands and locals are taking advantage of the setting. Mohinder Singh was out walking Tracker during October, something he does two or three times a week. He is one of many local walkers who now use the grounds for exercise. The pedestrian gate on Epsom Rd is open until 6pm each night and closed only when a race is being run, a move appreciated by locals. “During COVID they have been much more accepting of having the pedestrian gate open,” another local dog-walker Rebecca Boster said. “There’s enough space here that you’re never overrun by other people. It’s a good place for distancing. It’s so serene, so beautiful.” She said the trail around the pond was popular. “It can get a bit busy but it’s nothing like the Maribyrnong.” Positive experiences by locals on the grounds have helped the Victoria Racing Club improve its standing in the community during difficult



▲ Mohinder Singh takes the trail around the pond.

times. “It’s made me think completely differently about the VRC,” Rebecca said. “Could I put up with another Melbourne Cup? The endless helicopters made me grit my teeth.” “Now I’m a complete convert. They can have the Melbourne Cup and I’ll support it 100 per cent because of their open door policy for locals.” Gardeners say there have been so many people this year there’s been a bit of damage to the rose garden. Different varieties are pruned so they don’t bloom too early. The VRC has put up temporary fencing to protect the roses, a spokeswoman told *North*



▲ The pig face is blooming at Flemington.

West City News. “Last year more than 300 bouquets of Flemington’s roses were delivered to local frontline workers and community organisations to say, ‘thank you’ to those most affected by impacts of COVID-19, which we hope to do again this year,” she said. Mowers were taking up their position on the straight to get the track in order and construction workers were putting up marquees for Derby Day on October 30, which kicks off the Cup Carnival. Everyone is hoping that racegoers will get to see the benefit of all this work. “We have lodged plans with the Victorian

Government for a crowd of up to 11,500 for some or all four days of the Melbourne Cup Carnival,” the spokeswoman said. She said details could not be released until the VRC received feedback from the government. “It’s a really movable situation with COVID-19. There could be changes.” On October 10, the state government confirmed that up to 10,000 fans would be permitted to attend the Melbourne Cup. The final two days of the Melbourne Cup Carnival – Oaks Day and Stakes Day – will also welcome up to 10,000 patrons if the 80 per cent double-jab threshold has been passed. “Racing fans will be spread across a number of zones at Flemington in allocated seats and will be required to wear masks and be fully vaccinated or holding a valid exemption,” a state government spokesperson said. In the meantime, the destination has become such a favourite with locals that some are oblivious to the presence of races at all. Mohinder did his own race here a couple of years back in a charity marathon clocking in at two hours 15 minutes for 21.5 kilometres. “Actually, I am not knowledgeable about racing,” he said. “I like the park.” ●



▲ The 1860s-built West Melbourne home (light blue facade) sits central in a row of five cottages.

Heritage cottage gets reno go-ahead

WORDS BY *David Schout*
HERITAGE

A small terrace home in West Melbourne has been approved for “substantial redevelopment” despite being a “significant” heritage building.

Green-lighted works on the 1860s-built dwelling, which sits central in a row of five cottages on Chetwynd St, include demolition to rear portions of the building and roof, followed by a two-storey rear extension.

City of Melbourne councillors approved the \$700,000 redevelopment — the extent to which, on a significant heritage building, was described as “rare” by one councillor — at an October 5 Future Melbourne Committee meeting.

Council officers had deemed works on the run-down building, in this instance, appropriate to make the property “habitable”.

Crucially, almost all changes to the building would not be visible from street level.

Officers even declared that the demolition works “will not adversely impact the heritage character of the place”, something deputy planning chair Cr Rohan Leppert took exception with.

“I disagree that the proposal won’t adversely impact the heritage of the building,” he said.

“Most of it is being demolished [and] I think it’s obvious the building will be adversely impacted. So, I disagree with the reasoning in the delegate report quite strongly — I really don’t think that the heritage policy has been clearly met.”

Cr Leppert however stopped short of voting against the planning permit application.

“The impact from the public realm will be relatively minimal, but obviously the heritage place will be adversely impacted. Nevertheless, a permit should issue, because we want to see this place well kept-up, and

“

I think it’s obvious the building will be adversely impacted.

”

the extension shouldn’t be blocked on heritage grounds alone. I think it is quite a sympathetic and clever extension.”

Council planning chair Cr Nicholas Reece said the cottage was as “cute as a button”, located on a “really lovely street” in the city, opposite Eades Place Park.

He commended Krisna Cheung Architects for the design.

It is estimated the cottage at 16 Chetwynd St was built in 1868.

It is one of five in a row of “Moore’s Cottages”, named after first owner, Queensberry St surgeon Dr. George Moore.

There is a similar row of Moore’s Cottages on Rosslyn St.

The dwelling was not deemed of architectural significance individually, but rather as a row.

According to a City of Melbourne heritage database, one of its notable historical features include “early street side frontage”.

The two-bedroom cottage was sold in \$760,000 in June 2019, a price \$160,000 above its auction reserve.

Reports suggested the auctioneer called it a “renovator’s delight”, and “pretty much the last house before the city”.

The property’s long-time owner died around 18 months prior to it being sold.

A tenant was believed to have previously occupied the cottage for 24 years ●

Local Somali leader educates community about COVID

WORDS BY *Spencer Fowler Steen*
HEALTH

A local Somali leader is helping the community to understand the risks of COVID-19 through her work at the Somali Women’s Development Association Incorporated (SWDAI) in Kensington.

Sainab Sheikh, who founded the SWDAI, worked every day throughout the second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic to educate the community about COVID, translating materials and holding Zoom sessions with the latest information.

Sadly, she said some of the community members were infected with COVID-19 and didn’t reach out to health services because they didn’t know what to do or did not understand the risk of the virus.

“Some people, rather than sharing that [burden] and seeking help, they just keep to themselves and that caused to them death,” she said.

“It is hard, because when you know those people, and their families or you know the person who passed away, it’s really sad.”

Ms Sheikh said some Somali Australian community members ended up dying at home last year, without attending hospital or seeking help.

Since last year’s COVID-19 deaths, Sainab Sheikh and her colleagues from the SWDAI have continued to



▲ Sainab Sheikh and a volunteer at the Somali Women’s Development Association Incorporated.

dedicate themselves to informing and educating the community about COVID-19 and preventing it from spreading.

The SWDAI delivered COVID-19 health advice and information sessions, mental health information sessions, domestic and family violence information sessions, and support, including one-on-one counselling sessions.

Ms Sheikh said that she has set up three different WhatsApp groups that she regularly posts information to the community about COVID-19.

The SWDAI is also working with partner organisations and employment brokers to support African

Australian JobSeekers who have been long-term unemployed, also sending emergency food relief packages to those affected by COVID-19 or are in isolation.

Ms Sheikh also said that she appreciated the State Government funding awarded to the SWDAI ●

For more information or to volunteer:
Call 03 85967651 or email admin@swdai.org.au

London plane tree to get the chop

WORDS BY *Brendan Rees*
COUNCIL AFFAIRS

A large London plane tree in Kensington will be removed and replaced with a different species after it was deemed a risk to public safety by the City of Melbourne.

The council said an independent consulting arborist recommended the removal of the single tree on Eastwood St after decay and insect damage were identified in the trunk.

Kensington is renowned for boasting leafy streets, but the council confirmed “this is the only tree at this location that is planned for removal at this stage” and a “tree will be replanted in the same location next planting season”.

“The City of Melbourne plants more than 3000 trees each year and

has a target of doubling the canopy cover in the municipality by 2040,” a City of Melbourne spokesperson said, adding that it removed around 800 trees each year for various reasons, including decline and risk to public safety.

“We are currently planting a range of different tree species that will improve the urban forests’ resilience to changes in climate.”

Resident Kerry Mullan said although it was a “shame” the tree had to be removed, she understood safety was a priority.

“If it needs to go I suppose it needs to go. It’s a shame, I wouldn’t want to take any more out,” she said.

Another resident Michelle said she hoped the leafy character of the street would be kept, saying “it’s a beautiful aspect of the whole community” ●



▲ The London plane tree in Kensington which will be chopped by the council.

“Regrettable”: Gym to be turned into office

WORDS BY *Spencer Fowler Steen*
PLANNING

The City of Melbourne has approved construction at a Boundary Rd apartment block despite a “breakdown” in a relationship between the owners’ corporation (OC) and the developer, and nearly 30 objections to the plan.

Developer VMR Property was seeking approval for the construction of a mezzanine level between the ground and first floors, and a reduction in the statutory car parking requirements from five to zero.

The existing ground floor space at 179 Boundary Rd — which many of the 27 objectors understood was for a communal gym — as well as the future mezzanine, will be turned into an office, according to a council report.

At the Future Melbourne Committee meeting on September 21, the building’s OC chair and resident John Gilmore said owners disagreed with the waiver of parking, open access to the waste service and the change of user space.

“[T]he OC has not been consulted at all in

regards to this proposal,” he said.

Mr Gilmore said the OC was concerned that under the new proposal, external users would be able to access the space creating flow-on issues for traffic and illegal parking in Boundary Lane where ambulance access was a priority.

He said this would exacerbate existing “chaos” for residents created by a lack of delivery or drop off provisions, also flagging concerns about commercial users being able to access the building’s waste services under the new proposal.

“The third comment; the proposal compromises access and security to the building. We have had problems with theft from letterboxes and with and with non-resident access to this area, on a regular basis security is further compromised,” he said.

In reply, the council officer Larry Parsons said despite a note in the permit suggesting OC permission should be sought before going ahead, the Planning Scheme did not allow the council to consider this as a “priority issue”.

Deputy Lord Mayor Nicholas Reece said it was a “challenging matter” and “completely



▲ 179 Boundary Rd is set to lose gym space for offices.

understood” why the council had received 27 objections, but reiterated it was appropriate under planning law.

“I’ve got to say, if I was living in this building and I was a user of this gym, I would not like to see it go,” he said.

“But it is the case that under the planning law, and that’s what we are talking about tonight, how the planning law applies to this matter, the proposed development is consistent with the purpose of commercial one zone and would not result in any unreasonable amenity impacts.”

Cr Rohan Leppert added that the carparking waiver should be granted given the proximity of the site to Flemington Station and two tram lines.

“I agree it’s regrettable that the OC and the developer VMR have fallen out, and whatever that reason for the breakdown of the relationship has no bearing on the planning decision.”

The council acknowledged there may be other legal avenues available to the OC. ●

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TURNING GREY TO GREEN AS URBAN FORESTS BLOOM ACROSS THE CITY

With spring in full bloom, the City of Melbourne's Urban Forest Fund projects are transforming grey spaces to green with leafy laneways, curated courtyards and rooftop urban farms.

The Urban Forest Fund provides matched financial support to new private greening projects in the city, not just for residents, but in many cases for all Melburnians keen for a stroll in publicly-accessible green spaces.

Here are four new greening projects that are transforming grey spaces across the city.

Haines Street Apartments, North Melbourne

In Haines Street, North Melbourne plants and garden beds are now well established, softening the hard edges of an apartment complex car park.

'They're doing well and we will do a lot more planting after winter,' said Ying-Lan Dann, a resident and one of the keen gardeners behind the project.

The City of Melbourne contributed \$66,000 to the project which has transformed the car park area of a medium-density housing complex, which is publicly-accessible, into a

safe, active communal space for both residents and the public to enjoy.

'The neighbours love it and one of the key criteria was that if we got the greenery we'd get people downstairs more and we're finding that's happening. Particularly during COVID while we've been in lockdown. These 1963 buildings have so much space around them. We are planning working bees so everyone can get involved in

gardening and getting the vegies in for spring.' Now residents look out onto fruiting trees and herb beds, native flowering ground covers and vertical gardens complemented by rainwater tanks, compost bins and seating areas for relaxation. The green areas slow traffic and welcome pedestrians in an area that's walking distance to North Melbourne Primary School, Gardiner Reserve and Lady Huntingfield Children's Centre.

The major improvements are welcomed by Ying-Lan and the other Haines Street Apartments residents.

'It's an asphalt carpark fundamentally, so all these little dark nooks have now been activated. We've got bicycle parking, compost, garden beds where there was nothing before, just broken asphalt, so this project shows the potential for making these places much greener,' Ying-Lan said.



Haines Street Apartments, North Melbourne

MELBOURNE SKYFARM, DOCKLANDS

Melbourne Skyfarm is set to become a sustainable city oasis in the Seafarer's precinct overlooking the Yarra River to the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre.

While not open to the public until early next year, Melbourne Skyfarm has marked the completion of the first stage of works including the urban greening and urban farming component.

The City of Melbourne committed \$300,000 in matched funding through the Urban Forest Fund to support the delivery of the urban farm.

When fully complete, Melbourne Skyfarm will be open to the public to tour the working farm, visit the rooftop orchard and herb gardens, or purchase plants from the nursery.

There are also plans for a sustainable café and an environmental education area.



TRIBECA APARTMENTS, EAST MELBOURNE

At Tribeca Apartments, building manager Garrad Flint said 'we've had nothing but great feedback from our residents' about the new greening project.

The City of Melbourne contributed \$100,000 towards the project which has seen lush mature trees, including lemon myrtle and small-leafed fig, now line a narrow paved laneway, and the plaza area adorned with curving garden beds planted with a range of subtropical plants. Succulents and ground covers thrive.

'It's a publicly-accessible plaza with cafes, restaurants and a supermarket, as well as a crossing point between Victoria Parade's greenery and Albert Street's parks,' Garrad said.

The cool green oasis adds to the character of the area, with a historical red brick and bluestone brewery lending atmosphere to this pleasant precinct.



PRINTMAKERS LANE, SOUTHBANK

The hot dry Mediterranean climate was the inspiration for cooling vines in a laneway on the University of Melbourne's Southbank campus.

'Historically it is quite a harsh laneway,' project manager Sebastian Di Girolamo said.

'It has metal cladding so we did some testing and over summer it's a hot area.

'So we came up with the idea of a design from Italy, Greece and Spain, hotter climates, where they use vines to create shade and make laneways cooler. The idea is once the plants are blooming and leafy they'll create a shade canopy over the laneway.'

The City of Melbourne contributed \$100,000 to the greening project which will transform the Printmakers Laneway into a shady green space that can be enjoyed by students and members of the public.



WHAT IS THE URBAN FOREST FUND?

The Urban Forest Fund supports a wide range of projects, including gardens, tree planting, biodiversity projects, green roofs and vertical greening in the city.

Grant applications are assessed by a panel of greening experts and community members who prioritise projects that will provide the most benefit to the community and environment.

For more information, visit melbourne.vic.gov.au/community/greening-the-city/urban-forest-fund

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TAKING FUN TO NEW HEIGHTS

Treetop fun has taken over the oldest playground in town with the City of Melbourne's newest place space officially open to children of all ages.

The Lincoln Square playground in Carlton features rope bridges, play towers, slides, swings and timber play structures high up in the trees, as well as a new barbecue and picnic area.

Lord Mayor Sally Capp said the park's 150-year-old Moreton Bay Fig trees were incorporated into the design of the playground creating exciting new spaces to explore up high.

"We know ongoing restrictions have been incredibly hard on our community, so the completion of the Lincoln Square playground is perfectly timed to get restless kids out of the house and into the fresh air," the Lord Mayor said.

"We hope this new state-of-the-art play space will bring some much-needed joy and excitement, and become one of our city's most loved playgrounds," she said.

The playground upgrade is part of the City of Melbourne's Lincoln Square Concept Plan, and also included the delivery of new lawn and garden beds,

more trees, and improved footpaths, lighting and irrigation.

Health and Wellbeing portfolio lead Councillor Dr Olivia Ball said Carlton is one of the fastest-growing areas in the municipality and playgrounds like this are vital for the young families who call Carlton home.

"I used to live near Lincoln Square myself and it's been a joy to see the City of Melbourne expand the park and now build this magnificent new playground," Cr Dr Ball said.

"By expanding and improving our green open spaces, we're helping to

ensure Melbourne remains a highly desirable place to live, work and visit."

Lincoln Square has been home to the city's first playground since it opened to the public in 1907.



Lincoln Square Treetop Playground

HAVE YOUR SAY ON NEW GREEN WASTE COLLECTION TO WIN

Melburnians are embracing a new food and garden organics collection service with almost 150 tonnes of waste diverted from landfill in its first two months.

Residents who have used the food and organic waste service are encouraged to provide feedback on the pilot program.

Those who complete the survey, or share their tips and tricks, via Participate Melbourne before 1 November will go in the draw to win one of three \$100 Queen Victoria Market vouchers.

The service provided by the City of Melbourne began in June with waste collections from 9,000 homes across the municipality.

Residents in stand-alone houses and single-storey apartment blocks were

given a 120-litre lime-green wheelie bin, a kitchen caddy for food scraps and 52 compostable bin liners as part of the program.

Lord Mayor Sally Capp said the early success of the program showed the community is keen to embrace a more environmentally-friendly way to dispose of their waste.

"In one month alone, our team collected food and garden waste from more than 16,200 bins and processed 115 tonnes of organic waste – preventing hundreds of kilograms of Co2 emissions from being generated in landfill.

"The organic waste we've collected has been converted into about 42 tonnes of valuable compost.

"We're now exploring how best to use this compost, this will support the creation of a circular economy and help maintain our beautiful parks, gardens and trees."

The new food and organics service is part of the City of Melbourne's Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy 2030, which aims to reduce landfill and improve waste and recycling services across the municipality.

The City of Melbourne invested \$1 million to establish the service at no additional cost to residents.

Environment portfolio lead Councillor Rohan Leppert said community feedback would help Council roll out the service across the municipality.

"If you've been using our food and organic waste service we want to hear from you. Tell us what's worked and what hasn't so we can continue to improve and expand the service," Cr Leppert said.

To provide feedback on the food and organic waste service, visit participate.melbourne.vic.gov.au/food-garden-waste to have your say.



FREE PERIOD PRODUCTS AVAILABLE ACROSS THE CITY

The City of Melbourne is offering free period products in some of its public facilities to help ensure everyone can manage the normal process of menstruation without embarrassment or stigma.

When people aren't able to access these products, this can be a significant obstacle to emotional and physical health, comfort, and engagement with school and community activities.

'Period poverty' is experienced in Australia and all over the world by people who menstruate.

Council has unanimously endorsed a 12-month pilot of free menstrual care products, an initiative that addresses a number of priorities in our Council Plan.

When lockdown restrictions ease, free pads and tampons will be available at:

- Library at the Dock
- City Library
- Carlton Baths
- Melbourne Town Hall public toilets on Collins Street
- North Melbourne Community Centre
- Kathleen Syme Library and Community Centre.



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

KEEP IN TOUCH

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

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

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COUNCILLOR PROFILE

Giving a voice to our international students

While Cr Philip Le Liu has brought many passions to the City of Melbourne, his greatest ambition continues to be making Melbourne the number one student city in the world.

WORDS BY *Sean Car*

Having first been elected to the City of Melbourne in 2016 on former councillor Ken Ong’s ticket, Cr Le Liu is now one of the more experienced members on council after being re-elected for a second term last year.

And at just 38 years of age, he also represents an emerging younger voice at the City of Melbourne, and during his time as a councillor, the plight of the city’s growing international student population has been at the top of his agenda.

Having previously chaired the council’s international engagement portfolio during his first term, Cr Le Liu told *North West City News* he had made it his priority to ensure the council better served what was “pretty much our biggest community now”.

Making up around 40 per cent of the residential population in the CBD prior to the pandemic, it’s a community that represents one of the hardest hit by COVID and the impacts of its absence continue to be felt right throughout the municipality.

While he now chairs the council’s finance, governance and risk portfolio, he said he was happy to continue playing a driving role in supporting international students as deputy portfolio lead for education and innovation.

Together with that portfolio’s chair Cr Davydd Griffiths – a former teacher and education policy advisor himself – Cr Le Liu he was determined to reinstate Melbourne’s title as one of the world’s best cities for students.

“When I first came into council, international students were right down at the very bottom, no-one had done anything with it, yet they are one of our biggest communities,” he said.

“We’d never had any funding or initiatives or anything, so when I got in I said, ‘I really want to put it up here [at the top]’. We were the third best student city in the world, I want to make us number one.”

“I hope that by the time I leave here [council] we’re number one, and I think we can.”

Amid one of the most difficult economic periods in the City of Melbourne’s history, as chair of finance, Cr Le Liu has already been central to recovery efforts in helping to deliver the council’s biggest budget in its history this year.

While admittedly “less about the numbers”, he said he had been able to call on his background in auditing to “put a different lens” through the council’s finances and make a “real mark” during a crucial time.

And despite the often “black and white” nature of council treasury, he said the role had been able to “reconnect” him with his more than 10 years of experience working across a variety of sectors, including finance, government, telecommunications and not-for-profit.

But as the city braces for a long-awaited re-opening, he said the council needed to continue advocating to both upper levels of government to ensure the city’s economy “roared back to life”.

“I come from a different side of politics but I have to say that the state government has done pretty well in supporting the City of Melbourne with the Melbourne Recovery Fund,” he said.

“It is a good partnership, but you know what? Just because they support us on one thing it doesn’t mean we should stay silent on everything. The best relationship is when you test each other.”

“It’s about looking after our ratepayers, from residents to business owners. There is so much that we need to do for the small business owners, who have been absolutely smashed to bits.”

“My family comes from a small business



background. We ran our own shop in Balaclava for 15 years so I know what it means to run a small business. I ran a milk bar when I was 16. It’s the migrant story – they can’t get ahead, so what do they do? They run a small business.”

“I know a lot of small business owners can’t really speak English, some have no idea about the bureaucracy so I think we can play a real role in the advocacy and untangling all of the red tape.”

As one of four current councillors of Asian descent, Cr Le Liu said that representation of the city’s Asian community had never been better at the City of Melbourne.

A prominent member of that community, in 2019 he was recognised as one of 40 Under 40 Most Influential Asian-Australians and the winner of the public sector/government category. He also previously served as the general manager of the Australia-China Youth Association in Beijing, looking after Australian international students studying in China.

In reflecting on how much his community had “really suffered” during the pandemic, he said a key motivation for running again had been a desire to provide support and help it engage differently with the city.

“When COVID first hit, the Asian community was the first to get slammed,” he said. “The racism is real.”

“We’re mainly business people, we want a good education and the right opportunities and that’s essentially it for many. For me, I want to

get more of the Asian community into philanthropy and just giving back.”

“They’re very humble and I think the amount of work the Asian community has done during COVID hasn’t really been reflected well but it’s been really powerful.”

Having been re-elected last year on an “unofficial” Liberal Party ticket led by prominent night club owner Nick Russian, Cr Le Liu’s conservative stance on a range of issues are occasionally at odds with a number of his fellow councillors.

There are few issues he is more diametrically opposed to than the state government’s current proposal for a medically supervised safe injecting room on Flinders St, which he said he was “saving all his energy” for to continue fighting.

But despite the differing political persuasions inherent at times, he described the current team of councillors as “really energetic”, adding that they were each dedicated to achieving good outcomes for the community.

And as a resident of the CBD himself, Cr Le Liu said no community was more important than the city’s local residents and stressed the importance of giving them a “real voice” in decision-making through “better engagement”.

“The role of councillor is to represent the people. So, back to basics,” he said.

“I think we’ve really got to give residents a voice and ensuring that they’re in the thinking in of our decision-making. There are too many times we’re they’re an afterthought.”

“When the night-time economy was raised, I was one of the few people who said we needed to ensure residents’ views were across it because they’re going to be most affected from it.”

“As a resident myself living in the Hoddle Grid, I know exactly when the cleaning trucks come into the laneways at different times of the morning. I know that when we approved the extension of construction permits in the city, I couldn’t get any work done [in my apartment].”

“We need to engage with them [residents] more. There is no much knowledge and energy that we don’t tap into.” ●

ENVIRONMENT

Looking to nature

Things are changing in our world, particularly our environment. Questions are posed. What is the new way forward?

The current hierarchical growth at all costs systems which favour the few and which we have participated in, are obviously not working for the natural environment, nor us because our wellbeing is intrinsically linked to our planet’s wellbeing.

To paraphrase Einstein, “problems cannot be solved with the same way of thinking that created them”. Most of us have been educated in a system that grooms us to contribute in the current paradigm, so where will the new knowledge or thinking come from?

We can’t all run to the hills to start again, hide, or opt out, especially now with prices in the bush and on the coast favouring a few and travel to potential untouched lands limited.

Nature is a self-organising system that keeps regenerating itself powered by the sun’s energy and will continue to exist beyond our short time on Earth. This occurs despite how we have wreaked havoc on nature since the Industrial Age with our excessive consumption and lack of foresight about setting limits.

Survival of the fittest is giving way to a more scientifically accurate and more positive theory of evolution, one that emphasises the role of co-operation, interaction and mutual dependence among all life forms.

New insights are disputing the dualistic worldview of “survival of the fittest in the struggle for life” and genetic mechanisms as the metrics determining species’ survival.

This has seen us pit ourselves against each other for the prize, giving scientific legitimacy

to the use of power, greed and violence to “advance” civilisations. Epigenetic science and the Human Genome Project is showing cooperation as the impulse to how our world evolved.

Nature is full of these examples. Trees in a forest share resources with each other through their roots even with species different to them. See the documentary *Intelligent Trees* featuring German forester and bestseller Peter Wohlleben and researchers from the University of British Columbia.

In a simple compost pile, there are insects and microorganisms that each work together to break down a certain part of the organic matter into something that they can use and then something than can be used by another organism ensuring each organism is “fed” and plays their part in the whole. Each having different characteristics and “gifts” that keep the whole system going.

In a disturbed landscape – nature sends in the weeds or pioneer plants that have robust characteristics that other plants don’t. They populate the area with their prolific seeds and deep tap roots to crack the disturbed land creating pathways for water and air to flow so that the soil structure changes, and different plants (the grasses) can then inhabit. And so forth – succession occurs to move nature to a stable state suitable to that climate – stable old growth forests like those remaining in Russia where no-one prunes, burns, adds fertiliser, tills – what do they show us?

Seasons and the moon indicate to nature



times to move on things, times to be still, time to reflect, time to adapt and wither. Plants respond accordingly to these rhythms with root, flower, seed and leaf growth. As our body comprises a significant amount of water, does the moon provide a cycle for us to follow to ensure we are rejuvenated, less stressed and can move with clarity and optimal wellness?

Sunrise and sunset are other significant timings in nature where nature responds accordingly an indication for certain creatures to go to sleep and others to awake – each fulfilling a niche that complements and provides space for each other.

Plants require specific growing conditions for them to thrive and grow – certain amounts of sunlight, soil conditions, some plants don’t like windy spots, wet feet, root competition or are heavy feeders. And each plant plays a particular role in the overall system. Plants get diseased and struggle when the conditions are not right i.e., when they are stressed. Companion planting and guilds show us how plants can work together.

Each seed, however small, contains within it all the information it needs – it knows how to grow its roots, when to flower, when to grow leaves, the form and structure of its flowers and leaves and it knows when it’s time to bear fruit and seed.

Creatures move under, over, through these various systems. Thousands of insects move across our gardens and landscapes spreading a thin mist of their fertilising manure.

Working with and observing nature everywhere there is underlying harmony based on working together and an understanding of roles and the niche fulfilled to ensure the overall wellbeing of the whole. An order, timing, one system supporting another to support the whole. Everyone has seen enough David Attenborough documentaries to understand this pattern.

We are the only component creating disharmony. We have lost our orientation to the whole.

How do we return from a consumptive linear growth structure to a cooperative, collaborative nature-based way of being? Are some of the ways nature operates a guide for us in these times? ●



Jacqui van Heerden
CO-CONVENER OF TRANSITION
TOWN KENSINGTON
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Creativity and its impact on mental health

Tapping into our innate creativity (yes, we all have it!) and unleashing our imagination can help with processing emotions, reducing anxiety, improving self-esteem, and boosting our overall mental health.

In this article, Sylvie Meltzer, creative director at Satellite Foundation, shares her thoughts on how creativity offers alternative ways of sharing our stories, regardless of age, and how creativity can act as a catalyst for improving wellbeing, sparking joy and feeling connected to others; all so important during these challenging COVID times...

“I’m not really a creative person”, is a common phrase uttered by those who believe they don’t have a creative bone in their body. At Satellite Foundation, we know this just isn’t true!

British creative entrepreneur David Parrish, coins two kinds of creativity: “a” creativity – all the “artistic” practices we associate with the word such as visual arts, theatre, poetry, dance, music, writing, crafts, and photography. And “I” creativity – ingenious innovations that would not ordinarily be described as “artistic” in any way such as problem solving, thinking outside the box, and finding solutions to complex situations.

When you think about the range of activities, outputs and ways of being that are in fact inherently creative, it’s easy to conclude that, in fact, you are most probably extremely creative. Everyone is.

Satellite has the strong belief that being “creative” is simply being given permission to see, feel, share and communicate our experiences in this world in lots of different ways.

Here’s a scientific fact: when we are being “creative”, our brains release dopamine, which is a natural anti-depressant. Dopamine plays a role in how we feel pleasure. It’s a big part of our unique human ability to think and plan. It helps us strive, focus, and find things interesting.



Creativity as ritual

Mindfulness, weekly practices, journal writing, yoga, bubble baths, drawing and doodling, and self-care are all part of the daily lexicon around mental health and wellbeing. All these activities require a belief that we are deserving of moments in our lives to reflect, relax and connect if we can just work out how to set some healthy boundaries. This is not always easy. Practicing something can be a really hard thing – especially in this ever-changing world. But it is in these regular changes where we find a playground for creativity.

Creativity as a more flexible form of self-expression

The five senses are a powerful starting point here. We are shaped by how we engage with our surroundings. The act of “noticing” is a creative practice – how blue the sky is, how much you love that song, how the smell of coffee reminds you of that time, how the touch of your cat’s fur brings you a sense of safety. The world around us provides constant metaphors for the way we feel every day. Some people have worked out how to carefully craft those observations into books, poems, landscapes, and lyrics – but most of us use our senses to store up and build upon a personal library of memories, symbols and images that add to the scrapbook of our lives. The thing with scrapbooks is, it’s often the less curated bits that can reveal authentic parts of our stories.



How can we foster creativity to work with mental health?

There is an expectation that hovers around the word “creative”. It could be argued that it suggests a “doing” rather than just “being” and therefore carries the assumption of an outcome. The same can be said for engaging in mental health dialogues – whether it be seeking professional help or just talking with a friend. Both ask for access to a sharing of ourselves that can be terrifying, and liberating. Both can make people feel vulnerable and feeling vulnerable is hard. And, often, we don’t want to do it.

There are different realms of vulnerability, however, and both spaces, whether we are comfortable sitting in them or not, can offer a freedom to indulge, explore, communicate, celebrate, reflect upon, and process the experience of being human. Recognise when you cook, sort out a cupboard, write a list, gaze out the window, pick a flower, take a breath you are engaging with that world and that engagement is an act of creativity – because it’s yours. It doesn’t matter if you make something of it. Noticing is enough.

Embedding creativity into the lives of young people

A communion of dialogue exists in so many forms, especially for young people who are standing on a precipice of discovery, confusion, exploration, and learning every single day. What would happen if we allowed silence to

speak, colour to emote, photographs to show, graffiti to reach, music to share, and masks to protect? What if we asked questions around mental health and heard ALL the answers in the various ways they can be shared?

In group settings with young people, creative thinking can help to enhance awareness, develop trust, and foster group cohesion. Most of the time it doesn’t matter what the activity is!

Some tips for inserting creative play into the “everyday”

If that all sounds too simple (or complicated!) then setting ever-changing mini projects is a wonderful practice to bring creativity into your everyday. Some simple ideas include:

- Writing a reflective sentence in a notebook
- Taking a photograph out of the same window for a week
- Picking a flower posy or a song to start the day
- Starting a project with a friend via a chat platform where you share reflections, observations or images around a topic that you both feel connected to for a set period of time
- Writing positive self-talk posts and leaving them on your mirror
- Finding the colours of the rainbow in nature on a walk
- Sending a postcard or a written letter to someone
- Handwrite a recipe you might have tried recently (or learn to cook one you haven’t yet!) and start a recipe scrapbook

Do whatever brings you joy, slows you down, lifts you up, or connects you. Share yourself in whatever way you want to – someone will be listening.

Satellite Foundation is a not-for-profit organisation based on Victoria St, which delivers programs, workshops and activities for children, young people and their families who have parent or family member loving with mental illness or psychological distress ●

For more information:
satellitefoundation.org.au

METRO TUNNEL

Become a train master with Metro Tunnel’s free online game

The Metro Tunnel Project has launched a free online game that gives players a sneak peek into the inner workings of the next-generation technology coming to Melbourne’s train network.

Created with local game developers Two Moos, Train Master Challenge invites players young and old to try their hand at being a train signalling engineer.

Players must juggle the demands of four busy train lines and try to get as many passengers as possible to their destinations on time.

The game is an accessible way to learn about some of the more complex and technical aspects of Victoria’s biggest ever public transport project.

Strategies in the game include deploying high-capacity signalling to the train lines and adding platform screen doors at the stations. Both are real features coming to the Metro Tunnel and other parts of Melbourne’s train network in 2025.

High-capacity signalling allows trains to talk to each other so that they can run closer together, allowing more trains to run on the network and increasing the number of train services for Melburnians.



The smart technology will be rolled out not just in the Metro Tunnel but also along the Pakenham/Cranbourne and Sunbury lines. Works to install the technology are already underway across parts of the network.

The Metro Tunnel’s five new underground stations will feature automated platform screen doors, which allow passengers to get on and off

trains more quickly and safely.

While the Train Master Challenge game targets primary school-aged kids, it’s something that will appeal to all ages. It is designed for people to pick up and play without much instruction and has both a beginner level and an advanced level for those who want more of a challenge.



Train Master Challenge is part of Signalling Wizard, a new learning module on the Metro Tunnel Education website which explores how the Metro Tunnel will use next-generation technology to deliver more trains, more often.

You can access the game and more fun educational materials for free at the Metro Tunnel Education web page metrotunnel.vic.gov.au/education. Look for the Signalling Wizard badge to get your credentials.

Metro Tunnel HQ, the Metro Tunnel’s visitor and learning centre on Swanston St, is expected to reopen once COVID-19 restrictions ease ●

For more information:
metrotunnel.vic.gov.au

ABORIGINAL MELBOURNE

Harnessing the healing power of the sea

WORDS BY Katie Johnson

In her art and in her life, Wirangu artist Aunty Beverly Meldrum has always stayed close to the sea.

Inspired by her upbringing on the South Australian coast and her current home on the Mornington Peninsula, she wanted to showcase the healing properties of the ocean through her work.

So, when she was accepted into the Koorie Heritage Trust's Blak Jewellery Program, Ms Meldrum knew what to do.

"The design for all of my pieces come from kelp which I love working with because it's like a healing for me," Ms Meldrum said.

"I love the smell of it, the texture of it, sometimes it's thick and durable and other times it's thin almost like ribbons – it's always a surprise to work with and it's always different."

Using kelp, fishing net, metals and gold, Ms Meldrum created her *Found Treasures* jewellery collection which includes a necklace and a breastplate.

All of the materials were personally collected from Mushroom Reef in Flinders, with the intention to bring their beauty back to life through art. Ms Meldrum said that working with kelp meant that the final product was dictated by the sea.

"When I collect kelp I just walk until something catches my eye, almost like the kelp is



saying 'pick me!' and then I put it in a shopping bag and bring it home," Ms Meldrum said.

"When you're working with metal, you can plan how it's going to come out, but with kelp each piece is different and has a life of its own."

"I don't force my jewellery pieces into something the kelp doesn't want to be."

Ms Meldrum said that the jewellery, which will be showcased until February 27 at the Koorie Heritage Trust building, was inspired by the grounding and mediative power of the sea.

"I love the texture of the water, the sound of the waves, breathing in the sea air – it's all healing from within," Ms Meldrum said.



"Even when you sit on the beach, watching the force of the waves go in and out is like Mother Nature is breathing."

As the first of its kind in Australia, the Blak Design program was created to provide a platform for nurturing sustainable, indigenous-led design businesses.

Ms Meldrum, along with 10 other artists, took part in six weeks of hands-on jewellery design and making workshops under the guidance of jewellers Blanche Tilden and Laura Deakin, as well as small business skills tutorials.

The works are currently on display in a virtual exhibition on the KHT website, with hopes

in-person visitors will be able to attend after lockdown.

Ms Meldrum said the Blak Design program had been "mind-blowing" and she was keen to learn more skills.

"Never in a million years would I have thought that at my age, I would be doing anything of that calibre, and to think it has led me here," Ms Meldrum said.

"It was an intense year of learning and re-thinking, and using the tools of the trade in the RMIT silver smithing department where I learnt about metals and the tools associated with them."

"I would love to learn even more."

As for her future plans, Ms Meldrum said she was brimming with new jewellery concept ideas.

"Do you know when you go to the pokies and the machine goes off, that's my head at the moment with all these jewellery ideas," Ms Meldrum said. "It's crazy, it's very exciting."

To view the virtual exhibit, visit koorieheritagetrust.com.au or Aunty Meldrum's Instagram [@bevonline56](https://www.instagram.com/bevonline56) ●

For more information:
koorieheritagetrust.com.au

HOUSING TOWERS

Horn of Africa refugees and migrants

I am privileged to have had the opportunity to meet and become friends with many Horn of Africa residents of public housing in Melbourne.

WORDS BY Cory Memery

They have made Melbourne their home and a recently published book titled, *A Home for the Diaspora From the Horn of Africa to Melbourne's Public Housing*, tells their stories in their own words. Written by Sandra Carrasco, Neeraj Dangol and Majdi Faleh, it can be downloaded here for free by scanning the QR code:



A human right to affordable housing in Victoria

I believe access to adequate housing should be a human right for all adults and children in Victoria and everywhere else around the world.

The right to affordable, safe housing has been recognised as a fundamental human right under the UN's International Covenant on Economic Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR). This UN Covenant has never been voted into law by any governments in Australia as they have all held the view that somehow the private market will deliver.

Despite decades of federal government subsidies through tax concessions and Commonwealth Rent Assistance, though, the private rental market has proven unable to deliver what is needed. Tax concessions have instead driven the price of housing up dramatically during the past two decades. As the subsidies flowed to private investors, investment in public housing was wound back to next to nothing.

Castan Centre for human rights law

The Castan Centre at Monash University wants to change our state's position on this basic human right to have the Victorian Parliament vote the UN Covenant into law and to have a plan to end homelessness in our state.

I met recently (along with other members of the Save Public Housing Collective) with Professor Kevin Bell and Professor Jean Allain from the Castan Centre to hear about their work on making both changes in how we should all see and support the provision of affordable housing for very low- to low-income earners in our state.

During our meeting we agreed that there had been an abrogation of a duty of care by successive state governments for those who are homeless and desperate for affordable, secure housing. I have accepted an invitation by Professor Bell to help the Castan Centre gain support for their work and I will update readers on its progress in my future columns.

COVID and public housing residents

The management of recent COVID-19 Delta outbreaks in public housing has been managed very differently to last year's detention lockdowns.

No police control over residents and there is a sense of support rather than repression, despite Premier Andrews boasting he would do it all again if he had to.

I want to give a big shout out to Victorian Ombudsman Deborah Glass for her fearless criticism of the state government's actions last year and my own city councillors call for an apology – an apology we have yet to hear. It was her report that made this outbreak's management different.

Public housing maintenance

Despite funds being made available for maintenance many high-rise buildings have lifts in disrepair and other urgent jobs needing to be done. The Carlton Tenants Committee met with Minister Richard Wynne recently via Zoom and he has promised to act. I hope I can give you a positive update in my next column ●

ROTARY CLUB - NORTH MELBOURNE



Rotary looking for volunteers to help the homeless start up their new homes

The Rotary Club of North Melbourne has for quite a while now worked to help the homeless by providing support for established organisations that have a proven track record in this field.

We have been big supporters of both St Mary's House of Welcome in Fitzroy and Ozanam House in North Melbourne. We have provided considerable financial support to both.

In the case of Ozanam House we probably have a closer relationship that also involves providing small gifts each month with activities for their residents to help keep them occupied.

We are now heavily involved in a new venture and are looking at assisting with another as well. The new venture is that we have been the first Rotary Club to actually sign up as founding member of RIMERN being the Rotary Inner Melbourne Emergency Relief Network.

There are now 14 Rotary Clubs signed up and our role is to collect and distribute household goods to people that have just been provided housing. The recipients are referred by various other organisations that assist people who have been homeless or possibly even victims of family violence. Some may have just come out of prison.

RIMERN does not find these people accommodation but when we are contacted, we can completely supply the whole house with all the goods required; beds, bedding, tables, chairs, crockery, cutlery, TVs, fridges, washing

machines and more and it is all completely free.

We have a very large storage facility in East Brunswick where we operate from and though we have only been operating for around 100 days it is already completely full. Most of our goods come from deceased estates where the family must empty out the house after it is sold (sometimes before).

We have already made many deliveries to some very grateful recipients. One lady was given a delivery a few weeks ago and when one of our volunteers dropped in at the end of the day with a few more things she was amazed to see how she had put everything in place so stylishly making it almost look like a display home.

The pride she had in her new home made all the work worthwhile. But, of course, this all takes an enormous amount of work and so a large number of volunteers are required. The biggest job is going through all the goods after they arrive and sort them all out and put them in their right spot so when a delivery is required everything is organised.

At the moment, our club is doing a 45-minute shift every two weeks on a Saturday afternoon, and we would love to have more volunteers to both take the load off some of our stalwarts and also open the possibility of doing an additional fortnightly shift.

Please be assured that you do not need to be a Rotarian to volunteer so if you like to consider being a volunteer, please give our volunteer coordinator Judy Page a call on 0425 741 624 or email judydpage3@gmail.com ●

STATE MP

Thank you to our community healthcare heroes and everyone getting vaccinated

On my way to Parliament recently, I popped in to say hello and thank you to the amazing nurses and staff from Cohealth and the City of Melbourne who are running a pop-up vaccination clinic at Melbourne Town Hall.

This clinic welcomes all, especially providing vaccinations to those experiencing homelessness, international students and other people without Medicare, and anyone else who has had difficulty accessing the vaccination program so far.

The nurses told me that people lined up from 3am on the first day it opened.

Thanks to the City of Melbourne, Co-Ground is also providing free coffee and snacks, as well as a friendly face and time to chat, to people who are sleeping rough while they're waiting. These people are prioritised in the queue to ensure they don't face any additional barriers to getting their jab.

Staff from Cohealth have also done an amazing job setting up pop-up vaccination clinics at public housing towers in Melbourne's inner-city suburbs, and providing health advice in local languages, something we're very proud to support.

Every vaccination helps protect our community, and with the recent "re-opening road-map" it's our ticket to opening up again. The government has announced that for the next few months, many of the things we want to do (like going to a cafe or pub or event) will only be available to those who are vaccinated, so now is the time to book an appointment if you haven't already.

Thank you to all those who have already had your jab. Young people especially have been coming out in droves over the last few weeks and months, since many have only recently become eligible for the vaccine. Thank you.



I've recently been double-jabbed, as soon as I was eligible, and I'm also feeling very grateful for science and scientists! We're incredibly lucky to have a vaccine, and even luckier to have access to it when so many countries still don't.

If you'd like to make an appointment at the Melbourne Town Hall vaccination clinic, or any other clinic near you, you can do so at coronavirus.vic.gov.au.

If there's ever anything I can do for you, please get in touch. ●



Ellen Sandell
STATE MP FOR MELBOURNE
OFFICE@ELLENSANDELL.COM

ROTARY CLUB - FLEMINGTON & KENSINGTON

Rotary is for everyone

“

One of the great strengths of Rotary is the networking and connections it can facilitate.

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Through our members, clubs and activities, Rotary connects people in business, education, service and government and is able to join people from all walks of life and thus strengthen our ability to make a difference.

This was brought home to many members of Flemington Kensington Rotary at a recent meeting when we were joined by some of our Rotary alumni. We chatted with Riley from Texas who had come to Melbourne as a 16-year-old exchange student in 2014 and is now just starting her law career – here in Melbourne.

She was a delightful young lady who spent her year staying with four Rotary families, attending school and exploring Victoria and Australia before heading back to the USA.

Then there was Yvonne who in 1977 left Ballina in NSW and travelled by ship to Cape Town in South Africa for an unforgettable year and experience living through apartheid. It was an incredible learning journey that had a profound impact on her life choices.

Zoe and Jules are two young people who participated in the youth leadership program and

who learnt about their own leadership skills and abilities, gained resilience, made connections and grew in confidence.

There are many other youth leadership and development programs provided by Rotary clubs around the world. Our club strongly supports the National Youth Science Forum where Year 12 students have the opportunity to participate in a 12-day science immersion program at a major university meeting, and being involved in science events, lectures and visits which impact on their further studies and career options.

During the past eight years our club has sponsored 11 students from locals schools who have gone on to study science in fields as diverse as genetics, aerospace, medicine, international law, nursing, zoology and environmental science.

Rotary is not just for businesspeople, adults or men. Rotary is for everyone who wants to make a difference in the world in some way and to give back. If you would like to join with us, make a call, send an email or when COVID restrictions lift, call in to our Op Shop at 444 Racecourse Rd, Flemington ●

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



THE KENSINGTON ASSOCIATION

I'll miss the growl of my hot exhaust!

Let's have a go at rethinking the life we have lived with our cars.

I think there is a big challenge on the horizon for us Aussies, especially for those for whom cars are more than just a form of transport.

There are a myriad of reasons why cars are useful or convenient – not many of us live with a market around the corner. We also live in a “wide brown land” where weather and distance challenge us; we need our cars to connect and visit.

These are the practicalities, but there are also the “emotionalities” – a myriad of sentiments – power, safety, independence, status, coolness. How will we cope?

Will you miss the growl of your hot exhaust? Perhaps electric cars fill the gap by having a choice of HETB (HiFi Exhaust Tone Broadcast).

Will electric or hydrogen power become affordable, or will the ownership of a car become a very visible difference between the “haves” and the “have nots?” Life with (or without) our cars is just one challenge that climate change is bringing, but it's a sensitive one, it touches many established expectations and so many human foibles.

Many will know that policy and planning people are already grappling with “the car problem” and preparing for change. Locally we have the Arden Structural Plan (ASP) and the Macaulay Structural Plan (MSP), within which Clause 52.06 of parking provision guidelines is being quietly changed (some would say “compromised”).

Through a “parking overlay” arrangement it seems there are likely to be precinct-wide parking plans, as opposed to parking being determined by the number of apartments in a building. As I understand this, it would enable parking provision to be flexible, allowing for different transport options near the precinct.

As I am writing, the consultations on the ASP are about to conclude on October 11 (so will have concluded by the time you read this), but consultations on the MSP will soon begin. Make sure you take any opportunity to have your say about these Plans. Kensington Association submissions on both plans will soon be on our website.

A divergent thought – is it possible that living without a car could become a badge of honour!? Could Macaulay Rd become a Mecca for pedestrians and scooters!?

Let me put my optimist hat on for a moment.

My guess is that the current residents of a precinct (in our case, those of us in North Melbourne and Kensington) will struggle in the short term with any new “living with cars” arrangements but will adjust quickly.

Among new residents there will always be those who don't even recognise that there is a transition underway, and they will sometimes



park in the street, whether or not they have a car spot for their apartment.

Initially that will be annoying for current residents, but in time, with stricter parking regulations, the laggards will catch on, and the upside will blossom.

As the transition progresses, public transport will improve – it must; traffic congestion will be held in check and gradually decrease; private, smaller scale transport will diversify, and more jobs will be created locally.

Climate change compels me to contextualise this thinking. Here are a few relevant stats from the March 2019 *Quarterly Update of Australia's National Greenhouse Gas Inventory*.

In percentage terms (in Australia) the transport sector has experienced the largest growth, emissions increasing 64.9 per cent between 1990 to March 2019. Also, In the year to March 2019, transport accounted for 18.8 per cent of Australia's national inventory. The domestic transport sector accounts for more than 70 per cent of liquid fuels consumed in Australia.

It's hard to deny that climate change is driving us to rethink how we live with cars. What we don't know is how fast any transition will proceed, and how easy it will be to adapt our lives and expectations.

Let's face it, we are “creatures of habit”, are we not? We will be challenged by any prospective “compromise on A to obtain B”. But, if I have to lose the throaty sound of my exhaust (my car's), I will need something really good in exchange ●



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City Life

“Just add crowd.”

Flemington Racecourse



Faces of North West City

Who are you? What’s cool about you?
And what do you want to be when you grow up?



IAN, SEVEN YEARS OLD,
NORTH MELBOURNE PRIMARY SCHOOL
“I like Roblox the video game and maths is my favourite subject. I want to be a scientist when I grow up!”



GWILYM, 8 YEARS OLD,
NORTH MELBOURNE PRIMARY SCHOOL.
“My favourite subject is technology, and my favourite video game is Minecraft. When I grow up, I want to be a YouTuber!”



RUBY, 7 YEARS OLD,
KENSINGTON PRIMARY SCHOOL.
“I like drawing pictures of my family and sticking them on the art wall in our house. I want to be a vet when I grow up because I love animals.”



JUNE, 6 YEARS OLD,
HOLY ROSARY PRIMARY SCHOOL.
“I’m a Minecraft expert and I own my own YouTube channel. I like art and maths and I want to be a scientist when I grow up.”

PARKVILLE GARDENS RESIDENTS’ ASSOCIATION

A world record that’s no cause for celebration

“Melbourne has now been in lockdown longer than any other city on the face of the earth. Who could ever have imagined that the city would go from “most liveable” to “most lockable”?”



Hats off to all the workers who have kept basic services going – frontline health workers and carers, supermarket staff, public transport staff, emergency services personnel, delivery drivers and many more.

And a round of applause for all who have found creative ways of distributing meals and providing personal support to those in need. Let’s build on the best we can be.

Keeping fingers crossed that we will soon emerge from our confinement, we have things to look forward to here in Parkville Gardens.

First up is our Children’s Week event, an orienteering adventure in the neighbourhood and in Royal Park. That’s been put back a week to Sunday, October 31 to improve the odds of it being able to go ahead.

Second is the AGM of the Parkville Gardens

Residents’ Association, now rescheduled for the evening of Wednesday, December 8. More on that in next month’s edition when we’re clearer about what form it will take.

Readers who are local residents, please do two things. First, put the date in your diary. Second, consider putting yourself forward as a candidate for the committee. New ideas, talents and energies are always welcome. Parkville Gardens is a great place to live; let’s make it even better. Contact me at president@pgra.org.au.

Third, we’re excited about staging a community music festival in December. Courtesy of the City of Melbourne, we have funding for an event as part of its Summer Festival Program. Details are still being worked out, but the basic plan is this ...

Residents will be invited to make themselves comfortable on their picnic rugs on the grassed reserve and enjoy a program of music from early afternoon to early evening. There’ll be jazz and popular music from three ensembles. This will be a December weekend event, date to be decided. We’ll be hoping for just the right weather. Thanks to the City of Melbourne!

Our local feature for this month is Mercy Place. Here’s what Matthew Archdall, Mercy Health marketing manager, has to say about it ...

“People who are new to Parkville Gardens might wonder what the multi-story building is on the corner of Cade Way and William St. With its discreet and modern appearance, they could be excused for thinking it is another block of apartments. Essentially it is, but the people

living there have access to so many services and amenities – a hairdressing salon, chapel, reception area, rooftop bar, lounge areas, gardens, visiting entertainers (when COVID restrictions permit), internal courtyards, a community hall and in-house catering and laundry.”

“The lucky occupants of this building – Mercy Place – reside in the 52-unit retirement village at the front of the block or in the 140-bed aged care home at the back. Described by many as one of Parkville’s best kept secrets, it is owned and operated by Mercy Health, who also operates hospitals and provide home care as part of their aged care offering. One of their home care offices is located just around the corner on Cade Way.”

“Recently, the apartments and the aged care home have undergone renovations, and I have been told that plans have been drawn up to remodel and reopen the café that sits between the two properties. Now, that is something we can all look forward to! Thanks, Matthew.”

For more information, you can contact him at matthew.archdall@mercy.com.au ●

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



Tom Knowles
TOM KNOWLES IS THE PRESIDENT
OF PARKVILLE GARDENS
ASSOCIATION.
PRESIDENT@PGRA.ORG.AU

MELBOURNE ZOO

The wonder of wildlife

I've been thinking a lot about habitat lately. Maybe it's because we're all spending so much more time at home. A habitat is home, a home for wildlife.

WORDS BY *Finn*
MELBOURNE ZOO SENIOR MANAGER
OF SUSTAINABILITY AND ENVIRONMENT

There's habitat all around us: in the local park, along our street, in our backyard. Even a balcony or windowsill can be habitat for something! I'm lucky enough to work in one of central Melbourne's biggest and most diverse habitats – Melbourne Zoo. Most people know the zoo is home to lions, giraffes, zebras and meerkats, but you may not know the zoo is also home to a huge variety of wild animals during the year. Our trees, ponds and gardens provide food, water and shelter – in short, habitat. In fact, the zoo grounds are a collection of different habitats, perfect for an array of local birds, reptiles, mammals and invertebrates.



I realised very soon after joining the zoo that it's a real sanctuary in the city. It's a refuge for so many animals, as well as people when they visit. The variety of wildlife that visits the zoo or makes a home here is amazing. The zoo is brilliant for bird lovers. Rainbow Lorikeets, Wattlebirds, Bellbirds, Ducks and Wrens are all easily spotted, and there are also the more occasional winged visitors like Tawny Frogmouths, Pardalotes and the Yellow-tailed Black Cockatoos who drop in when some of our trees are producing their favourite seeds. There are many local butterflies and all sorts of other invertebrates and some amazing water dragons and turtles who live at ponds and lakes in different parts of the zoo. And that's just to name a few. I know that many of our Zoos Victoria Members and visitors love these wild residents and visitors as much as they do the more famous zoo animals. We love and care for these wild animals also. My team of horticulturalists and sustainability experts thinks about them when we're creating gardens, planting, pruning, mulching, and composting. We consider them when managing water quality and irrigation across the zoo and when we design and look after buildings and infrastructure. As nature enthusiasts we understand how important the zoo is as a refuge and

playground, not just for our zoo members and the people of Melbourne, but for the animals of Melbourne. We love this wildlife but coexisting with it can be challenging at times. We need to discourage possums from exploring places where they could get injured. So, we have bin latches on our bins to stop possums getting into them at night. And we block off and regularly inspect our roof spaces to ensure possums can't get into buildings. Birds nesting in high numbers can also damage some of our trees. In this area, as in everything at the zoo, animal welfare is at the core our decision making. The opportunity we have to create habitat brings with it a responsibility to manage that habitat carefully in the best interests of the animals who visit or live in it. Wildlife-safe netting on backyard fruit trees is something that might be relevant to you in your backyard or your local community garden. We can all help to create habitat where we live. There are little things you can do to attract wildlife into your own local environment, and to care for them when they arrive. Maybe it's planting some flowers for the bees and butterflies, or trees or shrubs for birds, or making a small pond for frogs. Think about what sort of animals you want to attract or make a home for

and research what they love and need. It's fun! It's so important from a mental health perspective to have that connection to nature in our everyday life, especially when we're spending so much more time at home. If you just sit quietly somewhere outside at your home or in your local area, nature comes out from everywhere. When you just pause and listen and watch, the birds get closer, and the bees and butterflies appear. If you're lucky a lizard might poke its head out. Just animals doing their thing – foraging, feeding, exploring. Nature is all around us, but sometimes we need to be still to discover it. Animals bring so much joy. I love to observe that hive of activity. As an animal lover, I'm so aware that the space wild animals need to thrive is diminishing across the world. It's partly what brought me to the zoo. I'm passionate about the zoo's mission of fighting extinction and creating special places for wildlife and people who love wildlife. This is my chance to make a contribution to that bigger picture. It's what keeps me optimistic. I believe we all have a role to play in creating a beautiful global sanctuary for wildlife. For me it starts at my place and at Melbourne Zoo. And I am certain that you can make a big contribution where you live, also ●

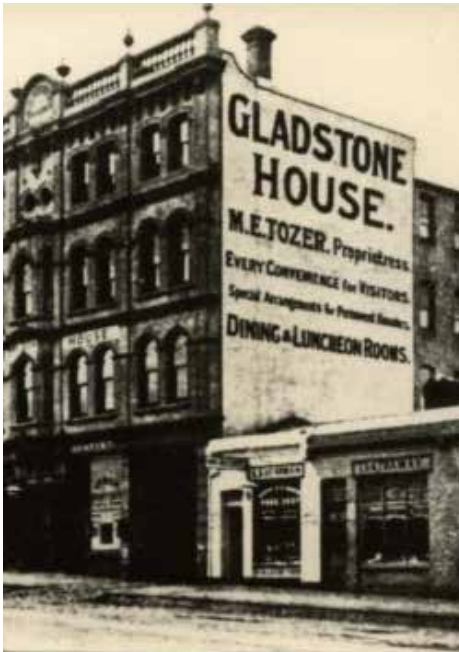
HISTORY

Coffee Palace

As North Melbourne developed and expanded so did the number of pubs.

WORDS BY *Felicity Jack*

In the first decade of the 20th century there were 57 pubs, a tally which did not count those in West Melbourne. The neighbourhood of North Melbourne, centred on Errol St, still retains a number of pubs, but in recent years they have been joined by a profusion of coffee shops and cafes. In the 1880s there were two "Coffee Palaces" on Victoria St within a short walk of each other. Coffee Palaces were residential hotels where alcohol was not served. A number of them sprang up in Melbourne around this time due to the influence of the Temperance Movement that lobbied the state government to reduce the number of public houses as a means of reducing public drunkenness. The 1888 Centennial Exhibition, held at Carlton's Exhibition Building, attracted a great number of visitors and tradesmen to Melbourne from interstate and overseas. So, the two "Palaces" on Victoria St were attractive places for them to stay as they were within easy walking distance of the Carlton Gardens as well as being close to the city attractions. The Oriental Coffee Palace, at 326 Victoria St, opened in 1888. It later changed its name to Gladstone House, possibly because a factory manufacturing Gladstone bags was situated in an adjacent stable. Proximity to the Queen Victoria Market made it an excellent lodging place for market workers, many of them European immigrants, and shortage of accommodation after the Second World War meant that it was a



The neighbourhood of North Melbourne, centred on Errol St, still retains a number of pubs, but in recent years they have been joined by a profusion of coffee shops and cafes.



magnet for many migrant families. This grand old building remained until it was demolished in 1997 to make way for the Polaris apartment building, much to the consternation of local residents who fought its demolition all the way to VCAT. Ekman's North and West Melbourne Coffee Palace, now the carpark on the corner of Roden and Victoria streets, also dates back to the 1880s. As you can see in the 1885 photograph of Ekman's Draper's store, the small coffee palace was situated next door. An article in the *North Melbourne Advertiser* in 1892 tells how it had been extensively extended and renovated. It had 30 bedrooms, and each bed had a spring mattress. There were separate sitting rooms for ladies and gentlemen, and a smoking room for the men. There was a reading room with a piano, and a basement billiard room (to ensure that

it was cool) was lit at night by 26 burners. This was presumably open to the public as there was a second table for the use of residents. Lunch was available for the modest sum of one shilling, and the article boasted that it was "equal to anything in the city – indeed, as regards fresh vegetables and good bread it surpasses many places in Melbourne". There were also spacious club rooms on the ground floor that were available for use by local societies and associations so that meetings did not have to be held in a hotel. Fire precautions were provided by buckets of water on each landing. Unfortunately (or not?) these were not to hand when, in 1972, the derelict building that was due for destruction was destroyed by a mysterious fire, thus saving its owners the costs of demolition ●

Pet’s Corner

Meet Boots, the sidekick

“Boots” isn’t your typical dog’s name, but she is a typical sort of dog.



WORDS BY *Spencer Fowler Steen*

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If you ask Sarah-Beth, her owner, why her pup has such a name, she’ll tell you it has nothing to do with the type of shoe.

“People used to say I looked like *Dora the Explorer*, so her sidekick in the show is Boots the monkey, so Boots is my sidekick!” she said.

Picked up on a farm from a breeder in 2010, Boots will be 11 years old next month.

According to Sarah-Beth, she’s a bit lazy, verging on boring at times, but a lover of people, nonetheless.

“She loves people, she’ll go around the dog park and get pats off everybody and sit with them,” she said.

“She’ll bark when other dogs or prams come past. She doesn’t really know how to play, she’s a lazy dog,

a bit boring!”

Boots eats anything she can possibly find, so Sarah-Beth has had to put her on a special dog diet to slim her down.

But that doesn’t stop her providing Boots the occasional peanut butter treat, which she loves.

Sara-Beth said she had always travelled a lot, so naturally Boots had been her companion.

“She’s got used to trips in the car. If we get up any earlier than usual, she’ll go down to the garage to try and get into the car straight away – she thinks we’re going on a holiday,” she said.

Although she’s travelled far and wide, Sarah-Beth said she was enjoying Kensington the most for its “beautiful” parks and open spaces to take Boots for a walk ●

NORTH WEST CITY LOCAL

“Molesworth Musos” strike a chord

WORDS BY *Spencer Fowler Steen*

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Staving off the COVID blues is what it’s all about for North Melbourne local Ash Voellner.

Throughout the pandemic, he’s regularly whipped out his guitar, donned loud, Hawaiian shirts and unashamedly fired up the vocal chords from his front porch, bringing joy to people’s lives during repeated lockdowns.

And recently, Mr Voellner’s partner Kate Bowshel has joined him on the microphone, with the duo singing catchy crowd pleasers to the delight of passers-by on Molesworth St.

Mr Voellner said while last year’s performances attracted between 20 to 30 socially distanced locals, now, up to 70 people were stopping by to watch while out walking.

“It’s made people’s day,” he said.

“I’ve received gifts in the mail from people I don’t know for easing the COVID blues.”

After one October performance, Mr Voeller even received a bottle of red from an appreciative audience member addressing him by the moniker “Molesworth Muso”.

Mr Voellner sadly lost his job in aged care at the beginning of the year.

Since then, he’s been doing handyperson jobs for people, building his reputation in the local community as a skilled worker who can fix things cheaply.

“If people need help, that’s what I’m there for. I’ve just put three screws into an elderly lady’s cabinet door, and I’ll charge her \$40 or \$50, as opposed to a couple of hundred she’d pay to a tradesperson,” Mr Voellner said.

And if it’s something he can fix quickly, Mr Voellner said he often turns down payment.

Asked why he decided to start singing and playing guitar for the local community, Mr Voellner said he took inspiration from a video of a violin player in San Francisco who lived across the road from an opera singer.

The duo arranged to perform together on their balconies in front of a crowd while in lockdown.



Keen to bring the same enjoyment to the local area through combining strings and vocals, Mr Voellner posted on the North Melbourne Good Karma Network Facebook page saying he would be performing music on the Molesworth St median strip.

“I’m not saying I’m any bloody good, but one thing I can do is sing and play guitar, and at the end of the day people appreciate anyone having the balls to do it,” he said.

“No one was breaking rules. The cops drove past, slowed down, gave me a wave and drove off.”

Both self-taught musicians, Mr Voellner and Ms Bowshel have forged unlikely friendships with people in the neighbourhood through their performances.

During breaks, the duo often chats with people over the fence thanking them for coming down.

“Then while out walking the dogs a couple of weeks later, you’ll bump into them and they’ll be like, ‘this is the guy that does the music,



when’s your next one?” Mr Voellner said.

One day during one of his performances, Mr Voellner’s said his neighbour from across the road, Josh, plugged in his electric guitar and started playing along to one of the songs.

“This guy was just incredible – in the break started playing *The Entertainer* and started off as normal, then went crazy! I was like, ‘oh my god you’re embarrassing me.’”

To strike a visual contrast between the front of their old, weatherboard house, Mr Voellner said he bought four of the “loudest” Hawaiian shirts he could find to match his “burnt orange” guitar while performing.

Ms Bowshel is also loving singing songs with her partner, belting out classics such as *Space Oddity* by David Bowie and *Accidentally Kelly St* by Frente!.

“It’s been really good to have that together and practice during the week,” he said.

During his first gig, Mr Voellner said he was struggling with nerves and wasn’t playing “that well”.

Sensing this, Ms Bowshel stepped in.

“She just looked at me and said, ‘play to me’, and it just went through the roof from there, I started playing really well,” Mr Voellner said.

Having just played his seventh performance over numerous lockdowns, Mr Voellner and his partner are showing no signs of slowing down.

Mr Voellner is currently in conversations with local “foodies” to gauge interest in a 10 per cent voucher for his performance attendees to spend at local businesses.

Although the homemade jar of olives he received as a gift from someone in the neighbourhood is going straight to Ms Bowshell, it’s the enjoyment of brightening people’s day which keeps him going.

“I’ve got big JBL speakers, so I hear people streets away clapping their hands to the music!” he said with a laugh.

To enquire about Mr Voellner’s services or to organise vouchers, contact him on 0401 585 729 ●

BUSINESS

Shaping the Next Chapter of local development

WORDS BY Jack Hayes

In building development, it is common to find buzzwords like “sustainability” and “community” littered through a company’s mantra. They are popular terms that provide prospective buyers with the assurance needed in making what will be one most important decision in their lives.

It isn’t common, however, to find a business, particularly within the intensely competitive world of local real estate, which backs up that mantra with action and commitment to their clients and local community.

Next Chapter Projects does just that. Acting as a conduit between developers and buyers, Next Chapter works strictly with high-quality, architecturally-finessed and sustainably-minded new home developments in Melbourne’s inner-north.

With the face of North and West Melbourne to change considerably over the coming decades with a burgeoning CBD and Arden urban renewal on the horizon, Next Chapter director and founder Tom Hirini told *North West City News* the future of development in the suburbs would define the area for the decades to come.

“Living in North Melbourne, I have seen how much investment and development is happening in the area and the ones that align with our values, are the projects we would live in ourselves,” Mr Hirini said.

“Next Chapter was born out of seeing how the usual real estate model has been, where you are in and you’re out and on to the next one, but we are trying to build strong relationships and build a community within our projects.”

“For us, we aren’t a one-size-fits-all agency that is going to be project based, we are very client based. In that regard, we like to think of ourselves as consultants rather than salespeople.”

A North Melbourne local of more than seven years, Mr Hirini founded Next Chapter 12 months ago after a decade in the industry, building the knowledge and relationships that would eventually see him start his own business.



Mr Hirini and his team at Next Chapter now have three projects under their management: the recently complete Tailor Residences at 491 Victoria St, West Melbourne; 388 Barkly St, Brunswick, which will be completed in 2022, and the now selling Florenze Terrace, at 89 Lothian St, North Melbourne.

“Tailor Residences is a fantastic case study as to show what we are about and how we are trying to position our business. When dealing with local owner occupiers, understanding their motivations is the most important aspect in our discussions,” Mr Hirini said.

“It’s not just about the right property, or the right townhouse, although that certainly plays a big role, it’s about the building and the community within it.”

“There is a real intangible value because it hasn’t been built yet and it’s hard to say what it is like when it’s complete. Is it going to be a full of owner occupiers who are like-minded, have similar interests, kids at the same school, who are active on the owners’ corporation and making sure the building is taken care of, or is it a building with a higher proportion of investors?”

As with any off-the-plan transaction, Mr Hirini said trust and transparency were two key elements of his selling process that couldn’t be compromised.

Providing that bridge between those who design homes and those who want to live in them, allowing Next Chapter to put a face to an often-faceless developer, and inversely the business is then able to provide earnest feedback from purchasers.

“If you look at Tailor, we have been incredibly lucky to get to know everyone as they have bought, physically helping them move, introducing them to other residents in the building and maintaining that connection with our clients,” Next Chapter selling consultant Imani Fawahl said.

“We don’t want to let that go, we still want to be available and involved with our people.”

Ms Fawahl said it had been amazing to see a mentality shift for purchasers to wage their living towards a green lifestyle.

A perfect example of enhanced community outcomes is the transition of Next Chapter’s Florenze Terrace development, in a joint venture between Drake Developments and



Nicholas Murray Architects, which saw 33 apartments and 34 car spaces become 18 spacious and architecturally outstanding townhouses and equivalent car spaces.

“It isn’t about aligning yourself with a building, but getting a developer who is willing to look at a project and think, how will the community respond?” Ms Fawahl said.

“The last two years has made people hone in what they are doing and what they can be doing and how you can live a sustainable life.”

“They are wanting electric car spaces, solar panels on their roof, and it is all about rainwater collection. The project has changed into a celebration of the community and enhancing the lifestyle of the area.”

As locals who work and live in the area, Mr Hirini and Ms Fawahl want to make sure the buildings Next Chapter sell, and the developers who build them, have the same aligned values, and that is to improve the community they built in and provide an exceptional standard of living for their residents.

“Living in North Melbourne and working here, we have a sense of ownership. We want to make a positive contribution to the community,” Mr Hirini said.

“Only offering clients buildings we would live in ourselves is imperative. It must be practical, a smaller community and ethically and sustainably designed.” ●

For more information:
thenextchapter.com.au

NATURE

Hello possums

It’s not as common as it once was to be woken in the night by the thumping of possums running across the roof, the raucous guttural sounds of their territorial squabbles destroying our dreams and shaping our nights.

WORDS BY Howard Birnstihl

Nor do we now sneak off down to the Flagstaff Gardens after dinner seeking out those shining eyes peering expectantly down at us from gnarled trunks, tiny pink noses twitching expectantly at the aroma of the chopped apple and sliced bread held eagerly in the brown paper bag in one hand, torch and enticing morsel stretched out in the other.

Squeals of delight would ring through the park as each new furry critter was discovered. Alas, no more.

It’s not as if their numbers have dwindled though disease (as in the case of the Tasmanian Devil) or been hunted to extinction by men, foxes and feral cats (such as bilbies and bandicoots). It’s partly bureaucracy and a case of fellas felling trees. Show me a tree and I’ll show you a possum. Show me less trees and...

Melbourne is a city blessed with its greenery but, of course, there’s always that balancing act to consider, the one where we must decide as to our priorities.



Tradition has seen our parks and streets dominated by exotic tree species, particularly elms (our avenues of elms the most majestic in the world today, those overseas ravaged by Dutch Elm disease) and our hungry possums are rather partial to a nice tender young sprig of elm for breakfast (not to mention lunch, dinner and supper) and so it’s possums versus elms, with the elms coming out on top.

To prevent possums settling in the trees metal bands have been placed around the trunks and these have been largely effective, however, possums are clever little critters and I have been delighted to see their ingenuity in action on many occasions.

Not only are they accomplished contortionists, sometimes actually squeezing between the metal and the trunk to gain access to their hollow above, but they are top tightrope walkers as well, cheekily running along electricity wires from one tree to another.

I do admire the elms, but I must confess I feel a warm glow when I see these mischievous examples of beating the system by those cheeky possums.

And so, what are these possums exactly? Australia has a number of species (Victoria’s state fauna emblem being the endangered Leadbeater’s possum), and probably our most ubiquitous marsupial is the aptly named



common brushtail (*Trichosurus vulpecula* to be precise), those which once filled our parks but have been banished to who knows where?

Not as well-known as his smaller cousin the ringtail (with pointy nose, bulging eyes and that famous prehensile tail, and probably the one attacking your apricot tree each night), or as cute as the pygmy possum which fits comfortably in a child’s hand, the brushy is larger than a cat and built like the Hulk, its tail possessing great potential if Davy Crockett hats ever come back into style.

Possessing two opposing fingers or toes allows for excellent gripping of branches, you could call the brushy the Tarzan of the bush as it swings effortlessly, if noisily, through the trees. Although considered a pest in the city and suburbs (and in New Zealand where as an illegal immigrant it is devastating their forests) it is actually quite an asset in our bushland, delighting in eating the parasitic mistletoe which would otherwise decimate our eucalypts.

Like koalas, possums are fairly harmless creatures, but their claws can be quite damaging. One brushy we rescued as a tiny shivering hairless baby after falling from one of those mammoth palms in the Flagstaff Gardens grew to be a typical ravenous teenager before we deposited him out in our peach tree in the backyard. In the meantime, “Poss” as we called



him, used us as his tree, the summer months with us at the time seeing us in shorts. My legs still bear the scars – and he was never satisfied until he was sitting on our heads.

Brushtails bearing pink noses and long whiskers are usually grey, brown in colour, although I’ve seen a number of rufus types bearing a strong orange tinge, and like all marsupials, females carry their young in a pouch. There are usually only one or two offspring which, tiny when born, gravitate to the mother’s pouch where they remain as snug as a bug in a rug for 120 days or so before graduating to riding on Mum’s back.

After a further four to six months of this onerous parenting, they become too large and heavy to be carried around and are encouraged to leave home and get a job. Sound familiar?

Award-winning photographer Howard Birnstihl has lived and worked in North Melbourne for the past 45 years. Spending much of his time photographing in the bush, collecting a huge image file of native flora and fauna, he has also found a surprising amount of wildlife in the inner suburbs. Developing an interest in writing, he has published a couple of successful novels, as well as many articles on Australian nature and architecture ●

Quiz



- 1. What does an ornithologist study?
- 2. The old North Melbourne Town Hall is located on which street?
- 3. True or false: the postcode of Kensington is 3032?
- 4. Porcini, king oyster and chanterelle are types of what?
- 5. Which ex-husband of Liza Minnelli (pictured) and well-known Australian entertainer was born in Tenterfield, New South Wales?
- 6. Which iconic Melbourne tourism attraction closed down in September?
- 7. Nitmiluk National Park is found in which Australian state or territory?
- 8. An orca whale named Tilikum is the subject of what 2013 documentary?
- 9. In which US city was rock band The Velvet Underground formed?
- 10. True or false: Royal Park is the largest of Melbourne’s inner city parks?
- 11. Name the seal which has been spotted in rivers around Melbourne including the Maribyrnong River.
- 12. Major upgrades are planned for which local waterway?

QUIZ SOLUTIONS

1. Birds 2. Queensbury Street 3. False, it's 3031 4. Edible mushroom 5. Peter Allen 6. The Melbourne Star 7. Northern Territory 8. Blackfish 9. New York City 10. True 11. Salvatore 12. The Moonee Ponds Creek

5x5

No. 004

Insert the missing letters to make 10 words – five reading across the grid and five reading down.

H		F		S
	S		A	
M		N		E
	D		E	
N		S		S

SOLUTIONS

ACROSS: HAFTS, USUAL, MINCE, ADDED, NESTS, DOWN: SLEDS, ASIDE, FUNDS, TACET, SLEDS.

Sudoku

No. 004

Fill in the blank cells using the numbers from 1 to 9. Each number can only appear once in each row, column and 3x3 block

EASY

		3	8		7	6		2
						9	7	
	7	4	3		6			8
					4			
7	2		6		3		5	9
			1					
4			9		8	3	6	
	5	6						
3		2	7		5	1		

HARD

					1		2	
	4		3		7	8		
								3
	7			2			8	5
6			7		8			9
3	9			6			1	
9								
		5	8		4		3	
	3		5					

SOLUTIONS

EASY

4	6	1	5	9	7	2	8	3
7	2	8	1	3	4	9	5	6
5	9	3	8	2	6	7	1	4
9	3	2	6	7	1	5	4	8
6	5	4	3	8	9	1	2	7
1	8	7	4	5	2	6	3	9
8	1	5	9	6	3	4	7	2
3	7	6	2	2	4	5	8	9
2	4	7	9	1	7	8	3	6

HARD

4	6	1	2	7	5	9	3	8
9	3	2	4	6	8	5	7	1
2	7	7	5	9	3	1	4	2
2	1	1	7	5	9	4	8	6
6	4	3	8	8	1	7	2	9
3	9	8	2	6	1	7	4	5
8	5	4	6	8	2	7	9	1
1	9	8	7	5	3	6	4	2
7	2	6	1	4	9	3	8	5

Wordfind

Theme: Metal

The leftover letters will spell out a secret message.

M	N	W	E	L	D	I	N	G	E	T
N	I	C	K	E	L	I	G	O	L	D
Z	T	A	A	L	H	D	N	O	R	E
I	A	R	L	E	E	T	S	G	E	I
N	L	O	E	U	B	E	I	T	O	A
C	L	D	E	V	M	A	N	M	C	T
F	O	F	O	I	L	I	R	I	S	O
O	Y	P	L	A	T	I	N	U	M	M
R	T	O	P	I	P	E	S	I	R	S
G	U	N	L	E	A	F	T	S	U	R
E	T	E	V	I	R	Y	E	N	O	M

ALLOY	IRON	RUST
ALUMINIUM	LEAF	SILVER
ATOMS	MINE	SMITH
BAR	MONEY	STEEL
COPPER	NICKEL	TIN
FOIL	ORE	WELDING
FORGE	PIPES	ZINC
GOLD	PLATINUM	
GUN	RIVET	
INGOT	ROD	

Secret message: Metal detector

Crossword

No. 004

ACROSS

- 1 Cleaning implement (3)
- 3 Illegally entering (11)
- 9 Component of blood (5)
- 10 Front end of computer program (9)
- 11 Normally (7)
- 12 Highest in temperature (7)
- 13 Female name (5)
- 15 Fraternal (9)
- 17 Male name (9)
- 18 Parts (for actors) (5)
- 20 Docket (7)
- 22 US president, Bill – (7)
- 24 Quivering (9)
- 25 Monarch’s headwear (5)
- 26 Four-sided with right-angles (11)
- 27 Total (3)

DOWN

- 1 Govern incompetently (7)
- 2 Prickly animal (9)
- 3 Language spoken in parts of Sri Lanka (5)
- 4 Poet, – Dickinson (5)

1		2		3		4		5		6		7		8
9						10								
11								12						
13				14		15						16		
17										18				19
20		21						22		23				
24										25				
26												27		

- 5 Implement traditionally wielded by angry mobs (9)
- 6 Injured player carrier (9)
- 7 Silly (5)
- 8 Tremendously (7)
- 14 Stuff associated with the US (9)
- 15 Standing on end (hair or fur) (9)
- 16 Family members (9)
- 17 Eternally (7)
- 19 Word with same meaning (7)
- 21 Like dice or square boxes, e.g. (5)
- 22 Water passage (5)

SOLUTION

W	N	S	R	V	I	N	G	N	V	I	C	O	E	R
A	N	U	V	N	N	I	E							
N	M	O	H	C	N	O	I	A	V	E	S	I	A	
C	I	N	V	I	C	O	E							
N	O	I	N	T	I	C	O	E						
A	V	E	S	I	A									
S	E	T	O	R	K	O	I	D	E	D	E	R		
E	E	R	M	H	N									
A	T	R	E	H	L	O	R	E						
T	S	E	I	I	O	H	A	T	T	V	N	S	N	
V	N	E	C	O	T									
C	V	E	F	E	L	I	N	I	N					
U	N	L	I	N										
N	I	N	S	I	S	I	S	I	S	I	S	I	S	I

Codeword

No. 004

17	6	15	15	1	20	7	7	24		2	6	24
20		12		5		20		23		18		8
21	12	P	5	10		23	5	5	11	12	5	4
11		P				5		20		11		6
12	10	3	7	7		24	6	22	22	12	11	G
11				18		23		24		11		
G	4	5	5	9	5		24	8	20	G	G	3
		14		13		18		12				12
24	P	18	11	24	18	4		P	12	19	6	5
20		23		22		5				6		7
16	5	12	7	12	11	G		20	21	20	4	10
5		9		23		18		G		9		5
24	5	20		8	5	11	P	5	9	13	5	10

SOLUTIONS

P	G	S	L	W	A	V	O	O	F	V	Z	X
9	2	12	3	22	12	22	6	18	21	9	11	4
K	I	N	D	C	H	E	U	L	E	R	B	J
6	1	21	11	13	9	8	7	2	4	5	13	7

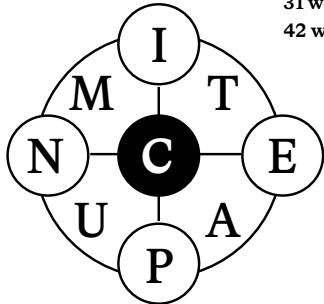
9-Letter

No. 004

Today’s Focus:

- 21 words: Good
- 31 words: Very good
- 42 words: Excellent

Using the nine letters in the grid, how many words of four letters or more can you list? The centre letter must be included and each letter may only be used once. No colloquial or foreign words. No capitalised nouns, apostrophes or plural words ending in “s”.



SOLUTIONS

Reference: Collins Concise English Dictionary

PNEUMATIC, puce, pumice, teacup, tunic, uncap, mantle, mica, nice, pace, pact, panicle, peccan, peckin, pica, cent, cinema, cite, cumin, cute, exact, encamp, epic, impact, incept, incape, inace, manic, acme, acne, actin, accumen, acute, antic, came, camp, cane, cant, cape, caput, carni, p

What's On: October 2021

Community Calendar (please check current covid restrictions)

SCIENCEWORKS AT HOME

Online

Everyday

Take a tour of Scienceworks exhibitions and enjoy a range of family friendly activities.



ANIMALS AT HOME

Online

Every day

Check out the 24/7 live streams of some of your favourite animals at Melbourne Zoo.

<https://www.zoo.org.au/animals-at-home/>

MELBOURNE MUSEUM AT HOME

Online

Everyday

Can't make it to Melbourne Museum? Take a virtual tour of the exhibitions, hear from a museum expert, dive into learning resources or get inspired by a range of family-friendly activities.

CHILDBIRTH EDUCATION FROM THE ROYAL WOMEN'S HOSPITAL

Online

Wednesday nights. 6pm–9pm

Childbirth education via online livestreaming.

BARK LADIES

November 19 – May 1

National Gallery of Victoria. Free

Bark Ladies is an exhibition that celebrates the NGV's extraordinary collection of work by Yolngu women artists from the Buku Larrngay Mulka Centre. (Buku), Northeast Arnhem Land.



Dog Lovers Show

Royal Exhibition Building (Covid pending)

Fri, 22 Oct 9:30 am–5 pm

Australia's largest dog dedicated festival will return to Melbourne's historic Royal Exhibition Building.

Visit dogloversshow.com.au/melbourne/



FREE EXERCISE ONLINE

The Carlton Baths Facebook feed is filled with free workout videos. Scroll down the page to find low-impact workouts, Pilates and the ever popular yoga classes.

Kaya Health free online workouts

Charge your body and mind with indoor-phins via Kaya Health's free online workouts.

FREE THE PARK HOTEL REFUGEES

Online meetings available.

Every night, 6pm.

Support the remaining refugees indefinitely detained in the Park Hotel through peaceful protest.



TRANS AND GENDER DIVERSE WRITING GROUP

Fortnightly on Tuesdays 5-6pm

Online writing group via Zoom for trans and gender diverse young people. The workshop will also be for any other queer-identified people between the ages of 13 to 25 to connect and get writing. FREE



ART PLAY AT HOME

Online

www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/arts-and-culture/artplay/

Your home is full of creative possibilities - you could draw, dance, make music, write or play. Explore a range of ArtPlay activities at home ranging from puppetry to creative writing, music to drawing - all

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