

NORTH WEST CITY NEWS

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Puzzles & Trivia P18



▲ (L-R) Built Development Director Jono Cottee, Irongate CEO Graeme Katz, Deputy Lord Mayor Nicholas Reece, Ivanhoe Cambridge Investment Asset Manager Edwin Tong, and Built National Director Ross Walker.

New 40km/h speed limit rolls out in North and West Melbourne

The City of Melbourne is lowering the speed limit across North and West Melbourne in a bid to improve safety for all road users and pedestrians.

WORDS BY *Brendan Rees*
TRANSPORT

A new 40km/h speed limit will be rolled out from early April on all local roads bordered by Dudley St, Peel St, Flemington Rd, Macaulay Rd, part of Dryburgh St, Boundary Rd, and Footscray Rd; however these arterial roads will remain unchanged along with King and Spencer streets.

Busy roads like Errol St, Queensberry St, Arden St, and O'Shanassey St will also drop to 40km/h, including those roads where there is not an existing 40km/h limit.

Lord Mayor Sally Capp said the council had worked closely with the state government to reduce speed limits across the municipality.

"Melbourne's streets are among the busiest in the nation, with hundreds of thousands of people moving through the city on any given day," she said.

"There is always more that can be done – that's why we're continuing to work closely with residents, businesses and the community to explore ways to boost pedestrian safety in our city."

Chair of the North and West Melbourne Association Kevin Chamberlin said, "The community always welcomes these traffic calming measures as they help restore amenity, air quality, and safety".

Executive officer of Victoria Walks Dr Ben Rossiter said while they were "very supportive" of the reducing the speed limits, he believed consideration should be also given to reducing to the speed limit to 30km/h in some areas.

"We welcome 40km/h, it's very good," he said, but added, "in high pedestrian areas where there's lots of walkers around activity centres and that sort of thing, we think the speed limit should be lower," Dr Rossiter said.

"The state government is often a barrier to safer speeds. In inner areas that are really dense, they're people places, people streets; we should have safer speeds to give people more options of getting around.

"Safer speeds mean there's more street level activity, which is important for commercial businesses. People are more likely to stop and enjoy kerbside dining for example."

North Melbourne resident Sandy Melnikoff, who was almost bowled over by a car at a zebra crossing earlier this year after a driver was distracted using their mobile phone, said the reduction in speed limits was welcomed.

However, she expressed reservations about how a "happy medium" could be achieved for all road users and pedestrians, particularly with the use of e-scooters, which "do quite a speed", and more of the devices expected to hit the roads after the state government lifted a ban on private scooters.

"Being a high-density area, there's still going to be risks involved," she said.

"For the people I see walking and not looking [when crossing the road], it's fantastic."

Electronic traffic signs will be displayed at different locations to advise motorists of the new speed limit.

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Younghusband woolshed revamp starts

A new era for Kensington's century-old former Younghusband Woolstores has been ushered in with construction of a major redevelopment of the site started in March.

WORDS BY *Brendan Rees*
BUILDING

The iconic red buildings have occupied the 2-50 Elizabeth St site for 122 years and are recognised as one of Melbourne's biggest heritage sites.

But under a "reimagined Younghusband precinct" project, the 1.57-hectare site, which includes a network of early-20th-century industrial buildings, will be transformed

into a "vibrant new destination village", with a mix of office and retail spaces.

Since joining forces last year to acquire the site, Australian construction and development company Built, global investment group Ivanhoe Cambridge, and property investment and asset management group Irongate, have been working on upgrading plans to improve the design and sustainability aspects.

Construction for stage one began on March 28, which saw members of the three-way consortium and City of Melbourne Deputy Lord Mayor Nicholas Reece gather to celebrate the milestone occasion.

"Melbourne is blessed to have so many heritage buildings which have been preserved and, in many cases, enhanced, and that's what we're going to see on an epic scale with this Younghusband redevelopment," Cr Reece said.

The Younghusband warehouses were originally bought

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E-scooter trial extension sees calls for safety improvements reiterated

WORDS BY *Brendan Rees*
TRANSPORT

North West Melbourne residents and pedestrian safety advocates are hoping that the state government's extension of the electric scooter hire scheme will see safety improvements and enforcement of rules such as illegal footpath riding addressed.

Minister for Roads Melissa Horne announced in March a six-month extension to the trial, which was launched in January last year and has seen 3.7 million short trips in Melbourne through scooter hire companies Lime and Neuron.

Private scooters were classified as unregistered vehicles, with their use in public spaces attracting a \$925 fine, but this ban was lifted when the changes came into effect from April 5.

Under the trial's extension, e-scooters will be permitted on roads with a speed limit of 60km/h or less, up from the 50km/h limit that was in place. They can be ridden on roads, in bicycle lanes, on bicycle paths or separated and shared paths, but will remain illegal on footpaths.

The minimum age of riders will also be lowered from 18 to 16 but all riders must still wear a helmet and adhere to the same blood alcohol

content and drug use restrictions as motorists. Riders cannot consume alcohol while travelling on an e-scooter. E-scooters cannot travel above 20km/h while devices capable of travelling faster than 25km/h are not classified as e-scooters and are still illegal.

Therese Fitzgerald, a member of local group the Kensington Association, said while they supported a more sustainable mode of transport that reduced carbon emission and provided an alternative to cars and motorbikes, there were still a "whole lot of things that haven't really been looked at all".

This included policing illegal footpath riding and ensuring insurance policies were in place so that third parties, such as pedestrians, were covered if they were struck by a rider using a footpath or not wearing a helmet.

"There's lots of reasons why they're good, they cut down carbon footprint and allow young people to move around ... but it really has come upon us quickly and we don't have any real control," she said.

Ms Fitzgerald said residents also queried why a recent City of Melbourne online community survey titled the *Kensington and North Melbourne pedestrian safety and walkability* did not include e-scooters: "There has to be a lot of things looked at really and I don't know if the study is doing that in sufficient detail." ●

New 40km/h speed limit rolls out in North and West Melbourne

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The council said residents had received information in their letterboxes, and that the online Neighbourhood Portal would be updated soon.

Meanwhile, the council is undertaking a study to identify a range of pedestrian improvement projects to be constructed in Kensington and North Melbourne, after public consultation closed on March 20.

Concerns raised by community reference groups included:

- Lack of pedestrian crossings.
- Footpath condition and connectivity issues.
- High vehicle speeds on local roads.
- Vehicles using local roads as short-cuts to avoid congestion on arterial roads. ●

Flood affected business still waits recovery grant

WORDS BY *Brendan Rees*
BUSINESS

A West Melbourne business owner whose shop suffered an estimated \$1.5 million in damages after being inundated with floodwaters last October says he has not been able to access financial support promised by the state government.

The state and federal governments last October announced recovery grants of up to \$200,000 would be available for medium and large businesses that were directly impacted by the floods to help them return to trade as quickly as possible as part of a \$877 million Recovery Support package.

However, Richard Noble, the co-owner of Aftershock PC in West Melbourne, which had 111 pallets of computer equipment damaged from the floods, said, "at the moment there's no information at all" in accessing the \$200,000 grant, which did not exist on the state government's website to make an application.

"I've been patiently waiting but it's never come up," Mr Noble said.

"I called Business Victoria and they said they can't find anything on it."

He was referred to the Premier's office, which he contacted but was told to speak to Business Victoria.

Melbourne State MP Ellen Sandell said the state government "seems to have announced grants for flood-affected businesses but then never actually delivered them".

A government spokesperson said the grant program for medium and large businesses started operating on January 31 and was still open, adding they were currently evaluating the eligibility of a dozen businesses that have been identified as requiring extra support.

Business owners who require further flood assistance are encouraged to call the Business Victoria hotline on **13 22 15** or get in touch with their nearest Regional Development Victoria business office. ●

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Love your North West City local

A bright new light in North Melbourne's café community



The more you dig into the North and West Melbourne café scene, the sooner you come to a realisation ...



WORDS BY *Jack Hayes*

This isn't a collection of businesses vying for the same clientele, this is a homogenous community of like-minded small businesses working together, not just to serve bloody good food and coffee, but to champion the ethos of putting "people over profit".

The latest member to join this growing cohort is Lumen, a bright new all-day café calling 522 Victoria St its home.

The two industry stalwarts behind it are North Melbourne locals Emma Sheahan and Marichi Clarke.



Having worked in just about every corner of Melbourne's hospitality scene at places like Seven Seeds, Wide Open Road, St Ali and even local roastery, Small Batch, there was a sense of inevitability in opening a café of their own.

However, it wasn't until both Sheahan and Clarke began to live in and fall in love with North Melbourne that they decided to open their own café in what is an already well served and competitive coffee neighbourhood.

"There is definitely room for all of us," Sheahan told *North West City News*. "All of the big coffee players in North Melbourne are all good friends; we all grew up together and worked in venues together."

"The sense of community and love of coffee in this neighbourhood is truly something. As a resident you see one side of it, but as someone that works in the community, you see the whole other side of the coin where I feel like the people of North and West Melbourne are just so proud to live here."

"I had a taste of that, but upon opening Lumen, I've seen it ten-fold. People love to make it known that they live here and they're really excited to have us in the area."

Lumen's footprint may be small, but the soft interiors and spacious fit-out offer up a comfortable sense of familiarity; this truly is a local's local.

Just as with everything they do, the omnipresent sense of subtlety extends to a menu that will satisfy that grumbling stomach but not leave you "needing a nap after it".

There are Ortiz sardines on rye bread baked around the corner, or the smoked caciotta, cheddar and quince hot pressed sando, and on weekends the crowd favourite is the tamago and cheddar milk bun.

"Opening here and designing our menu, we felt like there was still room for something a little more casual, something that had some sophistication and was intentional about what it did, but wasn't too serious," Sheahan said.

"You don't have to sit down for a three-course meal or have to have a set menu; you can just come for a glass of wine or a snack and you're welcome in whatever you want. Ten minutes or two hours, you know, we're here for you."

"As far as coffee goes, we just want clean, sweet, crunchable coffees. Scoring 86 and above out of 100, really easy to drink, really enjoyable to drink and to just want to build trust with the community that we can deliver that day in, day out."

In the coming months Lumen will be open during the evenings with a simple menu revolving around "a few things done well". ●

For more information:
Instagram: @lumenpeople



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It's time to celebrate small businesses

WORDS BY *Kaylah-Joelle Baker*
BUSINESS

Applications for the 2023 Lord Mayor's Small Business Awards officially opened on March 29 and the council is seeking nominations for businesses that have helped shape the city.

Businesses of the municipality's north-west are often reflected in the awards program, with North Melbourne's boutique wallpaper art and signage business Grafico Group having taken out last year's top prize.

West Melbourne's Amiconi Restaurant was also recognised in 2022 for 40-plus years in business, and West Melbourne's hardware store, Calmatronics, for 20-plus years.

Speaking about the recognition, and its importance, business partners of Amiconi Restaurant, Michael Cardamone, Joe Muso and Vince Alfonso described the award as "an honour".

"Small businesses are the backbone of the economy, and the government should understand small businesses need support more than the large multinationals," Mr Cardamone told *North West City News* last year.

The award program has run since August 2005, with more than 800 City of Melbourne small business proprietors recognised.

Given the struggle during the past couple of years, the council is looking forward to celebrating all milestones again this year.

From small businesses that have been around for 10-plus years, to businesses that are celebrating more than 20 or 40 years, all milestones are recognised, with one outstanding business awarded Small Business of the Year.

"Small businesses are the heroes of our city – they keep Melbourne humming, adding vibrancy, character and appeal to our iconic streets and precincts," Lord Mayor Sally Capp said.

"From hidden gems to well-loved institutions, our Small Business Awards recognise the people and places that make Melbourne so magnetic."

For 2023, the council has also introduced a new category called the Small Business Innovation Award to recognise a City of Melbourne business that is "always looking outside the box to demonstrate excellence through innovation".

The winners of 2023's Small Business and the Innovation categories will also receive a cash prize of \$3000 and be announced at the annual Lord Mayor's Small Business Ceremony.

Nominations for the awards can be made via melbourne.vic.gov.au/smallbusinessawards until April 28. ●

City of Melbourne councillors unanimously back Voice to Parliament "yes" vote

WORDS BY *David Schout*
COUNCIL AFFAIRS

City of Melbourne councillors have unanimously backed the "yes" campaign in the lead-up to a vote on the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice to Parliament.

The move saw it become the first capital city council to "adopt a firm position on the Voice" according to Lord Mayor Sally Capp, ahead of Australia's first referendum since 1999 later this year.

A motion from the Lord Mayor affirmed the council's support for the 2017 Uluru Statement from the Heart and the "yes" campaign for constitutional recognition.

It also committed to ensuring locals were as best informed as possible before of the significant vote.

"It's important to affirm that the City of Melbourne is supportive of the principles of the Uluru Statement from the Heart and the 'yes' campaign in particular as we go into the referendum," Cr Capp said at the March 21 Future Melbourne Committee meeting.

"Referendums don't happen very often; it's important that we're all involved ... from my

perspective, this referendum is one of the most critical in our lifetime."

The Lord Mayor said that despite being an Australia-wide issue, local councils – as the closest level of government to the people – had an important role to play in ensuring "informed participation".

"As many other councils have done, [we have] an obligation and responsibility that we have a practical role to play in what is a national debate and a national government-led reform," she said.

"But our practical role over the coming months is to help ensure that our community is engaged, connected, and informed about every aspect of the debate. It's an important role that we can play, so people participate in this very significant discussion – that's got to be the first hurdle."

Community engagement would include the sharing of information through public meetings and opportunities for discussion, speeches, social media, and other communications.

Following the meeting, Deputy Lord Mayor Nicholas Reece was questioned on 3AW radio how the council could support the "yes" vote before it had (at the time) seen the final wording of the constitutional amendment and question.

However, Cr Reece said councillors were supporting a "principle", and the technical wording of the question was being used to "confuse and scare" Australians.

The wording was confirmed by Prime Minister Anthony Albanese two days after the meeting.

The council motion also noted that there was a "diversity of opinions" both "inside and outside Aboriginal communities" on the proposed Voice to Parliament.

"We acknowledge that the entire Aboriginal community is not unified in its position, as it wouldn't be on any position in any community," deputy chair of the council's Aboriginal Melbourne portfolio Cr Dr Olivia Ball said.

However, Cr Dr Ball said there was a "strong majority and some very strong leading voices" within the community.

A total of 44 nationwide referendums have been held in Australia's history, and only eight have been carried. The last referendum was held in 1999, when almost 55 per cent of voters rejected the chance to become a republic.

In the same way that it is compulsory to vote in a general election, voting in a referendum is compulsory for those on the electoral roll. ●

Remy back to his old self after flying away for three days

WORDS BY *Brendan Rees*
COMMUNITY

A pet Indian Ringneck that went missing for three days in summer before turning up in a Kensington backyard has been loving his time being back home.

Remy's owner Bec Leader said she had been training him to stay on her shoulder as she stood on the balcony of her home in Maribyrnong.

Everything was going well with Bec rewarding Remy with treats until he was suddenly spooked by a gust of wind.

"He tried to land at a nearby tree and birds were on him at that point, so he kept going," Bec said.

Bec panicked for the next three days as she walked around hours each day calling out to him – including making bird sounds – but to no avail.

She also posted to multiple community Facebook pages appealing for the public's help in a desperate bid to find him.

To make matters worse, Remy had gone missing during a heat wave with Bec "praying that he was healthy".

But to her astonishment, Bec received a call from a stranger in Kensington saying they believed they had found her cheeky parrot after seeing the Facebook posts.

"I was over there with his travel cage within half an hour. He was on her clothesline," Bec said, which was more than two kilometres from



her home.

"I was in tears when I found him."

Apart from Remy experiencing nine grams of muscle wastage, he was given the all-clear from a vet on the day he was found in late February.

Bec said she was "extremely relieved" and while the finder insisted on not being rewarded, Bec decided to give her \$50 and a bunch of flowers.

Remy has since fully recovered and was back to his old self at home, with Bec also looking at getting him a parrot friend.

She explained the training exercise – a method called recall that teaches a parrot to fly into their owners' hands – was something she had done before with Remy (who can also talk) but "there's no way in hell I'm letting that stuff happen again".

"I think the first thing he said to me when I picked him up from the clothesline was 'what ya been doing?'" to which Bec replied to the finder, "the audacity of this guy to say 'what ya been doing?' when I should be asking what he's been doing all this time." ●





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Uniting Church lists historic North Melbourne church for sale

WORDS BY *Brendan Rees*
PROPERTY

A 144-year-old bluestone church in North Melbourne featuring a landmark spire is up for sale with a price guide of about \$10 million.

The St Mark the Evangelist Uniting Church occupies a 4882-square-metre block with a huge complex including a manse, hall, parsonage, cottages, and a commercial building along the frontages of Curzon, Elm, and Queensberry streets.

The site was put on the market earlier this year with JLL now considering a range of expressions of interest.

According to Reverend David Fotheringham, the Uniting Church of Australia's moderator of the synod of Victoria and Tasmania, the congregation had "discerned that their needs for the future had changed, and that such a substantial landholding, including the associated maintenance and upkeep required, no longer met their missional goals".

"Their hope is that the proceeds of the sale will fund that missional work for many decades into the future," he said.

The 1879-built church together with the manse, hall, parsonage, and cottages are listed in the Victorian Heritage Register "as a rare surviving example of an intact church complex".

"The di-chrome brickwork, interior gallery, stairs, and stained glass are just four of the notable features. The church hall is of architectural significance for the notable large, exposed timber trusses," a heritage statement reads.

JLL capital markets director Jesse Radisich said the sale had attracted the interest of investors, developers, owner occupiers, and value-add buyers.

"The expressions of interest have closed and we're very pleased with the response," he said. "There is a range of different visions for the church building, which we can't comment too much specifically on what people are thinking, but residential conversions, that sort of thing."

Rev. Fotheringham said it would be their desire that a new owner was able to respectfully develop the site "to reflect its history and allow rejuvenation of the buildings



and introduction of contemporary uses to the site though a sensitive adaptive reutilisation".

"The specific uses have changed over the past 150 years; however, the site has always been used for the purposes of worship, church-related accommodation and for the missional and community work of the St Mark the Evangelist congregation, including housing Hotham Mission in recent years."

Chair of the North and West Melbourne Association Kevin Chamberlin said the community would want to "make certain that the new owners respect the heritage status of the property and the importance of the buildings on the site".

"In the hands of the new owners, the refurbishment of the existing buildings would be a major plus for North and West Melbourne," he said.

In October 2004 the congregation celebrated 150 years since the first service of the Presbyterian Church in North Melbourne was held in the loft of a blacksmith's shop in Villiers St on October 29, 1854.

Five years later, in 1859, the first church, a bluestone building, was constructed in Curzon St and named Union Memorial Church, in honour of the amalgamation of the three strands of the Presbyterian Church, according to records of the Hotham History Project, a community group with an interest in the history of North and West Melbourne.

The Victorian Heritage Register states: "the spire and imposing exterior of the church along with the intact manse, rear hall, parsonage and cottages results in a complex of aesthetic significance, which is a landmark in North Melbourne". ●



Revised budget and timeline for Kensington Rec. Centre

WORDS BY *Georgie Atkins*
COUNCIL AFFAIRS

City of Melbourne councillors have endorsed an additional \$17.2 million to complete asbestos and soil removal and remediation works on the Kensington Community Aquatic and Recreation Centre (KCARC) redevelopment site, with the project now expected to be complete in early 2025.

The revamped KCARC was set to open to the community in 2023, however the council has now been forced to revise the facility's revised timeline and budget following the discovery of a small amount of asbestos at the site in July last year.

The total cost of the project has now been set at \$68.2 million – a \$26.2 million increase on the original \$42 million budget, which councillors endorsed at their March 28 meeting.

While the asbestos did not pose any health risks, the affected soil had

to be taken away by licensed specialists before construction could continue. Soil excavation works began in November 2022.

Lord Mayor Sally Capp said, "more than 75 per cent of the affected soil has been removed, and construction has recommenced", with further soil removal and pre-drilling works now on track to be completed by mid-2023.

"We know this is disappointing for the local community, who are eagerly awaiting the opening of this exciting new facility – but the safety of our community is our highest priority," Cr Capp said.

"We'll continue to update local residents and businesses as the project progresses and look forward to welcoming the community to the centre as soon as possible."

The new KCARC will feature a 25-metre pool, a gymnasium, three full-sized, multi-purpose courts, community spaces for classes and events, a café, health and wellness areas and accessible change rooms. ●



Footscray Road closed westbound

! From late-March to late-May 2023



Footscray Road westbound between Dock Link Road and Appleton Dock Road will be closed from **late-March to late-May 2023** so the launching gantry can continue moving safely above the road.

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Younghusband woolshed revamp starts

Continued from page 1.

by wool giant Younghusband & Co in 1902, which remained there in operation until the 1970s.

The buildings are among the last remaining wool stores in Victoria. In more recent decades, the complex has been home to arts and creative businesses as well as storing the Australian Ballet's various goods.

Stage one of the Woods Bagot-designed plans proposes to preserve and showcase the architectural heritage of the two existing historic woolsheds, while converting them into 17,560 square metres of A-grade office space and adding a new town centre, "village-style" food and beverage outlets, and an "activated retail laneway that will bring new energy to the site throughout the day".

The first two stages of the project have received planning approval, with construction under way on the first stage ahead of a mid-2024 completion.

A further 14,000 square metres will be added across two "sustainable and architecturally significant new buildings" in stage two of the project.

"This includes a new-build contemporary office building that references surrounding silos through a shimmering, permeable curved façade spanning seven levels and includes an adjoining glass-clad extension with hipped roofs that mimic the adjoining heritage buildings visual



language while maintaining the historic façade to Elizabeth St," according to the consortium's vision for the project.

A third stage is currently pending approval, but it proposes for the corner of Chelmsford and Elizabeth streets to feature a further 13,300 square metres of A-grade office across a six-level building with "cascading greenery and a large public zone to encourage foot traffic, dwell and permeability through the precinct".

Sustainability is front-of-mind for the project and its three stages, with targets including a 5.5 Star NABERS Office Energy (Base Building) 4.5 Star NABERS Water, 6-star Green Star Design, WELL Core v2 Gold and WELL Platinum, as well as being fully carbon-neutral.

Built managing director and CEO Brett Mason said tenants were being sought for stage one, with some of the largest flexible floor plates in the city on offer.

"Younghusband will create Melbourne's largest carbon-neutral adaptive reuse precinct, reimagining and revitalising one of the city's largest heritage sites and creating a connected and sustainable destination for work and play," Mr Mason said.

"With a design, and construction principles guided by sustainability and heritage preservation from the ground-up, Younghusband will create an environment where the past is respected and engineered for a sustainable future."

The newly unveiled plans are touted to represent Younghusband's "greatest evolution," while aligning with the state government's vision for the Macaulay Precinct, a sentiment shared by the Deputy Lord Mayor.

By 2051, the precinct, which also includes North Melbourne, is expected to house 10,000 residents and 9500 jobs.

"The Macaulay Precinct is a really blessed little spot in Melbourne," Cr Reece said, adding "there's nothing that's going to do that in a bigger way than what we're seeing here at the Younghusband with this new development".

"For many decades, this was the largest wool store in Australia – those days are now long gone. But we've been left with this incredible building, and through some imagination and human ingenuity, we're going to see this building readapted and reused for the modern era."

Ivanhoé Cambridge's head of portfolio and asset management for Asia-Pacific, Rodney Fung, said, "The beginning of the construction of this mixed-use project is tangible evidence that Australia is a key part of our commitment to making all our development projects net-zero carbon from 2025."

Irongate CEO Graeme Katz said it was of "upmost importance" that the project struck a balance with the requirements of community, commerciality, and heritage carefully, which he believed it did well, with the development to "produce a successful asset for both the community and investors for years to come". ●

"Melbourne's worst train station": calls for action on South Kensington Station

WORDS BY *Shervin Nasiri*
TRANSPORT

Kensington locals are once again calling on the state government to provide badly needed upgrades to the "super dangerous" South Kensington Station ahead of the next Victorian budget.

Renewed calls for upgrades have been led by Greens MP for Melbourne and Kensington local Ellen Sandell and the Kensington Association, with narrow platforms, poor shelter and lack of accessibility just some of a litany of safety issues plaguing the station.

Whether you're a parent with a pram or someone living with a disability, Ms Sandell said South Kensington Station, which services the Werribee and Williamstown lines, was one best to avoid.

"It is super dangerous," Ms Sandell said. "South Kensington Station is poorly designed and completely inadequate. The platforms are dangerously overcrowded and too narrow, especially for prams and wheelchairs."

Chair of the Kensington Association Simon Harvey told *North*

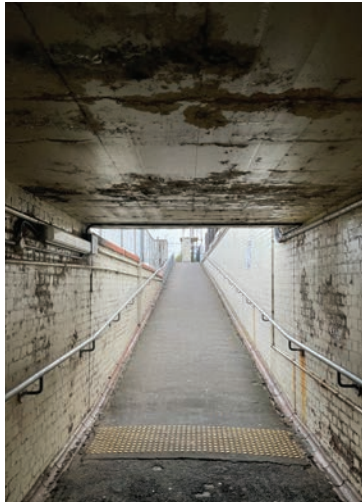


West City News, "It's the worst station I've ever seen. It's just terrible."

"Many residents avoid this station and are forced to walk further to nearby stations to take a train," Mr Harvey said.

"Inadequate shelter, poor lighting at night and restrictive access for wheelchairs and prams are some of the main issues that residents grapple with on a daily basis."

According to Ms Sandell, many "near misses" between trains and



passengers were regularly reported, with the platforms becoming incredibly dangerous when overcrowded. She also added that the station's audio-visual equipment was "virtually non-existent".

"We've had situations where people have suffered medical emergencies and have been unable to get help," Ms Sandell said.

While the community has long campaigned for a complete overhaul of the station, the state government



has so far only committed \$1 million back in 2020 for basic upgrades to lighting and CCTV.

Despite the western portal of the state government's \$11 billion Metro Tunnel project surfacing at South Kensington, it has yet to commit to upgrading the station itself.

"The Metro Tunnel construction is creating a huge disruption in Kensington and the station is getting a new forecourt area, but the station itself still desperately needs an

upgrade", Ms Sandell said.

A spokesperson for the Department of Transport stated there were no current plans to upgrade the station, but said, "Making our public transport network safer and more accessible to all Victorians is our priority - which is why we're constantly monitoring the network to determine where improvements may be needed."

With the Metro Tunnel due for completion in 2025, Mr Harvey said the station upgrades needed to happen "very soon".

"I don't know how long in the future or how long we [the community] are going to wait. But the upgrade should definitely happen very soon," he said.

Ms Sandell has launched a petition calling on the state government to upgrade South Kensington Station, which 70 people had signed at the time of publishing. ●

Sign here:
ellensandell.com/south-kensington-station

Proudly representing the community in inner Melbourne

Evan MULHOLLAND MP

MEMBER FOR NORTHERN METROPOLITAN REGION

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[@evmulholland](https://twitter.com/evmulholland)

Authorised by Evan Mulholland MP, Member for Northern Metropolitan Region, Unit 10, 2 Graystone Court Epping Vic 3076. Funded from Parliamentary Budget.



Royal Park Golf Club celebrates 120 years

WORDS BY *Helena Morgan*
SPORT

On Sunday, March 19 more than 90 players reined in the impressive 120th anniversary of the Royal Park Golf Club (RPGC) in Parkville with festive activities, heartfelt speeches and of course, numerous rounds of golf.

The morning started with 18 holes, followed by lunch, speeches and the awarding of prizes by the President of Victoria Golf League, Peter Ross.

The afternoon featured a nine-hole competition, with many golfers opting to play with old hickory clubs and demonstrate their love for the game by proudly wearing plus fours.

Andrew Thomson attended in representation of his father, Peter Thomson, who is widely acknowledged as Australia's best golfer. The early days of Peter's career can be traced back to the RPGC; playing at the club as a young boy

and receiving praise from older members who recognised his talent.

The current members of the club are thankful to the founders for their dedication to the club throughout world wars, an expanding population of the neighbouring suburbs, and the COVID-19 pandemic.

The club was established at the Parkville Hotel by a small group of golfers who possessed a deep love for the game. They leased the north-east corner of Royal Park and independently financed the construction of the course.

The club is determined to widen the diversity of people who choose to play golf at the club, always welcoming visitors, and new members from various walks of life. ●

For more information:
royalparkgolfcourse.ymca.org.au

Hopes grow historic gas building can be revamped into a community facility

WORDS BY *Brendan Rees*
HERITAGE

Community members are hoping a heritage building that was once used as part of a former town gas distribution site in North Melbourne may be rejuvenated into a new social offering.

The stand-alone building, also known as a guard hut, is a remnant of the former Gas Regulating House at 60-96 Macaulay Rd, which was built in 1887, and now used as apartments.

As *North West City News* reported last year, residents had raised concerns about its dilapidated state, with the building also being a target for graffiti vandals.

In response, the Public Record Office of Victoria (PROV), which owns the building, has undertaken maintenance work, and has sought a building engineer's report to guide other repairs in the future.

The building was again vandalised this year, but PROV, an agency which holds the government archives of the Australian State of Victoria, said graffiti was regularly removed by the City of Melbourne, and that asbestos, identified at the site last year, had also been removed.

"We are now awaiting a building inspector to visit and provide recommendations for next steps – we're not sure how long this will take," a statement from PROV said in March.

Residents, who described the guard hut as a "valuable historic artefact", were glad action had been taken to maintain the building, but hoped plans were now in motion to give the building a new lease of life and possible conversion into a community hub or some kind of social facility, while respecting its heritage value.

"Bravo to the PROV for starting the process of saving this important historic building," resident Brendan Gleeson, who has been a local campaigner to save the building, said.

"It seems the right time to involve the local



▲ North Melbourne resident Brendan Gleeson hopes a former gas distribution building can be rejuvenated.

community and the City of Melbourne to contribute to a discussion about how it might be put to a good social use."

"This growing area can certainly do with some new community facilities. And why not start by asking the local children for ideas?"

Chair of the North and West Melbourne Association Kevin Chamberlin said, "It's great the 'archives' have taken action to clean the building up and make it safe with the removal of asbestos; now the next step is to get approval to find a good use for the building and bring it back to life".

The historic buildings at the site are listed of "historical significance" on the Victorian Heritage Register.

The National Trust of Australia (Victoria) has previously said that it supported the ongoing maintenance and conservation of heritage buildings, acknowledging the challenges of issues such as vandalism that are faced by property owners. ●



Upcoming closures at Wurundjeri Way

! In March and April 2023



From **Friday 31 March until late-April 2023**, Wurundjeri Way will be closed in both directions between Dudley Street and Bourke Street at night between 8pm and 5am while we continue critical works at the intersection and in the area.

Then from **early-April to late-October**, one lane will be closed in each direction along Wurundjeri Way.

Please plan ahead and allow for extra travel time.

Thanks for your patience

We understand that these closures may be disruptive to you. Thank you for your ongoing patience as we work as quickly and safely as possible to get the job done.

Visit bigbuild.vic.gov.au for detour routes and exact closure times. Please note that dates and times are subject to change.

In partnership with:



Keep in mind there are other disruptions during this time.
Find a detailed list at bigbuild.vic.gov.au



Authorised by the Victorian Government, 1 Treasury Place, Melbourne

Getting ready for Iftar

WORDS BY *Rhonda Dredge*
EDUCATION

A small school in Flemington is changing perceptions in the community with its range of community programs and the standard of its events.

Debney Meadows Primary School hosted a traditional Iftar dinner for 150 people just before Easter and was proud of the turn-out.

The dinner included special dishes from a local Turkish café in Racecourse Rd.

All the school community was invited, Muslims and non-Muslims alike, to celebrate the breaking of the 12th day of the Ramadan fast.

The event is one of many involving the community in the school, including English lessons, a play group and a community hub.

“We’ve gone up from 69 to 95 students,” school principal Koreena Carlton said. “We’ve changed the perception of the school.”

She said that while some schools in the area had dropped a class, Debney Meadows had gone up two.

“We’re all about painting our school in a positive light. Education is everything.”

The school was in the media limelight earlier in the year when some parents in North Melbourne objected to their children being zoned to the school.

“It was a bit of a shock to see the article,” Ms Carlton said. “The parents know nothing about our school.”

The objection was not based on academic standards but the fact that a new campus for North Melbourne Primary School was closer to their home.



Some families find it difficult crossing busy roads between North Melbourne and Flemington and students are advised not to walk to school alone.

The state government has recently announced it will be firming up zoning exceptions across the state at the beginning of Term 2, a move that has once again fuelled the debate.



In the meantime, members of the school community were busy making sweet African tea, cutting up watermelon, delivering traditional dishes and collecting more than 30 balls left in the grounds by children.

Community Hub co-ordinator Amran Guleid said the dinner had been organised because “we are a school with a high Islamic percentage.

More students celebrate Ramadan than Easter. We wanted to bring the community together.”

The Iftar dinner is the first one held by the school and the community broke their fast with dates and water after the call to the Maghrib prayer, which is around sunset.

This was followed by special dishes from Gozleme and Sweet, including charcoal-grilled chicken, tabouli in fresh pomegranate juice, red cabbage salad and pide made with three kinds of cheese.

Mako Daher helped with the preparations. She has four children at the school, in Grades Five, Three, One and Prep, as well as one who has graduated to secondary school.

“I like it because it is so close,” she said. “It’s easy. We come in the back gate.”

Three of her children have already decided on their professions of dentist, doctor, and paramedic.

Ms Guleid said that Ramadan was not just about fasting. “It’s also about fighting your bad habits. It’s time to reflect. Once in a while, you feel the hunger of a poor person. It’s time to read the *Koran*.”

“You do lots of good deeds, avoid back-biting. It’s a month that trains you to be a better person.” ●



Rhonda Dredge
JOURNALIST
RHONDA@CBDNEWS.COM.AU

YIRRAMBOI festival promises another stunning showcase First Nations works

WORDS BY *Helena Morgan*
ARTS & CULTURE

Australia’s renowned First Nations festival returns to Naarm for another year, delivering a program of awe-inspiring performances, innovative commissions, and global premieres of creative content.

From May 4 to 14, *YIRRAMBOI* – which translates to “tomorrow” in the local languages of the Boonwurrung and Woi-wurrung peoples – will provide audiences with a spellbinding display of art, music, fashion, and theatre.

The festival will feature the work of more than 300 creatives across 170 shows at 40 Melbourne venues. More than 80 per cent of the creative content is making an Australian debut at *YIRRAMBOI*.

The festival’s co-founder Sherene Stewart invites Melburnians to step into a “world reimagined.”

“*YIRRAMBOI* is curated in celebration of Blak love, joy and

excellence; it’s a platform for voice and change, change which heralds in a future where our culture and shared history is respectfully celebrated by all,” she said.

A dedicated event hub – the Uncle Jack Charles – will serve as the core meeting place of the festival. Named after the late Indigenous actor, activist, and revered arts elder, the Uncle Jack Charles is located in North Melbourne’s Meat Market.

The event hub will exhibit a variety of creative work by First Nations artists, from comedy and music to fashion and cabaret.

Audiences can also expect to see five world premiere commissions, alongside DJ PGZ performing at Melbourne Town Hall’s iconic grand organ, a runway show reimagining First Nations fashion and a one-night-only show by drag performer Kween Kong.

The festival also welcomes First Nations communities from around the world, including Canadian First Nations choreographers Lara Kramer



▲ (Top) Cerulean will be performing across *YIRRAMBOI*.

“*YIRRAMBOI* has something for everyone



and Jeanette Kotowitch, who are set to perform a double bill of dance routines.

The council’s Creative Melbourne portfolio lead Cr Jamal Hakim emphasised that the festival was one not to be missed.

“*YIRRAMBOI* has something for everyone. The festival will connect and entertain while celebrating the incredible work of our First Nations creatives, and forging international connections,” he said. ●

For more information:
yirramboi.com.au

ARE YOU A RENTER?

Victoria is experiencing a rental crisis. Rent prices are soaring and the number of homes available to rent is plummeting.

As your state MP, I’m fighting to make renting fairer and I need your help. Please scan the QR code and tell me about your renting experience.



ELLEN SANDELL

GREENS STATE MP FOR MELBOURNE

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146 Peel Street
North Melbourne VIC 3051



THE GREENS

Authorised by E. Sandell, 146 Peel St, North Melbourne 3051

OUR BIG GREEN CITY HOW WE'RE TURNING GREY TO GREEN

Melbourne is a city of green possibilities - green roofs, green laneways, more trees, more plants and more green space.

At the City of Melbourne we're passionate about turning grey to green and making Melbourne one of the greenest cities in the world in which to live, visit and do business.

We've been working hard for 10 years to create a big, green city.

We were one of the first cities in the world to launch our Urban Forest Strategy in 2012, now we're half-way through.

Did you know that over the past decade we've planted more than 47,000 trees?

And that our urban forest is made up of more than 78,000 public trees across the municipality?

Not only is a healthy urban forest vital for the wellbeing of our community, trees help cool the city and help mitigate against the impacts of climate change.

So we're planting a diverse range of species, such as the Chinese Parasol Tree (*Firmiana simplex*) and Pau Ferro (*Libidibia ferrea*), to improve the resilience of our urban forest.

With all the extra trees, we have a canopy cover of more than 25 per cent,

so we're well on our way to achieving our goal of 40 per cent canopy cover by 2040 and a greener, cooler city.

Our Urban Forest Strategy guides our work and we continue to seek community feedback on important issues like our Urban Forest Precinct Plans, tree maintenance and water management.

We want Melburnians to be a driving part of our city's greening efforts.

We already have more than 700 Citizen Foresters who help collect data about the urban forest.

Join us on our campaign to continue to grow Our Big Green City.

Plant a plant. Take a photo to share on social media using [#OurBigGreenCity](#)

Join us at our upcoming community workshops, read more about our Urban Forest Precinct Plans or let us know your thoughts via our online survey at participate.melbourne.vic.gov.au/urban-forest

Learn more about what we're doing to see Our Big Green City thrive in this special feature.

#OurBigGreenCity

ADVERTISEMENT
Your City of Melbourne community update

GREENING THE CITY FROM THE GROUND UP

We're on a mission to turn more grey spaces to green.

While Melburnians have embraced green infrastructure, with green roofs, walls and facades sprouting across the city, there's still so much more we can do to improve new buildings or retrofit.

The possibilities for city greening are the focus of our Canopy Green Roof Forum, a City of Melbourne initiative that showcases the best urban green infrastructure and city greening projects, strategies and initiatives.

There are lots of great urban greening projects to learn from and knowledge that can be shared.

Our Canopy Green Roof Forum aims to showcase to building owners, tenants and community members how they can easily green their rooftops, balconies, walls and facades with lush green plants.

Green infrastructure is vital for cities, just as important as roads and public transport to the health and wellbeing of the community, providing more vegetation and green spaces in a dense urban environment.

The visual appeal and the myriad ways of greening and cooling the city all contribute to making our urban environment much more desirable.

Plants and trees provide clean air, clean water and increase our resilience to the impacts of climate change.

To keep up-to-date with future canopy forum events or subscribe to our newsletter visit melbourne.vic.gov.au/canopyforum



Councillor Rohan Leppert plants the first of 3000 trees for 2023 with David Callow and Matthew Forster



Fall in love with our leafy laneways

We've transformed some of Melbourne's iconic laneways into lush green spaces for everyone to enjoy.

Greening projects are an important part of the work we do to adapt to climate change and cool the city.



Visit Guildford Lane to experience urban tranquility

Here are four leafy laneways to explore.

Guildford Lane

Wander down this quirky laneway between Queen and Sutherland streets to spot greenery flourishing in pots and window boxes, and climbing up the buildings' drain pipes.

Meyers Place

A striking green wall with 80 species of plants is the jewel of this laneway between Bourke and Little Collins streets. Pause to enjoy the contrast between vibrant greenery and the towering metallic skyline beyond.

Coromandel Place

Stunning Boston ivy against historic red brick makes this laneway off Little Collins Street extra charming.

Katherine Place

This foodie precinct near Melbourne Aquarium has turned over a new leaf, now boasting street trees, gardens and lush greenery in planter boxes and pots.

Our Green Your Laneway program was the first of its kind in Australia when it launched in 2017.

Each laneway trialed different greening approaches.

After five years of growth, we've evaluated the success of the laneways and identified the best ways to encourage more community-led greening.

We have established incentives and opportunities for the community to green their laneways effectively, including the Greening Melbourne permit system and through the Green Your Laneway stream of the Urban Forest Fund.

Learn how you can green your laneway at melbourne.vic.gov.au/greenlaneways



HELP US GO GREEN

Help us plan the future of tree planting in your neighbourhood.

Join us at our community workshops to learn more about our Urban Forest Precinct Plans:

1 April - South Yarra, St Martins Youth Arts Centre, 10am - 2pm

29 April - CBD, Zinc, Federation Square, 10am - 2pm

13 May - Carlton, Melbourne Museum, 10am - 2pm

For more information and to register your interest visit participate.melbourne.vic.gov.au/urban-forest

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 News* at news.melbourne.vic.gov.au

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ADVERTISEMENT
Your City of Melbourne community update

HONOUR A HUGGABLE TREE

Learn about our Exceptional Tree Register and how you can protect our urban forest for future generations.

We've just added 108 special trees to the Exceptional Tree Register, which means a total of 268 trees are now protected from being removed or significantly pruned.

These trees are on privately owned or managed land and include those of outstanding size, old age, outstanding habitat value, Aboriginal association, curious growth form, significant environmental services, among other exceptional criteria.

Trees are nominated by the community and then evaluated by an expert panel.

You can nominate any tree on private land within the City of Melbourne. This could be trees in private backyards, residential communal gardens, schools and universities - we even have exceptional trees at some of our favourite places to visit like Melbourne Zoo, Melbourne Showgrounds, Melbourne Museum and Yarra Park.

Listed trees are protected under the Melbourne Planning Scheme and a permit is needed to remove them or to undertake works that might affect their health or condition.

Next time you're out and about, check out these exceptional trees:

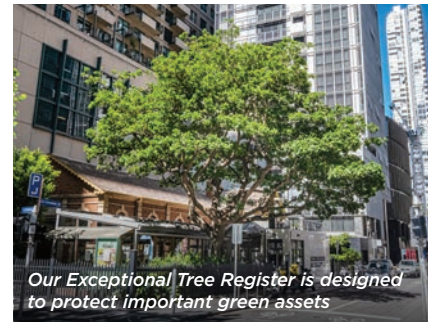
Tree 176 River Red Gum (*Eucalyptus camaldulensis*)

This tree in Yarra Park is a living Scarred tree with Aboriginal significance and is likely to be about 300 years old. The scar on this River Red Gum was created when the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung peoples removed bark to make canoes, shields, food and water containers, string, baby carriers and other items.

Tree 170 Port Jackson Fig (*Ficus rubiginosa*)

Attractive for its curious growth form, this Port Jackson Fig is perched atop a stone wall at RMIT University with long aerial roots draped down metres to the ground.

To see which trees made the list or more information about our Exceptional Tree Register and nomination process visit participate.melbourne.vic.gov.au/amendment-c379



Our Exceptional Tree Register is designed to protect important green assets

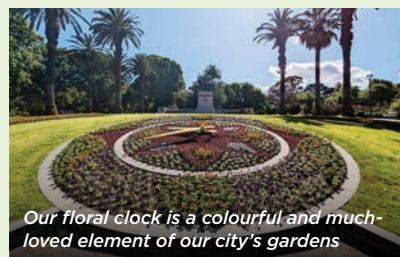
KEEPING OUR PARKS CLEAN AND GREEN

Melbourne's open spaces range from the major parks and gardens that define our city with classic 19th century heritage features and majestic tree-lined avenues; to the 170-hectare Royal Park with its unique bushland landscape and wetlands habitat, as well as smaller neighbourhood and local reserves.

With a network of some 480 hectares of internationally acclaimed parks and gardens, there is the perfect patch of green space to suit everyone.

To keep our park assets clean and green, we invest \$6.5 million in our Annual Park Renewals Program.

This includes everything from renewing garden beds in iconic parks like Fitzroy and Carlton gardens to irrigation to keep our lawns green in summer. As well as updating and refreshing public toilets to improve user experience.



Our floral clock is a colourful and much-loved element of our city's gardens

BIOLITZ CITY NATURE CHALLENGE

Love getting up close to nature? Then we want you.

Help us discover and document the unique animals, plants and fungi that call Melbourne home.

We're documenting our city's plants and wildlife as part of the City

Nature Challenge, an annual global citizen science bioblitz event.

Join expert researchers, local community groups, families and students to unearth our creature secrets from Friday 28 April to Monday 1 May.

The bioblitz will provide us with a snapshot of the biodiversity in our neighbourhoods, and provide the community opportunities to help survey city biodiversity and increase connection to nature.



Help us survey our city's biodiversity at our BioBlitz events. Photo credit: Stuart Riley.

Sign up at participate.melbourne.vic.gov.au/bioblitz

Nuturing our nature

Cities are important places for biodiversity. They are home to a large number of species and considered 'hotspots' for threatened species.

Melbourne is a biodiverse region with 239 species of birds, 12 species

of reptiles, 18 species of mammals, seven species of frogs, more than 1500 species of insects, and 31 species of fish recorded in the past 20 years.

Cities around the world are developing greening initiatives to improve and protect nature in the urban environment.

Here in Melbourne, we recognise our responsibility to play an active role in protecting and enhancing nature in our city.

We're half way through our Nature in the City Strategy, a program to create healthy ecosystems and thriving biodiversity in our neighbourhoods.

From the soil with its underground fungi to the plants and animals, including insects, birds, mammals and frogs, our Nature in the City Strategy connects all parts of the ecosystem and clearly sets out the actions we need to ensure the environment our children inherit is richer than it is today.

Over the past five years, we've been busy.

We've achieved and passed our target to increase understorey habitat by 20 per cent - now at 26 per cent and rising.

We established a Gardens for Wildlife program so that residents can turn

their balcony, backyard, community garden, school veggie patch or green rooftop into a haven for birds and bees.

Our expert garden guides are on hand to help create wildlife-friendly habitats, even if there is only space for pot plants.

We've worked with the University of Melbourne to reintroduce a locally extinct species, the tiny, flightless Matchstick Grasshopper. Insects like grasshoppers play an important role in maintaining a healthy ecosystem and are an abundant food source for larger animals such as praying mantis, lizards and birds.

The Matchstick Grasshopper's population has dwindled in recent years due to a scarcity of suitable environments and an inability to relocate from one habitat to another.

To learn how you can get up close to nature visit melbourne.vic.gov.au/urbannature



Garden Guide volunteers visiting a Melbourne garden, inspiring private landholders to create space for nature in the city

Parks and gardens directory

Melbourne is world renowned for its parks and gardens.

To make it easier for you to explore our green spaces, we've created a free park and gardens directory to help guide your tour around the city.

Our interactive City of Melbourne maps provide easy-to-access information on park facilities including playgrounds, barbecues, dog off-leash areas and more.

Visit maps.melbourne.vic.gov.au



Explore one of city's parks and gardens today

Three men arrested in series of raids – with cash, drugs, fireworks seized

WORDS BY *Brendan Rees*
CRIME

Victoria Police have charged three men from West Melbourne and North Melbourne with drug offences after a series of warrants were executed in early April.

The arrests were part of a major operation involving detectives from the Echo Taskforce, Illicit Firearms Squad, Gang Crime Squad, VIPER Taskforce and North West Metro Regional Crime Squad.

In total, eight warrants were executed at residential addresses in Flemington, West Melbourne (two), North Melbourne, Essendon, Highett, Bundoora and Mernda, as well as a business in Mernda.

As a result, police said they seized \$20,000 cash, various drugs of dependence, prescription medication and fireworks from a West Melbourne address, while cannabis was seized at another West Melbourne property.

A 28-year-old West Melbourne man was charged on April 4 with possessing a drug of dependence, explosives, and proceeds of crime.

He was bailed to appear at Melbourne Magistrates' Court on June 23.

A 32-year-old West Melbourne man was also charged on April 4 with cultivate cannabis. He was released and is expected to be charged on summons.

An additional warrant was executed at a residential address in North Melbourne on April 6.

A 27-year-old North Melbourne man was charged with two counts of traffic drug of dependence, possess drug of dependence, and possess proceeds of crime.

He was bailed to appear at Melbourne Magistrates' Court on June 23.

The raids were prompted after Australian Federal Police officers arrested a 26-year-old man, believed to be an associate of the Rebels OMC, at an address in Mernda on April 4.

The man was charged with procuring a child for trafficking controlled drugs, trafficking a commercial quantity of a controlled drug and perverting the course of justice.

It is believed to be the first time the Commonwealth charge of procuring a child for trafficking controlled drugs has been used in Australia.

Police said they also seized \$90,000 cash, weapons, and prescription medication from the Mernda address.

Detective Acting Superintendent Craig Darlow of the state anti-gangs division said motorcycle gangs relied on criminal activities to fund their operations and "have no regard for the damage their drug dealing activities cause to our community".

"The collaborative effort with our partner agencies at both a state and federal level ensures we are able to relentlessly disrupt these gangs to minimise the harm caused by their criminal ventures," he said.

"This operation is an example of our willingness to share resources and capability to achieve our goal of making Victoria the most hostile environment possible for serious and organised crime groups to operate."

AFP Acting Superintendent Glenn Tankard said organised criminals would try every avenue to profit off the high demand for illicit drugs in Australia – including exploiting children.

"Today's charges show the depths these gangs will stoop to peddle their misery," Acting Det-Supt Tankard said.

"Every cent that organised criminals gain from an illicit drug sale takes them one step closer to funding their next criminal venture."

Bear With Us: The trending new way to enjoy art

WORDS BY *Kaylah-Joelle Baker*
ARTS & CULTURE

Best friends Vivienne Choi and Jen Wang may not be professional artists, but their enjoyment of doing fun, artistic activities together has led them to opening their very own art workshop *Bear With Us*.

After trying out various different paint and sips, and other similar art activities, the friends began to notice a rising trend of fluid acrylic art in Japan, Korea and Malaysia, whereby participants paint mini bear-like statues.

Agreeing that it was unlike anything they had seen in Melbourne, Vivienne and Jen went into business together and officially opened the doors to their North Melbourne studio on March 30.

"We have done paint and sip, which is an activity similar to this, but personally, it isn't something we would do regularly, whereas this is fun for friends, couples, and kids to switch up their activities," Vivienne said.

"And with our bear painting workshop, you can bring home something really beautiful and memorable to keep in your home."

The experience of a *Bear With Us* workshop starts the moment attendees walk through the doors, they are asked to put on an apron and gloves, decide what size bear they want to paint, and offered a range of colours to choose from.

Multiple sizes of bears are available to make your own, starting from keyring-sized figures.

Each person then works behind a workshop bench and are asked to paint a base colour on the bear, before being given a cup of their chosen colours to pour slowly all over it.

This process is known as "fluid acrylic art", or sometimes acrylic pouring or fluid painting.



▲ Vivienne Choi from Bear With Us.

Following the pouring process, there is an option to decorate the bear with metallic paints, glitter, or to glaze the bear with a shiny coating.

While painting bears is a chance to get creative, Vivienne said it was also a great opportunity to switch off from technology and enjoy spending time with friends, family, or colleagues.

"It can be a quick process, but we ask people, if they have time, to slow down the process and just have a lot of fun with it," Vivienne said.

"The sessions never run for longer than two hours, but we like to keep people here because no one is on their phone, and they are just spending quality time with each other."

For anyone wanting to film the process, the workshop does provide tripods to set their phone up on so you can look back on the process and experience.

Bear With Us is currently on a three-month lease within its space at 340 Queensberry St, and they are looking forward to involving the local community, while still focusing on their prospective professions – Vivienne as a pharmacist and Jen in finance.

"If it becomes really popular, we would be more than willing to run it alongside our professional careers as well," Vivienne said.

"It's a short-term commitment that we do have long-term goals for, and we would like to focus on groups of friends, parents and kids, couples, and even corporate groups if they are looking for a nice team bonding exercise."

To see what all the exciting fuss is about, visit at the studio, the website bearwithus.melbourne, or reach out on Instagram @bearwithus.melbourne ●

North Melbourne public housing residents thank council for strong support

WORDS BY *Brendan Rees*
COMMUNITY

President of the Melbourne Somali Community Inc Awil Hussein has expressed his gratitude to the City of Melbourne for having "developed a good connection" with North Melbourne public housing residents over the past year.

In addressing the council's Future Melbourne Committee (FMC) meeting on March 21, Mr Hussein thanked all councillors and council staff for listening to resident concerns – including stopping the closure of the North Melbourne Community Centre gym at Buncle St – that were raised at the council's June 14 meeting last year.

Mr Hussein said the council had held meetings with residents of the North Melbourne public housing estate, which was coordinated through the North Melbourne Language and Learning space.

"The two meetings and the walk arounds created atmosphere of great engagement and working together," he said, which had resulted in the following priorities being actioned:

- A commitment to building a zebra crossing at Canning St.
- Engagement with public housing residents.
- Redeveloping the community centre and involving resident ideas and activities.
- Improving the lights between the new Woolworth shopping centre and the estate.
- A focus on providing employment opportunities to the residents – with one resident from the estate having been employed with the council.
- Advocacy for the North Melbourne Primary School and Uni High School to be included in the school zones of the estate, with Cr Capp writing a letter to the Minister for Education.



Lord Mayor Sally Capp thanked Mr Hussein's leadership for advocating issues in the community and for taking the time in showing her and councillors around the neighbourhood, which coincided with the creation of the City of Melbourne neighbourhood program, which helps locals connect and share ideas for the future.

Cr Capp said while there was "still plenty of work to be done", she praised Mr Hussein's work and community engagement with the council which she described as "more effective and collaborative".

Mr Hussein said residents wanted to continue to build a stronger relationship with the council and to "assist with structural capacity building and developments for our local organisation".

"With all these supports from the City of Melbourne and building a working relationship with our resident local organisations such as the Melbourne Somali Community Inc, we acknowledge the support of the City of Melbourne, and thank and appreciate their services on behalf of our residents of the public housing estate at North Melbourne," he said. "We've built a stronger communication with the council who have helped us get funding for organisational support as well as the Eid community festival on April 29, which we are looking forward to hosting at the North Melbourne Public Housing estate for the second year running." ●

Push to double fine for out-of-hours construction breaches

WORDS BY *David Schout*
COUNCIL AFFAIRS

One local councillor said it was an "open secret" some developers were happy to cop current fines, and it was time to make penalties a genuine financial deterrent.

A City of Melbourne councillor has proposed doubling the maximum fine of \$2000 for construction companies that continue to work beyond permitted hours.

Cr Rohan Leppert said larger companies considered daily fines a "cost of doing business", and weren't deterred by the current figure.

The current penalty unit for all offences across the City of Melbourne is \$100, and the maximum penalty units for out-of-hours construction offences is 20, or \$2000.

Cr Leppert argued that the \$100 penalty unit from 1989 was outdated and should be replaced by the newer definition, currently \$184.92 and expected to rise from July 1.

This would force developers to pay almost \$4000 in fines for starting work early or finishing late, which impacts on the daily lives of residents particularly in the CBD and inner suburbs where large-scale construction often takes place within metres of residences. ●

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Arts House becomes a vibrant storytelling activity hub

Arts House's first iteration of its new Equity-Building Curatorial program has begun, and will continue to overtake the space throughout April in the lead-up to the much-anticipated YIRRAMBOI festival.

Curated by visiting Dalit artist Vishal Kumaraswamy, the Art House program is designed as a way to invite multiple curators of varying marginalised identities to utilise, convert and subvert the spaces to hold multiple activations and exhibitions.

"Our invitation to Vishal Kumaraswamy was to flip our home in a colonial building inside out and place the community at the very centre. As a Dalit artist-curator, Vishal draws from an anti-caste lens and uses a range of methods, processes and relationalities in exhibition-making," Arts House co-artistic director Nithya Nagarajan said.

Vastly different practices have been explored by all the artists for the program, and all have a unique theme or story to share.

Artist Eugenia Lim has been presenting a video work documenting a series of performative interventions into the Taungurung country's town of Kyneton's local tip and exploring its relationship to residents.

Despite describing the site as something that is not "glamorous", Eugenia was enthralled with the concept and delved into it further before coming up with the work titled *Shelters for Kyneton (triadic transfer)*.

"It fascinated me because every household in Kyneton has some interface with it, either through their landfill or their recycling. Or they might go and get mulch for their garden, for example. It's somewhere that probably isn't considered part of daily life but actually connects every household to the lifeways of the town," Eugenia said.

"So, when I went out to the transfer station, that's where the idea really sparked! How could

this site on the periphery, but also very much at the centre of the cycle of Kyneton's systems be celebrated as somewhere where work and life is happening."

While Eugenia's work is displayed as a video, artist Nancy Qin Yu is demonstrating an endurance performance, centred around the material of glass as a storyteller.

"*Glass Armour* is a durational performance of glass in concert with the artist's body. The artist's embodiment and interaction with the glass sculpture is inspired by a personal anecdote of heartbreak and depression as a catalyst for a period of isolation and inability to reach out for help due to her sense of self-dignity; not wanting to be seen as weak," Nancy said.

"Reflecting on the experience, she [the artist within the performance] came to explore pride as not the inverse of shame but the source of it. *Glass Armour* engages with the invisible inner struggles individuals undergo while upholding a facade that may be culturally inherited."

During the program, two communal feasts will also be held on Saturdays, April 15 and 23, between 12.30pm and 2.30pm.

Upon the program wrapping up on April 23, the month of May will then include works presented by *YIRRAMBOI* and Arts House.

YIRRAMBOI is a First Nations festival returning to Naarm from May 4, and two shows showcasing the best of First Nations contemporary dance, giving voice to past and future ancestors, are scheduled to be presented at Arts House.

Double Bill: Culture Evolves + Kisiskâciwan by Brent Watkins and Jeanette Kotowich will be taking place on Friday, May 5 and Saturday, May 6 at 7pm both days.

And then *Double Bill: Them Voices + blood of my blood* by Lara Kramer and Jada Narkle will follow on Friday, May 12 at 7pm, and the following day at 2pm.

For anyone interested in participating in an experiential movement workshop, as part of the partnership between Arts House and *YIRRAMBOI*, both Lara Kramer and Jeanette Kotowich will be assisting all dancers and non-dancers through the process on May 10, from 10am to 1pm.

artshouse.com.au ●

Death of an Idea

The collectors were out in force at a West Melbourne gallery in March as a show of museum-quality postcards opened to the public.

WORDS BY Rhonda Dredge



▲ The artist at the centre of his show.

Peter Milne is well known as a photographer but these exercises in photomontage went beyond his early work.

Basically, there were 150 jokes on the wall, each cut and pasted by the artist.

Katie Beale, curator at One Star Gallery, said the show sold very well at its opening and that it was on for another two weeks.

Photomontage was big in Germany during the Dada movement with its coded messages, often against the Nazis.

Milne said that Dadaism could be distinguished from surrealism in that the juxtaposition of images and the cut-out text made a political comment.

He has cut the text out of *Civilisation*, a book by Kenneth Clark, and used it to comment on his collages or vice versa.

Ms Beale said the works were not just clever commentaries but showed that Milne was "good at sticking and pasting".

The visuals combine figures from a number of photographs with phrases such as "the new democratic system" or "a small group of humanists".

The first shows a stone edifice, a sheep and a suited man with his back turned, while the second shows three people in a strange underground car park with gold columns.

The commentaries generally lampoon Clark's pompous generalisations and buy into tropes beloved by art critics.

"I don't know enough about Persian literature" shows an artist in the desert doing a painting of an upside-down nurse, and slings off at the metaphorical meanings attached to art practice.

A good satirist never reveals his thinking for the joke is always on the viewer. "I think the text and image relationships make sense on their own terms," Milne said.

This has put the artist into a quandary for he is scheduled for an artist's talk at the gallery on Saturday, April 15, and isn't sure how to proceed.

"I might have questions at the beginning instead of the end," he said, with an enigmatic smile.

Milne is attracted to misunderstood imaginative geniuses and his next project will be based on articles he has collected about King Ludwig II of Bavaria.

The Death of an Idea, the name of his current show, is based on a quote from Nietzsche that he has got wrong.

When pushed, Milne is similarly disrespectful when speaking of Clark whom he calls "a waspish little man".

Death of an Idea, Peter Milne, One Star Gallery, artist's talk, 4pm, April 15. ●



Lord Mayor Sally Capp with Beverly Caprioli, University Cafe

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Faces of north-west city



What's your favourite place to visit in the area, and why is it your favourite?



CATHERINE

It's got to be Bread Club, like everyone. I'm from West Melbourne but I have to go to Bread Club every week to get a loaf of bread. I'm a Danish sort of person though so I love any of their bakery Danishes, they also do really good pizza slices which are the best. But always a Danish too.



JOE

North Melbourne Books is my favourite. They're so nice and have a great range of books. They really try to cater for most people, they'll get in any book you like. They're always very friendly and it's always nice to just get in there. My daughter likes coming here with me and picking out books she wants, reading's a favourite thing of mine.



ROBERT

Bread Club is my favourite place by far, you have to go in and buy a loaf if you want to find out why. Or a croissant, or hot cross bun – anything. I live around the area, and I go there every day.



JO

I love Chemist Warehouse – it's my favourite shop, I've always loved it. I love the restaurants; I love the Three Crowns Hotel – I go there quite often. I go to Snax café too because it's got a good variety of food and friendly people. I just love Errol St. ●

STATE MP (LOWER HOUSE)

Women should be able to breastfeed anywhere and everywhere

I've breastfed three babies. I've fed them in Parliament, in churches, in cafes, and even perched on the kerb in cities where there was nowhere to sit. Any time my babies were hungry, I fed them.



In fact, in 2017, I was the first woman to breastfeed in the Victorian Parliament in 15 years (!), after Kirstie Marshall was kicked out for doing so in 2003.

You might have heard that recently a woman was kicked out of the Victorian County Court for breastfeeding her baby. In recent years, women have been asked not to breastfeed in other public places, like public pools.

Women should be able to breastfeed their babies wherever and whenever they need to. Telling women they cannot breastfeed in a public place sends the message that women are not welcome in public spaces. This is not acceptable.

It's a biological fact that when babies need to feed they cannot wait. Delaying or skipping breastfeeding can also lead to serious health problems for the mother, like mastitis.

In Victoria, the *Equal Opportunity Act 2010* protects pregnant and breastfeeding people in areas of public life, including work, schools, universities, shops, and rental properties. But there are loopholes and grey areas in the law that still allow people to be excluded from some public spaces, like the courts, simply for

needing to breastfeed a baby. Grey areas mean that many in society still don't feel protected to breastfeed in public spaces.

My Greens colleagues and I have called on the Victorian Government to amend the *Equal Opportunity Act* to explicitly prevent discrimination against breastfeeding in *all* public places, including public areas of courts.

If there is ever anything I can help you with, please get in touch at office@ellensandell.com.

Watch Ellen Sandell's speech on breastfeeding in Parliament: ●



Ellen Sandell
STATE MP FOR MELBOURNE
OFFICE@ELLENSANDELL.COM

MELBOURNE ZOO

Legs for days! Black-winged stilt chick strides into new habitat

A newly hatched Black-winged stilt chick is growing into its legs at Melbourne Zoo with ample encouragement from Mum and Dad.



The long-legged, water-dwelling chick is waddling around its pond, flapping its tiny wings and chirping to its parents as it clumsily explores its new habitat.

Melbourne Zoo birdkeeper Kody Davidson said the stilt's parents worked together to protect the fluffy brown-and-white chick as it steadily became more independent during the past eight weeks.

"The chick is absolutely adorable and is eating on its own, splashing in the pond and occasionally hiding under Mum and Dad for comfort," Mr Davidson said.

"Stilts breed when they feel safe and happy in their environment. The chick is a major welfare win for Melbourne Zoo as it was conceived shortly after we upgraded the habitat with new Australian native aquatic plants, substrate and a larger pond."

While nesting, Black-winged stilts bend their long, orange legs and shimmy their bodies down onto the eggs, which incubate for 25 days. The species likes to nest out in the open near wetlands, without any natural foliage to protect the nest.

Mr Davidson said visitors could see the little family when they visited the beautiful new habitat at the Zoo, which has been a year in the making.

"Ground dwelling birds have evolved to be great parents as they're vulnerable to predators, so it's amazing to see them stick together as a family with the new chick," Mr Davidson said.

"The birds are so charismatic, the new aviary is stunning, and visitors can enjoy sitting on the bench and observing the birds thriving in their environment."

Black-winged stilts are Australian natives and usually live in marshes, mudflats and the shallow edges of lakes and rivers. The birds can occasionally be spotted at the Trin Warren Tam-boore wetlands in Royal Park.

They use their long beaks to eat aquatic insects as well as snails and yabbies that wade near the water's edge.

Black-winged stilts are part of a Zoos Victoria regional breeding program. Zoos Victoria and Melbourne Zoo visitors are reminded that all tickets must be pre-booked online at zoo.org.au.

Zoos Victoria members no longer need to book tickets. ●

HISTORY

Ellen Mulcahy

Ellen was born in County Cork, Ireland, in December 1859. Her parents, John Mulcahy and Bridget Connell, had two subsequent children, Catherine and Timothy, and the family of five set off for Australia in September 1864. Sadly, five-month-old Timothy died during the voyage.

WORDS BY Felicity Jack
HOTHAM HISTORY PROJECT



They arrived in Melbourne on November 28, 1864 and John Mulcahy set himself up as a bootmaker in Kilmore. Four more children were born in Kilmore. The family subsequently moved to Melbourne, living for some years in Royal Parade, Parkville.

In 1872 Victoria passed an *Education Act* that brought in free, compulsory, secular education. Ellen was employed the following year as a teacher, aged 14.

Ellen retired from the teaching profession after 30 years, giving her a pension. She

subsequently joined the Labour movement and the Trades Hall Council. Her experiences as a teacher gave her a good basis on which to fight for the rights of women, and from approximately 1909 she was active in the formation of several unions that focused on the trades that employed women, including those for office cleaners, laundry workers, women bookbinders and stationery employees.

She was elected secretary of the Political Labor Council Women's Organising Committee, and then a member of the Victorian PLC Central Executive and its minute secretary and press correspondent. She supported the Labor party in the 1910 and 1911 elections.

There were several factors that led Ellen to becoming disillusioned with the Labour movement and the Trades Hall, and in 1913 she stood as an Independent Labor candidate for North Melbourne against Dr Maloney in the Federal election. She was one of the first six women to seek national parliamentary office in the young Commonwealth and it was 30 years before any woman would be successfully elected.

Her criticisms of the Labor party included social cliques and political patronage, believing that its policies were self-serving and did not serve the interests of the people they were representing.

Clearly Ellen spoke clearly and had a sharp mind. A report of her speaking at a meeting at

the North Melbourne Town Hall starts with the assertion that she was "evidently able to handle interjections as well as many of her male confreres".

With the outbreak of the 1914/18 war Ellen took up a full range of "home front" work to support the war effort.

After the war she and her siblings set up a business in Abbotsford selling boots and shoes. She died there suddenly of heart failure on September 16, 1920.

Join Wendy Dick, Australian Industrial Relations Commission Centennial Prize winner, and Aileen Sarsfield who will be giving a talk about Ellen and the Mulcahy family at North Melbourne Library on Thursday, April 20 at 6pm.

The event is free, but bookings are essential and can be made through Trybooking: ●



Tickets:



PARKVILLE GARDENS RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION



Bright blue skies and brilliant sunshine!

We couldn't have asked for a more glorious day for the annual Parkville Gardens Residents' Association (PGRA) Easter egg hunt on April 2.



Great weather and the promise of chocolate are certainly a winning combination. A terrific turnout of well over 100 kids and adults, plenty of eggs, a few basic rules to keep the game fair, and friendly management by the PGRA team made the event a great success.

It was particularly satisfying to see new faces from new places come along and meet up. Bringing people together and building community is what the PGRA is all about. We'll keep at it.

There's something more to look forward to. Social housing providers Housing First and development partners Frasers Property and Citta are teaming up to host a Parkville Easter Family Fair on Saturday, April 15 (not on April 8 as stated in last month's column).

All residents are welcome. Come along to the Galada Ave Reserve for a fun day, kicking off at 11am and running through to 3pm.

Attractions will include another Easter egg hunt (yes!), an art activity, face painting, a petting zoo, and food trucks. With a bit of luck, the weather will be as lovely as it was on April 2.

Speaking of community, our neighbourhood partner, Nas Mohamud, has worked with her colleagues at the City of Melbourne to secure data from the 2021 National Census specific to Parkville Gardens. Thanks to all of them.

A couple of factors make interpretation

a challenge. The first is that the census was taken during Melbourne's prolonged COVID lockdown. This meant, among other things, that many international students had not been able to return to Australia. Second, a number of questions had only an 80 per cent response rate. Here's just a few facts and figures ...

Overall, we're a young community. Of the total population of 1760, nearly half (47 per cent) were aged between 20 and 40.

Complementing this segment, given the large retirement and aged care facility in the neighbourhood, about 17 per cent were aged between 80 and 100. Nearly half (46 per cent) of our residents were born in Australia, with the next biggest group born in China or Malaysia (20 per cent).

Unsurprisingly, Cantonese and Mandarin (23 per cent) are the most common languages spoken at home after English (50 per cent).

In brief we are a wonderfully diverse mob. PGRA will continue to do all we can to promote inclusion, engagement, safety and respect.

On that note, we hope everyone had a most enjoyable and relaxing Easter break. ●



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

METRO TUNNEL



Metro Tunnel's Arden Station powers ahead with new solar panel system

Arden Station is sporting some new bling after crews installed 125kW of solar panels on the roof of the station entrance – enough to power about 50 homes.

Made up of 392 glistening panels, the impressive system will generate about 140KWh of electricity annually, helping to power the station and reduce carbon emissions by around 188 tonnes per year.

Arden Station is the only Metro Tunnel station with a renewable energy source, as it's the only station with a big enough roof space, according to Metro Tunnel Project sustainability coordinator Alex Steinmeyer.

"Most of the Metro Tunnel Project is underground, so having the roof space available on top of the station entrance at Arden provides us a great opportunity to establish this solar system," Mr Steinmeyer said.

The system will replace 15 per cent of the grid electricity used by the station for things like lighting, ventilation, escalators, and lifts.

The expansive roof space at Arden Station is also being used to harvest stormwater and rainwater to supply non-drinking water to the stations, which can be used for things like toilet flushing.

"The stormwater and rainwater initiatives are an Australian first for underground railway stations," Mr Steinmeyer said.

"Capturing rain and stormwater, along with water-efficient design, will mean a 43 per cent saving in water use across all the Metro Tunnel stations."

From one end of the tunnels to the other, the Metro Tunnel team is raising the bar for sustainability on major infrastructure projects in Australia.

Initiatives to reduce greenhouse gas emissions on the project include using concrete with lower cement content for the lining of the twin nine-kilometre tunnels, by replacing cement with lower-carbon materials of equal strength.

Each of the five underground stations will also use regenerative braking systems in escalators and lifts to capture and reuse energy that would otherwise be lost through heat.

"Anytime our escalators or lifts slow down or stop we capture that energy and store it as electricity," Mr Steinmeyer said.

The Metro Tunnel team is targeting a five-star Green Star Design and As Built rating for all five of its stations – Arden, Parkville, State Library, Town Hall, and Anzac on St Kilda Rd.

The team is making great progress on construction of the stations and tunnels to get them ready to start testing trains underground in the second half of this year. ●

PUBLIC HOUSING RESIDENTS' NETWORK

Stop the demolition of public housing at Barak Beacon, Port Melbourne

“
I am urging all my column readers – as I have in previous columns – to get behind Margaret Kelly and other residents who remain living on this estate. Margaret has declared they will have to carry her out if they want to proceed with the demolition of her home.

”
WORDS BY *Cory Memery*

A petition has been tabled in state parliament to stop the demolition and instead retain, refurbish and build more housing on the estate. The campaign can be followed on the Save Barak Beacon Facebook page:



Housing crisis deepens in Melbourne

On March 23, *The Age* published another article documenting the housing affordability crisis in Melbourne, writing...

“Rental vacancy rates across the country have plummeted over the past two years to record lows. In Melbourne, it is now five times as difficult to find a rental property than it was in the early 2000s. The collapse

in vacancy rates is also driving up rent for many properties, making them increasingly unaffordable for the nation’s lowest-income earners.”

The state government’s policies and programs on housing need complete revision. Hoping for an improvement in the next few years and beyond based on current federal and state government policies and programs is delusional.

The private market is causing the problem, not the solution

We all need to understand that the private market for the past two decades has generated the crisis. In 1999 then Liberal Treasurer Peter Costello delivered a wealth windfall to investors by introducing a 50 per cent discount on capital gains when investors sold their properties. Since then, there was a rush to invest and take profits that drove prices up.

Peter Costello now heads up the Future Fund, Australia’s sovereign wealth fund, where the federal government wants to invest \$10

billion to get returns to invest in so-called affordable (not public) housing.

When Labor first announced this plan before the election it was promising closer to \$1 billion per year from investing with Future Fund. This has been driven down to be just \$500 million as the stock market has been volatile and delivering lower returns.

New affordable housing program

The federal government is currently trying to legislate the \$10 Billion Future Fund program. It is getting constructive proposals to change course from the Greens and other crossbenchers.

The Victorian Government needs to abandon its current policies of demolishing public housing and defining affordable rental housing as being 90 per cent of local market rents and join in a call for a change of complete course by the two tiers of government with the following new policies:

- Invest the federal \$10 billion in housing estate retention and refurbishment, and build more;
- Remove the capital gains discount and invest projected additional tax revenue in every future year into building more public housing; and
- Propose a national conversation on the human right to housing and decide on investments beyond the \$10 billion to deliver affordable housing for very low to moderate income households.

* Written with the assistance of the Save Public Housing Collective. ●



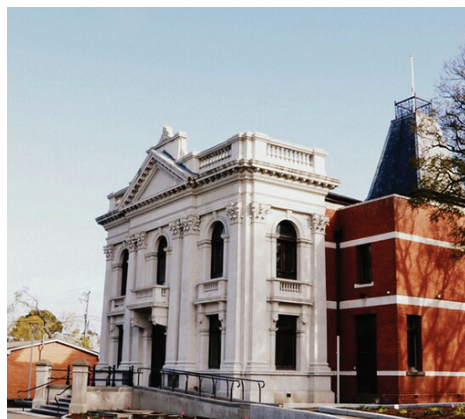
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KENSINGTON ASSOCIATION

An important step towards reconciliation at Kensington Town Hall

The Kensington Town Hall was first opened on August 14, 1901, the same year the Australian Constitution was enacted.

WORDS BY *Kate Kennedy*



Australia’s national identity was formed in the years leading up to federation in 1901. This was a time when the ethic of self-improvement and the theory of evolution prevailed, as Richard Broome explains in his history of *Aboriginal Victorians* (2005).

Churches, friendly societies, lodges, temperance societies, debating societies, mechanics institutes and libraries were places of self-improvement and community engagement for white settlers.

In 1887, RMIT University was established through the philanthropy of pastoralist Francis Ormond as the Working Men’s College.

The upstairs Conference Room in the Kensington Town Hall where the Kensington Association meets monthly, holds the honour boards from three fraternal societies; Manchester Unity Independent Order of Odd Fellows (MUIIOF), the Protestant Alliance Friendly Society (PAFS), and the Australian Natives Association (ANA).

These societies met in dedicated club rooms in the Town Hall. The enduring record of the names of leaders for each society are listed according to their years of service. Two boards are Roll of Honour memorials to members who served in the First World War.

The names of more than the 580 men and less than 22 “sisters” depicted in this room are a small representation of the many other societies, friendship groups, clubs, political organisations, and community members who have met and continue to meet in this building since 1901.

In the lead-up to this year’s proposed referendum to enshrine a voice for First Nations

people in the Constitution, groups meeting in the Town Hall conference room have raised questions on the origins of these grand timber edifices hanging on the walls.

Who were the Australian Natives Association, or what was an Independent Odd Fellow?

For example, the ANA was established in Melbourne in 1871 as a non-partisan and non-sectarian friendly society for Australian-born, white men seeking to shape Australia’s nationhood and identity. The ANA was an advocate for Federation and a strong advocate for the White Australia policy.

Richard Broome tells of Aboriginal activist William Cooper being publicly critical of the group for their appropriation of the term “native”.

In recognition of and commitment to Indigenous culture, the Kensington Association requested in a petition to the City of Melbourne in October 2022, that a statement explaining the history of these friendly society honour boards be displayed in the room.

Currently the association along with the Kensington Reconciliation Action Group are consulting with a team from the City of Melbourne to update the room with an explanatory statement on the artifacts displayed and to bring contemporary voices into the room. ●

Kate Kennedy on behalf of the Kensington Association.

Pet’s Corner



North Melbourne’s local lap dog

WORDS BY *Georgie Atkins*

“
You don’t have to search too hard to spot the Harry and Mao Mao duo wandering around North Melbourne; just look for the three-year-old golden retriever with a pair of booties on.

“He was my friend’s dog, but my friend went back to his country and couldn’t get back to Australia, so I started to take care of him when he was a one-year-old.”

Harry and his girlfriend had been looking after Mao Mao together until she had to leave Australia to visit her home country. When he’s missing her, Harry likes to take Mao Mao on routes they used to all walk together.

“Every time I walk with him, he reminds me of my girlfriend,” Harry said. “He makes me feel less lonely.”

Mao Mao’s friendly nature is the quality Harry loves most about him, as he’s always happy and excited to have friends over at the house.

However, Mao Mao’s enthusiasm can be problematic at times, forgetting how big he really is when launching himself into people’s laps. ●

Concrete – the extensive dangers to the planet and human health

Apart from water, concrete due to its benefits of endurance and low cost of production is the most widely used building material on the planet. It provides foundations for modern cities, homes, offices, streets, and pavements.



Cement is a basic component of concrete. The cement industry pumps out more than eight billion tonnes every year.

The sheer scale at which we produce cement means that **cement alone before it's even been made into concrete accounts for four to eight per cent of man-made carbon emissions including dust and gases.**

Creating concrete **requires huge amounts of non-renewable resources** from raw materials, large amounts of energy mostly powered by fossil fuels to heat, mix and cool the ingredients.

Sand is an important part of cement and is being harvested from the environment-destroying beaches and riverbanks which need their sand to prevent flooding and keep ecosystems running.

Concrete **uses almost a tenth of the world's industrial water use** – straining supplies for drinking and irrigation, 75 per cent of this consumption is in drought and water-stressed regions.

Concrete **replaces natural structures like floodplains or forests** without adequately mimicking their essential functions.

Animals, plants, fungi, and their ecosystems have been smothered under tonnes of concrete.

It is estimated that about 60 per cent of the soil in the City of Melbourne is covered. This increases flooding, as water cannot sink into the ground thereby increasing run off. The floods in New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina were made more severe because urban and suburban streets could not soak up the rain like a floodplain.

Cement production **emits large amounts of toxic substances and pollutants** into the air such as cadmium, thallium, and mercury creating considerable environmental pollution.

These toxic elements are bad for anyone exposed to them, but they can also damage the ecosystems nearby wherever the cement is being produced.

Concrete, new or aged is subject to vapour emissions **“outgassing” forever** unless you make the extra effort to seal the capillary or gel pore system found in all concretes.

Concrete is well known for **magnifying heat on hot days** – being the significant material that contributes to the heat island effect. It also traps gases from our car exhausts and air conditioner units.

Every part of the process of making concrete has the potential to cause serious damage to the environment however it seems that humanity is far from phasing it out.

The cement industry has undergone some changes to clean up its carbon emissions with concrete being recycled and alternative energy sources being sought.

However, the politics of concrete seen in the form of stimulus spending projects by governments around the world plus cementing our riverbeds and hillsides in the name of flood and mudslide prevention – coupled with the technological advances of the cement industry – makes it difficult for another voice to be heard.

In Japan construction companies have been ordered to “hold back the sea”.

Environmentalists say that mangrove forests could provide a cheaper buffer.

What are the alternatives? While construction companies are fuelled by developers seeking to maximise profits for their shareholders and themselves versus what's best for the planet or human health and not checked by themselves or government policies we have lots more to lose in air quality, natural resources, water, sand, soil, ecosystems and their natural functions. ●



Jacqui van Heerden
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JACQUIVANHEERDEN@GMAIL.COM

STATE MP (UPPER HOUSE)

NORTH WEST CITY NEWS

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It's time for reform of Victoria's criminal justice system

The March release of the Justice Reform Initiative's Victorian State of Incarceration Report paints a harrowing picture of the problems facing our criminal justice system.

WORDS BY *Evan Mulholland*
MP FOR NORTHERN METROPOLITAN

The Victorian adult prison population now has grown by over 32 per cent in the last decade, and we are now spending a billion dollars a year keeping Victorians locked up, an increase of 96 per cent over the same period.

It shows that something is deeply wrong with the way the Victorian Labor Government is overseeing our prison and rehabilitation systems.

In my inaugural speech I spoke about the need for us as Victorians to appeal to our better selves in dealing with the crisis of incarceration in our State, and the power of the value of redemption.

I believe Victorians are ready to appeal the human good in people and begin exploring better ways to combat the root causes of crime. The criminal justice system in our state does not differentiate between those that we are afraid of and those that we are just mad at, and our lack of nuance does both those we lock up, and our community a great disservice.

That is why under the leadership of John Pesutto, the Victorian Liberals have appointed this state's first ever Shadow Minister for

Criminal Justice Reform in Brad Battin. It is time for new solutions. We cannot in good conscience spend yet another \$798 million to increase state prison capacity, which appears to be the only solution on offer from Labor.

We must prioritise community safety, but that does not mean we cannot find alternative punishments for people who should not be in prison. For non-violent offenders, such as low-level drug possession.

I believe Victorians would rather spend a small amount at the start of someone's interaction with the justice system on programs of rehabilitation than spend \$149,113 a year, every year, to keep them in prison. This is not only makes economic sense, but is clearly a better outcome for society.

Current policy continues to lead to circumstances where many who are incarcerated cannot find a job once they leave prison, and end up back there.

The report found that 53.1 per cent of people in Victorian prisons have been there before. This means the government spends \$1.5 million per day on prisoners who have been incarcerated before. This recidivism disproportionately affects already vulnerable communities like First Nations people.

I firmly believe there are good human qualities to every Victorian, even those that have followed the wrong path at times. We should seek out the good in our fellow Victorians and always find a pathway to redemption.

We can and must do better. ●

For more information:
evanmulholland.com.au

What's On: April 2023

Community Calendar



EVERY THIRD SUNDAY OF THE MONTH, 10AM - 3PM

KENSINGTON MARKET

For a market that highlights the produce and artwork of its wonderful inner-city makers community, be sure to come down as you'd be sure to find something you love.

Kensington Town Hall
30-34 Bellair St

EVERY MONDAY AND WEDNESDAY, 10:30AM - 3PM

SONGBIRDS

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.

North Melbourne Library
66 Errol St



EVERY TUESDAY, 10:30AM - 11:15AM

PRESCHOOL STORYTIME

Share the wonder of books with your preschooler at storytime, with stories, songs, rhymes, and activities.

North Melbourne Library
66 Errol Street



THE CENTRE

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.

58 Errol St, North Melbourne
centre.org.au



EVERY THURSDAY, 10:30AM - 11AM

STOMPERS

Come along for an energetic 30 minutes of stories, songs, rhymes, music, and most of all, fun. Ages 18 months to 3 years.

North Melbourne Library
66 Errol Street



SECOND MONDAY OF EVERY MONTH (OR THIRD IF THE SECOND IS A PUBLIC HOLIDAY), 1:45PM - 3:45PM

ORGAN CLUB

Fun and entertaining musical afternoon, with music to suit all tastes. Afternoon tea to follow. Contact: 9307 8207.

Kensington Neighbourhood House

OPEN MONDAY TO SUNDAY, 6AM - 11PM

PARKVILLE TENNIS CLUB

A small friendly tennis club located just outside the CBD on Royal Parade. Individual, student, concession and family memberships are available.

151 Royal Parade, Parkville 3052



THREADING STORIES

Aimed at residents over 55, this program is an opportunity to learn or practice creative skills (such as knitting, sewing, craft, painting), while forming connections and exchanging ideas and stories.

Call 9376 6366 to find out specifics.

Kensington Neighbourhood House

Business Directory

Health & Fitness

Precinct

Politician

Real Estate

School

Shopping

Melbourne Electronic Sound Studio: a hidden North Melbourne gem



Not many people know that Australia was centre stage in the development of electronic music and it continues to be at the forefront of innovation. There's a lot to be proud of.



WORDS BY *Joyce Watts*
PHOTOGRAPHY BY *Anna Encio*
ARTS & CULTURE



Byron J Scullin and Robin Fox are the founders and directors of the Melbourne Electronic Sound Studio (MESS), a not-for-profit organisation that is dedicated to furthering electronic sound and music culture in all its various forms.

“We connect people to electronic sound and music culture through our huge collection of multimillion-dollar, rare and antique instruments. But we're not a museum,” Byron smiled. “We make all this equipment available for the public to use, learn about and explore with us.”

MESS focuses on four main areas of activity. “There's the ‘Studio’ – the North Melbourne hub with all the instruments. Then ‘School’, in that we provide education with a diverse series of accessible short courses and workshops for all levels of interest,” Byron said.

“Show’ means we have artists in residence who work here and present in concert. Finally, ‘Schematic’ is an emerging part of MESS where people can build, design, and repair their own instruments.”

Byron is a sound artist and electronic music producer and has had a career in film, television, radio, and computer games. He also creates large-scale outdoor sound and music installations, such as *The Rivers Sing*, as part of the Rising Festival.

Robin became fascinated with electronic music from a young age as his mother made a lot of electronic music. Robin comes from a more experimental, avant-garde background and is well known as an audio-visual artist using lasers and sound.

The pair became friends through a shared interest in experimental music. In 2016, they founded MESS when they recognised the opportunity for an independent organisation dedicated to electronic music within Melbourne's vibrant music, culture, and art culture scene.

“Working in the university sector, we saw how students were missing out on a lot of opportunities in electronic music education and

engagement. Then talking to fellow artists, we found that they were fascinated by all different instruments and machines – but because the instruments are often rare and expensive, artists found them very hard to get access to, let alone obtain or own.”

MESS's studio, inside North Melbourne's Meat Market, offers around 500 pieces on display out of their close to 2000 strong collection of instruments. All of the instruments in the studio are available to play and record at the studio by booking a session through the MESS website.

The eclectic range of synthesizers, keyboard and electronic instruments, drum machines, and even metronomes, has been drawn from loans from electronic music enthusiasts such as musician Gotye and actor Guy Pearce, donations from private benefactors and contemporary instrument manufacturers, and Robin's own collection inherited from his family.

Byron's favourites include the Transaudio collection, a handful of rare synthesizers designed and built in Melbourne in the 1970s.

Many of the instruments have fascinating stories behind them.

“We've got an instrument from the '70s called the Fairlight CMI that was Australian made, and I think the most important musical invention in the last 100 years. It introduced a concept called sampling, where you could record any sound and then play it back. Sampling is now the basis for so many musical genres, from hip hop to electronic dance music.”

“These affordable electronic music instruments also inspired the concept of a ‘bedroom producer’ – that you could produce music on your own terms with full creative control, without a record label producer. The Fairlight CMI was what Kate Bush used to make *Running Up That Hill*.”

As for their future plans, Byron, Robin and the MESS team are putting all their energy into ensuring that MESS continues to provide the best space for people to experience music in a friendly and welcoming environment and to foster a love of music.

“There's a real utopian streak, an idealism at the heart of electronic music, that the technology should allow anybody to create something out of sound. The idea is that these instruments allow people to access creative expression in new and transformative ways,” Byron explained.

“So, at MESS, we want to inherit and further that spirit by building a physical space where people can connect and create.”

MESS is located at 15 Dowling Place, North Melbourne.

This article was contributed by the North & West Melbourne Precinct Association Inc. ●

For more information:
mess.foundation



Ramp and lane changes at the M80 interchange

! From April 2023



Upcoming ramp and lane closures

As we continue to build new ramps and re-build lanes along the West Gate Freeway and at the M80 interchange, we need to close some ramps and lanes at the interchange to make room for ongoing works.

What this means

From 9pm Friday 14 April - 5am Monday 15 May:

- One lane will be closed on the **Princes Freeway inbound** at the interchange. Please follow signs and allow extra travel time.
- During this time, we will also close the **Princes Freeway citybound ramp to Geelong Road** and **Princes Freeway citybound ramp to the West Gate Freeway** overnight. Detours will be in place. For exact dates and times, go to bigbuild.vic.gov.au/disruptions

**From 9pm
Friday 14 April
- 5am Monday
15 May**

In partnership with:



Remember that other works may be happening at the same time. Check for disruptions at bigbuild.vic.gov.au/disruptions



Authorised by the Victorian Government, 1 Treasury Place, Melbourne