

The new team and philosophy behind Sosta Ristorante

Filipino performance takes over Arts House

Council support for new project in Macauley as structure plan remains shelved

CITY NEWS



Mo Works finds new home in North Melbourne

North Melbourne continues to attract new businesses with creative agency Mo Works the latest company to move in, relocating its headquarters from Docklands to Arden St. More on page 13. Photo: Marcela Lehocka.

Residents angry over “secretive” local West Gate Tunnel impact projects

“
Outraged North and West Melbourne residents claim a \$100 million “transport and amenity program” aimed at easing traffic impacts when the West Gate Tunnel opens is being spent in a “secretive fashion” on projects in the CBD.

”

WORDS BY
BRENDAN REES



on Franklin St, including a new park which will sit above the future underground State Library Metro station.

According to the state government, some of the funds are proposed for new tram stops on William St, while a council report in March 2022 stated “projects already delivered” included bike lanes on La Trobe St, Abbotsford St, William St, and Peel St.

Other projects “delivered” from the scheme include a “connecting Docklands to North Melbourne feasibility study,” a “Victoria St opportunities plan,” and a “Peel St corridor study,” with the council also proposing to spend money on a new linear park outside the North Melbourne Town Hall.

But residents say they have been left in the dark about how the amenity scheme’s funds are being allocated and spent, while not addressing the real issues that the WGTP will create for the community.

North and West Melbourne Association secretary and former Lord Mayor Kevin Chamberlin said, “The only thing that everybody seems to agree on is that when the West Gate Tunnel opens, the movement of traffic and volumes are unclear.”

As reported in sibling publication *Docklands News* in 2017, the project’s original traffic modelling forecasted that the extension between Dynon Rd and Wurundjeri Way would carry up to 19,000 vehicles per day.

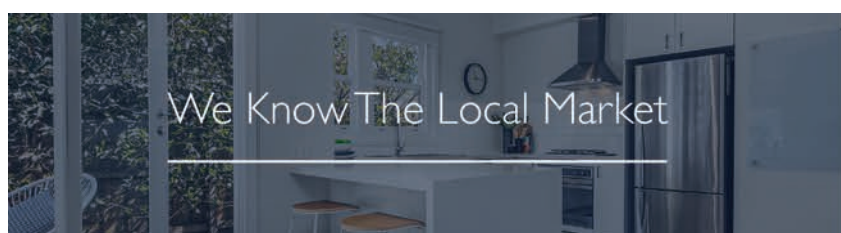
Wurundjeri Way, which is getting an extra lane in each direction, is predicted to carry up to 16,000 vehicles per day by 2031, but the government says the extension will take 5000 cars a day from Spencer and King streets.

Continued on page 4.



History award for Houses of North and West Melbourne

The Public Record Office Victoria has acknowledged the work of Elio Sarpi and his much-loved Instagram page.



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Elio Sarpi recognised with community history award

North Melbourne resident Elio Sarpi has made his community proud, taking home the Local History Project Award at the 2024 Community History Awards on February 2 for his Instagram page, Houses of North and West Melbourne.

WORDS BY
GEORGIE ATKINS



The annual ceremony is presented by Public Record Office Victoria in partnership with the Royal Historical Society of Victoria to celebrate individuals who are dedicated to telling local stories through creative and unique history projects.

With a social media following of 18,300, Mr Sarpi's winning Instagram series that explores the "history and houses of North and West Melbourne" has captivated the local community. Mr Sarpi was also recognised in December last year with a Rotary Club award.

"It all started during COVID, I really wanted to get out of the house, and it made me start looking at where we're living – I started to really appreciate the beauty of some of the houses in North and West Melbourne," Mr Sarpi said.

While "not a photographer, architect or historian", Mr Sarpi began posting photos of interesting houses he had come across, and eventually took up researching their history and discovering the multitude of local stories that were waiting to be told.

"It's kind of like building a jigsaw puzzle, it's a bit of a thrill about what I can find out about a

place," he said.

"As I started posting, I realised the power of community and the power of information that people store in their heads – people have amazing links and stories that they sort of just keep to themselves, which they're now starting to share on my posts."

While he also works for a large IT company, Mr Sarpi has enjoyed getting to express his "creative side" through the project, as well as connecting with other residents in his community.

"It kind of surprised me how many people like what I do and reading the stories," he told *North West City News*.

"It's really nice to feel that sense of community, it makes the area even more appealing in terms of where I live."

Mr Sarpi hopes to continue the series with a focus on some of the current individuals and businesses in the community, "documenting their stories so they're not lost".

He also plans to bring light to some of the migrant stories that have "shaped the community".

"I feel very honoured to have received the award," he said.

"The age bracket of people who follow me is from their 20s to about 45, so I'm bringing information and history to an audience that's probably untapped – that's what I'm most proud of." ●



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North and West Melbourne Precinct Association



Meet the new team and philosophy behind Sosta Ristorante

As soon as it opened in 2007, North Melbourne restaurant Sosta Cucina became a local institution.

WORDS BY
JACK HAYES



It was a simple, yet refined, approach to Italian cooking that set it apart from its contemporaries.

But, following some of the harshest years in hospitality, Sosta's former owner, Maurice Santucci, had had enough.

Santucci heard there was some interest in continuing the Sosta name, and waiting in the wings was chef Alex Tintori and businessman Frank Remoundos.

While Sosta Ristorante may continue locals' familiarity with the venue, a new team, new philosophy and new fit-out promise to take the much-loved restaurant into a new era.

Born and raised in Lucca, Tuscany, Tintori (previously Il Bacaro) brings a 15-year culinary career to a new Sosta menu that draws inspiration from his most loved regions of Italy with a sharp focus on sustainability.

"The philosophy behind the new menu is a modern approach to Italian food, focusing more on local produce and working directly with farmers and suppliers," Tintori said.

"I grew up in a little farm in the heart of Tuscany where everything was made in your home. We make everything from scratch. From the bread to the pasta, it's all hand-made."

"You end up with a greater product and

greater chance to show respect to the environment by sourcing from sustainable producers ... that is what we are committed to."

Tintori is unwavering in ensuring sustainable practices materialise on the plate. From foraging pine mushrooms or wild garlic flowers on Merri Creek to fermenting mushroom off-cuts into an umami-loaded sauce extract.

The new menu harnesses Victoria's food bowl to pair with "classic, strong, Italian cooking methods and traditions", creating a new flavour profile on the plate.

Current favourites include calamari grigliati, with grilled calamari, tomato, garlic flowers and capers; maialino arrosto, a Western Plains roast pork rack, fermented cantaloupe melon and pickled green tomatoes; and spaghetti al grancho, squid ink spaghetti, Fraser Island spanner crab, bone

marrow and crab sauce.

Remoundos admits it has been tough educating diners in the new philosophy of Sosta Ristorante since opening in September last year, but it is a challenge he and Tintori are headstrong in facing.

"We want to educate people in the area about the new philosophy and the new team, there is a lot of work that goes into every dish and every ingredient, and we want to showcase it to them," he said. "Ours is an approachable attitude to hospitality, from the prices to the services, we want to make our customers feel at home." ●

For more information:
sosta.com.au



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Residents angry over “secretive” local West Gate Tunnel impact projects

Continued from page 1.

The City of Melbourne openly opposed the West Gate Tunnel Project when it was originally announced by the state government due to the significant influx of additional vehicles it will bring into the city.

When the transport and amenity program (TAP) was originally negotiated in 2018, then Deputy Lord Mayor Arron Wood told *Docklands News* that despite a shared commitment on TAP, it “fundamentally” disagreed with the state government on the WGTP.

“We have a shared commitment to these projects [TAP], while acknowledging disagreement on the project fundamentally. They are acknowledging that we don’t support the project, but they are coming to the party on mitigating some of those impacts,” Cr Wood said.

But Mr Chamberlin told *North West City News* this month that “the community was led to believe the money was only to be spent when the tunnel was open and the issues identified.”

“To find that the council and the government are planning to spend some of it in the CBD is an absolute betrayal of the community of North Melbourne, West Melbourne and Kensington.”

“If the council thinks it’s such a great idea [to fund projects in the CBD through the amenity scheme] why are they doing it in an underhand way?”

He added that because of the uncertainty of the traffic being pumped into the local area, “it’s not very smart of the council and government’s transport department to be proposing to spend this money in this secretive fashion”.

Mr Chamberlin also noted that projects like the Hawke St linear park and the small extension to the Roden St greening area



West Melbourne resident Mary Masters is among many locals wanting answers into how the West Gate Tunnel project’s transport and amenity program is being used. Photo: Hanna Komissarova.

should be funded out of developer contributions for open space and recreation, not “trying to sneak money out of the transport and amenity program for this sort of work”.

According to a council report in 2022, stakeholder and community engagement was “undertaken on a project-by-project basis,” and “council is working with DTP (Department of Transport and Planning) on a joint communications strategy, with a view to releasing information about the program objectives and key projects in 2022”, which residents say they have never seen.

The City of Melbourne did not respond to questions about how much of the transport and amenity program had been spent or what other future projects had been

proposed or how they were chosen.

Instead, City of Melbourne Acting Lord Mayor Nicholas Reece said the council would engage the community, stakeholders, and traditional owners on project proposals “to secure positive outcomes for local residents, businesses and visitors impacted by the Victorian Government’s West Gate Tunnel Project”.

“Design works are well under way for streetscape improvements and a new linear park on Hawke St. Upgrades will include a significant amount of new green space along with traffic calming measures.”

“As drivers opt to use the tunnel, we’re looking at opportunities for the future of Spencer St, North Melbourne. One option I am keen

on is to make it into a pedestrian-friendly area like Lygon or Errol streets – bringing more visitors and business to the area.”

But West Melbourne resident Mary Masters said the community wanted “good safety outcomes” to mitigate huge amounts of traffic when the tunnel opened.

“We are yet to hear from any government stakeholders about how the transport and amenity funding will deliver good outcomes for Docklands, West Melbourne and North Melbourne or evidence of traffic modelling or community consultation that points to what amenity improvements are needed,” she said, adding residents had the right to feel “cheated”.

RMIT University’s emeritus professor of environment and planning Michael Buxton said he predicted “very large volumes of vehicles” would be pumped into North and West Melbourne, which was “a classic example of a freeway dumping traffic onto congested conventional streets that are separated from another freeway”.

“Why dump traffic on the streets and then try and improve the amenity of those streets? I mean they’re contradictory aims,” he told *North West City News*.

“It strongly indicates that nobody’s in charge. Nobody seems to have a proper strategic overview of the relationship between traffic movements and amenity at all.”

The community had its say on Hawke St and proposed Franklin St projects, with a consultation summary published on the council’s Participate Melbourne website.

A Victorian Government spokesperson said, “We’re working with the City of Melbourne to finalise where the remainder of the transport and amenity program fund will be spent to ensure we deliver transport improvements to the communities of North and West Melbourne.” ●

South Kensington Station: “Unarguably the worst” in Melbourne

A senior figure working for Rail Projects Victoria (RPV) – the state government department delivering the Melbourne Metro Tunnel – has dubbed South Kensington Station as “unarguably the worst metro station in Melbourne”.

Speaking at a community forum hosted by CBD residents’ group Residents 3000 on February 1, RPV’s manager of landowner and business support services Barry McGuren made the comment during an update on the Metro Tunnel project.

As part of the project, the state government has revitalised the areas surrounding the entrances to the station with a new pocket park, tree plantings and almost 3000 square metres of garden beds.

Despite South Kensington Station sitting at the western entrance to the Metro Tunnel, the state government has made no commitments to upgrading the station itself, which Kensington

Association president Simon Harvey also described last year as “the worst station I’ve ever seen”.

The station’s narrow platforms and its poor shelter, lighting, and accessibility have come under continuous scrutiny from residents, commuters and Greens MP for Melbourne and Kensington resident Ellen Sandell.

Mr McGuren, who is a Kensington resident himself, referred to the station during an update about the new park and artwork the Metro Tunnel project had delivered to its entrance.

“This [Kensington] is my ‘hood and we’ve put up with a certain amount of disruption. Nothing like South Yarra, but we have got a new park, a beautiful new piece

of legacy artwork called *One Day in Our Park* and we’ve got a nice, new tarted up entrance to South Kensington Station which is, unarguably, the worst metro station in Melbourne,” Mr McGuren said.

Ellen Sandell, who has been a leading advocate for upgrades to the station for many years, told *North West City News* that the state government still had no plans to make any changes despite persistent pleas from the community.

Ms Sandell most recently met with the Minister for Public and Active Transport Gabrielle Williams in late November to discuss the issue and has put in a Budget bid to Treasurer Tim Pallas to upgrade the station and change

its timetable.

“South Kensington has been labelled the ‘worst train station in Melbourne’, yet Labor still has no plans to invest in much-needed upgrades. Instead, they are pouring billions of dollars into toll roads that increase traffic in the area and pour pollution into our communities,” Ms Sandell said.

“Labor has ignored South Kensington Station for too long and people are sick of putting up with dangerous platforms, sub-par shelters and a dark and flood-prone underpass.”

“South Kensington residents deserve decent train services.”

The Department of Transport and Planning has been contacted for comment. ●

WORDS BY SEAN CAR



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Mainit: heat, arts, and culture at Arts House

From mid-February, *Mainit Illusion* and *Mainit Fantasy*, events showcasing Filipino art and performance, will take over North Melbourne's Arts House.



WORDS BY
MARILYN TAN



The performances are a collaboration between Saluhan Collective, which connects Filipinx artistes in Australia and the Philippines, and Liquid Architecture, providing a platform for experimental sound practice.

"Mainit", the Filipino word for "hot" or "humid", refers to the intensity of summer heat.

According to Arts House, *Mainit Illusion*, inspired by "voyeurism and the post paradise palate of the Philippines", features newly commissioned works across video, sound, and installations. It will showcase Filipinx artistes from the Kulin and Eora nations.

This free exhibition runs alongside *Mainit Fantasy*, a "one-night curated spectacle of sweet and salty art".

The 18-plus event begins with a video installation and reading by Mariam Ella Arcilla, followed by

a "voyeuristic rendition" of songs from the Pointer Sisters. It will continue on the dancefloor in the Arts House basement, where tropical refreshments will accompany DJ sets from various artists.

Kristi Monfries and Lucrecia Quintanilla, the co-directors of Liquid Architecture, described the showcase as "a 360-degree experiential plunge into South-East Asian Filipinx sound, vision and taste."

Mainit Illusion runs from February 19 to March 23, from 10am to 4.30pm on weekdays, and 11am to 4pm on Saturdays. No bookings are necessary.

Mainit Fantasy runs on February 24 from 9pm to 11pm, with bookings available via phone or online.

Both events will take place at Arts House, 521 Queensberry St, North Melbourne. ●

For more information:
artshouse.com.au



From top to bottom:

1. Ranima Montes, 2. Catherine Sandow, 3. Nariam Ella Archilla
4. Neil, Raquel, Del 5. MJ Flamiano



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Kensington resident building bright futures through LEGO charity

“The sky’s the limit” when it comes to local Kensington resident Chin Quah’s passion project, Bricks2Change; a LEGO Builders Club based in Malaysia that aims to recycle unwanted LEGO in support of children’s learning and development.

WORDS BY
GEORGIE ATKINS



Describing himself as an avid “AFOL” (adult fan of LEGO), Mr Quah came up with the idea to establish his own LEGO Builders Club charity after COVID lockdown reignited his love of the toy.

“Like many of us, we pick something up when we’re very young and we really enjoy it, and then you lose touch and forget about it when you grow up,” Mr Quah said.

“I acquired this passion again because I was looking for stimulation and socialisation during the lockdown, but then I discovered it’s a little more interesting than just a plastic toy.”

In a survey Mr Quah ran last year through

the Kensington Good Karma Network Facebook page, he discovered the educational benefits that LEGO can have on developing children’s social skills, STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics) learning and self-confidence.

The results inspired him to raise more than \$6000 through GoFundMe to buy around 56 LEGO sets, which he donated to his former primary school in Malaysia.

“It was a really joyful experience for me, and triggered my question to the school, ‘what can I do next?’,” Mr Quah told North West City News. “They were willing to assign a teacher to help me develop a curriculum

and lesson plan, and deliver LEGO activities that encourage collaboration, sharing of ideas, and creativity.”

With the LEGO bricks donated through Bricks2Change, Mr Quah will design various LEGO creations accompanied by a step-by-step building guide for the children to follow.

For interested donors that may not have any spare LEGO, Mr Quah has created a GoFundMe page to buy second-hand LEGO, with his current target being \$1500.

“It’s an expensive toy, it’s not something that everyone has access to,” he said.

“A key focus for me is to not buy new

LEGO and create more waste, but to recycle unwanted goods so it’s loved again.”

While Bricks2Change is still in its early stages of development, Mr Quah hopes that residents will get involved through either financial or LEGO brick donations, which can be arranged for pick-up by contacting him directly via the GoFundMe page.

“Everyone has a brother or sister or niece or nephew that plays with LEGO, it’s very relatable,” he said.

“This has taken me a long time, and I’ve really put my heart and soul into it – hopefully some community support will keep it progressing.” ●

Parkville Gardens residents demand action against “rat-run” drivers

“Parkville Gardens residents fed up with drivers using their housing estate as a shortcut during peak hours are calling on authorities to act on the growing concern.”

WORDS BY
BRENDAN REES



Photo: Marcela Lehocka.

Parkville Gardens Residents’ Association (PGRA) president Tom Knowles said the problem of “rat-running” had been going on for years as impatient drivers used their quiet neighbourhood to avoid congestion on main roads during rush hour.

“People living along Cade Way

and Willam St get very frustrated because the traffic can bank up and they can’t get out of their driveways. It’s a pain in the neck basically,” he said.

“In the evening people are more so in a hurry to get home or

to get where they want to go, so they again tend to speed and cut corners.”

He said it was becoming increasingly frustrating with many drivers ignoring a no right-hand turn sign from Brunswick Rd into

Gibson Ave from 6.30am to 9.30am weekdays.

In the afternoons, he said Cade Way became “virtually one lane with cars parked on either side” as drivers travelling from Flemington Rd used the estate as a short cut to access the CityLink freeway via Brunswick Rd.

Brunswick Rd is a state-owned road while the estate’s local roads are managed by the City of Melbourne.

Mr Knowles said their narrow roads were intended for local traffic and serving residential needs, not large volumes of traffic.

He said the current situation was also posing a safety hazard to the community including elderly residents walking in the vicinity of the Mercy Place aged care facility on Willam St.

“There is one pedestrian crossing but nothing outside the aged care facility. I’m not aware that there have been any major accidents, but it seems to me it’s something that’s waiting to happen.”

Mr Knowles said the issue had been reported to the City of Melbourne but noted “it’s difficult to get action”.

The City of Melbourne said it was aware of rat running through the estate after having met with the PGRA on several occasions.

In a statement, the council said it would address the issue by applying to the Department of Justice to install a red light camera at the Brunswick Rd and Gibson Ave intersection to deter the illegal right turns, while also advocating to Victoria Police to enforce illegal right turns.

It would also begin a “pedestrian road safety improvement study” in Parkville Gardens and recommend traffic calming measures following the completion of the study.

The council introduced a 40km/h speed limit to the estate in 2020.

The Department of Transport and Planning has been contacted for comment. ●

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Council supports new development in Macauley as structure plan remains on the shelf

City of Melbourne Deputy Lord Mayor Nicholas Reece has called on the state government "to get a move on" with approving the Macauley Structure Plan, despite the council endorsing plans for a 12-storey development in the urban renewal precinct.

WORDS BY
BRENDAN REES



The proposed \$105.7 million development at 218-246 Macaulay Rd and 23-35 Boundary Rd in North Melbourne was endorsed unanimously by City of Melbourne councillors at their February 6 Future Melbourne Committee meeting.

According to council documents, the owner of the site, Ceapal Pty Ltd, seeks to construct a six-storey building facing Macaulay Rd as well as two attached 12-storey buildings at the site, which has a brick warehouse and office building.

Under the Rothelowman-designed plans, the 394-dwelling development would comprise 82 studio apartments, 156 one-bedroom apartments, 132 two-bedrooms apartments, and 24 three-bedroom apartments.

It would also have outdoor and internal communal areas on level one, and a communal terrace area on level six.

Four per cent of housing (about 15 apartments) would be dedicated to affordable housing at a 35 per cent discount on market value or rent.

Other features include a total of 757.2 square metres for three retail tenancies, as well as a 1985.7sqm ground floor supermarket.

A proposed publicly accessible link, a laneway, would be constructed along the site's north-west alignment "to form part of the community benefit associated with the uplift sought to develop the site".

The application proposes a total of 190 car parking spaces with 138 for residents and 52 for supermarket/retail customers.



The City of Melbourne's planning officers recommended that the proposal be approved after it was referred to the council by the Department of Transport and Planning, which will now consider the application for final approval.

The council's officers noted the "layout and design of the buildings sit comfortably within the broader North Melbourne and the Macauley urban renewal area context".

DTP advised the council it had received one objection to the proposal, which raised concerns about overshadowing, car parking, traffic congestion and the lack of apartment diversity.

But council documents stated, the "proposal will not result in unacceptable amenity impacts to adjoining properties and shadowing impacts to Clayton Reserve and Canning St Reserve will be mitigated".

Conditions set out by the council for the planning permit application include an

electric vehicle charging infrastructure in the car park, and a minimum of 16 bicycle spaces.

Deputy Lord Mayor Nicholas Reece told the council meeting that the proposal was a "very substantial new residential development" with a "really outstanding design".

"We recognise that this is a part of Melbourne which is changing significantly," he said.

"I think this will be a really, very high-quality development which will be highly sought after by folks planning to move to the City of Melbourne or move within the City of Melbourne, so I commend everyone involved."

However, Cr Reece noted that the council's Macauley Structure Plan 2021, which sets the vision for major urban renewal of Macauley within North Melbourne and Kensington, was still awaiting approval by the state government.

"That means that planning applications are taking longer than they need to assess; applicants like we have tonight don't have that certainty around their applications," he said.

"We consider ourselves to be good and proud partners with the Victorian Government around meeting the housing challenges for Melbourne and I really do hope that they get a move on and approve that planning scheme amendment for exhibition so we can get on delivering a world class suburb for the people of Melbourne."

The council's environment and heritage portfolio lead Cr Rohan Leppert said it was not easy to "ascertain exactly what government wants on this site, given the mishmash of existing and proposed controls and policies on the land".

"Although we cannot give regard to the new Macauley planning controls, we can and must give regard to seriously entertain sunlight to parks, controls and a range of policies that have been adopted".

North and West Melbourne Association secretary and former Lord Mayor Kevin Chamberlin expressed disappointment that the proposal was "developer-focussed" and did not provide enough three-bedroom apartments for families, which "completely misses the government's much-needed housing strategy".

He also said the term "affordable housing" was "unclear" and questioned whether "this is just cheap housing or quality accommodation available to people on lower incomes".

Additionally, he said the "the elephant in the room" was that the developer and the council "don't want to acknowledge the demand that this development will place on existing infrastructure".

"Where will the children go to school? Where's the childcare? Where is the open space and recreation? All those fundamental community needs appear to have been ignored."

"The last thing this area needs is yet another supermarket. The local retailers are still suffering from the opening of a very large Woolworths only a couple of hundred metres away."

Mr Chamberlin said the impact to traffic would also be felt with Boundary and Macauley roads "already being heavily congested, particularly at peak hours". ●

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LEADING WITH LOVE: KON KARAPANAGIOTIDIS OAM NAMED MELBURNIAN OF THE YEAR



Kon Karapanagiotidis OAM, founder and CEO of the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre and Melburnian of the Year for 2023

Melburnian of the Year Kon Karapanagiotidis OAM, inspires us all to build a more compassionate Australia, where everyone has a seat at the table.

From a Greek-Australian child experiencing racism in a country town to CEO and founder of the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre, Kon has turned trauma into action that positively impacts countless lives.

As a human rights lawyer, social worker, Children's Ground board member, philanthropist, masseur, and cooking enthusiast, Kon is both a passionate advocate for people in need and a voracious learner.

"Education is power – the power to do good, and the power to influence and change things for the better. Thanks to my parents' legacy, I get to live this dream. I can't waste that opportunity," Kon said.

FAMILY VALUES

Kon's grandparents came to Australia as refugees, and his parents made great sacrifices for their children.

His dad spent humiliating and gruelling years working on a tobacco farm to support the family, and his mum never fulfilled her dream of being a maths teacher. Kon was the first in his family to complete high school.

Kon and his sister, Her Honour Nola Karapanagiotidis, who was the first Greek-Australian woman to be appointed a judge in the County Court of Victoria – remain ever grateful for these sacrifices, and their family's strong Greek values.

"The Greek term 'philoxenia' means to welcome the stranger, or to love the stranger. 'Philotimo', too, means being a servant to love. These values are like breathing for Greeks," Kon said.

"Society so often forgets it, but everyone deserves to be seen and valued. After all, with a change of the wind we could be the ones in search of safety and welcome."

A Seat At My Table: Philoxenia

Kon's strong family values have made their way into the title of his Greek cookbook. Created with his mother Sia, *A Seat At My Table: Philoxenia* includes 100 vegan and vegetarian recipes. Proceeds have raised more than \$200,000 for the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre.

THE POWER OF COMPASSION

Motivated by generational tenacity and a conscious decision to "lead with love", Kon's journey has seen him support the most vulnerable people in our communities.

Among Kon's many roles, he has worked the midnight shift on a crisis line, run support groups for male survivors of incest, promoted safety for sex workers on the streets of St Kilda, and provided massage clinics for men experiencing homelessness.

"I was working with men sleeping rough – tough guys who'd been in prison – and they'd be like little lambs. They told me it was the first time they'd been touched without being harmed. We don't often think about that, with men," Kon said.

"People we turn our backs on have trauma at the heart of their journey. That's the common thread. Whether it be displacement, abuse, serious health issues, bereavement or family breakdown, trauma is the universal story. Intergenerational trauma, in particular, places people at the margins.

"Everyone is worthy – there's no such thing as a broken person. Most

Australians are just a step away from being on the streets, so we need to show each other compassion."

A CHARITY BEGINS

At 28, Kon founded the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre with TAFE students he was teaching to become welfare workers. Their first task was to provide meals for refugees who couldn't find food in Melbourne.

"The TAFE students were migrants, refugees and lots of Australian mums in their 40s and 50s returning to studies – they were people about whom the world had low expectations," Kon said.

"This project taught them that they could make a difference and change the world for the better – all you need is the intention, passion and ideals to do so. There's not much more to it than that."

The eight-week TAFE project became a charity, and thousands of people began to volunteer and donate in the wake of the Tampa affair.

ASTONISHING IMPACT

Twenty-two years later, the non-profit has made a huge impact – supporting 30,000 people in need, raising a quarter of a billion dollars and saving thousands of lives. This success was based on three core principles:

"I decided that the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre would never take money from the Australian government, that we would be outspoken and fearless, and that we would never turn anyone away in need," Kon said.

Today, 200 staff members and 1000 volunteers deliver English classes, a full-scale legal service, an incubator for refugee-led businesses, two social-enterprise cafes, numerous programs



in health, education, housing, meals, financial aid and women's empowerment, and much more.

The Asylum Seeker Resource Centre has also worked tirelessly to support and evacuate refugees from Nauru and Papua New Guinea. The organisation is training the next generation of advocates as Australia's largest investor in refugee leadership.

"We are Australia's most influential and effective refugee organisation when it comes to creating change," Kon said.

HOW TO MAKE AN IMPACT IN YOUR NEIGHBOURHOOD

For people seeking to follow in Kon's change-making footsteps, he has some encouraging advice:

"Be proud of where you come from, work hard, remain humble and make a difference. Everything you build, you build through your own hard work," Kon said.

"There is a long way to go, and the work is ahead of us, but we cannot despair. Despair is not a strategy. We've got to come back and be prepared, and more compassionate."

The Asylum Seeker Resource Centre website offers a wealth of information about how to support refugees, from volunteering to booking catering with social impact. To learn more, visit asrc.org.au

ABOUT THE MELBOURNE AWARDS

The Melbourne Awards are the City of Melbourne's highest accolade, recognising the people and organisations who make a significant impact on community life.

"I'm surprised, humbled and very grateful to be recognised in the Melbourne Awards," Kon said.

For more information visit melbourne.vic.gov.au/melbourneawards



The new narm ngarrgu Library and Family Services centre

Browse 30,000 books, use high-tech creative gadgets or bliss out on the rooftop terrace while your children play at narm ngarrgu, the City of Melbourne's new flagship library and family services centre.

narm ngarrgu is on Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Country, and we have worked closely with Elders, artists and community members to bring this warm, welcoming space to life by drawing on deep knowledge systems.

The name, materials, artworks – even the design of the carpet – honour and celebrate the First Nations community. narm ngarrgu means 'Melbourne Knowledge' in Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung language.

Spanning three levels and 3000 sqm, narm ngarrgu is an urban oasis for families designed so everyone in our diverse community can explore their interests, learn something new and access integrated family support.

It's also our first new library in almost a decade.

The project is part of the broader Queen Victoria Market precinct transformation and the \$1.7 billion Gurrrowa Place development, with support from the Victorian Government, the Living Libraries Infrastructure Program and Changing Places.

Welcoming, accessible spaces

The entryways to narm ngarrgu set the scene for a very special library experience.

The front counter is staffed with caring workers who ensure everyone visiting the library feels welcome. Community outreach, social work, digital literacy and Aboriginal liaison staff members support this commitment to inclusivity across the library.

Venture further inside to discover lofty spaces for reading and study that transform into grand event spaces with retractable tiered seating.

Around the corner there's a computer lab where training and digital literacy workshops will be held, and lockers with laptops you can borrow to use throughout the library.

The library also offers many different spaces you can use for events and meetings. These spaces are low-cost to book, and free for First Nations people.

For library users who need mobility support, narm ngarrgu offers a state-of-the-art bathroom fitted with a hoist and full-size change table.

Last but not least, help yourself to water or a cuppa from the stations dotted throughout narm ngarrgu. We want you to feel at home.

Aboriginal artwork

Maree Clarke, a Mutti Mutti / Yorta Yorta and Wemba Wemba / Boon Wurrung artist from north-western Victoria, collaborated with other creatives and designers to shape immersive spaces that tell the stories of the site and its context.

Designed to invite reflection, learning, ceremony and play – the artworks at narm ngarrgu celebrate the rich contribution First Nations people make to the life of the city, share stories of Country and speak to the impact of colonisation.

Maree described the expansive library space as a super-giant blank canvas.

"In the Children's Library, I've designed the carpet to represent the seven seasons of the Kulin nation through plants and animals," Maree said.

"And I've also designed the forest on the mirrored glass that's down the passageway, so children again will be able to see themselves reflected in the forest on the way to the beautiful library.

"Through the main library carpet – with the beautiful watercolour and the maps over the top – people will get to learn about the five clans of the Kulin nation. And what better place to learn about it than in a library."

Books and collections

The library has more than 30,000 books – 22,000 for adults and 8000 for children. There are books in a variety of languages including Chinese, Japanese and Korean. narm ngarrgu also offers an English as an Additional Language collection.

When you return books inside the new library, pause at the window above the slot and watch – like a child at a chocolate factory – as a state-of-the-art machine automatically sorts the titles into their correct categories.

Children's library



On the way to the dedicated bubup wilam Children's Library, follow a trail of blue ants that weave among images of native animals and plants, including sugar gliders, koalas and golden billy-buttons.

Grab a colourful cushion from the stack and make yourself comfortable with books from local and international authors, in multiple languages.

The bubup wilam Children's Library features stories galore, access to a play area on the secure terrace and a large space that will host storytime, craft sessions, book clubs and more.

The library also hosts a social work outreach program, which provides support and referrals to families in need.

Family services centre

Our family services centre offers a generous playroom, outdoor play area and accessible parent room.

The dynamic space is also home to a holistic range of services, including maternal and child health services, parenting services, immunisation, family support and counselling.

Creative makerspace and sound studios

Explore your passions or start a new creative side-hustle in our decked-out makerspace. Think 3D printers, laser cutters, sewing and embroidery machines, airbrushing, electronics, sound studios and much more.

Expert support is on hand to help you learn how to use all of the equipment.

Rooftop terrace

When you reach the spectacular rooftop terrace, crawl through the giant eel trap, breathe in the native plants and pause to reflect by a coolamon cast from a giant eucalyptus burl by Wurundjeri Elders, which will be used for smoking ceremonies.

The rooftop terrace also features an outdoor play area and a water-play space for the warmer months.



More library locations

The opening of narm ngarrgu Library and Family Services adds to our five neighbourhood libraries, City Library, plus the Mel-Van mobile library service.

You can find narm ngarrgu at 141 Therry Street, Melbourne, just across the road from Queen Victoria Market.

To learn more, visit melbourne.vic.gov.au/libraries

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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The right to repair

Repair saves people money, saves resources, creates jobs, prevents waste, and teaches people.

There is a growing movement around the world seeking legislation and policy for us to be able to have access to parts, tools and manuals to fix the items we buy. A “right to repair” is the ability of consumers to have their products repaired at a competitive price using a repairer of their choice.

Increasingly, manufacturers produce items with a limited lifespan so that you have to keep buying more goods. They then make it impossible for you to repair by not having the spare parts and tools available and not making the information available. Some manufacturers even void warranties if owners or repairers attempt repairs.

At the Kensington Repair Hub we have seen how companies glue in batteries with industrial strength adhesives making it difficult to access, and use proprietary screw heads so we can't open items. Sometimes designers make opening a product destructive.

These intentional designs that shorten the lifespan of these technologies are also putting more of them on the waste pile, increasing our e-waste to more than 48 million tonnes every year. Deeper mining, which is more costly and damaging to our planet, is now required to access fewer resources.

This “dispose” society puts the wealth in the hands of a few. Can we really afford to keep making as many items as we are? And we definitely can't keep throwing this much of it away.

Global free repair guide provider iFixit states that for every 1000 tonnes of electronics, land filling creates one job, recycling creates 15 jobs and repair creates 200 jobs.

The repair economy is growing, with more than 2500 repair cafes worldwide and other repair initiatives like tool libraries, Remakeries, Men's Sheds, Commons Transitions enterprises and organisations like iFixit which are making thousands of manuals available for repairers.

Research shows that material repair generates a

“

Ifixit state that for every 1000 tonnes of electronics, land filling creates one job, recycling creates 15 jobs and repair creates 200 jobs.

”

deep sense of care, pride, belonging and civic participation and that a repair economy creates a kinder and more caring community.

How you can save money, reduce mining and waste and create jobs:

- Visit your local repair café/shop to make the products you already have last longer
- Buy repairable electronics whenever possible and give away your old phones and laptops
- Say no to cheap, breakable products and support companies that make quality ones
- Join the Right to Repair Movement.

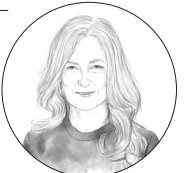
Come visit our computer and electronic repairers at the Next Kensington Repair Hub on Sunday, February 25 from 1pm to 4pm at McCracken Church, 76 McCracken St, Kensington. The Kensington Repair Hub has officially fixed more than one tonne of goods – the equivalent of 1148.997kg.

Transition Town Kensington Founded the Kensington Repair Hub in 2018. ●

Jacqui van Heerden

CO-CONVENER OF TRANSITION TOWN KENSINGTON

JACQUIVANHEERDEN@GMAIL.COM



HISTORY

John Buncle

The Hotham History Project is interested in getting together an inventory of the lanes and alleyways of North and West Melbourne and the stories they tell.

Buncle Place, a narrow laneway that is accessed from Vale St, is situated on the site of Buncle's huge iron works that ran along Flemington Rd, covering one-and-a-half acres. Buncle St is also named after him, and, such was his importance in the history of Australia's industrial development, he is also commemorated by Buncle Place in Canberra.

John Buncle (1822-1889) was born in Edinburgh and served apprenticeships in engineering and piano making. In 1852 he was chief draftsman and designer at the London and Northwestern Railway workshops at Crewe, Cheshire, but at the age of 38 he left for Melbourne with his wife Mary Ann and three daughters, having been passed over for promised promotion.

Buncle's arrival happened to coincide with that of thousands of gold-seekers. As men took off from North Melbourne for the goldfields, tools and machinery were in high demand. For a short time he was employed at Langlands Foundry, where one of his jobs was to hang a peal of bells in St James Old Cathedral. However, he soon launched his own highly successful iron foundry business, John Buncle and Sons. As Australia's rural areas opened, he gained a reputation for his innovative agricultural machinery.

His progress from being employed to being a successful employer took place gradually, with his first customer requesting patterns of various sizes of American stoves. He was living in a small cottage, but he turned one room into a workshop where he worked long

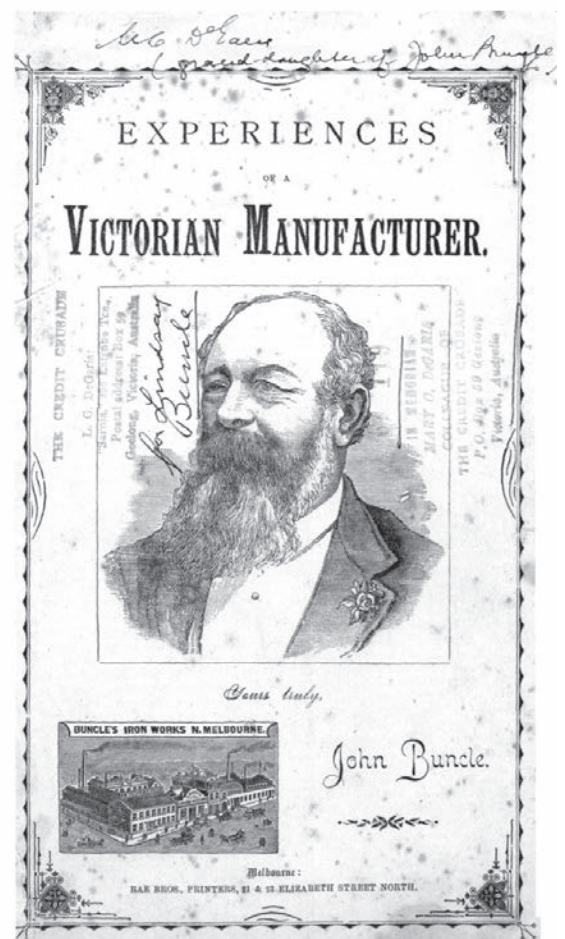
hours meeting what developed into strong demand. He made and painted a sign 24 feet long to ensure that his clients could find him. This led to further orders, and he designed a highly successful sign for an undertaker which included the picture of a coffin.

He was highly thought of by his peers and was an active member of the Chamber of Manufactures, and a commissioner of both the 1880 Melbourne International Exhibition and the Centennial Exhibition in 1888. He was himself a successful exhibitor at exhibitions throughout Australia. He also served on several committees of inquiry for the Victorian Government.

Active in local politics, he twice served as mayor of Hotham. He was involved in the Hotham School of Design and in its early years taught mechanical drawing. He was a strong supporter of intercolonial free trade and of Federation.

The year before he died, he wrote his *Experiences of a Victorian Manufacturer*, with amusing anecdotes of conditions in early Melbourne. For instance, he had been warned that there was a water shortage in Melbourne, but his early days were spent sheltering from pouring rain with his family in a tent that he had providentially brought with him.

More information about John Buncle and others involved in the municipal government of North Melbourne is to be found in *Men of Hotham* by Heather McKay. It was published by the Hotham History Project and is available through its website. ●



Written by Felicity Jack for the Hotham History Project (hothamhistory.org.au)



Metro Tunnel brings world-class art to the daily commute

The major public artworks that will feature at Melbourne's five new underground train stations will create a world-class art trail when the Metro Tunnel opens in 2025.

The permanent works were revealed to the public for the first time earlier this month, marking another huge milestone for the city-shaping project.

They range from an eight-metre-high etched glass landscape featuring Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung women at State Library Station to an abstract textured tile installation at Parkville Station.

The creators of the works are among

the nation's foremost artists, chosen by an expert advisory panel including leading figures from Victoria's creative industries.

Each work has been created with its location and the people of Melbourne in mind.

Arden Station's *Come Together*, by Sydney-based multi-disciplinary artist Abdul Abdullah, features two large-scale aluminium hands reaching out to each other, set against graphic mosaic tiling that depicts historical imagery of the area.

Internationally renowned artist Patricia Piccinini's *Vernal Glade* at Parkville Station is a collage of vibrant hand-glazed ceramic tiles that acts as a gesture of care to the users of Melbourne's leading healthcare and research precinct.

Contemporary artist Danie Mellor has used photographic images of Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung women in his work for the main entrance at State Library Station. His work acknowledges Victoria's First Peoples and honours their social, familial, and cultural contributions to Melbourne.

Further south at Anzac Station, Rafaat Ishak's bright and colourful *Future Wall Painting* at the station's Albert Rd entrance features abstract representations of iconic St Kilda Rd landmarks, such as 19th century tent cities and the Shrine of Remembrance.

Finally, pre-eminent First Nations artist Maree Clarke has created a line-wide artwork called *Tracks* featuring a collection of oversized animal footprints, modelled on the tracks of Kulin Nation animals. The



footprints will be stamped across the platforms of the five new underground stations.

Permanent artworks have also been installed at the Metro Tunnel's two entrances at Kensington and South Yarra.

Metro Tunnel project director Ben Ryan said the artworks would add a cultural dimension to the Metro Tunnel stations. ●

PARKVILLE GARDENS RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

Events season in Parkville Gardens

Good for gardens, lawns, and parks, but not so good for holidaymakers, summer this year has been cool and wet. Perhaps we'll get our warmest weather now that schools are back.

As usual, life at Parkville Gardens has been quiet during January but that's about to change. The residents' association is gearing up for action.

We're cooking up a community event on Sunday, March 17 ... yes, St Patrick's Day!

It's an auspicious date that picks up vibes from Clean Up Australia Day on March 3, the Moomba Festival from March 7 to 11 and Neighbours' Day on March 31.

March is a grand month for community celebration and action. We'll be getting into that spirit here in Parkville Gardens with food, attractions, and activities out on the Galada Avenue reserve. There'll be a reminder in next month's edition of *North West City News*. Our thanks to the City of Melbourne for the funding grants that make all our community events possible.

Hot on its heels will be our annual Easter egg hunt. It's always great fun for the kids. That'll be on Sunday, March 24. And we'll have another community get-together before the middle of the year. More on that a bit further down the track.

Something else to look forward to around the middle of the year will be the publication of the draft Royal Park Master

Plan. It's the fruit of an extensive community consultation conducted by a City of Melbourne team that attracted nearly 2000 comments.

Some of people's key concerns were protecting the park environment, landscape, and habitat, addressing safety and transport issues, and maintaining Indigenous heritage. There'll be a further round of community consultation once the draft plan is published.

We're also awaiting feedback from the Department of Transport and Planning after its public consultations about the Royal Park Station precinct. It's a complicated spot with trains, trams, buses, other vehicles, cyclists, golfers, zoo visitors and pedestrians all intersecting.

Work on replacing cladding at the Mercy Place aged care and retirement facility has been completed.

Beyond Parkville Gardens, interior refurbishment works are getting under way at the Juvenile Justice Centre on Park St.

Another big neighbour, CSL, has stated that it will be fully vacating its Poplar Rd site around late 2026. We await more information about the site's future with great interest. ●

Tom Knowles

PRESIDENT
PRESIDENT@PGRA.ORG.AU



KENSINGTON NEIGHBOURHOOD HOUSE

Our house, in the middle of our street

Do you know who "owns" Kensington Neighbourhood House? Out of curiosity, we asked this question in our recent participant survey.

Nearly 50 per cent of respondents think that KNH is run by the state government or the City of Melbourne. No, no, no! This mighty little house is proudly owned and managed by the community of Kensington, and has been since 1975.

It's one of only a few grassroots organisations established in the '70s and '80s that is still running under community ownership today. Others in Kensington include The Venny Inc. and the Kensington Community Children's Co-operative.

These unique and much-loved organisations were built by small groups of community members to meet local needs.

Many neighbourhood houses were a result of the women's movement in the 1970s and Kensington Neighbourhood House is no exception.

In September 1975, a group of seven local women got together in a lounge room on Bellair St to talk about ways they could support one another. Bringing up children in small flats in close proximity to neighbours with no supervised play areas was difficult. Incomes were low, social isolation was high and the threat of domestic violence was often present.

These shared experiences brought the women together. They were looking for breathing space, and the opportunity to sort things out.

By the end of 1975 the group of seven had grown to 42 and the "Kensington Women's Group Child Care Co-operative" was born. Initially the house was staffed by volunteers as funding was hard to come by.

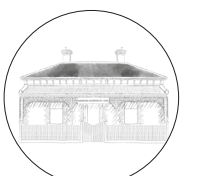
By 1986, the state government recognised the importance of Neighbourhood Houses and began providing secure, recurrent funding. In later years, this funding was augmented by regular income from the Education Department and Melbourne City Council. In 1995 our house became the "Kensington Neighbourhood House Incorporated Association" you know today.

We are still governed by a volunteer board of management. Of the eight current board members, six are residents of 3031 (the other two live just across the border!). Likewise, our staff are predominantly local. We even employ neighbourhood kids to deliver our brochure twice a year.

So the next time you're walking past KNH and someone asks, "who owns that place?", you can answer "we all do!" ●

Rebecca Smith

MANAGER
REBECCA.S@KENHOUSE.ORG.AU





QUESTION:
What's your New Year's resolution?

Faces of North West City



MON
Detachment and acceptance



PAUL
To be happy



KIRSTEN
To be more spiritual



KENSINGTON ASSOCIATION

Kensington Association at a crossroad

The Kensington Association (KA) was formed in 1997 ... 26 years ago. In the first edition of North West City News (NWCN) in February 2021, as chairperson of the association, I penned a brief history of the KA, in which I documented some of its achievements (you can revisit all 33 NWCN editions at north-westcitynews.com.au).

As immediate past chair I now, three years later, pen Kensington Association at a crossroad.

I want to celebrate our past achievements and suggest that being at "a crossroad" is not a bad thing, just as a "crisis" is not necessarily negative. By facing challenges, we

can be pushed into a more thorough review, reassessment, and revision, which can set us up to face the future more effectively.

Why are we at "a crossroad"? Allow me to explore this.

On our website we have three key "purpose" words: monitor, protect, and enhance. Our six organisation purposes (as per our constitution) begin with six verbs: to initiate, implement, encourage, provide, uphold, and cooperate.

If I add that the "provide" is to provide connection to government, and the "uphold" is to uphold democratic processes, it is not hard to fill in the gaps. These purposes and our full constitution can be viewed on our website: kensingtonassociation.org.

We need to ask how well we are carrying out our objectives, and whether they are as fit for purpose in 2024 as they were in 1997?

In the 2021 article I wrote, "the usefulness and relevance of community organisations is directly proportional to how effectively they reach out in a collaborative manner into the community". I still believe that, but this year, 2024, I would add: "how effectively

we reach out depends on the number of members (of KA) who actively 'man the barricades'".

When there is a cause that excites or disturbs us, "the barricades" are solid i.e. membership activity blossoms. At present there are some disturbing developments, but it feels like a blanket has dulled our passions ... was it COVID? Is it a feeling of powerlessness in the wake of government assertiveness? Does our modus operandi require some rejigging? Are our purposes still relevant in 2024?

Many volunteer organisations seem to be facing similar challenges; perhaps we can learn from one another as we face the future. This is a crossroad, but not the first, nor will it be the last.

All the above questions, and more, will be explored by Kensington Association members over the coming months. We will look at ways of facilitating active membership in such a way that responsibilities are shared by a team, so that our purposes can continue to be pursued in the most effective way (watch this space!).

We know we are a valued arm of the City of Melbourne's matrix of governance and that we provide a key connection between the community and the council.

All Kensington community members are invited to become association members and to participate, give feedback, and make suggestions about how we can look to the future. We particularly invite input from past and present association members.

The Kensington Association exists to help us look after ourselves, our families, our interests, and the wonderful suburb in which we are fortunate to live.

Membership details are on our website. Drop us a line or subscribe to our newsletter! kenassocinc@gmail.com or info@kensingtonassociation.com

Simon Harvey

SPOKESPERSON

INFO@KENSINGTONASSOCIATION.ORG



Wish your inbox was more local?

Scan the QR to sign up to our Newsletter

NORTH WEST CITY NEWS

Stretch & Strengthen For Women

This floor-based class is gentle and low impact. It is aimed at improving flexibility, balance, spinal mobility and co-ordination. No prior experience necessary.

Wednesdays
10am - 11am \$20/month

Creative Art For Kids

Explore the creative arts and use your imagination. Discover new techniques and experiment with making art in a fun and relaxed environment.

Tuesdays or Wednesdays
3.30pm - 4.15pm (5-8 years)
4.30pm - 5.30pm (9-12 years)

Kensington Neighbourhood House

www.kensingtonneighbourhoodhouse.com



ph. 9376 6366



The Salvation Army is calling out for driving mentors

The freedom and independence of driving is something most of us take for granted, but many young people struggle to get their licence if they don't have access to a supervising driver or vehicle.

Not having a driver's licence can limit a young person's goals for work, study, and housing, so the Salvation Army is making learning to drive more equitable through its Drive for Life TAC L2P program in the City of Melbourne.

The inclusive program is funded by TAC and matches learner drivers aged 16 to 21 with volunteer mentors who can help them achieve their licence and reach their full potential.

Stephen Harvy, program manager (and volunteer mentor), is seeking new mentors to help more young people achieve their licence, and their dreams.

"We take family for granted. Not everyone is able to ask mum or dad to take them out in the car. Volunteers power the Drive for Life TAC L2P program," Mr Harvy said.

"Some young people really don't have any other way to get their licence and it's a really big thing in their lives if you can help

them achieve that goal. If you have some spare time, becoming a Drive for Life TAC L2P program mentor is a really worthwhile and rewarding way to spend it."

"We welcomed and provided training for our latest intake of volunteers in December readying them for matching with learner drivers in the year ahead but are always seeking to attract and recruit more volunteer mentors."

To be eligible, you need a current unrestricted driver's licence, maturity to bring to a mentoring relationship with a young person, a desire to improve road safety, and just two hours per fortnight or month.

Learners must be aged 16 to 21, with a current learner's permit, and without access to a vehicle, a supervising driver, or both.

To apply to be a mentor or learner, visit salvationarmy.org.au/driveforlife, phone 0477 408 533, or email driveforlifel2p@salvationarmy.org.au •

Making MOves in North Melbourne

Creative agency Mo Works is the latest addition to North Melbourne's thriving business community.

After eight years in Docklands, the company led by Mo Hamdouna, sought a change of scenery in another inner-city location that, in the words of Mr Hamdouna, had "a strong sense of community".

And, with that in mind, Mo Works has landed at 121 Arden St in North Melbourne with a desire to bring its bespoke marketing, branding and digital services to the local business community and support innovation and growth.

Mr Hamdouna told *North West City News* that being surrounded by B2B businesses in North Melbourne allowed his company to foster collaborations, exchange ideas and integrate into the community.

"North Melbourne's commitment to sustainability resonates deeply with our mission as an agency," Mr Hamdouna said.

"From eco-friendly initiatives to green spaces, the suburb provides a conducive environment for us to continue making moves to empower creativity and innovation that contributes to a better world."

"Our presence in North Melbourne is an opportunity to grow local businesses. Through partnership, curated collaborations, and



digital transformation, we aim to enhance B2B brands, harness digital products' true potential, drive commerce, and promote national expansion."

In line with its commitment to openness and collaboration, Mo Works will host an "Open House" event on February 29, which will serve as a platform for local business owners and marketers to connect, share ideas, and explore opportunities.

Supported by the North & West Melbourne Precinct Association and *North West City News*, Mr Hamdouna said all members of the North and West Melbourne community were welcome to attend an "inspiring evening of networking and discovery".

To find out more about the event contact kimberley@moworks.com.au or visit moworks.com.au •



NWMPA meeting with Scanlon Foundation.

IRREGULAR: a chance to shape North and West Melbourne

Have you ever reimagined parts of your neighbourhood? How you'd like it to be used or how it connects members of the community?

WORDS BY
JACK HAYES



Have you ever had an idea, big or small, you felt could transform your community, but had no way of bringing it to fruition? Well, now you can.

Designed to canvas the ideas of people who live, work, and play in North and West Melbourne, IRREGULAR, a new festival that's part of 2024 Melbourne Design Week, is a hyperlocal event that encourages local to reimagine their community.

Presented by the North and West Melbourne Precinct Association (NWMPA), IRREGULAR will be held at Cobblestone Pavilion, North Melbourne Meat Market from Thursday, May 23 to Saturday, May 25.

It will exhibit the best ideas from the community in a variety of visual formats, with keynote speakers and presentations, panel discussions and workshops.

IRREGULAR is the brainchild of North Melbourne local, and NWMPA committee member, Dylan O'Donnell, who drew inspiration from the work of two prominent local urban activists, Ruth and Maurie Crow.

"The original concept came about from speaking with people in the community, whether that be people I've known for a long time, or only met recently ... it just began with conversations around different ideas for North and West Melbourne and the built environment," he said.

"IRREGULAR takes its name from an influential newsletter that was started more than 50 years ago by two local urban activists, Ruth and Maurie Crow."

"They developed the Citizen Action Plan for North and West Melbourne which recommended strategies for the City of Melbourne to adopt. It is seen to have an influential role as to how Melbourne is today. It focused on the arts, sport, and culture as a lifeblood to draw people into the city, making the CBD a more attractive place to live."

Mr O'Donnell said while there was an enormous breadth of talent and knowledge within North and West Melbourne, made up of architects, designers, health care experts and academics, their expertise was often channelled on a national or global scale.



NWMPA committee member Dylan O'Donnell
Photo: Hanna Komissarova.

IRREGULAR is designed to harness that talent and turn the lens inward, on our direct environment, the streets, services, and places that we interact with every day.

"One of the guiding principles of this festival is a placemaking philosophy of what makes a great place or precinct is not being about the physical end product, it's about the community involvement in getting it done," he said.

"It isn't so much about the ideas that get presented, it's about how they engage with that idea, get involved with the ones they want to see come to fruition, connect with new people or getting businesses to collaborate which they wouldn't have otherwise."

Mr O'Donnell and the NWMPA have recently secured the Scanlon Foundation, a philanthropic organisation focusing on enhancing, supporting, and measuring Australia's social cohesion, as an event partner, along with additional support from Our Community House.

Submissions for the festival are now open. They can be sent to irregular@north-westmelbourneprecinct.com.au •

For more information:
irregularfestival.com



WHAT'S ON February



The weather is getting warmer and Melbourne's events season is just getting started. Here's our list of the best community events this month.



TAYLOR SWIFT INSPIRED COCKTAILS AT LEVEL GROUNDS CAFE & BAR

For the month of February at Level Grounds Café & Bar sip and celebrate Melbourne's biggest concert weekend with three brand-new Taylor Swift inspired cocktails.

50 Batman St, West Melbourne.

FEBRUARY, WEDNESDAY - SUNDAY, UNTIL 8PM

CHATTY CAFE

Enjoy a chat and a cuppa at
Chatty Café

Kensington Neighbourhood Centre
18 Anthony Street, Kensington

Every Thursday 1pm to 3pm

CHATTY CAFE

Join us for a cuppa and afternoon tea, play our board games and puzzles and explore our beautiful sensory garden and mini library, with pre-loved library books to keep.

**Kensington Neighbourhood Centre
18 Anthony St, Kensington**

EVERY THURSDAY, 1 - 3PM

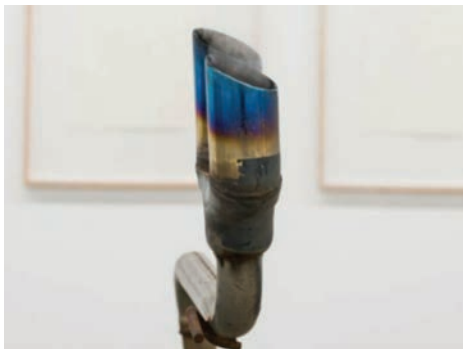
Bloom

WEST END PROJECTS SHOW

BLOOM: WEST END PROJECTS GRAD PRIZE

Initiated by West End Art Space, this group exhibition will showcase emerging talent from Monash University, Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology, and Victorian College of the Arts. **112 Adderley Street, West Melbourne**
westendartspace.com.au

UNTIL FEBRUARY 24



50 DEGREES EXHIBITION LAUNCH

In Naarm we average 11 days of temperatures greater than 35 degrees Celsius, and due to climate change this figure is expected to rise by almost 50% across the next two decades.

KINGS Artist-Run, 69 Capel St, West Melbourne
kingsartistrun.org.au/public-programs

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 3PM - 6PM



THE DISASTER SHIELD

In this stunning window commission, artist Sher Ali has collaborated with a group of female weavers to share the beauty of traditional Afghan embroidery with the practicality of a net screen, in a wish to protect innocent people from weapons and destruction. **Arts House exterior, 521 Queensberry St North Melbourne**

UNTIL MARCH 25



SAM MICHELLE: HALF FULL

At the forefront of Australian contemporary still life painting, Sam Michelle celebrates abundance and human creativity within her practice.

Gallerysmith, 170-174 Abbotsford St, North Melbourne.
gallerysmith.com.au

UNTIL MARCH 2, 11AM - 5PM



BAKERY HILL DISTILLERY TOUR & TASTING

The 90 minute event includes a detailed guided tour of the distillery, conducted by a distiller itself where you will learn how Bakery Hill produces its malts.

**Bookings essential: bakeryhill.com/pages/tours
411 Macaulay Road Kensington**

SUNDAYS, 2PM - 3.30PM



TECH CONNECT – TECH HELP FOR OLDER PEOPLE - KENSINGTON

Do you need help learning how to use your mobile or computer? Tech Connect offers FREE weekly one-on-one hour sessions and monthly group workshops with trained and skilled 'Lively Tech Helpers'. **Kensington Neighbourhood Centre, 18 Anthony St**

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 18, 8.30AM



TRAVELLING TO TOMORROW: AUSTRALIAN WOMEN IN THE UNITED STATES, 1910-1960

Public Record Office Victoria will be celebrating International Women's Day 2024 with a talk by historian Dr Yves Rees on Australian women who pursued work and adventure in the United States from 1910-1960. **99 Shiel St, North Melbourne.**

MARCH 8, 2 - 3PM



TECH CONNECT – TECH HELP FOR OLDER PEOPLE - NORTH MELBOURNE

Do you need help learning how to use your mobile or computer? Tech Connect offers FREE weekly one-on-one hour sessions and monthly group workshops with trained and skilled 'Lively Tech Helpers'. **Jean McKendry Neighbourhood Centre, 91 – 111 Melrose St**

MONDAYS, 9.30AM - 11.30AM

IRREGULAR

A hyperlocal festival of ideas and actions for people who live, work and play in North & West Melbourne

NWPA NORTH + WEST MELBOURNE PRECINCT ASSOCIATION

IRREGULAR

As part of Melbourne Design Week 2024, the North and West Melbourne Precinct Association presents, IRREGULAR - a hyper-local festival of ideas and actions for the community of people who live, work, and play in North and West Melbourne. **Meat Market, Cobblestone Pavilion, 3 Blackwood St.**

MAY 23 - 25

Business Directory

POLITICIAN

ELLEN SANDELL
STATE MP FOR MELBOURNE

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146 Peel Street North Melbourne VIC 3051

PRECINCT

NORTH + WEST MELBOURNE PRECINCT ASSOCIATION

NWPA



SCHOOL

www.haileybury.vic.edu.au



HAILEYBURY
KEESBROUGH BRIGHTON BERNICK CITY BEIJING

www.sccmelb.catholic.edu.au
273 Victoria St, West Melbourne

9321 9200



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It's a great way to enjoy the summer sunshine or shelter from extreme weather with unlimited access to activities and facilities at Melbourne City Baths, Carlton Baths and North Melbourne Recreation Centre.



Find out how to move it your way in your neighbourhood at melbourne.vic.gov.au/activemelbourne

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