

# NORTH WEST CITY NEWS

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Puzzles & Trivia P22



▲ L-R: Cr Rohan Leppert, Cr Dr Olivia Ball, Lord Mayor Sally Capp, Minister for Early Childhood Ingrid Stitt, Cr Davydd Griffiths and Member for Northern Metropolitan Sheena Watt celebrate the grand opening of the Lady Huntingfield Early Learning Centre. Picture: Murray Enders.

## More space equals more care! Revamped Lady Huntingfield Early Learning Centre unveiled

WORDS BY *Kaylah-Joelle Baker*  
EDUCATION

Having served the local community for more than 80 years, Lady Huntingfield Early Learning Centre has been revamped to provide additional support to the growing North Melbourne community.

The \$10.2 million redevelopment of the centre, which is also a family services centre, was funded by the City of Melbourne, which has been planning the expansion since 2016 in consultation with the local community.

An additional \$1.6 million was also provided by the Victorian Government to support the project through its Children's Facilities Capital Grant program.

On April 28, Lord Mayor Sally Capp, Cr Dr Olivia Ball and Victorian Minister for Early Childhood Ingrid Stitt visited the new facility, which reopened to the community in August last year.

According to Cr Dr Ball, who leads the council's health, wellbeing and belonging portfolio, the "first-class facility"

would provide an all-inclusive place which supports parents and helps give kids a "positive start in life."

"The centre is already having a positive impact on local families, who are accessing services including childcare, maternal and child health care and new parent sessions."

The original centre was demolished to make room for the new two-storey building, and with a focus on sustainability being paramount in the build, solar panels, rain-water harvesting, natural ventilation and energy-efficient fittings were put in place.

Since reopening in August 2021, Lady Huntingfield has provided services to local families through more than 1000 different sessions and appointments, including everything from long day care to kindergarten, playgroups, maternal and child health services, family support and counselling and parenting services.

With more than 100 education and care places now available, the added space also means the facility been able to provide enough room to nearly double its intake.

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## Future of West Melbourne locked in as the state government signs off "milestone" structure plan

*The state government has approved a much-awaited structure plan that will guide the future growth of West Melbourne, including a new high street on Spencer St and an abundance of open space.*

WORDS BY *Brendan Rees*  
PLANNING

The West Melbourne Structure Plan – known as Planning Scheme Amendment C309 – sets out several exciting changes while respecting the area's unique character and appeal as a "counterpoint to the central city".

Developed by the City of Melbourne and informed by extensive community consultation over four years, the master plan also seeks to transform West Melbourne into five distinct precincts – Adderley, Flagstaff, Historic Hilltop, Spencer, and Station.

Planning Minister Richard Wynne announced the approval of the structure plan on May 1 with new planning controls to guide the area's future sustainable development while also "delivering certainty and guidance to manage future sustainable growth in West Melbourne."

In approving the plan, the state government acknowledged West Melbourne was home to a "strong and established" community, with a "diverse mix of housing, warehouses and businesses, and a rich cultural and architectural heritage".

The Minister's sign-off comes as the City of Melbourne used its inaugural council meeting in West Melbourne on March 15 to renew its

push for the state government to approve the structure plan, which was endorsed by the council in February 2018.

Deputy Lord Mayor and planning chair Nicholas Reece told *North West City News* the Minister's approval of the structure plan was a "milestone" for the local community.

"It allows us to crack on with our vision to deliver a new High St in the form of Spencer St. We want to see Spencer St become like a little Lygon St or Errol St for West Melbourne – like a community hub for the area," he said.

"It also puts in place important protections for neighbourhood character including the mix of heritage, industrial, and residential which is so appealing."

"It will allow West Melbourne to continue to be home to a growing population but will allow this development to occur in a way which preserves neighbourhood character and stops West Melbourne from being overdeveloped."

Cr Reece said he was "ecstatic" about the structure plan being approved, which has been "the culmination of four years of work and really is an innovative urban policy which I'm confident will deliver results for the people of West Melbourne."

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Hyperlocal News Pty Ltd  
ABN: 57 623 558 725

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## Future of West Melbourne locked in as the state government signs off “milestone” structure plan

*Continued from page 1.*

“I would like to thank the hundreds of West Melbourne residents and local businesses who participated in our community forums, made submissions, and provided feedback on the different iterations of the plan as it progressed through the planning system. Today your hard work has been rewarded.”

The council's planning portfolio Cr Rohan Leppert, who, in 2021, described the government's delay in signing off as “unnecessary” and “very frustrating,” said he was “delighted we got there at last.”

“This approval has been a long time coming. There are plenty of innovations with this planning scheme amendment that have paid off,” he said.

“Our pre-amendment community consultation was comprehensive and engaging. The special use zone is unusual but essential to ensure a genuine mix of residential and non-residential uses.”

“And the mandatory floor area ratios provide certainty for all parties, respond to the industrial heritage of the area, and put a lid on unsustainable property speculation. This is a great day for West Melbourne and its unique inner-city character.”

According to the City of Melbourne, West Melbourne is set to play a key role in the city's COVID-19 recovery – which is predicted to house almost 9000 additional residents and generate more than 7000 new jobs by 2040.

Under the proposed structure plan, standout highlights include the creation of a new high street on Spencer St and 10,000 sqm of new public open space – about the half the size of the MCG.

The vision of Station Precinct, which is bounded by Abbotsford, Spencer, Lothian, Victoria and Laurens streets and Railway Place, will see a “thriving area” of shops, cafés, restaurants and bars around North Melbourne



Station, which is soon to be renamed West Melbourne Station.

The retention and reuse of historic buildings will also be encouraged while ensuring West Melbourne's unique character is kept, the state government said in signing off the plans.

“A genuine mix of uses for businesses and residents will be supported through rezoning, with provisions that encourage the development of more affordable housing,” it said.

“Future design and development in West Melbourne will provide greater consideration to accessibility, ensuring Victorians of all ability will be able to safely enjoy and move around the area.”

A spokesperson for the North and West Melbourne Association said, “the Ministry of Planning has offered the North and West Melbourne Association a technical briefing on the details of the planning scheme amendment and the association will take up the offer.”

In feedback to the council, West Melbourne

“

*This approval has been a long time coming. There are plenty of innovations with this planning scheme amendment that have paid off.*

”

residents and businesses wanted a sense of community and appropriate redevelopment after expressing concerns around increased building height.

They also called for certainty around the planning process, more public transport, walking and cycling infrastructure after citing concerns around car parking and increased traffic, and more parks, open spaces, trees, and street greening.

In announcing the plan's approval, the Minister for Planning Richard Wynne said, “We're ensuring West Melbourne will thrive into the future, with better amenity for the community and space for businesses to grow.”

“West Melbourne is perfectly located on the doorsteps of the city and our leading bio-medical and research institutions, connecting the community employment hubs and world-class infrastructure.”

The plan is consistent with Plan Melbourne, the state government's blueprint, by delivering a 20-minute, mixed-use neighbourhood for the West Melbourne community.

The previous structure plan was last completed in 2005, which has seen a gradual shift away from industrial uses ●

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# Spike in toxic mushrooms prompts health warning

WORDS BY *Brendan Rees*  
ENVIRONMENT

Recent rain has led to an outbreak of toxic mushrooms in Parkville and surrounding neighbourhoods with a local vet reporting pets had fallen ill.

The rising number of poisonous mushrooms has prompted the City of Melbourne to install signs warning the public to keep their distance in public parks following sightings of death cap mushrooms and yellow staining mushrooms.

Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria senior mycology research scientist Dr Tom May said with heavy falls of rain it wasn't unusual for poisonous mushrooms to be popping up across Melbourne.

He said yellow staining mushrooms "pop up in massive numbers" and are "very common all over parks and gardens."

"It's got a couple of characteristics, a bright yellow stain and a slightly chemical smell, a bit like hospital disinfectant," he said.

"It's the dominant mushroom around, it is frequently the mushroom for confusion ... but it's not going to kill you."

Dr May said the death cap mushroom was not as common as it specifically grew underneath trees in the oak family, and "forms a symbiotic relation with the roots."

"It is potentially deadly; it's got a very nasty toxin in it."

His advice is do not eat any wild mushrooms unless you know what you're doing. It's easy to confuse different types.

A local vet and resident, who wished to remain anonymous, said there had been a few cases of dogs having eaten wild mushrooms and developing symptoms.

"We have had cases from Parkville, Brunswick, and Pascoe Vale," they said. "Nothing too severe thankfully – we haven't lost any pets which is great."

"Symptoms have been mild then severe which were more gastrointestinal such as vomiting and diarrhoea. Luckily, we were able to induce vomiting and with a couple of hours on IV fluids these dogs were bouncing off walls again."



▲ A council sign at Cade Way in Parkville Gardens warning locals of the dangerous mushrooms. Photo: Rebecca Broadhead.

The resident said they had contacted the City of Melbourne after spotting "a whole heap of" wild mushrooms, which had coincided with "numerous cases in the clinic."

The public are warned to be extra careful and not wander around picking mushrooms.

"They do look inviting, but you do need to be careful," Dr May said ●



*Brendan Rees*  
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▲ YMCA's Carolyn Morris (back centre), Cr Ball (back, third from right) and Lord Mayor Sally Capp (back, second from right) with the construction team on May 5. Photo: Murray Enders.

## Rec Centre construction under way

WORDS BY *Sean Car*  
BUILDING

Demolition has been completed and construction is now officially under way on the new Kensington Recreation Centre.

Lord Mayor Sally Capp and Cr Dr Olivia Ball visited the site with YMCA CEO Carolyn Morris on Thursday, May 5.

The Lord Mayor said it was "fantastic" to "see the significant progress that's been made."

"Demolition has now been completed and official construction work is getting under way," Cr Capp said.

"This redevelopment will provide state-of-the-art facilities for residents, workers and visitors to enjoy."

"It'll also support the creation of around 170 jobs, as we deliver a brand

new 25-metre pool, gym facilities, indoor multi-sports courts and community spaces."

McCorkwell Constructions won the job of redeveloping the centre, which will include a 25-metre pool, three indoor multi-sports courts, a children's water play area, and a wrap-around cafe.

It will also feature a gym, health, and wellness spaces, and three large flexible spaces as well as amenities suitable for a range of classes and community use.

Having served the community since 1976, the City of Melbourne identified a dire need to upgrade the KCRC to meet the community's diverse needs.

The council's latest 2022/23 budget includes \$25 million for the project.

The project expected to be finished by 2023 ●



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# City of Melbourne seeks joint effort with state government to rid the city of graffiti as deterrence reaches critical point

WORDS BY *Brendan Rees*  
COUNCIL AFFAIRS

The City of Melbourne has stepped up its fight against graffiti with a cleaning blitz soon to get under way in the city’s north-west.

It comes as the council battles to fight a 60 per cent increase in graffiti and tagging since the pandemic began – with councillors voting at their April 26 meeting to seek the “urgent assistance” of the state government to help combat the vandalism scourge.

The council is in the middle of a “graffiti blitz” which has seen clean-up crews hit the streets of the Southbank, Docklands, South Wharf, and Hoddle Grid areas as the council aims to improve public spaces and ensure the city was clean as workers, students and visitors return.

Since the blitz started in March about 14,000 square metres of graffiti has been removed – the equivalent of 50 tennis courts – after reports of graffiti almost tripled in volume.

Crews are now targeting North Melbourne and South Yarra – with Kensington, West Melbourne and Flemington areas to be completed in May.

The average time between graffiti being reported and cleaned has been five days – a 70 per cent reduction compared to January.



According to a council report, “The blitz has had a noticeable impact on graffiti management and the cleanliness of the city.”

However, Lord Mayor Sally Capp conceded at the council meeting that “we don’t have the unlimited resources to just keep cleaning” and successfully moved a motion requesting the City of Melbourne work with the state government, Victoria Police, and M9 councils (an inner city-advocacy group) in a “coordinated approach to graffiti deterrents.”

Cr Capp said a joint approach would ensure “our city has an opportunity not just to recover, but to literally be a city that can welcome people with its beautiful buildings, beautiful, physical environment that is not impacted in such a negative way by tagging and graffiti.”

“We’re seeing that heightened increase of

tagging ... we absolutely have to look more broadly and use the data more deeply and efforts to deter and prevent [the illegal behaviour].”

In approving the motion, the council will provide a breakdown of graffiti reports including by area, month, asset type, and response times for the 2021-22 financial year.

The council’s city activation portfolio lead Cr Roshena Campbell said preventing and deterring graffiti was critical and “looks at how we can best use the resources we have for cleaning the city.”

“Although we’ve invested heavily in a blitz, it’s not on its own enough,” she said, adding, “The reality is that this is a scourge on our city”.

Victoria Police launched Operation Fade in the CBD in late February this year, targeting those involved in graffiti and vandalism, which a police spokesperson said had been a “devastating blow to small businesses who have been doing it tough over the last couple of years to find their properties damaged and being left to cover the cost.”

“In a little over a month, this dedicated group of officers has already arrested 14 people allegedly involved in graffitiing, including four people who were remanded as a result of their offending,” the spokesperson said.

“This should leave the community in no doubt that police take graffiti and other forms of criminal damage seriously and if you do the

wrong thing, you will be caught.” Melbourne street art expert Adrian Doyle said the volume of graffiti the council was contending with was “unwinnable”, and that “they need to go to the source and do youth programs.”

“In the end graffiti will always be there, there’s nothing they can do. All they can do is work with and curb these guys [offenders] and give them an understanding of respect,” he said.

The City of Melbourne’s latest 2022/23 budget includes a “huge investment” of \$33.6 million in graffiti removal by expanding its rapid response clean team to “fast-track graffiti removal and doubling our investment in high pressure cleaning.”

“We’re proud to lead the fight against illegal graffiti and tagging, but we can’t do it alone. We need property owners to step up and clean their buildings and assets,” Lord Mayor Sally Capp said.

Police are encouraging the community to report any instances of graffiti to your property to the Police Assistance Line (131 444) or by submitting an online report: ●

**For more information:**  
[police.vic.gov.au](https://police.vic.gov.au)

## River Studios: Is it enough for West Melbourne artists?

WORDS BY *Kaylah-Joelle Baker*  
ARTS & CULTURE

West Melbourne’s River Studios is a flourishing working art space for local artists, but artist-run group MREAM believes the demand is still greater than the supply.

MREAM, standing for Maribyrnong Rivers Edge Art Movement, is a long-standing art group in Melbourne’s west and is responsible for the discovery of the Sims St warehouse River Studios was founded in.

Unable to move into the space themselves due to believing the owners wanted the entire three floors to be occupied, MREAM brought the space to the attention of the City of Melbourne for its Creative Spaces program having seen it as a viable space not to be wasted.

The Creative Spaces program was launched in 2008 in partnership with the RMIT Design Research Institute and Creative Victoria with the purpose of supporting local arts production through the provision of a range of low-cost bookable spaces.

“The Sims St space was fantastic but was too large for us at the time and we were unable to have just the top floor which was what we wanted,” MREAM’s Allison Orton said.

“A MREAM member then contacted the City of Melbourne, and this succeeded in the warehouse becoming the fantastic space it now is.”

Following the space being managed by the Creative Spaces program, the warehouse was successfully renovated with the building’s owner, Arts Victoria and the council each contributing \$100,000 to the space’s refurbishment.

The project, which took 16 weeks to complete, was designed by Breathe Architecture and won the Victorian Award for Small Projects in 2011.

But while MREAM deems River Studios “a great space” with 57 studios currently occupied by 75 artists, it said West Melbourne needed more like it as MREAM continues to look for space capable of accommodating its organisation in the local area.

“Several of us had or have studios at River Studios but really, we need a gallery space [ourselves] because the demand at River Studios is greater



than supply,” Ms Orton said.

Before finding the River Studio warehouse, MREAM resided in Moreland St in Footscray before being removed.

“MREAM and our hundreds of resident artists were forced out of Moreland St after almost 30 years when the building was sold by the [Maribyrnong] council for residential development,” a MREAM spokesperson told *North West City News* in a statement.

When the River Studios space fell through, MREAM moved onto Pipemakers Park in Maribyrnong before then settling in Maidstone in

2013 where Ms Orton said they spent the relocation money given to them by the City of Maribyrnong.

Although satisfied with the location, it was then when the building was sold from underneath them that the unsuccessful search for a space in West Melbourne began, leaving MREAM members questioning whether enough was being done to support the local artists in the area.

“Suitable affordable studio spaces for artists have seriously declined since 2008, presenting great issues for artists to continue their practice locally. This lack of suitable rental space has also led to MREAM currently being without a home,” Ms Orton said.

“There are a lot of artists who have moved over this way [to West Melbourne] and they can’t afford it, resulting in a lot of artists in the city moving out.”

In response to *North West City News* relaying concerns raised over commercial rents for artists, a City of Melbourne spokesperson advised MREAM to reach out directly as it had “not received an application or expression of interest from MREAM

for the Creative Spaces program.”

In reaffirming the council’s support of local artists, Lord Mayor Sally Capp said the community arts organisation had a pivotal role in shaping West Melbourne’s vibrant creative and cultural scene and the council was looking for more ways to help.

“We’re acutely aware of the challenges faced by many creatives in accessing affordable and permanent operating spaces, and we’re always looking for solutions to support them,” she said.

To support artists the council has recently awarded more than \$1 million under the Annual Arts Grants program to help out 1500 artists and is funding up to \$50,000 through the City Activation Grants program to support over 30 activations around the city.

The council’s latest 2022/23 budget also includes an “\$8.7 million boost for local artists, creative spaces, and major events,” including \$2 million to secure new creative infrastructure for independent, small and medium creative sector operators in spaces like offices, rehearsal spaces and cultural production studios ●

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## Parkville Gardens’ Biggest Morning Tea fundraiser

WORDS BY *Brendan Rees*  
COMMUNITY

The Parkville Gardens community has banded together to host its annual Biggest Morning Tea to raise money for cancer research.

The May 14 event held at Cade Square saw nearly 50 people gather with hardworking volunteers supplying plenty of homemade cakes, sweets, spinach and ricotta pastry, choc chip cookies, lemonade and more.

Organiser Ajith Vasanthakumar said the day was a success despite damp weather with the community raising \$543 in total from the bake sale.

“Overall, the enthusiasm and the mood was exceptional,” he said. “People brought umbrellas and rain jackets and chatted away in rain.”

Mr Vasanthakumar thanked volunteers and the community for their support ●

## More space equals more care! Revamped Lady Huntingfield Early Learning Centre unveiled

*Continued from page 1.*

“This upgrade shows what the future of early learning can look like. The centre focuses on providing a range of education and care options, housed in a facility that is environmentally sustainable,” Minister Ingrid Stitt said.

While separate learning centres and family service entities are still around, it is this model of integration and everything being “under one roof” that Lord Mayor Sally Capp said was “easier for locals” when accessing the required services.

“The Lady Huntingfield Early Learning Centre has served our municipality for more than 80 years, and we’re proud to deliver this important upgrade to support the growing North Melbourne community,” Cr Capp said.

“We know integrated care is the way of the future, as it provides education and care from birth to school age delivered by qualified teachers, with the flexibility for parents and carers to choose the days and hours that meet their needs.” ●

“  
This upgrade shows  
what the future of early  
learning can look like.  
”



▲ L-R: Sheena Watt, Ingrid Stitt, Cr Dr Ball, Cr Griffiths and Cr Leppert open the centre.



▲ The revamped Lady Huntingfield Early Learning Centre.



## Firefighters contain chemical spill in West Melbourne

WORDS BY *Brendan Rees*  
SAFETY & SECURITY

Dozens of firefighters contained a chemical spill on a ship in West Melbourne on May 4.

Forty-eight firefighters arrived on scene to find a chemical on board that was leaking from a barrel, Fire Rescue Victoria said.

A hazmat team wearing breathing apparatus boarded the ship and safely removed a 50-litre barrel after working to stop the leak, Fire Rescue Victoria said. Victoria Police also attended the scene.

## Parkville Gardens nursing home blaze

Residents at a Parkville Gardens nursing home were forced to evacuate after an external fire broke out on May 4.

Fire Rescue Victoria crews were called to the William St incident at 12.30pm following several calls to triple-zero.

Firefighters found an external fire at the three-storey nursing home, and “immediately escalated the response due to the large amount of smoke being generated by the fire,” FRV said.

The fire was brought under control within 10 minutes however; a lot of smoke had entered the building, which required ventilation.

FRV said there were no injuries reported and all occupants were evacuated quickly as the smoke had presented a “significant danger”.

Victoria Police and Ambulance Victoria also attended the scene to assist with the evacuation ●



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# Recreation centre the big winner in budget as rate rise returns

WORDS BY *David Schout*  
COUNCIL AFFAIRS

An extra \$25 million will be pumped into the redevelopment of the Kensington Community Aquatic and Recreation Centre, the City of Melbourne announced in its latest budget.

The project, which will feature a new 25-metre pool, three full-sized multipurpose courts and large spaces for community use, will benefit from the extra funding, on top of \$10.2 million in 2021-22.

With demolition works complete, construction was underway on the site set for completion late next year.

The council's 2022-23 draft budget, released on May 17, also included \$810,000 for new cycling infrastructure across Kensington, North Melbourne and West Melbourne.

However, the news wasn't so good for local residents and businesses already concerned about the rising cost of living, after the City of Melbourne announced a 1.75 per cent rate rise — its first announced increase since 2019.

In 2020, within months of Melbourne's first COVID-19 lockdown, the council announced a freeze on rate increases, while in 2021 it passed on a discount to both residential and commercial ratepayers that saved the majority of ratepayers between \$10 and \$50.

However, this year it opted to increase rates — which contribute around two-thirds of council revenue — in line with the rate cap rise announced by the state government late last year.

The City of Melbourne did, however, announce a rate discount of up to \$247 for pensioners, which it said was the most generous in the state.

Across the municipality, the council's latest budget featured a record \$837.8 million council spend in the next financial year.

This included \$254 million on infrastructure; a \$140 million investment in Lord Mayor Sally Capp's signature Greenline project over four years, plus a further \$50 million for the Queen Victoria Market Precinct Renewal.

The council also spent big in keeping the city clean and free of graffiti — something it believed was imperative to attracting visitors as the city recovers from the pandemic — with a sizeable \$33.6 million spend to "clean up our streets and keep them free from graffiti".

The council had expected to return to surplus in the upcoming financial year, but this has now been pushed back to 2023-24.

The underlying deficit announced on May 17 was \$11.3 million

According to the budget papers, this was due to the "unforeseen impacts of the Omicron variant and the sixth COVID-19 lockdown in 2021" ●



▲ Local mosaic artist Libby McKinnon is excited the City of Melbourne is retaining "The Bellair Street Mosaics".

Photos: Murray Enders.

# Kensington's popular mosaic artworks saved as street works take shape

WORDS BY *Brendan Rees*  
ARTS & CULTURE

A stunning collection of mosaic artworks will be saved along on a popular shopping strip in Kensington as heavy machinery moves in to undertake street works.

Twelve colourful circular mosaics located in the pavement of Bellair St — which represent the themes of local architecture and landmarks including the gold rush and Maribyrnong River — will be carefully preserved and reinstated by the City of Melbourne in a move that has been applauded by the community and local artists.

Known as "The Bellair Street Mosaics", the artworks celebrate Kensington's strong community identity after becoming the product of a public art and job skills project undertaken in 1996 and led by artists Helen Bodycomb and Paul Robinson.

Fifteen participants were employed by the City of Moonee Valley in conjunction with Training Edge Consultants Pty Ltd to help design, construct, and lay the 1.2-metre circular mosaic tiles over a six-month period.

At the time, the project team, which developed designs from the themes that had researched or had some knowledge of, was described as an "outstandingly motivated, diligent, and talented group" with the works being of the "highest professional standard in the field of public art".

The participants included a man who had left school at 14 and worked various labour jobs, a landscape gardener, a musician, a sculptor, and a man who arrived in Australia four years earlier after having served in the military in his home country.

Ms Bodycomb said she was "very pleased" the mosaics were being kept and was working closely with the City of Melbourne in their preservation.

"We've adjusted the position of the mosaics a little bit, taken the opportunity to slightly shift them into positions that are a bit safer and practical and integrated with the

other surfaces on the street," she said.

"There are a few tiles that we are having custom-made to replace lost material which was originally handmade by the group.

"I'm working with a conservator to find other tiles and to match exactly how the works were originally made."

Ms Bodycomb said she was impressed with the work of the council, adding they had been "terrific to work with and they're doing a really nice job."

"Public artworks like this, do over time, become a part of the community and by the people who use that site."

"Sometimes councils just have these sorts of things removed because it's easier or harder to retain it ... but it's a measure of the value they hold to the cultural collection of the City of Melbourne and to the community."

"It was a really successful project in its time, and I don't know that anybody imagined that 26 years later."

The City of Melbourne's education and innovation portfolio lead Cr Davydd Griffiths, who had many residents reach out to him to ensure the mosaics were protected, said, "it's important council spends money on preserving and renovating works of art just as much as finishing new ones and this is a great example of that."

"Like all locals, I'm really looking forward to the work being done and being able to go back down and enjoy all of those sites along Bellair St."

Local mosaic artist Libby McKinnon, who was one of the tutors involved in the original project and has helped maintain the mosaics over the years, said it was "great news" the council had taken steps to ensure the mosaics' retention.

Work is underway to upgrade the stormwater drainage network and streetscape on Bellair St. This includes the repositioning of kerbing and the reconstruction of the footpath, while preserving the heritage mosaics.

Works began in March and are scheduled for completion in late June ●

# Council works with residents to improve road safety

WORDS BY *Brendan Rees*  
SAFETY & SECURITY

The City of Melbourne will identify a range of road safety and pedestrian improvements projects in Kensington and North Melbourne through the help of the community.

The council recently conducted a call out seeking residents to join one of its community reference groups, which will consist of a diverse range of community members and groups to provide valuable insights and share

experiences on road safety and walkability in their local area.

A reference group of 10 members will be formed for both neighbourhoods after expressions of interest closed May 11.

They will work with council officers, and other neighbourhood stakeholder and community groups while also raising awareness about City of Melbourne's existing projects including blackspot projects, bike lanes, pedestrian improvement projects, and more ●



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# Melbourne Money brings a welcome boost to inner-north traders – but some venues say it didn't quite hit the mark

WORDS BY *Brendan Rees*

PHOTOGRAPHY BY *Murray Enders*

BUSINESS

Local traders have delivered a mixed response to the latest round of the Melbourne Money scheme, which overall brought a welcome boost to hospitality businesses.

The mid-week scheme, which offered discounted dining at the city's bars, restaurants, and cafes, saw 60 per cent of customers visiting from outside the municipality, spending an average of \$155 on meals – \$40 more than city residents, according to the City of Melbourne.

The CBD topped the highest share of claims, followed by Southbank, Carlton, Docklands and North Melbourne, with 53 per cent of diners going on to spend \$200 or more on retail or entertainment experiences in the city.

Under the scheme, which ran from March 7 to April 11, diners could claim 25 per cent off their food and drink bill when they spent more than \$40 between Monday and Thursday, up to a total spend of \$500.

Foot traffic in Southbank nudged pre-pandemic levels – reaching 94 per cent of the 2019 benchmark, while night-time activity “soared” across all dining precincts.

Anthony Che, manager of Thyme Square Café in North Melbourne, said while the scheme did encourage customers to spend a “tad more”, his venue mainly relied on its regular patrons.

“We definitely had people apply to get the Melbourne Money, but my business has always relied on my regulars, so whether it's Melbourne Money or not, lockdown or no lockdown, I don't think it [the scheme] made a difference,” he said.

Chris Lay, owner of Pimm Thai Café in Kensington, said Melbourne Money had given



▲ Anthony Che at Thyme Square Café on Flemington Rd said the business had appreciated the ongoing support of regulars.

their business a boost.

“It did attract quite a few customers which is good, there were definitely more customers coming through the door,” he said, although he added the street works along Bellair St had caused some disruption.

“It's been impacting us for the past month or so. It's not ideal but there's not much we can do.”

Russell Spear, owner of Apollo Café in West Melbourne, said while he believed Melbourne Money was a “brilliant” idea, it didn't quite tailor towards their business.

“I'm totally in favour of it, I think it's a brilliant initiative, it gets people out and moving



again but in our space it probably doesn't quite work. I think it's more for a fine-dining environment,” he said.

“People certainly did use it, but I wouldn't say it had a massive impact.”

Ele Troise, owner of Sussi Italian Restaurant in West Melbourne, said the experience of the scheme had fallen flat of their expectations.

“It would be nice if Melbourne City Council didn't forget about us – they didn't send us the paperwork to put on the window and advertise Melbourne Money. We got totally left out,” he said.

“When you ring them, they still didn't send

it out. So, did the scheme do anything for my business? Zero.”

Maurice Santucci, owner of Italian restaurant Sosta Cucina in Errol St, North Melbourne, said the feedback they received was that customers weren't entirely aware of being able to claim a rebate.

“Introducing a scheme that attracts new customers is always a good thing from a business point of view, but we noticed people didn't get the gist of it until the end of the campaign,” he said.

“From our end anyway, we had to remind people midweek who didn't know about it.

“Whether they come back I don't know. All we can do is do the best we can and show them what we do and hopefully impress them and bring more business to North Melbourne.”

Other businesses including a gelati shop in North Melbourne said customers “didn't really spend that much” to take advantage of the scheme.

“One scoop of gelato is \$5 or a coffee or juice is less than \$10. People have to buy lots of things to spend over \$40,” owner of Hotham Juice and Gelati Sia Kaveh said.

“If they could do \$15 or \$20 if they could get some refund, it would be good.”

Mr Kaveh said his business was “just surviving” after being hit hard by two years of lockdowns.

“We're not making any money but we're not losing any money, we've been in this situation the whole time – just surviving.”

While Midweek Melbourne Money has finished, visitors still take advantage of the state government's \$30 million Victorian Entertainment Program, which offers 25 per cent back on eligible entertainment purchases more than \$40, including tickets to the theatre, live music and museums and galleries ●

## Labor pledges \$2.84 million to Moonee Ponds Creek restoration

WORDS BY *Sophie Berrill*

ENVIRONMENT

Federal Labor has promised to spend more on efforts to transform the Moonee Ponds Creek into a “natural Melbourne icon” if Anthony Albanese is elected on May 21.

In a joint announcement on May 16, Member for Maribyrnong Bill Shorten, Shadow Minister for the Environment and Water Terri Butler, and Labor candidate for Melbourne Keir Paterson, briefly outlined the \$2.84 million commitment.

It would fund the removal of sections of concrete drain in the creek along its course south of Strathmore.

According to the statement, this would improve drainage, water quality and the amenity of the creek for the local community. The investment would also provide an “informative cultural experience”.

“For too long the Moonee Ponds Creek has been neglected,” Mr Shorten said.

“Now the creek's significance is rightly being recognised, celebrated and returned to a more pristine natural setting.” Various stakeholders have endorsed ambitious plans in recent years to return the concrete drain to its natural glory pre-European settlement.

But a 25-kilometre urban catchment like the Moonee Ponds Creek can be hard to govern given the sheer number of municipalities it crosses as well as parties with an interest in its future.

In 2018, 15 community and government organisations, led by Melbourne Water, partnered to form the Chain of Ponds Collaboration Group. Together, they aimed to create a catchment-wide approach to revitalising the creek.

The proposed funding announced this week is said to build on the group's endeavours.

“We're pleased to have the support of now both the Member for Wills and the Member for



Maribyrnong with announcements towards the re-naturalisation of the Moonee Ponds Creek,” said John Kavanagh, president of the Friends of Moonee Ponds Creek, which is part of the Chain of Ponds Collaboration.

“It's very well received and it's good just to have the creek on the agenda, to be honest.”

Mr Kavanagh attributes this attention on the creek to the COVID-19 period, which he said made more people realise the value of open spaces and waterways.

“I'm pleased to see politicians believing the same,” he said.

While Labor would not elaborate on the exact length or location south of Strathmore, they said improvements would dovetail with similar works due to begin soon in the northern section in Strathmore and Pascoe Vale, where the concrete channel begins.

Mr Kavanagh said the proposed location was the “logical choice”.

“It's a continuation of works that are already set to begin. It would make sense, rather than have a salt and pepper-type arrangement, just to continue it along.”

He said this commitment from Labor would extend current plans much further.

If it goes ahead, Mr Kavanagh is confident this could signal more funding for improvements further down the creek.

“Once that becomes a reality then I think people are going to demand that it continues all the way along.” ●

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Labor

Authorised by Chris Ford, Australian Labor Party, 438 Docklands Drive, Docklands 3008.



# Face lift for old post office

WORDS BY Rhonda Dredge  
HERITAGE

The two-storey shop at 518-520 Queensberry St has seen better days – the original windows have gone, the internal staircase is rickety, there’s a crack in the floor and the upstairs rooms are piled up with office furniture.

Owner Ray Walters knows he has work to do to bring the shop back to its glory days as the original post office for Hotham from 1860 to 1875 but he’s feeling inspired.

He has an original photo of the post office that he is using as a guide to how the place will look.

The trouble is that every time he gets out the picture, he can’t help marvelling at how short people were back then.

It’s true that the doorway on the building is high but he’s marked a place on the wall on Lancashire Lane that he’s measured at about five feet, or 1.52 metres, the height of a man standing next to the building in the picture.

“People love history here,” he said, of this section of Queensberry St. “I want to restore the front and set the shop up as a showroom. My youngest daughter will move upstairs selling her Oliver Goldsmith sunglasses.”

Recent real estate sales have spurred Ray on with his project. Number 500 Queensberry, a few doors up, recently sold for \$2 million to a fashion designer and there’s a team of builders currently turning the place into a boutique.

“There were five bidders,” Ray said, of the auction. “A couple bought it and I think they’re going to live upstairs. The fashion designer’s partner sells vinyl records.”



▲ Ray Walters with plans for the restoration.



▲ Top: the building today. Bottom: The original post office.

Between these two establishments is the picturesque Mr Price’s food store, ostensibly a second-hand shop full of table settings, but often used as a venue for lunches. The owner’s partner reputedly works for the Melbourne Club.

Ray is a well-known character on the street and takes pride in what it has to offer. He owns two buildings, one next door to the bookshop, which he also uses for showing office furniture.

He’s no Franco Cozzo but a man with good taste in moderne styles for the discerning retro buyer. “I really want to put back as much as I can into the post office,” he said. “Maybe even

the sign.”

He has a company doing a quote on the restoration and will submit the design to the Heritage Trust for funding.

He said the building, unlike the Court House Hotel next door, was not on the heritage register but it did have an overlay.

There are quite a few buildings for sale in the vicinity, the Court House itself, which has been on the market for a while, and the newsagent in Errol St which was auctioned in March and attracted no bids.

The asking price was \$1.6 million, according to the tenant. “The returns are not there. It’s a

good place to park cash but doesn’t stack up if you have to borrow,” he told *North West City News*.

The Errol St laundromat sold for \$1.8 million not that long ago but there are still issues with NBN along the street with the internet dropping out during transactions.

“It [Errol St] has to lift its face like Gertrude St,” Ray said. “They’re still trying to sell pies and chips to workers who aren’t here anymore.”

Both the Errol and Queensberry streetscapes are intact and locals like Ray are coming out of hibernation to give the area the lift it deserves with a little friendly rivalry thrown in ●

# School community welcomes new zebra crossing at dangerous roundabout

WORDS BY Brendan Rees  
SAFETY & SECURITY

The North Melbourne Primary School community has welcomed the news of a raised zebra crossing that is being planned for a busy roundabout.

The City of Melbourne will begin works in June to install a raised zebra crossing at the intersection of Errol, O’Shanassy and Harcourt streets following concerns of pedestrian safety including children walking to and from school.

The proposed works near the Errol St Reserve will aim to slow vehicles and improve road safety by allowing pedestrians right of way in crossing the roundabout.

According to a letter to residents, the council said additional features of the pedestrian improvement project would include longer raised platforms (flat top road humps) on Errol St and Harcourt St to cater for bus services, and the removal of a “two-minute limit” parking space in



▲ North Melbourne Primary School has welcomed a City of Melbourne measure to install a raised zebra crossing at a busy intersection. Photos: Murray Enders.



Harcourt St.

It will also see existing bicycle lanes end on the approach to the roundabout with the installation of bicycle pavement markings to encourage cyclists to merge and ride in the middle of the traffic lane through the roundabout.

The crossing on the east side of the roundabout is proposed to be

realigned to accommodate the raised platforms without removing an existing tree.

The City of Melbourne said the zebra crossing project was “progressing well” with works expected to begin in June and be completed before the end of the year.

North Melbourne Primary School principal Sarah Nightingale

applauded the council’s road safety measure.

“At North Melbourne Primary School, we encourage our families to walk, ride or scoot to school therefore pedestrian safety is a top priority for us. We welcome this proposal, as we believe it will assist in managing traffic concerns around the school and keeping our community safe,” she said.

Local resident Kim Sheridan, who has three children who attend North Melbourne Primary School, said she was highly supportive of the proposed raised zebra crossing.

“You see dangerous stuff happen every week at that intersection especially with cars flying through,” she said. “It’s always a topic of conversation of getting kids to school safely – it’s a really residential and school zone area.”

Ms Sheridan, who has lived in the area for 12 years, said she never took any risks and always walked her children to school including a fourth child who walks to high school.

“I think because it’s so inner city too, people cut through rather than using Flemington Rd, they zip through here,” she said. “I think a raised crossing would probably do the job – we’ve seen similar improvements to roundabouts in the community and they seem to be working.”

However, she said it would be “really reasonable” to ban trucks altogether along Errol St and the surrounding area.

“This is highly residential and a built-up zone, they shouldn’t be here.”

Her concerns come as the *North West City News* recently witnessed a car and a rubbish truck drive dangerously at speed through the roundabout within minutes.

The project will also include drainage works including installation of new drainage pits, which is funded as part of the council’s capital works program.

Drainage works are expected to begin in the next few months with dates and times to be provided to residents closer to the start of the project ●



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# Labor look to address decade slide as Greens favoured to win again

*Ahead of the federal election on May 21, North West City News looks at the seat of Melbourne and whether Labor candidate Keir Paterson can halt the party's huge slide in first-preference votes since 2010.*

WORDS BY *David Schout*  
ELECTIONS

Greens leader Adam Bandt goes into the 2022 Federal Election as red-hot favourite to win the seat of Melbourne for a fifth straight time.

The division of Melbourne, which covers the CBD and suburbs immediately north of the Yarra River to both the east and west, has been dominated by the Greens since 2010 and remains the party's only lower house seat in Canberra.

Held by Labor from 1904 to 2010, the party has since suffered a huge loss in first-preference votes since Bandt's breakthrough victory 12 years ago.

That year, the percentage of first-preference votes dropped from 49.5 (in 2007) to 38.1.

It has continued to slide since, to a record low 19.7 per cent in the last election in 2019.

The candidate tasked with halting this slide and deliver what would be a huge underdog victory for Labor is Kensington resident Keir Paterson.

After winning preselection in August 2021, Mr Paterson has been campaigning since



▲ Labor candidate Keir Paterson (centre) with a local family.

September and said voters had one thing on their mind.

"There's a real mood for change," he told *North West City News*. "The number of people that we speak to that say 'we just need to get rid of this government' — that is the number one, two and three priority for most of the people I speak to in the electorate."

Born in Carlton and having owned his first home in North Melbourne, Mr Paterson said he had "lived on and off in the electorate my whole life." And despite having also lived in three different continents, he counts Melbourne as "by far the best city in the world to live in."

He has worked in the mental health space and, most recently, was president of the 50,000-member Bicycle Network, which advocates for more sustainable transport and safer riding.

Mr Paterson said looking at Labor's recent election results "doesn't give you the full

picture", referencing the fact Labor's previous candidate for the seat of Melbourne, Luke Creasey, withdrew before the 2019 count due to offensive social media posts that came to light.

However, Labor's primary vote had already dipped well before 2019, something he was determined to turn around.

"I don't have a theory as to why," he said.

"I can say that this campaign that we're running at the moment is probably the most active and, certainly in my view and the view of other observers, the most organised and proactive campaign [in recent elections]. We've got a really good volunteer base and a lot of supporters out there, and we're running a really positive campaign and we're getting a really positive response. I suppose I'm not really focused on the previous elections."

Labor and Mr Paterson are under no illusion as to the magnitude of their upcoming task but remained positive about their prospects.

"We're very confident about this election. There's no question it's a pretty steep hill to climb," he said.

"I feel positive about it, the vibe is good. There's no question that Adam is a strong incumbent, and this seat is a big focus for the Greens, they've got a huge budget and he's spending a lot of money in the electorate ... I'm really motivated to change this government, and we need a Labor majority to change the government. But also, I've become increasingly frustrated by the lack of action of issues like climate change, inequality, job security, aged care, childcare et cetera. And unfortunately, having a member of parliament from a minor party doesn't get us traction on those issues."

While noting a number of nationwide issues, Mr Paterson said the biggest issue facing the

seat of Melbourne — Victoria's smallest electorate at 40 square kilometres — was "definitely the emergence from the pandemic."

"Our CBD has been decimated," he said.

"We need to restore the CBD as our capital. But the reality is that people aren't going to be working five days a week in the CBD, so we need to reimagine the purpose of our CBD, what it's there for and how it acts as the glue that holds Melbourne together."

Mr Paterson said the biggest surprise during the campaign to date, having spoken with many people on the ground in Melbourne, was the appetite for a national independent commission against corruption (ICAC).

He said the issue was "spontaneously identified" by about one in three people as their number one issue heading into the May 21 poll.

"The thing that's surprised me the most this election — you expect a lot of the prominent issues, you can anticipate those — but the Federal ICAC, and in general restoring integrity and trust to federal politics just comes through as a really high priority for people. They actually nominate that as one of their most important issues, which surprised us," he said.

"I think people are really sick of our federal politics, they're sick of the perception of the lack of accountability and the perception of favouritism and corruption and they want to do something about."

Other candidates contesting the seat of Melbourne in this election include Justin Borg (United Australia Party), James Damches (Liberal), Richard Peppard (Liberal Democrat Party), Scott Robson (Independent), Walter Stragan (One Nation), Bruce Poon (Animal Justice Party) and Colleen Bolger (Victorian Socialists) ●

## Bandt's bid to keep Melbourne liveable

*Speaking to North West City News ahead of the May 21 election, Adam Bandt said one of the best things about being Greens leader was taking "Melbourne's values to the national stage."*

WORDS BY *David Schout*  
ELECTIONS

This is a city, and indeed a seat, he has a close affinity with, as he bids for a fifth term as local MP.

"One of the things that Melbourne holds very dearly is not only protecting what's really good about our local area, but also ensuring that those values of sustainability, compassion and equality are spread out over the national stage as well," he told *North West City News*.

But since his first election win in 2010, when he broke up Labor's century-long hold on the electorate, locals have faced growing pressures.

He lists the housing crisis as the "single biggest change" he had seen in the city during the past 12 years.

And in an election where, as leader, he will push for national action on things like climate change and affordable dental and mental health services, he also knows that within his patch there are distinct issues that need to be addressed.

"The things that are good about Melbourne are still there, but they're under threat," Mr Bandt said.



▲ Greens leader Adam Bandt is the strong favourite to win the seat of Melbourne for a fifth time.

"A big priority for me is keeping Melbourne liveable, and that means ensuring that everyone can afford to live [here] ... although there might be a pause in rent [rises] in some areas at the moment, on the whole rent and housing prices have skyrocketed, and it's putting a lot of pressure on people who live in Melbourne. It's making it more difficult for people who want to live near where they work or study and we need some new thinking to tackle the housing affordability crisis, because at the moment it's getting out of control."

The four-term Melbourne MP said there needed to be a policy shift within areas like the CBD and Docklands which were particularly hard hit by COVID-19.

And while support had rightly focused on the small businesses, there needed to be an acknowledgement of the real impact on locals.

"I don't think that the state or federal government have really grappled with what the pandemic and the change in work practices will mean for our community. Speaking to inner-city residents, one clear message that comes through is that a lot of the small businesses and services that they've relied on have gone, and they may not come back."

Mr Bandt said the Greens had a plan to bring creative enterprises back to Melbourne and would push for rent reductions to innovative and creative businesses that came into the area and signed long-term leases.

"We've got to work out how to rebuild in a way that isn't just about supporting one big event here and another big event there — we need a more sustainable way that works at a human-scale that supports residents and businesses in the area."

Mr Bandt's first election win in 2010 came as Australia witnessed its first hung parliament for 70 years.

Without an outright majority for the major parties, Mr Bandt (alongside other independent MPs) were given greater negotiating power for their electorates.

Early indications suggest there is a significant chance of another hung parliament this election, such is the close nature of polling.

The Greens leader said that would put locals in a good position, and outlined plans should he again be thrust into the balance of power.

"We're heading towards a really tight election and the people of Melbourne again have the chance to have a really powerful seat at the table, in a very finely balanced parliament. My priorities in that position will be to kick the Liberals

out, and then push the next government to act on the climate crisis, but also to get dental and mental health [services] into Medicare, build affordable housing and wipe the student debt. They're things that will make a big difference to people's lives."

Both Labor and the Greens were united in the push for a national independent commission against corruption (ICAC).

Mr Bandt, who introduced the first-ever bill for a federal ICAC in the House of Representatives, said "it can't come soon enough."

However, the Greens leader said neither of the major parties could be trusted to properly address the climate crisis.

"People want action on the climate crisis and are dismayed that Liberal and Labor are both vowing to open up new coal and gas projects at this election. We're in a climate crisis — you can't put the fire out while you're pouring more petrol on it."

Since Mr Bandt's breakthrough win in 2010, when he won the first lower house seat for the Greens at a general election, the party is yet to claim success in any other electorate.

Despite the Greens stranglehold in Melbourne, where their primary vote almost reached 50 per cent in 2019 (up from 22.8 per cent in 2007, for example), they are yet to improve on their solitary seat in the House of Representatives.

Speaking to *North West City News* in early May, he said the Green were "in with a really good shot" in five seats.

These included nearby Macnamara, where Steph Hodgins-May will challenge for a third time, plus three seats in Queensland (Ryan, Griffith and Brisbane) and one in NSW (Richmond) ●

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# Ukrainian cookbooks sell out

WORDS BY Rhonda Dredge  
COMMUNITY

The purplish tinge of a nice beetroot-stained pickled cabbage might not appeal to everyone but there has been a surge in interest in Ukrainian recipes since the beginning of the war.

Amanda Schulze at *Books for Cooks* in Victoria St has sold every Ukrainian cookbook on the shelves bar one.

Even the Russian shelves are depleted as local cooks look bizarrely for inspiration from a war zone.

The most popular book is *Summer Kitchen* by Olia Hercules who was due to come out for the Food and Wine Festival in March but cancelled because of the war.

“She lives in London and decided to stay instead for support,” Amanda said. “She’s been fundraising for UNICEF.”

“We’d ordered in a few books, so we decided to do a promotion to raise money for Ukraine.”

The bookshop donated \$15 from each sale of *Summer Kitchen* to the cause and the books were sold out within one-and-a-half weeks.

Ukrainian food is known for its pickles, black bread, quark, dumplings, piroshki and borscht, colourful dishes that are known here but not normally grouped together as a cuisine.

“It’s beautiful food,” Amanda said, admiring a picture of a dish of garlic shoots in the book. “They use everything.”

The country-style illustrations are in stark contrast to nightly scenes of the war of demolished cities and decimated towers.

Amanda said that interest in the cuisine was one way of showing solidarity with the besieged Ukrainians.

Ironically, when you compare books from the opposing sides, Ukrainian dishes are quite



▲ Amanda Schulze with her last copy of *Summer Kitchen*.

similar to Russian ones, with connections across the entire region as far as Iran.

A Russian cookbook shows eggs stuffed with beetroot while a Ukrainian one shows dumplings in beetroot soup.

“If you look at Russian food it’s very heart-warming,” Amanda said. “The country’s in the wheat belt. They use buckwheat and root vegetables.”

*Summer Kitchen* is filled with great pictures of recipes that are interpretive of the local cuisine, in a similar way as Ottolenghi’s are of the Middle East.

The author was born in Kherson in the south of the Ukraine in 1984. She trained in London and runs a cooking school. She has a new book out in August called *Home Dishes*.

The bookshop holds 55,000 titles with a mix of new and secondhand books arranged according to region. There are still books available on the Russian shelf.

Some of the old cookbooks are reproduced by a small New York publishing house, including the only Ukrainian cookbook still in stock, up next to its warring neighbour ●



▲ Lawrence Angwin outside his home in Capel St and right, a painting depicting the historic cottage.



# Oldest home in West Melbourne captures the heart of US-based artist

WORDS BY Brendan Rees  
ARTS & CULTURE

A beautiful Victorian-era cottage believed to be the oldest home in West Melbourne has been captured in watercolour by an artist based some 15,000km away.

The heritage-listed home at 62 Capel St is 158 years old and recognised for its architectural significance as an early residence employing a juxtaposition of stone and render work.

Its current owner, Lawrence Angwin, a history enthusiast, has lived in the terrace house for the past 40 years.

So, when a sharp-eyed local historian and librarian told him that his home had recently been depicted in a painting and posted to social media, he was “pleasantly surprised”.

The artist, who lives in Louisiana in the United States, also showcased the painting named *St Just* – a nod to the home’s personalised name plate – on his website called “Matt Dawson”.

When contacted by *North West City News*, Mr Dawson said he had no idea the home was one of the earliest forms of residential development in West Melbourne.

“I follow an account on Instagram called @housesofnorthandwestmelbourne and I really liked the feel of the house and decided to draw it,” he said.

“I follow other Australian accounts and have done the same thing.”

“I just liked how it looked and the stony colour of it. The brickwork and the foliage and vines on it. Beautiful building.”

When informed the home was believed to be the oldest standing in the area, he said, “I was not aware of this. I’m glad you told me this. I love history and putting history to my art makes it even more alive.”

Mr Dawson said he had never flown to Australia but “would love to go one day.”

“I get all my inspiration from photos online or on Instagram. Just like I do a lot of paintings of New York City, but I’ve never been there.”

“I have done a couple of ones from Sydney and a toy shop in Melbourne. The closeness of

the homes and buildings is very unique, and I like drawing them.”

When this news was relayed to Mr Angwin, he was taken aback as he “just presumed it was a local artist.”

“I’m very pleasantly surprised and it’s very heartening to know that people appreciate the early architecture and some of the unique architecture of Melbourne that we have managed to save,” he said.

The house was originally built in 1864 and occupied by Thomas Noble, a carpenter, who also built many homes in the area.

Mr Angwin moved into the home in his early 20s after finishing fine art and education studies at university in 1981 before purchasing the property in 1990.

According to Mr Angwin, the home, which has National Trust classifications and Heritage Victoria registrations, was built in two stages with the bluestone ground floor of three rooms first, followed by an Italianate-style first floor in 1868.

Mr Angwin is a passionate community volunteer, having been the coordinator of the homework club for the past 20 years at The Centre, a neighbourhood house in North Melbourne.

He recently conducted historical walks of West Melbourne last month – one during a “come and try day” and the other during an “out and about day”.

The group of attendees included a new resident from Japan who enjoyed connecting with like-minded people, Mr Angwin said.

“It was a very social activity; we looked at the history and then we had a convivial lunch afterwards. It was a friendly introduction for people in the area in which they discovered very early architecture.”

Such is his love for history, Mr Angwin is in the middle of writing a paper about the residential history in West Melbourne for the Hotham History Project.

“I also look at the social history, not just the building. It’s about the people who lived here and what they did.”

The next free “Out and About” day, which are held on the last Saturday of each month, is May 28 from 10am to 11am ●

# Haileybury’s student koala project becomes a beacon of hope

WORDS BY Kaylah-Joelle Baker  
COMMUNITY

Following the devastating Black Summer bushfires in 2019 and 2020, the Haileybury school community felt motivated to support the conservation of impacted koalas.

Creating a Haileybury Koala Project, the school provided 23 large-scale koala sculptures to be decorated ahead of a fundraising auction, with proceeds going towards the Australian Koala Foundation (AKF).

Behind the varying designs and colours were 16 small student groups across the school’s five Australian campuses and seven renowned Australian artists – former Haileybury student Adam Elliot, Joan Blond, Pamela Irving, Di Crawford, Ian Wood and George Manioudakis.

Head of Curious Minds program at Haileybury Jacqueline Gough said in addition to raising funds the project also served as a



▲ Artist Pamela Irving with her koala.

unique opportunity for the students to connect with the creative arts industry.

The fundraising auction, which ended on Thursday, May 5, was conducted through an online platform over the course of two weeks and the proceeds contributed reside at \$19,198 ●

ELLEN SANDELL

GREENS STATE MP FOR MELBOURNE

Hi, I’m Ellen, your local state MP.  
I’m here to help. Don’t hesitate to get in touch.

(03) 9328 4637  
office@ellensandell.com

146 Peel Street  
North Melbourne VIC 3051

Authorised by E. Sandell, 146 Peel St, North Melbourne.

THE GREENS





Melbourne skyline and the Yarra River Birrarung at twilight

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Your City of Melbourne community update

# SEVEN REASONS WHY NOW IS THE TIME TO BUY IN MELBOURNE

**Love inner-city living? Find out how stamp duty savings can help you make even more of iconic city experiences, eateries and glorious green spaces.**

While other property markets have increased, the City of Melbourne has become comparatively more affordable, according to economist Anne Flaherty from realestate.com.au.

‘Australia’s property market has performed strongly and seen incredible growth over the past two years,’ Anne said.

‘In the City of Melbourne, we haven’t seen significant price rises, so properties are comparatively more affordable for a lot of buyers.

‘This can be an opportunity for buyers. Of the properties that have been on the market, many have fallen in value over the past year.’

But it won’t last forever.

In our hearts, we know that Melbourne is still one of the world’s most liveable cities, and surely it’s only a matter of time before it returns to the top of the official rankings.

## 1. Make the most of massive stamp duty savings

For those who love Melbourne or want to live in the city, the biggest incentives for acting now are perhaps the stamp duty concessions available on new properties.

There’s a small window of opportunity for buyers, according to Anne. The concessions have an end date, and it’s fast approaching.

‘If you purchase a new property up to \$1 million, you get a 50 per cent concession on your stamp duty fees for contracts signed from 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2022,’ Anne said.

Better still, the offer can be used in conjunction with other benefits, such as the first home buyer concession, off-the-plan deals and more.

## 2. Save if the new property has been on the market for a while

Maybe you’ve had your eye on a new property that’s come up in your search over the past year or so. Maybe you’ve wondered why nobody has snapped

it up. Maybe it could be you who does the snapping...

‘If the new property has been on the market for more than 12 months, you can get a full exemption on your stamp duty. That’s available for contracts signed before 30 June 2022,’ Anne said.

You could save up to \$55,000 on properties up to \$1 million.

## 3. A concession for investors and owner occupiers alike

Imagine being the first person to move into a new city pad, or reaping the rewards while renting out a sparkling new space so your tenants can make the most of city living.

There are no constraints on this temporary stamp duty concession: it’s available to owner occupiers and investors.

That means you, first homeowners, downsizers and investors.

## 4. Newer properties are usually better earners

Newer properties can command higher rents, especially if they are modern and offer good amenities.

‘The rents achievable on new properties tend to be higher than rents achievable on a property that’s older,’ Anne said.

‘Any new apartment is more attractive, even than ones that are a couple of years older. Designs look newer, fresher, cleaner.’

No wonder tenants are often prepared to pay a bit more.

‘If you can get something new and never lived in, that’s more appealing than something that’s had more wear and tear.’



San Telmo, Meyers Place

## 5. Start as you mean to go on

Are you renting in the City of Melbourne and daring to dream that there’s a way to embrace inner-city life and own your own place?

You’re not alone. Research commissioned by the City of Melbourne found that more than half of first home buyers surveyed are likely to consider buying in Melbourne.

Forty-eight per cent of those already living in Melbourne said they were also considering buying property in the area.

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

Imagine being the first person to open those blinds to a unique city vista.

## 6. Look to the future

Melbourne offers a lifestyle all its own. This is the cultural capital, the sporting capital, a magnet for foodies. So many aspects add up to make Melbourne a supremely liveable city.

‘People migrating to Melbourne are more likely to live close to the city. They’re more likely to live in inner city suburbs compared to people who’ve grown up in Australia,’ Anne said.

Maybe they’ll be your new tenants.

‘When migration regains momentum, it’s going to be really great for the city, and this will support the recovery in rents and property prices,’ Anne said.

‘The rental market might be subdued for a while, but it will pick up as migration resumes. And that’ll be good news for the city.’

.....  
**‘If the new property has been on the market for more than 12 months, you can get a full exemption on your stamp duty. That’s available for contracts signed before 30 June 2022.’**  
.....



## 7. This is your local

You already know that an extraordinary life awaits amid the laneways of this great city.

There’s always another rooftop bar to discover, and a whole grid stacked with the best eateries.

If you’re not already living in the city, you can soon roll out of bed and into the orbit of the best baristas in Melbourne. At lunchtime, the Birrarung beckons for a riverside moment.

After work, catch up for drinks and a share plate at an underground hot spot, or explore the length of the glorious gardens that wrap around the city.

Study with the best and brightest and plug into our knowledge economy. Or be part of the conversation as creative thinkers discuss big topics.

Catch a gig, indulge in a feast, go see a show. Best of all? You can wander home afterwards with no need for a long commute.

Find out how you could pay \$0 stamp duty on your next home purchase in the city at [realestate.com.au/thisisyourlocal](https://realestate.com.au/thisisyourlocal)



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Your City of Melbourne community update

# BOOK IN TIME TO WRITE A PRIZE-WINNER

Now may be the perfect time to dust off that unpublished short story you wrote during lockdown and enter the Lord Mayor's Creative Writing Awards.

Win up to \$12,000 if your original work is judged to be the outstanding entry across five categories.

Our biannual Creative Writing Awards celebrate the achievements of emerging writers and storytellers, and help ensure that Melbourne's famous literary tradition continues into the future.

Melbourne is a UNESCO City of Literature and has a proud history of great Australian writing, whether readers' tastes run to Helen Garner or Christos Tsiolkas, George Johnston, Alice Pung or our most recent Creative Writing Awards winner, Yamiko Marama.

Melbourne City of Literature research tells us that Melburnians consume more books, magazines and newspapers per capita than any other Australian city.

We know how important writers are to our community and the Lord Mayor's Creative Writing Awards are firmly

grounded in this deep wellspring of literature. In recognising emerging writers, we aim to promote our city as a place of ideas and creativity.

The awards offer plenty of scope across all genres.

This year sees the introduction of a new category. The inaugural Self-told Stories by Writers Living with a Disability will provide an opportunity for underrepresented voices in media and literature.

The Life Writing Award for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Writers will be awarded to an outstanding work that discusses or highlights a uniquely Victorian story of Australia's First People. This prize supports City of Melbourne's ongoing commitment to promoting Indigenous culture and reconciliation.

Winners in each category receive \$2000. The overall winner of the Lord Mayor's Creative Writing Award will win an additional \$10,000. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are encouraged to apply for all categories.

The awards close Thursday 30 June.

For more information, visit [melbourne.vic.gov.au/writingawards](https://melbourne.vic.gov.au/writingawards)

- The Lord Mayor's Creative Writing Awards include the following categories:
- The Dorothy Porter Award for Poetry (up to 100 lines)
  - Narrative Non-fiction (no more than 5000 words)
  - Short Story Set in Melbourne (no more than 5000 words)
  - Life Writing Award for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Writers (no more than 5000 words)
  - Self-told Stories by Writers Living with a Disability (no more than 5000 words).



Submit your short story to the Lord Mayor's Creative Writing Awards

## WHO INSPIRES YOU? NOMINATE THEM FOR A MELBOURNE AWARD



Great Wrap was awarded the 2021 Sustainability Award



The Torch won the Aboriginal Melbourne - Ganbu Guljin Award in 2021

Nominations are now open for the City of Melbourne's prestigious Melbourne Awards.

For 20 years the City of Melbourne has celebrated inspirational individuals and organisations who have made a positive and valuable contribution to our city through the Melbourne Awards.

Each year, we are humbled by the extraordinary people and organisations that go above and beyond to make Melbourne such a wonderful city in which to live, work and visit.

This year we are looking to add more inspiring individuals and organisations to the honour roll.

Lord Mayor Sally Capp said the Melbourne Awards showcase some of the most driven and compassionate people in the municipality.

'The Melbourne Awards celebrate the outstanding Melburnians who contribute their time, knowledge and energy to make our city great,' the Lord Mayor said.

'I can't wait to hear the stories of inspirational Melburnians - I

encourage everyone to register a Melbourne-based initiative or organisation that has made a difference to our city.'

This year, organisations will be recognised in eight key areas: Aboriginal Melbourne - Ganbu Guljin\*, Arts and Events, Community, Hospitality, LGBTQI+, Knowledge and Innovation, Sustainability, and Urban Design.

Last year's winners included Farmer's Daughters - a food and dining experience that champions local sourcing and sustainability,

and RMHive - an app developed to respond to the unique mental health needs of healthcare workers.

So, who inspires you? Nominations are open until 30 June.

To apply, visit [melbourne.vic.gov.au/melbourneawards](https://melbourne.vic.gov.au/melbourneawards)

*\*Ganbu Guljin means 'one mob' in Woi Wurrung language. The name is intended to better recognise the important work of Aboriginal communities.*

### 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](https://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](https://participate.melbourne.vic.gov.au)

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# Arts House launches program for deaf and disabled creatives

*For the next five years, the new Warehouse Residency at Arts House in North Melbourne will support deaf, disabled, neurodiverse and chronically ill artists to reach their artistic potential.*

WORDS BY *Sophie Berrill*

The City of Melbourne’s Arts House will fund artist fees, access and production costs for two residencies per year, and then showcase the outcomes.

This includes \$25,000 towards fees and materials, an additional \$4000 for access support, a three-month residency in a studio space, and mentor expertise.

“The Warehouse Residency at Arts House will challenge what it means to create and produce accessible art – it will break down the barriers for artists and audiences,” Arts House creative advisory group member Kath Duncan said.

The inaugural residents for 2022 are duo Catherine Dunn and Sam Martin, along with dancer Leisa Prowd.

Dunn and Martin began their residencies in March and are working with a group of deaf artists to explore storytelling beyond



hearing-centric environments and spoken languages.

“Our deaf-led project will provide a cultural-ly safe space to empower deaf artists to thrive in their own language,” Mr Martin said.

“We will invite deaf artists to reflect upon

their relationship with signed stories and audism to present a reflective performance in a final showcase open to the public,” Ms Dunn said of the shows planned for August.

From July, Leisa Prowd will begin her residency delving into the themes of perception,

voyeurism and consent from the perspective of a four-foot-tall person in a six-foot-tall world.

Prowd’s residency will culminate in a two-week season at Arts House in October.

One residency, which aims to demystify autistic art practices, is already commissioned for early 2023.

In collaboration with 16 autistic and non-autistic artists, Mishka will develop a sensory and tactile performance with large-scale brain puppets, as well as a film installation with projection mapping.

The Warehouse Residency was co-devised by Arts House and six deaf, disabled and neurodiverse artists, with support from Arts Access Victoria.

Their goal was to ensure the program embraced self-determination, flexibility and risk-taking, and enhanced inclusion and participation.

“This program will build capacity and provide support for creatives with a disability and reflects the work we are doing to promote cultural safety and a creative resurgence in our city,” Cr Jamal Hakim said.

The next expression of interest for The Warehouse Residency at Arts House will open in October 2022 ●

**For more information:**  
[artshouse.com.au](https://artshouse.com.au)

## NORTH & WEST MELBOURNE PRECINCT TRADER PROFILE

### A little slice of Paradise

*A peak through the window of Errol St gift and toy store, Stranger Than Paradise, will give you a tiny insight into this unique small business, but nothing with will prepare you for what lies behind the shopfront.*

WORDS BY *Jack Hayes*

Run by North Melbourne husband and wife team, Lucia Di Mauro and Matthew Aldridge, Stranger Than Paradise is a quaint oasis stocking best in local and internationally sourced gifts, games and toys.

From Brio and Moulin Roty to women’s jewellery and men’s aftershave, the term one-stop-shop does not do this store justice.

The selection of high-quality, yet reasonably priced, products provide an insight into the couple’s years of careful curation and a lifetime’s passion for fun.

“I’ve always wanted to have my own business, and I’ve always loved novelties and toys,” Ms Di Mauro said. “Even as a kid, these were the kinds of stores that attracted me, and that has obviously stayed with me over the years.”

“When we travelled around the world, we would always be drawn into these kinds of stores because they have the ability to reflect the personality of the place or country you are in; that is a thing that definitely stays with you.”

Nestled near the corner of Queensberry and Errol streets, adjacent to the Auction Rooms café, Stranger Than Paradise has serviced locals and visitors alike for eight years.

Starting out with a range of small, handpicked toys and gifts, the business has quickly grown into a true shop of wonders, a place where customers spend time browsing for that perfect gift for kids or adults.

Shelves are stacked from floor to ceiling with a range of favourites like Grimms, a German family-owned and sustainably-managed manufacturer producing natural, high-quality and safe wooden toys, or their ever-popular collection of Halcyon Nights, a Melbourne brand with a fresh, creative take on babies’ and children’s wear.

“We take a long time sourcing our products. We are always on the lookout and put a lot of work into research.



It’s not like we just buy once a year, we are always in the process of finding new things,” Ms Di Mauro said.

“It’s quite funny, we continue to have new locals come in who have been in the area for 20 years say, ‘how have I not found you before?’”

“I can assure you, if you want something unique and great quality, you are definitely going to find it here.”

This store will take you on a whimsical tour from infancy to adulthood, in just a matter of a glance. The more you look, the more you will find, this shop is more than just a kid’s store.

If you are not able to visit in-store, although you will sorely miss a truly unique shopping experience, Stranger Than Paradise’s online shop has everything you will need.

Stranger Than Paradise sits at 101 Erroll St, North Melbourne ●

**For more information:**  
[strangerthanparadisegifts.com](https://strangerthanparadisegifts.com)

## NORTH & WEST MELBOURNE PRECINCT ASSOCIATION

### The buzz is back

*Down cobbled laneways, along heritage shopping strips and across our green spaces, the buzz is returning to North and West Melbourne!*



It’s thrilling to see our precinct spring back to life. To kickstart the revival, and as part of a broader, long-term strategy to secure the ongoing prosperity of our local traders, the North & West Melbourne Precinct Association (NWMPA) has recently launched a new website.

Featuring refreshed NWMPA branding, the new site provides helpful information for locals and visitors alike, including a Business Directory showcasing the plethora of galleries, cafes, tradespeople and entrepreneurs that thrive in our distinctive corner of Melbourne.

Run by locals, for the local businesses and community organisations that thrive here, we share a passion for this distinctive corner of Melbourne and its people. NWMPA’s mission is to champion local businesses and enable a thriving local economy.

To direct dollars back into the precinct, we have also launched a Gift Card Program. A first for the precinct, the pre-loaded Gift Cards ensure money is funnelled directly into the pockets of local traders, rather than being spent elsewhere. It’s all about bringing attention to the array of goods and services available right here and encouraging residents and traders to support each other with their patronage, wherever possible. With more than \$13,500 pre-loaded Gift Cards already in circulation,

it’s been a promising start for the Precinct Gift Card.

You might also have noticed NWMPA window decals in our members’ shops and a selection of tote bags, featuring the new look branding proudly stating LIVE.LOVE NORTH + WEST MELBOURNE. We hope to help establish the sense of pride for our beautiful precinct.

We look forward to seeing our member numbers grow, further strengthening the diversity of the association.

We encourage you continue to support fellow traders by buying local where possible ●

Find out more or join us via:



**For more information:**  
[northwestmelbourne.com.au](https://northwestmelbourne.com.au)



# Have a look at this block!

“  
Yes, go to Google Maps and have a look! It’s a community test case – the block bordered by Stubbs St, Macaulay Rd, Robertson St, and Barnett St. The big rooftops jump out at you.”

”  
The relatively narrow residential strip immediately east of Barnett St is the only part of the block that is residential, and the only section officially outside the Macaulay Structure Plan. The majority of the block comprises four large commercial landholdings, and one public park.



1. To the east (purple line) is the ex-Vision Australia building on the Macaulay-Stubbs corner. This property has a pending development of 400-plus apartments and 500-plus car spaces.
2. The industrial estate at 352-400 Macaulay Rd (outlined in green). This property has recently been purchased by the purchased by the developer, Greystar.
3. The Webb warehouse (yellow line – 402-444 Macaulay Rd) has a pending development of 300 plus apartments.
4. The block on the north (in red, facing Robertson St) is owned and leased by the Australian Wool Testing Authority (AWTA). To this point I know nothing about the future development of this property.
5. The square (blue line) on the north-west corner is Robertson St Park, which (according to the latest Macaulay Structure Plan) is planned to be extended marginally to the east.

I have written extensively in both the *North West City News* (NWCN) and *Flem/Ken News* about the section of Macaulay Rd south of this block (See NWCN edition two – March 2021 – *The Case for a Kensington Precinct Plan*).

Last week I met with Greystar, the developer of the industrial estate, which confirmed some of my concerns expressed last year. Developers are permitted, under certain conditions, to build up to eight storeys. Greystar’s initial plans involve a squared-off, eight-storey, horseshoe design, with the closed end facing Macaulay Rd, with the intention of having commercial premises facing Macaulay Rd on the ground floor. Like the development to the east the plan includes some open space within the development, but the space is not visible nor readily accessible to the public.

I have said the development of this block is “a community test case”. So, what could be a reasonable set of parameters for this test? Firstly, this block is labelled as a “mixed use zone”, i.e., a mixture of residential and commercial. What will that mix look like? How about walkability within the block? Public open space and sunlight? Community infrastructure? Planting? Accessible and affordable housing? How will it feel to walk in and around the block? Parking and transport options? How will they pan out – too little, too much? How about bike spaces, and charging points?

In my article last March I described my vision

for Macaulay Rd as follows, “... we can see the ‘vision thing’ come into play – Kensington from the top of the hill along Macaulay Rd (down) to Boundary Rd in North Melbourne becomes a people precinct, fed by public transport and characterised by bikes, scooters, pedestrians, small electric vehicles, and enough green open space to feed the souls of residents.”

Whether or not this vision is realised depends to a great extent on what developers do on either side of Macaulay Rd. Despite attention being given to bike lanes and safety along Macaulay Rd, one would have to say the signs are not good. The so called “Macaulay Canyons” on either side of the road are falling into place! For those not familiar with this expression, it refers to the six- or eight-storey facades being constructed on both sides of the road.

The sombre fact is that the built-form controls, which have evolved under the watch of local and state governments, allow these “canyons” to be created. The streetscape on this north-side block has been (is being) designed by three different developers, at three different times; not great for cooperative precinct planning! This is what happens, not a recipe for development in the interest of the community!

Apart from a small section on the south-west corner, which is designed to be four storeys, the remainder will have a six- to eight-storey façade along Macaulay Rd – that is six storeys at the street quickly transitioning to eight storeys.

The early designs for the Greystar site include a small public space on the north side of the horseshoe – a positive, but the Macaulay Rd façade is unbroken – a negative. The Assemble design for the Webb warehouse site has a more diverse façade on Macaulay Rd, but little open space within the development.

No firm conclusion can yet be drawn as to the “success” (or otherwise) of this Macaulay test case, much will depend on how the Greystar development proceeds and how the final AWTA site is developed sometime in the future – probably under different built-form controls.

The Kensington Association will do everything we possibly can to amplify community voices. We always have a chance to improve outcomes, which will never be perfect (whatever that means). The questions we ask are always about overall community benefit. We know what makes a difference, however, we recognise that we are wrestling with powerful commercial interests, and with governments which, unfortunately, are too often caught in the same web of capitalistic imperatives ●



*Simon Harvey*  
CHAIRPERSON  
**INFO@KENSINGTONASSOCIATION.ORG**

## PARKVILLE GARDENS RESIDENTS’ ASSOCIATION

# The latest from Parkville Gardens

*Little by little the days are getting shorter and soon they’ll turn wintry. If that prospect dampens your spirits, here’s something to cheer you up ...*

Celebrate the winter solstice and shake off the blues. Come and join in the friendship and fun of our first Trivia Night, hosted by a professional Quiz-Meister!

We’re casting our net far and wide, so, dear readers, please sign up with your friends and come on down to the Reggio Calabria Club, on the corner of Brunswick Rd and Gibson Ave, at 7pm on the night of Thursday, June 23.

For the very modest sum of \$20 per head (\$15 for paid-up Parkville Gardens Residents’ Association (PGRA) members) you get to enjoy a generous two-course meal and all the fun of the festivities. International students are especially welcome.

Registration will be via Eventbrite – details in next month’s edition. Now’s the time to put the date in your diary.

It’s a pleasure to report that this year’s children’s Easter egg hunt was a great success. Thanks to committee member Michael Thom for organising the event, and top marks for lining up such a lovely sunny autumn morning. It’s always great to see children and families enjoying themselves.

On the business side of things, there’s been a number of significant meetings. The Lord Mayor and councillors gathered at the Future Melbourne Committee meeting in Parkville on April 12. The meeting began with a resume of feedback received from Parkville residents and concluded with question time, but most of the meeting was devoted to planning matters in other parts of the City of Melbourne.

Another council initiative has been a regular meeting of the presidents of residents’ associations with the Lord Mayor, Deputy Lord Mayor and council staff. It brings home how diverse the neighbourhoods are that comprise the city. East Melbourne, Southbank, the CBD

and Docklands, for example, are all quite distinct precincts. Parkville Gardens is unique in being a relatively small and outlying area that is entirely residential, with no businesses, educational facilities or industries, and just one small coffee shop/convenience store.

One of its distinctive features – having the Minister for Planning as the responsible authority ever since the 2006 Commonwealth Games – is no longer the case. Planning authority for Parkville Gardens has been returned to the City of Melbourne. However, all prior approvals for the development of the Freeway Apartments on the land between Galada Ave and CityLink remain in force. The principal change, therefore, is that other residents seeking planning permits will now submit their application to the City of Melbourne rather than the Minister’s Department of the Environment, Land, Water and Planning.


That big issue aside, the PGRA is determined to make progress on our bread-and-butter issues such as traffic and parking, school zoning and connecting with the community.

Following on the success of last year’s event,

local resident Ajith Vasanthakumar hosted another morning tea in Cade Square on Saturday, May 14 to raise funds for the Cancer Council. Once again it was a welcome opportunity for neighbours to get together, enjoy homemade fare and contribute to a worthy cause.

The last word goes to the Trivia Night. Do join us on June 23 for a night of fun and friendship ●

**Residents can find us:**  
[facebook.com/groups/pggrass](https://facebook.com/groups/pggrass) or  
[email\\_secretary@pgra.org.au](mailto:email_secretary@pgra.org.au).



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



ENVIRONMENT

World Localisation Day – June 21, 2022

“  
There is a quiet revolution emerging. Many grassroots groups, individuals and non-government, not-for-profit, voluntary entities are coming together to forge a more hopeful path towards healthy communities grounded in strong local economies.

”  
To celebrate this movement, World Localisation Day was launched on June 21, 2020. The day aims to celebrate, galvanise and create awareness of localisation as a force for systemic change.

I know I don't need to reel off the reasons why we need systemic change – a quick reminder – the degraded state of our planet, inequality, greediness of elites, homelessness, mental health and suicide levels, health issues, violence and abuse against women and children rising, levels of incarceration rising, cruelty against animals, grief of First Nations people, trauma, etc.

Localisation is believed to occur where a country, region, community or town own and source their essential life requirements such as water, food, energy and housing materials from renewable resources locally, therefore minimising imported resource dependence and prioritising social and environmental health, local ownership and governance participation.

According to organisers, localisation is about bringing the economy home – back to a human



scale. It is the process of building economic structures that allow the goods and services a community needs to be produced locally and regionally whenever possible.

It is not about isolationism or putting an end to international trade. It is simply about rebuilding human-scale economic structures by producing what we need closer to home.

Localising economies can strengthen community cohesion and lead to greater human health and material wellbeing, while reducing pollution and the degradation of the natural world.

The 2022 World Localisation Day is a month-long program of online and face-to-face regional and local events across six continents, and includes local food feasts, a localisation guide and more. For more information visit [worldlocalizationday.org](http://worldlocalizationday.org)

Localisation is not just about your food – yet food and water are critical in our daily lives.

Countries are routinely importing and exporting the same products. The USA imports 1.4 million tonnes of beef per year and exports 1.4 million tonnes of beef per year. The UK exports 270 million litres of milk and imports 170 million litres of milk.

In 2007 Australia and Britain exchanged 20 tons of bottled water. Argentinean pears are packed in Thailand and sold in the USA.

The travel miles and intelligence of this food



system and resulting CO2 are ridiculous – yet why does it continue – because industrialised agriculture means big profits for corporate giants. This chemical, industrialised food is artificially cheap because of government subsidies.

Community democracy initiatives and alternate education institutions are also a big part of the movement. So are local business alliances and finance schemes that keep wealth circulating locally, rather than allowing it to be siphoned off to distant corporate headquarters.

For example, farmers take home 80 per cent of profits from local farmers' markets versus 10 per cent of the price we pay for food in the corporate supermarkets.

Recent events (pandemics, extreme weather conditions, war) have highlighted the need for greater regional self-reliance. It has become clear that depending on global supply chains is risky particularly when it comes to basic needs.

Especially since COVID, community mutual support groups have spontaneously arisen in almost every country. In many cases these community groups are proving to be much more responsive and nimbler than centralised agencies in dealing with crises. They also encourage the best human qualities like compassion and altruism, community solidarity, and lift people's spirits in ways that cannot be achieved by large-scale organisations.

In Kensington/Flemington we saw how local

groups activated quickly and responsively when the state government shut down the Flemington high-rise towers without any notice – they were able to rouse local resources because of their existing relationships within the community.

Local community gardens in Kensington started a surplus food program working in conjunction with local organisations that weekly distributed fresh food grown chemically free to more than 90 families.

I offer the recent Lismore floods as another example where in the absence of government action many locals took on the role of sharing their food, time, homes and resources to those in crisis. Local Lismore residents went so far as to organise crowd funding for helicopters for supply drops.

What is considered local? In Victoria we could use the recent example of when the Premier decided you could not move outside five kilometres of your home.

The thing about localisation is that we will need to start thinking about how to live within the constraints of our local ecosystem.

Mmm, I start to think – I will need to capture my own drinkable water and water for washing, a local energy grid will need to be set up, how will I keep myself warm, cook – how will I deal with my wastes?

Wherever you look, things are happening at the local level that testifies to the goodwill at the core of human nature and to our intelligence and initiative. The book *Retrosuburbia* based on permaculture ethics and principles provides a wealth of practical information on how we can localise plus there is the great work by Local Futures and the Transition Towns network.

They prove that there are other, kinder ways forward for our future ●



Jacqui van Heerden  
CO-CONVENER OF TRANSITION TOWN KENSINGTON  
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SATELLITE FOUNDATION

Dear schizophrenia

Satellite Foundation Ambassador Justin Heazlewood is a musician and award-winning author. He wrote this piece for Satellite Foundation to acknowledge World Schizophrenia Awareness Day on May 24.

Justin's book, *Get Up Mum*, charts one year in the life of a 12-year-old growing up in Tasmania in the early '90s. As a child, Justin had a hobby – obsessively capturing the voices of his family and friends on tape, including his Mum who lives with schizophrenia ●

For more information:  
[justinheazlewood.com](http://justinheazlewood.com) and  
[satellitefoundation.org.au](http://satellitefoundation.org.au)



▲ This is me, Nan and Mum with schizophrenia pictured.

Dear schizophrenia,

How are you? Are you okay? Do you need help? I can only imagine you do need something, but probably have a very hard time communicating it. You're not really from around here, are you? You are like a force from another dimension. You take over humans from time to time and turn them into very unusual versions of themselves. The rest is really a guessing game. I know you pretty well because you've been inside my mother my entire life. Today is Mother's Day, so I've already rung her, and she is sounding really well on the phone. It's such a relief for me. Today is your day, World Schizophrenia Day. I'm not sure what to say. Happy schizophrenia day?

I'm not as angry with you as I used to be. Partly because you seem to have released your stranglehold on my mum. You used to haunt her, so often. I was an only child and the only other person in the house. So, I must be the biggest expert on you, short of people who have had you inside them. I know that people are quite scared of you. You're made out to be a bit of a villain. I guess that's fair enough. You are quite complicated really, and sometimes I think that unless someone has met you up close, like I have, then there's really no way to properly explain what you are like.

I remember standing in the hallway listening to my mum laughing away. She wouldn't be laughing with anyone else, just herself. Well, I suppose it was her voices. That was you, wasn't it? You created a space inside my mum just for yourself and her. It was a way for her to cope, I guess. I'm sure she experienced trauma in her younger life. It's such an extreme system you created – I mean, the laughing was the best part. Then there was the anger. Mum would swear to herself, quite violently, on repeat. It was like Tourette's syndrome. She would scrunch her face up until her jaw clenched and her teeth cracked. To this day it is the most horrifying sound.

Then there was something even worse than that! The sadness. Mum crying uncontrollably. Well, it wasn't really crying, was it, schiz? No, it was more like wailing. Some wild-animal-in-distress kind of moaning. Sometimes mum didn't even have tears in her eyes. I'd run into her room and ask her to stop. Mum would say "I need to cry" and then she'd turn away from me and go back to you. Oh schizophrenia, you were like the third member of the family.

I wish you could have introduced yourself to me properly – or even a doctor or a teacher tell me what you were about. To this day I'm still figuring it out and my only wish is that everyone can learn more about you because I know that you are not going away. I guess we need to learn to live with you, like covid or sharks or beautiful, strange meteors.

Anyway, sorry if this seems a bit out of the blue. It's Sunday so I'm a bit blue (I do barrack for Carlton).

Sincerely, Justin.



# Barak Beacon public housing estate in Port Melbourne

*Estate residents continue to campaign on Homes Victoria's plan to relocate them, demolish and redevelop the estate and the lack of clear advice on their future housing security.*

A local public meeting is being held on May 4, where Homes Victoria is presenting. Save Public Housing Collective member Chloe Cooper will speak and I will advise the results of the meeting in my next column.

## Another big redevelopment for investors, not public housing

The state government has announced another project under its Big Housing Build program: the redevelopment of the Richmond public housing estate.

This estate currently has five towers with 1020 units – 408 three-bedroom and 612 two-bedroom apartments, and around 4600 residents. Four new towers will be squashed into a small area reducing green space and residents' amenity.

The proposed new build on Elizabeth St will replace the very old units that were demolished back in 2007/2008. Those tenants were promised they could come back to new homes but that never happened and is now abandoned with the new plan.

It's another project designed to exit public

housing and use public lands for private profit under a guise of "social" and "affordable" housing. This is a reasonable assessment as the announcement mentions the government is investigating a "third party" source of funding.

It looks very much like a proposal to implement the "ground lease" model, with refurbished existing towers being included in the mix of new homes. This model will be used after the demolition of perfectly good public housing at the Barak Beacon Boulevard estate in Port Melbourne and is already in action on demolished public housing sites at Bangs St in Prahran, Bills St in Brighton and on the Flemington estate.

The model involves the state government providing land free for 40 years for a mix of community housing and discounted market rent and full market rent homes. After 40 years the state government takes up full ownership at no cost. Believing this will happen stretches the imagination.

The discounted rent stock is the so-called "affordable" housing. They pitch the "affordable" housing as being for "essential" workers – teachers, firefighters, childcare workers, nurses and now retail workers – by offering slightly less than market rates: up to 90 per cent as advised in the government's other announcement on April 1.

To use local private market rents as the benchmark for setting rents is unconscionable. It endorses escalating market rents as the norm. Discounted market rents seem only guaranteed for three years under this proposal and as the local private market rents go up so will discounted these rents.

## Collingwood Estate

Residents are continuing their campaign opposing the building of community housing in open space areas of their estate.

## State government's 10-year social and affordable housing strategy

The state government is about to release its 10-year strategy. It has to include investment to end homelessness which has continued to rise in Victoria.

The Save Public Housing Collective has petitioned the government with 5700 signatures to make public housing a priority in this strategy. I will provide an analysis of what is announced in my next column.

## Federal Election – May 21

This election campaign has seen the cost of housing rising high among the issues that concern voters of all ages.

One group to follow in seeking more information on the escalating crisis and how it affects older citizens is the Housing Action for the Aged Group (HAAG). You can follow them on Facebook by going to this link: [facebook.com/HousingfortheAgedActionGroup](https://www.facebook.com/HousingfortheAgedActionGroup)

Liberal and National Parties are telling young and old that if you can't find affordable homes to rent go and buy one!

They have expanded first homeowner grants – with Labor's support – that expert housing economists say only drive up prices. Re-electing the current government will do nothing to solve the current crisis and may make it worse.

Labor has a very modest investment proposal on community and affordable rental housing

*To use local private market rents as the benchmark for setting rents is unconscionable. It endorses escalating market rents as the norm.*

committing to fund the building of only 30,000 over a three-year term of being in government. This means a mere 7500 for the whole of Victoria when the waiting list already has more than 50,000 households in urgent need.

The Greens have a visionary, fully-costed plan to fund the building of one million homes over 20 years made up of public housing; genuine community housing, with rents set the same as for public housing and shared equity for first homeowners.

Funds would be made available for refurbishing and maintaining current public housing instead of demolition and privatisation ●



Cory Memery

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## WE LIVE HERE

# Sex parties on short-stay platforms

*The Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) is about to be exposed to sordid details of drug- and alcohol-fuelled sex parties and strippers enriching a short-stay operator in a Melbourne apartment complex.*

Outraged families, couples and singles in the suburban building are fed up with the drugged and drunken behaviour of short-stay guests and the insidious threat to residents' safety and security.

While residents have managed to get the short-stay operator banned from Airbnb and Stayz, the hens' nights and bucks' parties continue unabated.

One of the residents contacted us to describe the impact of the battle with the absentee sex party operator:

"This long-term behaviour has caused many problems. Most of the owners' corporation's (OC) time and money has been spent on dealing with the appalling situation: the maintenance and the security issues of having hordes of drunk and drugged people roaming the common areas between our apartments, lift areas, carpark and everything that comes with that!"

So far, there have been zero VCAT cases where orders have been made with damages awarded in favour of a complainant in this type of scenario under the so-called "short-stay party bill". Let's hope we see a precedent set in this case.

One option for which the OC may consider seeking advice is the new legislation regarding the benefit principle. The recent amendments to the *Owners' Corporation Act* cover scenarios where an OC may be allowed to charge additional maintenance and security costs to a lot owner benefitting from the service.

SHORT-STAY LAWS	SA	NSW	QLD	TAS	VIC	WA
	Draft	Law	Law	Law	Law	Draft
STRATA RULES	✗	✓	✓	✗	✗	✓
DAY CAP	✗	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗
REGISTRATION OR APPROVAL	✓	✓	✓	✓	✗	✓
CODE	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗
PARTY PENALTIES	✓	✓	✗	✗	✓	✓

## Short-stay action around the nation

**NSW:** The short-stay operators register is scheduled to become publicly available this month. The legislation introduced in 2021 allowed for operators to be banned for repeated or gross breaches of the regulations. Open access to the register is essential for communities to be able to check on the status of operators. The most important aspect of the NSW legislation is the empowerment of OCs to vote on adopting by-laws (called rules in Victoria) that regulate short-term rental accommodation in their building. For example, an OC in NSW can legally limit short-stays to lots that are the host's principal residence, such as during a temporary absence. This reform is desperately needed in Victoria.

**Tasmania:** A mandatory registration system requires operators to have planning approval. Platforms like Airbnb can only market and sell permitted, registered and approved short-stay accommodation. The government has suggested that taking further measures should be up to local councils.

**Hobart:** Hobart City Council has implemented the first stage of a ban on new whole-home, short-stay accommodation in the inner-city area. Hobart Lord Mayor Anna Reynolds said: "This is really just trying to provide some balance in our housing market in Hobart so it's more affordable and more accessible to people who need to rent a home."

**Western Australia:** The WA state government has released a draft planning policy outlining proposed regulations for short-term rental accommodation. The government is proposing a registration system and a cap on the number of nights before planning approval is required. The recommendations also include giving powers to OCs to limit short stays. The draft planning policy is part of the WA government's response to the recommendations of the 2019 Parliamentary inquiry and report, *Levelling the Playing Field - Managing the impact of the rapid increase of Short-Term Rentals in Western Australia*.

**Queensland:** Short-stay operators must have council approval in Brisbane and Gold Coast. A recent QCAT precedent has upheld an OC rule to limit short stays, based on a community amenity argument.

**Brisbane:** The short-term rental of an entire apartment by the property owner requires development approval from the council. The council defines "short-term" as a stay of less than three consecutive months. The development application is assessed by the council against the short-term accommodation code in the City Plan. The council says that its City Plan is designed primarily to ensure that "adjoining (sic) residents or businesses are not significantly impacted by the use."

**Gold Coast:** In addition to enforcing its approval process, the council has amended its planning laws to ban or regulate so-called "party houses" with changes that have been criticised as inadequate.

**Noosa:** Not content with waiting for the state government to act, Noosa Council has introduced a registration and approval process, a mandatory code of conduct and a 24/7 council complaints hotline. The council will act as the intermediary between the complainant and short-stay operators. The council also gave itself the power to deploy security services to observe and record activity at properties. The council says it will recoup administration costs through fees and property rates with a special

rating category for short-stay properties.

The new laws were enacted after a stakeholder consultation process where the council says it was exposed to the depth of community frustration and anger.

**South Australia:** The SA government has drafted the *Short Term Holiday Rental Accommodation Bill* with a state-wide mandatory registration system of all listed short-term holiday rentals and a mandatory industry code of conduct. Proposed penalties for breaches range from \$1250 for loss of amenity to \$5000 for failure to register. Platforms like Airbnb could be fined for failure to show a registration number in a listing. Operators could be compelled to pay disaffected neighbours \$2000 in damages – and multiple residents could apply for compensation from an operator. While there is no upper limit on the aggregate payment awarded, it must be "proportionate" to the loss of amenity.

**Last and least, Victoria:** There is no effective state-wide regulation for short stays. The current, very limited short-stay "party" legislation has resulted in no orders against operators since it was introduced three years ago. On our assessment, Victoria is the least regulated of all states: Operator registration is not required, OCs have no powers to regulate short-stays, and the very low "party" penalties are virtually impossible to enforce.

Come on Victoria, let's catch up with the rest of the country! We are lagging far behind the tames of reforms. "We Live Here" will continue to advocate for the Victorian state government to learn from the progress made in other states and implement urgent reforms ●



Barbara Francis & Rus Littleton

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LEARN MORE AT WELIVEHERE.NET







**BERNADETTE**  
My favourite café is Grounded House on Macauley Rd. I go there every day for coffee.



**ISABELLE**  
I just started working at The Premises so I would say come to there!

# Faces of North West City

*What’s your favourite local café/ restaurant in Kensington?*



**JACOB**  
Crumbs Bakery, just opposite the [Kensington] station. It’s a great vegan/organic bakery.



**JAIMIE**  
I really love Fruits of Passion and we get a lot of pizza from Crust.

HISTORY

## Maintaining our heritage with Victorian paint colours

*Houses in areas where there is a heritage overlay are required to maintain their homes in their original style, thus preserving the architectural integrity of the area. Heritage colours are essentially those deemed appropriate to the historic period when the building was erected.*

WORDS BY *Felicity Jack*  
HOTHAM HISTORY PROJECT INC.



Professor Miles Lewis is professor of architecture at the University of Melbourne. He is well known in Australia for his knowledge of architecture, and also has a worldwide reputation. He is giving a talk, hosted by the Hotham History Project, on Victorian Painting on Wednesday, May 25 at 7.30pm.

Heritage paint colour controls in Victoria, and to a large extent in Australia, are based mainly upon a document prepared 45 years ago by Miles Lewis and his then research assistant Alison Blake (now Bishop Alison Taylor).

Today those controls are substantially unchanged, but much more research has been undertaken by Lewis and others.

In this presentation Lewis will discuss both aspects – the fundamental principles underlying the original controls, and the further information now available, covering stucco and cement finishes, unpainted surfaces, paint types, natural colours, ready-mixed paints, conventions for external colours on buildings, signwriting, conservation colour controls, the paint colours bulletin, the Munsell colour system, paint layers and microscope analysis, sanded finishes and other topics.

The in-person talk has already sold out, but it will be broadcast on Zoom on Wednesday, May 25 at 7.30pm. It can be accessed by scanning the following QR code:



Meeting ID: 846 0966 5587  
Passcode: 125083 ●



**For more information:**  
[hothamhistory.org.au](http://hothamhistory.org.au)

BUSINESS



## The Winter Night Market is back!

*Grab your scarf, beanie, gloves and get ready to warm yourselves as the Queen Victoria Market’s famous Winter Night Market returns after a three-year hiatus.*

WORDS BY *Jack Hayes*

Running every Wednesday for 14 weeks, from June 1 to August 31, locals will reacquaint themselves with Melbourne’s best street food traders, brewers, distillers and artisans for the perfect midweek winter experience.

Night Market-goers will be able to wander the Queen Victoria Market’s iconic open-air sheds and laneways to enjoy a smorgasbord of street food specialties like spicy dumplings, cheesy pasta, smoked meats and decadent desserts while sipping on hot gin toddies, warming spiced cider and mulled wine.

Adding to the culinary wonderment will be a rotating lineup of homegrown talent playing live on the market’s main stage while roving performers keep visitors entertained.

Explore the Night Market’s unique stalls

selling locally-sourced and handmade products including jewellery, art, skincare, books and homewares before settling in beside one of the many roaring open fires.

For those looking for some festive cheer in the heart of winter, the Night Market will embrace the festive spirit to celebrate Christmas in July with (presumably) fake snow, Christmas trees, decorations and more.

The full list of traders will be released during May. The Winter Night Market will run from 5pm to 10pm ●

**For more information:**  
[winternightmarket.com.au](http://winternightmarket.com.au)



METRO TUNNEL



# Childers St reopened to traffic

*A Kensington street is open to traffic for the first time in more than three years in another sign of progress on the Metro Tunnel Project.*

Childers St is flowing with traffic for the first time since January 2019, when it was closed to allow for the safe construction of the western entrance to the Metro Tunnel. The street, which runs alongside where trains will enter the Metro Tunnel from 2025, reopened on April 28. The reopening means the current detour for over-height vehicles via Tennyson St and Derby St is no longer in place and access to residential properties on Childers St via Kensington Rd has been reinstated. The temporary boom gates on Tennyson St have also been removed and the road barrier reinstated, returning the local road network to its state prior to work starting on the Metro Tunnel Project. Pedestrians and cyclists still have access at all times. The reopening of Childers St comes as works on the Metro Tunnel continue in Kensington, including the widening of the rail corridor to accommodate the new tracks. This will allow for trains to enter the western entrance of the tunnel and continue through to the project's five new underground stations. Workers are preparing to lay the first track rail through

the completed nine-kilometre twin tunnels in a major step forward for the project. Before the tracks can be laid, workers will first install 4000 concrete panels along the floor of the tunnels. These concrete supports create an even base to lay the rail on and ensure it is properly aligned. Crews will then start laying track at State Library Station and work towards the western tunnel entrance. Once that section is completed, they will return to State Library Station and continue laying rail towards the eastern tunnel entrance in South Yarra. This will take about a year to complete and will be followed by the huge task of testing the tunnel and systems, which is expected to begin in 2023. Mechanical, electrical and plumbing fit-out works inside the twin tunnels between Kensington and the new State Library Station are also nearing completion. When finished, the Metro Tunnel will create capacity for more than a half-a-million additional passengers per week to travel during peak times across Melbourne's train network ●

**For more information:**  
[bigbuild.vic.gov.au/projects/metro-tunnel](http://bigbuild.vic.gov.au/projects/metro-tunnel)

KENSINGTON NEIGHBOURHOOD HOUSE

# Neighbourhood Houses – bringing people together across the country

*Neighbourhood House Week, which took place from May 9 to 15, is a national initiative which celebrates the role of more than 1000 neighbourhood houses in local communities across Australia. Kensington Neighbourhood House is one of 400 in Victoria.*



"We love bringing our community together to celebrate what makes Kensington Neighbourhood House such a special place for so many locals," manager Rebecca Smith said. "It's been a tough time with the COVID-19 pandemic, but I am proud of everything we have done to make it a little easier for our community." "Last year, Kensington Neighbourhood House provided more than 12,000kg of fresh produce to those who needed it most. We distributed 31,200 food and household items through the McCracken Street Food Share Pantry; delivered 7590 hours of adult education, and made hundreds of wellbeing calls to vulnerable community members, just to have a chat and make sure they were doing okay. It was important to us that no one felt completely isolated during such a difficult time." President of the national peak body Australian Neighbourhood Houses and Centres Association Nicole Battle said this year's Neighbourhood House Week theme was about re-emerging and rebuilding a harmonious and resilient community after the lockdowns that saw so many Australians isolated. "I am so proud to lead such a resilient, responsive and adaptive sector, made up of so many selfless and hard-working individuals," Ms Battle said.

"Neighbourhood and community houses and centres have truly demonstrated their weight in gold over the past two-and-a-half years. While so many other services closed during the lockdowns, Victorian neighbourhood houses stepped up. Ninety-six per cent of neighbourhood houses continued to deliver in varying capacities, and 60 per cent ran food relief programs, responding to a significant rise in demand." "Other services our houses provided included childcare, remote adult education, home deliveries, wellbeing calls, letterbox drops, online social gatherings, technology support and device hire. Neighbourhood houses also played a valuable role during the rollout of the vaccine program, creating awareness and combating vaccine hesitancy. Some even hosted pop-up vaccination sites at their premises to make the vaccine more accessible to vulnerable community members." "This Neighbourhood House Week we acknowledge this incredible effort and the staff, volunteers and community members who made it all happen." "However, now as we begin to re-emerge, we are looking to rebuild those strong social connections that many people lost, building a stronger, more resilient community than ever before." Kensington Neighbourhood House is open 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday. Visitors are welcome anytime! ●

STATE MP

# Housing in Melbourne is cooked and the Victorian Government just made it worse

*David lives in North Melbourne with four housemates. He loves his rented townhouse and his housemates but says he is disappointed that the "Aussie dream" of home-ownership continues to get further and further out of reach.*

"I don't know anyone my age who has been able to buy a home without a huge chunk of money from their parents. That's just not an option for many of us." "For me, I don't have Mum, Dad or grandparents to turn to for cash, a loan or guarantee, which makes buying a house in the local area basically impossible, even on a good job and stable income" he said.

David also worries about the constant threat of rising rents and of his home being sold by the landlord, which would force him and his housemates to move out. "Renters just have so few rights. Everything is stacked up in favour of landlords." This is something that I am hearing consistently from young people in inner city Melbourne. They're stressed about whether they'll ever be able to afford a home or even stay on top of rent payments while managing stagnating wages and the soaring cost of living. On top of that, they're worried about whether there's any point trying to plan for the future with the threat of worsening weather events as a result of climate change looming over all of our heads. It breaks my heart to hear how much stress this is causing young people. As your local MP, I have consistently fought to make housing fairer. Just a few weeks ago, in the lead up to the Victorian 2022/23 Budget being announced,



▲ Ellen talking to North Melbourne renter, David, aged 29.

my Greens colleagues and I pushed hard for the state government to make this the budget to properly address housing affordability. We called for a big investment in public housing, a policy for a cap on rent increases and an end to unfair tax breaks for wealthy investors and property developers. We were really disappointed that the

government decided not to take up these issues, instead cutting the budget of many homelessness services. The Labor Government also recently dumped its "social housing levy" after a scare campaign by the wealthy property developer lobby. This was a small tax on property developers which would have gone towards building more public and social housing, but Labor has dropped it. There was no relief for renters in this budget either, despite comparable countries around the world doing much more to help long-term renters afford to stay in their homes through policies like caps on rent increases. This year is a state election year, and we'll be using this year to keep the pressure on both sides of politics to make housing fairer and tackle the climate and extinction crises, so that all young people can have a future to look forward to. With more Greens in Parliament, we can push the state government further and faster on the big issues. If there is ever anything that I can do to help you, please get in touch ●



**Ellen Sandell**  
STATE MP FOR MELBOURNE  
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# Local park inspires North Melbourne resident to publish his second poetry book

*Dabbling into poetry during lockdowns “for reading as much as writing” has led to a North Melbourne resident looking to publish his second collection of poems.*

WORDS BY *Brendan Rees*

Brendan Gleeson, a professor of urban policy studies at the University of Melbourne, said he drew much of his inspiration from his local park at Gardiner Reserve, which he described as a “treasure” and a “source of peace.”

“It allows me to express my inner life and reflect on feelings and ideas in a soulful way,” he said.

“I’m also driven by a wish to share these poetic reflections in the hope that they may interest and even help some people to think about and cope with all the recent disruption, and the grief that has come from this for many of us.”

Mr Gleeson said his latest collection of poems *Records of the Loss Property Department of Gardiner Reserve*, which he began working on since the start of the year would “eventually end up in a book.”

“It is a series of picture poems meditating on the question of loss. This is not to wallow in loss but actually to accept it as inevitable for the human condition and reduce its power over us.”

Speaking about his admiration for Gardiner Reserve at Arden St, he said it was a “joyful place” that reminded him of when his own children were little and the “many happy hours we had at local playgrounds.”

A local to North Melbourne for the past five years, Mr Gleeson said his latest work followed last year’s publication of his first poetry book, *Nocturnes, A Passage of Dreams*, which he wrote during late 2020.

“It was triggered by some personal grief that was intensified by what we were all going



through in that year,” he said.

“It is a series of poems that catch my troubled dreaming in that time. It really helped me to express and ultimately console the griefs I was feeling.”

Mr Gleeson conceded he “never thought to share it,” but friends “encouraged me later to do this,” and “I like to think it might help others to think about and handle grief. I am happy to send it to anyone who’d like to read it.”

“It was lockdown and the general disruption of 2020 that caused me to think a little more soulfully and reflectively, which I’ve attempted to express through poetic writing,” he explained.

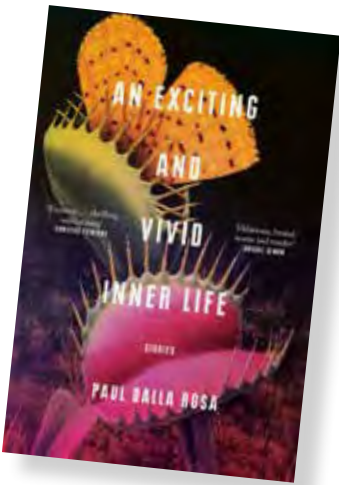
“I’m sure many others have had this experience and found various outlets for their emotions. Poetry was a way for me to do this.”

While he had no plans to hold an official launch for his work as he had “no interest” in making money from it, he added “perhaps something could be organised to help us all to think about loss, which is what the book is about, and to celebrate our survival despite all that has been thrown at us in the past few years.”

To read a few poems shared by Mr Gleeson with *North West City News*, read the online version of this article at [northwestcitynews.com.au](http://northwestcitynews.com.au) ●

# In a constant tizz

*Young writers often come up through the university system, studying creative writing, doing a Masters of Fine Arts, attracting a stipend while they do a PhD. Paul Dalla Rosa is an example of this style of writer with connections to RMIT and an MFA from New York State.*



He’s also a resident of North Melbourne, a suburb that nurtures writers.

If the stories in *An Exciting and Vivid Inner Life*, are anything to go by, it’s not easy surviving in New York while you’re trying to develop a voice.

In fact, it’s not easy for any of the characters in this debut book of short stories. They all seem to be worn down by circumstances such as aggressive cats, high expectations at work, lack of food and things never seem to get better even when the reader is empathic with their woes.

Is this the condition of modern life or is it possible for a writer to raise his or her sights a tad from the terrible disappointments of \$3000 padded shirts that look bad on arrival and can’t be returned and the host of other punitive measures that society foists on its citizens?

There is not much joy in this collection. The title indicates where some might be found but it is, of course, ironic.

The stories show a strong sense of narrative drive, however, suggesting to this reviewer that the writer might find more redemption in a novel.

These sweeps of character are quite enjoyable. The girl who has the vicious cat tries valiantly to keep it away from her tenant, jeopardising her job, love life and sanity in the process.

The cat is full-on as is the sales manager in a fashion store who will do anything to be noticed by the label owner who is about to arrive

on an unscheduled visit.

Some gestures are ridiculous, such as the trip to hospital emergency to deal with a pimple, but the way the cat scampers around the apartment is clever and so are the baddies in New York who insinuate themselves into the drama.

The American idea of the dead beat works well to spice up the confessional and auto-fictional style favoured at Australian universities.

Writers need to branch out. Just because you’re young and gay and love the internet doesn’t mean you can’t find larger themes than looking good on it.

Colm Toibin put his repressed, lovelorn characters in locations that opened them up to possibilities rather than disappointments.

New York might have seen better days when our hero arrived, but the city is usually full of starry-eyed visitors.

The stories in this collection work best when the characters are forced to deal with specific scenarios rather than drift through mood pieces such as sunbaking in Majorca.

Facts stick in the mind of a reader and work well in the opening line of a story as a hook.

“The court awarded damages” is the first sentence in the brilliant final story *In Bright Light*, which deals with the complications of life upfront and puts the narrator in a constant tizz.

*An Exciting and Vivid Inner Life*, Paul Dalla Rosa, Allen & Unwin, 2022 ●

# Joey joy: Melbourne Zoo welcomes new kangaroo

*It may not yet be old enough to hop, skip or jump, but an adorable new resident at Melbourne Zoo is quickly winning over the hearts of anyone lucky enough to catch a glimpse.*

The Zoo is celebrating the birth of a Kangaroo Island joey to first-time parents, Fern and Moe, with the little one just starting to poke its head out of the pouch.

Melbourne Zoo Australia bush keeper Kody Davidson said both mum and joey were healthy.

“They’re both eating and drinking really well, which is exactly what we want to see in a baby ‘roo and a new mum,” Mr Davidson said.

“Our vets perform regular health checks during the pregnancy and infancy period to make sure they are both maintaining their weight and have a variety in their diet, ensuring the joey receives the optimal nutrients it will need to grow nice and strong.”

“It’s been incredible to witness this process. We’ve seen this tiny joey kicking around in mum’s pouch for weeks. It has only just started poking its head out for its first look at the world,” Mr Davidson said.

When a joey is first born, it weighs less than two grams and is around the size of a jellybean.

Before they emerge and begin to explore the world on their own, Kangaroo Island joeys typically remain in the pouch for between seven to nine months. The mother will begin to wean



the joey off her milk and reduce the amount of time it spends in the pouch after 18 months, by which time the joey will weigh around five kilograms.

Mr Davidson said that, since falling pregnant, mum Fern had become much more confident and social.

“Fern used to be a bit of a recluse before she fell pregnant. She kept to herself and would only approach keepers to feed. However, since her pregnancy, she has had a complete behavioural change and is now super friendly and



loves being around the keepers and hanging out with her mob,” Mr Davidson said.

“Fern is a really beautiful seven-year-old kangaroo. She is lighter in colour than the others, which makes her easy to pick out from the rest. She’s doing really well for a first-time mum.”

As a crepuscular species, Kangaroo Island kangaroos are typically most active at dusk and dawn.

Zoo members and visitors are more likely to see the little joey peeking out of mum’s pouch within the Australia Bush precinct in the late

afternoon.

Kangaroo Island kangaroos are a subspecies of the more commonly known Western Grey kangaroo.

Evolving in isolation from their cousins on mainland Australia, Kangaroo Island kangaroos developed stockier builds and have darker coats, paws, feet and tails.

In the wild, kangaroos face threats from dog attacks and road accidents. However, with no large predators on Kangaroo Island, they have been able to thrive ●



# Pet's Corner

## Barny the barnacle loves a cuddle

“

Vanessa has had her beloved dog Barny for more than a year now, and he's adjusted to city life quite well.

”



WORDS BY Zephania Thangam

As a French bulldog, although he is as small as his average breed size is, he doesn't let that phase him. "He likes to act like the 'big guy' even in front of dogs that are double his size," Vanessa said. Barny tends to be friendly with his fellow canine buddies, that's "as long as they're smaller than him." Barny is even said to be "good with cats". He is now seven years old and living in an apartment complex with his owner near Flagstaff Gardens which just so happens to be his favourite park. He has experienced lockdown like many other pets during the past few years and Barny has had no problems adjusting to it. According to Vanessa, he likes to get out and about,

even outside the city. In fact, one of "his favourite beaches that he goes to often is one near Geelong" which he enjoys walking around on. Barny isn't picky when it comes to food, as "he eats anything" and enjoys a variety of meals, not only dog food but also carrots or even his owners' food. He hasn't always enjoyed the luxurious city dog life though. As a rescue dog from the country, initially he didn't get along with people very well. Thankfully someone from Vanessa's company offered him to her last year, and although she admitted she didn't like that "he's scared of people", she said she always enjoyed walking alongside him as he "struts around the city."

### NATURE

## Life on eight legs

Clearing out the back garden I came across this hairy orange monster with the most delightful yellow eyebrows. Assuming I'd discovered a new species I checked the reference books only to find I'd been beaten to it many times.

WORDS BY Howard Birnstihl

Although having caused some confusion over the years as to exactly who and what this colourful arachnid is, the backroom boys and girls have now decided she's just a humble huntsman, but obviously from the la-de-da end of town. We don't usually associate colour with spiders, they're just those drab brownish scuttling critters we occasionally see on the bathroom wall or in the webbed corner of a window frame. There are, in fact, hundreds of species around Melbourne in a whole range of colours but there are a couple of good reasons why we don't often see them. For example, being smarter than the average bear, most brightly-hued eight-leggeds dwell in an environment similar to their own colour, so trying to spot a yellow spider on a buttercup for instance, is not easy (particularly if they're only the size of your little fingernail). Another feature, which scientists have only recently established as fact, is that some spiders, like the common crab (or flower) spider, which roams your garden and mine, can actually change its colour to suit its background



▲ St Andrews Cross Spider.



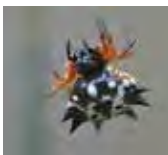
▲ Caption Arrow pointing up.



▲ Orb Weaver. ▼ Nicodamus.



▼ Diamond Spider ▼ Flower Spider.



▲ Olivos Spider.



▲ Green Garden Spider.

(a bit like Adam Treloar changing from a Collingwood to a Bulldog's jumper, but not as controversial). There is another group of colourful spiders we rarely see, they are the shy brigade, only venturing out in the dead of night. There is something of a mystery here – why would such exotically beautiful creatures hide away and only emerge in total darkness when the beauty of their brilliant bodies cannot be appreciated? It doesn't make sense, or does it? Although most spider species seek out their prey by smell, some can actually see in the dark and those, such as the clever little net-throwing spider, have eyesight an astonishing 2000 times as good as mine, and probably yours. Mind you, having eight eyes rather than our measly two is

a good start. If you want to see the beauty of the orb weavers in your garden, even with your torch, you'll probably end up suffering the indignity of flailing around like a frog in a sock after walking into one of their webs. This, of course, will give you the heebie jeebies, as does the thought of the web's gigantic owner lurking somewhere nearby, but remember, be strong. These spiders are not aggressive, nor is their venom toxic to humans. Besides, you're a nature lover, and when caught in the torch beam the owner of that web will hold you in awe. In fact, if you want to see these creatures there's no real alternative. Usually, bright orange with strong patterns of yellow and white, their

beauty is often only discovered by accident and is shrouded away in the daylight hours in some chink in the chimney or convenient knothole in your apple tree. Also in your garden, or the local park, you'll find leaf-curling spiders, equally spaced and guarding their own small piece of territory, each having chosen an appropriately pliable dead leaf to carefully curl into a homely tunnel. Hanging innocently on an unobtrusive web we could be forgiven for thinking it was just another dead leaf, albeit a rather sculptural one. The only give away is the sight of spindly legs which appear at the very edge of the lower opening, like hair in an old man's nostril, and unless we fluke a sighting at night in the torch beam, we might never know the beauty of this creature's gaudily bulging succulent body. Like many other species, the leaf-curler reacts to any unsuspecting insect's tell-tale tug on a trip wire and with a speed almost impossible to see, or believe, out it shoots and SOCK! POW! BAM! Well, more bite, wrap and suck, but the end is the same. Anyway, take a torch out tonight and with a little patience, who knows what surprises await. Put a little colour in your (night) life. If you would like to see more of my work, scan the QR code below, or check my YouTube channel under my name ●









# What's On: May 2022

**CROWD STANCE: RAFAELLA MCDONALD**

Arts House - 521 Queensberry St  
North Melbourne  
Free, Feb 1 - June 12

Rafaella McDonald's expansive installation Crowd Stance uses bold colour, intuitive mark making and cartoon-like outlines of the body in various moments of action.



**WEST END ART SPACE 5TH BIRTHDAY**

Come experience a mammoth group show, celebrating the talented artists in our stable and the fantastic vision and work of Gallery Director Anna Prifti over the last 5 years.

SHOW DATES: MAY 4 – JUNE 18

[westendartspace.com.au](http://westendartspace.com.au)

**Songbirds at North Melbourne Library**

Songs, rhymes and stories will engage your budding bookworm's mind and introduce them to the fun and rhythm of language.

For babies and toddlers to 18 months old; no bookings necessary.

**03 9658 9700**



**WALDEMAR KOLBUSZ - LOVE IS BACK - APRIL 29 - MAY 28**

In Waldemar Kolbusz' second solo exhibition at Gallerysmith (the 53rd in his career) LOVE IS BACK presents an energetic body of work which points to a facile desire for acceptance and perfection.

170-174 Abbotsford St, North Melbourne

**JURRUNGU NGAN-GA [STRAIGHT TALK]**

A provocation in dance challenging Australia's fixation with incarceration.

Wed 1 – Sat, June 11, Arts House - 521 Queensberry St, North Melbourne

[artshouse.com.au/events/jurrungu-ngan-ga-straight-talk](http://artshouse.com.au/events/jurrungu-ngan-ga-straight-talk)

**TRANS AND GENDER DIVERSE WRITING GROUP**

Fortnightly, Tuesdays 5-6pm

Online writing group via Zoom for trans and gender diverse young people and queer-identified people between the ages of 13 to 25 to connect and get writing.

[youngadults@melbourne.vic.gov.au](mailto:youngadults@melbourne.vic.gov.au)

**THE OTHER ART FAIR**

Experience-seekers, this one's for you. We're reframing art and how you experience it. Step right in & embrace a curious encounter (or two).

Thursday, May 26 - Sunday, May 29 @ 2 Wreckyn St, North Melbourne

[theotherartfair.com](http://theotherartfair.com)

**THE CENTRE**

58 Errol St, North Melbourne

The Centre is a not-for-profit offering programs and activities that respond to the needs of the North & West Melbourne community, providing an accessible and inclusive agenda which fosters belonging and community spirit.

[centre.org.au](http://centre.org.au)



**WESTERN SUBURBS ORGAN CLUB**

Kensington Neighbourhood Centre

18 Anthony St, Kensington  
June 20 - July 11, 1:45 pm

2nd Monday of the month (or 3rd Monday if the 2nd Monday is a public holiday). Cost: \$8 includes afternoon tea. Enquiries: Julie, **9307 8207**



**PARKVILLE TENNIS CLUB**

Parkville Tennis Club  
151 Royal Parade  
Parkville 3052  
Monday - Sunday, 6am - 11pm

Parkville Tennis Club on the edge of the central city is small and friendly, with three synthetic clay courts.

## Business Directory

### Precinct

**NORTH + WEST MELBOURNE PRECINCT ASSOCIATION**

**Contact Us.**

[info@nwmelbourneprecinct.com.au](mailto:info@nwmelbourneprecinct.com.au)

Post Office Box 5,  
North Melbourne  
Victoria 3051

**Next Chapter**

**Tom Hirini — Director**  
**0481 192 060**  
[thenextchapter.com.au](http://thenextchapter.com.au)

### Real Estate

**Biggin & Scott**  
KENSINGTON

For a clear path to success

Kylie 0417 960 492  
Simone 0447 022 266  
Trevor 0456 377 780

### School

**SIMONDS CATHOLIC COLLEGE**

**CONTACT US**  
Phone: +61 3 9321 9200  
Email: [contactus@scmelb.catholic.edu.au](mailto:contactus@scmelb.catholic.edu.au)  
Hours: Monday – Friday  
8.00am – 4.00pm

**CAMPUSES**  
St Mary's 7-9 | 273 Victoria St,  
West Melbourne VIC 3003

St Brigid's 10-12 | 20 York St,  
Fitzroy North VIC 3068

### Public notice

**OPTUS** **vodafone**

**PROPOSAL TO UPGRADE OPTUS MOBILE PHONE BASE STATION AT 179 BOUNDARY ROAD NORTH MELBOURNE 3051 with 5G**  
**RFNSA reference: 3051023**

1. The proposed facility consists of the addition of new 5G equipment and associated works as follows;  
Installation of three (3) new panel antennas (0.59m long)  
Installation of three (3) new panel antennas (0.81m long)  
Add ancillary items including twelve (12) new remote radio units, and in shelter works (Including main structure strengthening if required).
2. Optus and Vodafone regard the proposed installation as a Low Impact Facility in accordance with the *Telecommunications (Low-Impact Facilities) Amendment Determination 2021* based on the description above.
3. In accordance with Section 7 of C564:2020 Mobile Phone Base Station Deployment Code, we invite you to provide feedback about the proposal. Further information and/or comments should be directed to: Blessing Nhliziyo of Genus at [Feedback@Genus.com.au](mailto:Feedback@Genus.com.au), or 3/5 Hartnett Cl, Mulgrave VIC 3170, by **June 6th 2022**.



# Next Chapter



COMING SOON

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Offering 1, 2 and 3-bedroom homes featuring expansive garden terraces and a 7-star average energy rating. Located moments from Royal Park on a quiet residential street.

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## Get in Touch

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