

Vintage-inspired salon bringing sunshine to hairstyling

Government put on notice over Moonee Ponds Creek

Electrical Trades Union hopes to expand with rezoning

CITY NEWS



All hail the Kensington Stationeers!

In this month's *North West City Local*, we celebrate the legends who volunteer to keep the gardens surrounding Kensington Station looking beautiful for the local community to enjoy. More on pg 5. Photo: Hanna Komissarova.

Public space plan next to North Melbourne Town Hall knocked back

“A City of Melbourne proposal to create a new public space next to the North Melbourne Town Hall has been knocked back by the state government after concerns were cited over potential traffic impacts.”

WORDS BY
BRENDAN REES



Had it been successful, the proposal would have been funded through a \$100 million Transport and Amenity Program (TAP) for North and West Melbourne and Docklands, which is to deliver a suite of streetscape improvement projects to help mitigate the effects of the West Gate Tunnel Project.

However, the Department of Transport rejected the public space plan saying it would not support realigning traffic lanes through the Queensberry and Errol streets intersection and that east-west through-traffic movement on Queensberry St “must be maintained” in both directions.

A summary of the department’s findings presented to the council’s March 19 Future Melbourne Committee (FMC) meeting noted future changes to traffic capacity on Arden and Grattan streets “elevates this role” on Queensberry St.

It also said, “staggering traffic lanes through the intersection creates unacceptable risks for vehicles and pedestrians and will not be supported”.

“No objections in principle were provided to the partial or full closure of Errol St north of Queensberry St,” the summary said.

A council report stated that a remaining feasible option was a narrow median extension on each side of the heritage toilet (on the centre median of Queensberry St), but this “would not create sufficient open space benefits to warrant progression”.

Continued on page 2.



ಒಡಲಾಳ Odalala takes over Arts House

In celebration of Dalit History Month, ಒಡಲಾಳ Odalala (“from the depths of one’s being”) has brought a diverse and immersive series of exhibitions, screenings, and discussions to Arts House delving into the history of castes, migration, gender, and sexuality until April 27.

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Public space plan next to North Melbourne Town Hall knocked back

Continued from page 1.

The report added that there was an opportunity to create additional public open space on Errol St between Queensberry and Bendigo streets, which councillors voted in support for consideration.

"This may constitute an expansion of the existing Errol St grass median into road space on one or both sides of the street," the council report said, noting concept plans would be developed with business and community consultation and feedback.

The council's environment portfolio lead Cr Rohan Leppert said while an expansion of Errol St was a "very good option", he expressed his disappointment that the initial open space plans would not be progressed.

"I just don't understand the network view that's being taken and whether or not it truly considers the future state of the road network once Metro [Parkville Station] is finished, once Grattan St is reopened, [and] once Queensberry St is narrowed," he said.

Cr Leppert added the east-west traffic in North and West Melbourne "is going to see a very, very significant increase" following the opening of the West Gate Tunnel Project in 2025 and that the TAP was designed to mitigate this.

Councillors voted unanimously to defer discussion of a potential North Melbourne Town Hall public open space to their April 23 FMC meeting.

The North and West Melbourne Association's secretary Kevin Chamberlin said the decision not to proceed with the Queensberry St open space option was the right one.

"This area currently provides much needed and very important disability parking, short-term quarter-hour parking, and loading zones," he said.



▲ A proposal to transform more space along Errol St (highlighted in green) into open space will still be considered by the council, but plans for open space along Queensberry St (blue), as showcased during last year's Queensberry Cup (inset) won't go ahead.

"The association for some years now had supported a bus stop being located in front of the town hall as part of the 401 route from the North Melbourne railway station to Melbourne University. This recommendation keeps that option alive." ●

Brendan Rees

JOURNALIST

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TRADER PROFILE

North and West Melbourne Precinct Association



Bringing the sunshine to hairstyling

In a vintage-inspired space in North Melbourne, you will find the bubbly Poppy Liu and a bright blue budgerigar named Kenny. Together, they are at the helm of Kenny and the Sunshine Girls.

WORDS BY
JOYCE WATTS



At the light- and plant-filled salon at 113 Errol St, Poppy and her team of five offer simple haircuts to '50's glam, wedding and event hair and makeup artistry.

Poppy had a love of hairstyling from a young age. "I knew how to braid perfectly at 10!" she grinned.

"I used to practise on my friends' hair and thought, 'oh, I'm pretty good'. My parents probably wanted me to be a doctor, but I always knew that I wanted to be a hairdresser and to eventually own my own salon."

Poppy emigrated from Taiwan as a child with her family to Brisbane but relocated to Melbourne in her early 20s, wanting to try a change of scenery. She worked in salons across the city and as a freelance mobile hair and makeup artist until she decided to take the leap and open her own space.

"I think I had that fear of changing, and then I woke up one day and thought, this is



▲ Photography by
Anna Encio.

it, I've got to do it," Poppy laughed. "Because my last job was in Carlton, I wanted to stay close to my clients, and then I found this space. I love North Melbourne; it's like a little village."

Poppy opened her salon back in 2012, and after 10 years, it is well known in North Melbourne, not least because of its quirky name.

"I got the name from a friend's au pair who was talking about her uncle's band in the States called Kenny and the Sunshine Girls," Poppy explained.

"I joked that the name was so cute, and then I realised it just fit what I was planning

for my business. I wanted something random that didn't sound like a salon."

When designing her space, Poppy brought in the elements from her favourite things like vintage dresses, furniture and macrame planters, with a philosophy of making Kenny and the Sunshine Girls an inviting and fun space for its clients. All the vintage dressers in the salon have been sourced from Gumtree, Facebook Marketplace and hard rubbish!

Poppy says the team has clients who have followed them for 15 years and they are now serving numerous generations. The next focus is to make the salon more sustainable, ensuring that much of the waste, such as aluminium foil, hair dye chemicals and cardboard and plastic packaging, is recycled. Even the hair is collected to create wigs and used to soak up oil in a land or ocean spill.



"I have two goals. One is to provide a happy place for my staff to work – they have been loyal to me for so many years," Poppy smiled. "My second goal is to offer a welcoming environment where you will walk away feeling amazing. It makes me happy to know that using my talent makes other people happy. That is really satisfying. I'd love to continue providing for my clients and enjoying my time with my staff who have been with me all these years." ●

For more information:
kennyandthesunshinegirls.com.au



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TEN WAYS TO CONNECT WITH YOUR NEIGHBOURS, PLUS UP TO \$150 TO MAKE IT HAPPEN



Whether you're new to your neighbourhood and want to make friends or have been in your area for a while, many people still want the same thing: to feel more connected to neighbours.

But how do you make it happen?

Here are 10 ways to make meaningful connections with people who live in your area. During March and April, the City of Melbourne is offering up to \$150 to help you put on an activity which promotes community connection in your neighbourhood.

Have a look at the ideas below, then head to your Neighbourhood Portal to apply.

Set up a walking group

Solo walks are nice but sometimes it's even better to walk with other people. Together, you might discover something new about your neighbourhood.

Ask your neighbours to help with a clean-up day

Roll up your sleeves and help beautify your neighbourhood. Hosting a litter clean up activity is a great way to make a difference, have fun and bring local people together.

Start a reading party

Do you like the idea of book clubs but never have time to read? How about a reading party where people mingle, read in silence, and chat about books afterwards?

Organise a picnic with pups

Do you and your dog enjoy socialising with other humans and pups? Why not organise a picnic or a morning tea to get together.

Try a board game social

Making conversation with someone new can be awkward but when there's a fun game in between you and that someone, it can be easier.

Ask your neighbours for a day out

Going to events together is a great way to spend time with friends and meet new people. There are plenty of free or low-cost events all year around.

Plan a potluck meal

Do you enjoy trying something new to delight your taste buds? Is there talk about there being amazing cooks in your building or neighbourhood? This is your calling to organise a potluck meal.

Organise a storytelling night

Through stories, we make sense of the world and connect with each other. Why not host a storytelling event and honour the stories we carry.

Start a neighbourhood tools and skills library

Got a collection of tools that could be used more? Do people in your area have knowledge and skills? Build a community ready to trade these, creating a neighbourhood tools and skills library.

Host a neighbours day in the park

What better way to meet your neighbours than a low-key picnic or barbecue in the park? Choose a park then put a call-out on social media or a local noticeboard.



There's so many ways to connect with your neighbours. Head to your Neighbourhood Portal at participate.melbourne.vic.gov.au/neighbourhoods to apply for a voucher and to contact your Neighbourhood Partner by 30 April.



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Visit the Neighbourhood Portals for local news and events relevant to your area. Whether you live, work, study or play in the neighbourhood, we can support you with opportunities to better connect with your neighbours.



Explore City of Melbourne's Neighbourhood portals at participate.melbourne.vic.gov.au/neighbourhoods



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Jo Ryan unveils *Ordered Chaos* at Blender Studios

Graphic designer and pop-up artist Jo Ryan brings her solo exhibition to Blender Studios in West Melbourne, showcasing her vibrant and unique style with a series of "communication landscapes".

WORDS BY
GEORGIE ATKINS



Jo has been one of Blender's resident artists for just over a year, and her latest exhibition will feature around 45 pieces, focusing on the ways in which our urban environment communicates with us through design.

"I was always looking at signage, trends, posters and logos as I was on my way to work, and I realised how much communication there is around us," Jo said.

"It can be lines, colours, a tag – anything. It's all just trying to capture communication within a landscape."

Utilising a combination of skills and materials such as aerosol cans and vinyl that is predominantly hand-cut, Jo's intricately crafted pieces are a celebration of "really strong colours", vividly capturing the essence of various local landscapes.

Ordered Chaos will also present a unique sculptural piece. The exhibition will run from April 19 to May 4 at Blender Studios. ●

For more information:
sockettome.com



NORTH WEST CITY LOCAL



The community group bringing light to Kensington Station garden

Kerrie Gilbert has lived in Kensington for 39 years. She loves its proximity to Melbourne's shops, cafes, and facilities – and easy access to the city via train.

WORDS BY
GEMMA GRANT



However, more than 10 years ago Kerrie grew tired of the bland gardens lining Kensington Station near her home and was surprised to learn that the area was not managed by Metro Trains.

Keen to make a difference, she founded the Kensington Stationers in January 2013, with a broad aim to "beautify the gardens and to give the daily commuters an attractive and safe place to catch the train".

They are run entirely by community volunteers and rely largely on grants for funding including from Keep Victoria Beautiful, Metro, and the City of Melbourne.

When the working bees first began, Kerrie said they had a team of about 30 volunteers who contributed a great deal to improving the gardens, but they now have a core group of about eight to 10 regulars.

Kerrie, who is the group's team leader, said the station gardens had "improved dramatically" from the initial overgrown weeds, rubbish and gravel to all gardens being planted with natives and colourful flowering plants, providing a pleasant environment for all commuters.

There's also a succulent garden at the end of platform one (Bellair St), which was established as a memorial for Rob Karkut who was one of the founding Stationers.

A memorable achievement was the group's successful campaign to reopen the Kensington Station waiting rooms in

2019, thanks to the "considerable effort" of Stationer Mary McCartin.

"After two years of lobbying the government via our local MP and alerting community groups, the rooms were repaired and reopened," Kerrie said.

The waiting rooms now have displays of local kids' art and community event advertisements. Mary also has plans to display local station history, including quaint station anecdotes and a collage of local canine identities because "Kensington has a huge number of dogs!"

Another highlight of the group's work is the "fairy garden" located on the Bellair St side of the station. This was an initiative of Michelle Twyford who has decorated the garden with beautiful hand-made displays for Easter, Christmas and Halloween.

Sadly, one obstacle the group has faced is people committing acts of vandalism and graffiti with the fairy garden having recently been targeted.

"This is always so disappointing when this happens as the fairy garden is primarily for the children in the community, and many parents bring their children down to see the fairy garden especially at night when the lights are on," Kerrie said.

But overall, Kerrie said that her involvement had been a positive experience and urged any Kensington residents to consider offering a helping hand.

"Being part of the group is a rewarding experience as we get to meet other local people who enjoy engaging in activities that benefit our community. We generally meet once a month on a Sunday morning for two hours," she said.

No gardening experience is needed and "there is plenty of laughter and chit-chat and we always conclude the morning with a cuppa at one of the local cafes".

Anyone interested in joining the Kensington Stationers can email Kerrie at kaysigilbert@gmail.com ●



Kensington Rec Centre construction progressing

The Kensington Community Aquatic and Recreation Centre is moving closer to completion, with planned street closures in place this month to accommodate construction.

WORDS BY
GEMMA GRANT



From the middle of April, sections of Kensington Rd will be blocked off to allow stormwater works associated with the project. Traffic will be managed as required to ensure the area remains accessible.

The structure's roof will also be installed in the coming months. This section is expected to be finalised by the middle of this year.

The external facade brickwork and the pool within the aquatic area are both more than 70 per cent complete. Concrete slabs in the stadium section, as well as metal door frames within the facility have already been finished.

Located within JJ Holland Park, the recreational precinct will feature a new 25-metre pool and improved gym facilities, as well as children's play equipment and accessible change rooms.

Three full-sized courts will provide space for the community to play a variety of sports, including basketball, netball and futsal. The centre will also feature a new cafe and wellness areas.

The former recreation centre building was demolished to make way for the \$42 million upgrade, which is currently running behind its original schedule.

It is expected that the centre will be open to the public during 2025. ●

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“Outrageous”: council puts government on notice over Moonee Ponds Creek

City of Melbourne councillors have lashed the state government for its lack of progress in revitalising the city section of the Moonee Ponds Creek.

WORDS BY SEAN CAR



Councillors unanimously endorsed a new advocacy plan for improvement projects, which are being led by various agencies, at the Future Melbourne Committee meeting on March 19, which namely demanded the “immediate release” of the Moonee Ponds Creek Implementation Plan.

That plan, endorsed by councillors back in 2019, has remained on the shelf for the past five years and Deputy Lord Mayor Nicholas Reece described the delay in releasing it for public exhibition as “unacceptable”.

As part of its own advocacy efforts, the council has launched a new interactive map on its website, which highlights all the projects earmarked as part of the Moonee Ponds Implementation Plan.

The council has also requested the appointment of a lead government department or agency to coordinate governance of the creek corridor, and for the Lord Mayor to write to the Minister for Planning in relation to the “extensive delays” in releasing the implementation plan, and the exhibition of planning controls for Macaulay.

Currently 10 of the 12 outstanding projects to improve the creek are being led by Development Victoria, the West Gate Tunnel Project, Department of Transport and Planning, and Melbourne Water, and VicTrack while the remaining two are being overseen by the City of Melbourne.

The council will prepare concept designs

and costings for two new pedestrian and bicycle bridge crossings and “prioritise discussions with the Victorian Government around funding and delivery”.

In addition to two new active transport crossings in Macaulay, the council has also sought a renewed commitment from the government as to when the Moonee Ponds Creek trail in Docklands will be reinstated after it was closed in 2020.

Development Victoria (DV) temporarily closed the Docklands section of the trail to allow for the expansion of Docklands Studios, however, despite that project having been completed, DV is still yet to provide a timeline for when the trail will reopen.

Cr Rohan Leppert described the government’s behaviour as “outrageous”.

“The biggest problem we’ve got at the moment is that the state government is not working cohesively with the council on the range of projects that are needed to unlock public access to the Moonee Ponds Creek. Not only that, they’re removing public access,” he said.

“The Docklands Trail was closed in November 2020, and to this day there is no plan from the state government as to when that trail will be reinstated. That is outrageous.”

“[There are] tens of thousands of new residents [to come] and rather than helping to expand the open space in accordance with government policy – state and local – public access to the Moonee Ponds Creek bed is being removed. We must overcome this problem.”

Cr Leppert added, “another very significant issue” was the release of the Macaulay Structure Plan for exhibition, as well as a development contributions plan, “which is needed if we’re going to be able to raise the funds to purchase the land off the state government ... to help unlock some of the access along the Moonee Ponds Creek”.



“More than a third of the apartments for Macaulay will have been approved before that amendment has even been authorised for exhibition. That is massive development uncertainty.”

The Lord Mayor will also write to Treasurer Tim Pallas in relation to West Gate Tunnel Project contractors not implementing the state government’s own commitment to replace removed trees within the municipality at a rate of five to one – an issue which was highlighted by the Friends of Moonee Ponds Creek.

Cr Reece said he hoped the council’s efforts could help drive the revitalisation needed along the creek corridor to unlock the area’s true potential, and undo generations of neglect.

“The Moonee Ponds Creek is one of the most significant waterways in metropolitan Melbourne, but unfortunately it is also one of the most neglected. I would go so far as to say it’s the most abused waterway in all of Melbourne,” the Deputy Lord Mayor said.

“When John Batman arrived in Melbourne, he actually described thousands of birds flying from the west, coming from a large water mass which was the legendary Blue Lagoon, which extended out across where West Melbourne currently is.”

“It was a place that was home to thousands of swans, ducks, geese, frogs and fish. And over the last 200 years, we have degraded and degraded and degraded that area, turning what was a fruitful paradise into a poisoned dump scape.” ●

Council gets back control of laneways, leaving door open for community garden

The City of Melbourne has declared two laneways in North Melbourne as public highways, allowing it greater control to address concerns of traffic and safety issues and opening the opportunity of re-establishing a community garden.

WORDS BY BRENDAN REES



Councillors unanimously voted in favour of the two laneways in question, Shands Lane and Erksine Place, being named as public highways at their March 26 council meeting.

A council report said while the declaration “does not significantly change the current situation in terms of public use, traffic congestion, noise pollution or safety”, it would allow council greater responsibility of managing and maintaining the laneways.

It follows concerns raised by residents of trucks accessing the narrow laneways which included minor damage to a home and community garden being “forcibly

removed” by owners on Shands Lane in May last year. “In the 42 years I’ve lived by the lane, I have found that damage from vehicles occasionally attempting to access the western end of Shands Lane to park is not uncommon,” one resident wrote in a submission.

The resident, who supported the declaration but hoped some issues would be addressed, noted the laneway was three metres wide, and “even at low speeds the risk posed to pedestrians is immense”.

“There is no safe space to stand and no way to see vehicles coming, particularly when they are travelling east. This is a blind corner.”

The council’s chief legal officer Kim Wood said while laneways were already considered public highways at common law, the declaration “just gives you that greater ability for our officers to have some management”.

“Our parking officers, our engineering officers, our engineering officers, can all actually deal with the road issues,” he told the meeting. “We can’t stop the types of vehicles that use the laneway. What we can do is if someone wants to develop the site for instance as here, we would have a construction management plan which would control the nature of the use of the area.”

The council report referred to

a development of a property at Erksine St (near Erksine Place), which, had a traffic management plan been required, it “would have managed traffic issues arising from large vehicles accessing the development site”.

Deputy Lord Mayor Nicholas Reece said it was important to protect and preserve the municipality’s laneways.

“I note that submitters have also established a community garden in this laneway in the past, which is a great initiative, and I’m confident that our team will do the work that’s required to make sure this laneway is used for that benefit,” Cr Reece said. ●

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Electrical Trades Union hopes to expand with land rezoning

The Electrical Trades Union (ETU) has put forward a proposal to rezone its land to mixed-use so it can expand the offices of its North Melbourne headquarters.

WORDS BY
BRENDAN REES



The ETU-owned building at 192-200 Arden St has been operating for more than a decade as an administrative head office and for some training and health services despite it technically sitting in a residential zone.

But a planning anomaly – which the City of Melbourne hoped to fix – permits the ETU to use the four-storey building for office use.

In addressing this, councillors at their May 19 Future Melbourne Committee were supportive of the ETU’s request to rezone the land from residential to mixed-use and voted unanimously for the Minister for Planning Sonya Kilkenny to authorise and exhibit a planning scheme amendment.

Council management advised councillors that a proposal to rezone the site was “considered suitable recognising the site’s context and interface of the mixed-use area south of Arden St”.

According to a council report, the ETU is hopeful of increasing the building floor area to accommodate expanded facilities. The building is home to the heritage Melbourne Mills.

Potential building heights at the location allow for six to 18 storeys to the south-west and up to four storeys to the north, south and east.

The amendment, if approved, would introduce a new design and development (DDO) overlay schedule to allow a redevelopment of the site.

This would propose building heights ranging from seven metres along Dryburgh St and up to 20 metres adjacent to the Melbourne Mills heritage building.

Deputy Lord Mayor Nicholas Reece said as the land was zoned as residential, the “ETU aren’t allowed to extend or redevelop the office buildings, because technically office use is prohibited on the site”.

“The ETU benefits from existing use rights (under the Melbourne Planning Scheme); they’ve been operating as an office there for many, many years so they are totally entitled to use their current building as an office.”

But he added, “So what we’ve got here is an anomaly in the planning system that should be fixed”.

“I do know on that site, for example, at the moment they are running Australia’s first electric vehicle charging infrastructure costs. It’s certainly something we’d like to see more of here in the city of Melbourne.”

“So, all up there are good things happening on this site. This is a very sensible amendment to the planning scheme that’s been proposed.”

A council report noted key issues considered included heritage impacts on the adjoining Melbourne Mills heritage building and the broader precinct, as well as potential future amenity impacts on the residential buildings to the north of the site along O’Shannassy St.

The North and West Melbourne Association’s secretary Kevin Chamberlin said if the Minister for Planning agreed to a planning scheme amendment, the council must engage in “meaningful public consultation on this development”. ●



ARTS HOUSE

ಒಡಲಾಳ Odalala: a “full building takeover” of Arts House

In celebration of Dalit History Month, ಒಡಲಾಳ Odalala will take over Arts House in diverse and immersive activation, delving into the history of castes, migration, gender, and sexuality through a series of exhibitions, screenings, and discussions from April 3 to 27.

WORDS BY
GEORGIE ATKINS



Named after Devanooru Mahadeva’s book, ಒಡಲಾಳ Odalala translates in Kannada to “from the depths of one’s being”.

Curated by Vishal Kumaraswamy, the series builds upon the explorations of ಒಕ್ಕೂಟ Okkoota, a multifaceted arts program presented by Arts House in April 2023.

“It’s very much about celebrating the fact that our lives aren’t always just about being associated with acts of violence or threats, but to actually make space for joy and celebration,” Mr Kumaraswamy told North West City News.

The activation began in March with a captivating photographic exhibition titled ನಿರೀಕ್ಷಣೆ nireekshane (translating to “the act of seeing”), as part of PHOTO 2024 and running until April 27.

On April 6, audiences gathered for a communal meal designed by artist Jagath Dheerasekara, which spoke to “the act of Inter-dining, the process of breaking down caste hierarchies in South Asia by dining together”.

Additionally, audiences are encouraged to explore various exhibition spaces within and outside of Arts House, with live

performances on April 13 by Elyas Alavi and April 20 by Sajan Mani.

“It is free and open to all, and there are multiple points of engagement for people to come through where you don’t necessarily have to always engage with every single work in order to experience the exhibition,” Mr Kumaraswamy said.

“You have the choice to kind of pick and choose what you want to engage with in a way that also is not transactional, there isn’t anything that’s being asked of the audiences.”

Reflecting on Arts House as the hub for ಒಡಲಾಳ Odalala’s eight-week series, Mr Kumaraswamy underscored the importance of community to its message.

“A lot of the artists we have been working with also come from a range of diverse life-experiences, who are kind of making works that don’t often get kind of shown within a community space,” he said.

“It’s very much emphasising the kind of communities that are present across Melbourne today as well as in North Melbourne, and the histories that they share.” ●

For more information:
artshouse.com.au



Ginger Olive

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What's it like to experience homelessness in Melbourne?



Jason Russell

Hear Jason's story as we launch our draft City of Melbourne Homelessness Strategy to help end homelessness.

The rituals that helped Jason Russell survive on the streets of inner-city Melbourne for nearly two decades are hard to shake.

In the abandoned inner-city factory where he took shelter for years, Jason learnt to leave no trace of himself. Nothing that could be linked back to him.

"I was hard wired to living in a squat," Jason said.

Even though he moved into permanent housing two years ago, he still can't bring himself to hang photos on the walls.

And he still wrestles with the idea of keeping a "bug-out bag" handy, in case he needs to run at any moment.

"When I first got the keys to the new place, I was terrified. I slept in the lounge room. I didn't know there was a bedroom. I wouldn't cook in the kitchen.

"Now my place is like an Airbnb. I could put my wallet in my pocket and walk out the door and nobody would know it was me living here, apart from the didgeridoo ... that might be a giveaway!"

Inside an "18-year bad day"

In his former life on the northern coast of NSW, Jason was a firefighter and a family man with a wife and three kids. A proud member of the Birabri Nation.

Things started to unravel when an underlying mental health condition worsened, leading to an honourable discharge from NSW Fire and Rescue.

"As a firefighter we know how to stabilise a body ... but an injury to the

mind, I didn't know or understand it. Everything fell to pieces. My career, my world, my family life."

Jason left his community behind, thinking this would help him escape his "demons".

After roaming the country for a decade, he eventually found the anonymity he craved in inner-city Melbourne.

Ever since, he's been unlearning the compound stresses of what he describes as an "18-year bad day".

While Jason lurched from squat to crisis accommodation to transitional housing and back again, his instincts as a first responder never left him.

"I wanted to see how the homeless in the city were faring."

Jason volunteered at soup kitchens and drop-in centres. He got to know the workers, the agencies. He made friends among those who were also experiencing homelessness.

He began to notice discrepancies between what he saw on the streets and the statistics on homelessness quoted in the media.

"So I started to walk through the city, counting heads. I wanted to remove the variables on who was counted and who wasn't."

Jason's efforts and insights caught the attention of the sector.

Through the Council to Homeless Persons, he started advising the homelessness sector on ways to improve the collection and sharing of data.

"Knowing what it meant to be homeless has made me such a great advocate."

Helping others while waiting for housing

As Jason waited to have his housing needs prioritised on a growing waiting list for permanent housing, he also campaigned for caseworkers to act as "emissaries" for their clients.

A good caseworker, he argued, can spare people the trauma of having to tell their stories over again each time they present at a homelessness service.

Jason has a knack for sharing insights that resonate with first responders. Together, they find ways to better connect with people experiencing homelessness.

Two years ago, Jason finally got the keys to a new house in a suburb that put some distance between him and the squats where demons still lurked.

"I'm housed in a beautiful property. I know that home is where the heart is. I passionately want to make this my home. Is it 'home sweet home'? Not yet. I'm working on that."



HELP END HOMELESSNESS

Homelessness is something that people experience - it is not who they are.

We're working to end homelessness in Melbourne by securing affordable and sustainable housing for all.

Join us in being part of the solution. Have your say on our draft Homelessness Strategy at participate.melbourne.vic.gov.au/homes-melbourne by Sunday 7 April.



LORD MAYOR'S SMALL BUSINESS AWARDS OPEN

Lord Mayor Sally Capp with David Zhou of Oriental Tea House who's been serving Chinese fare for 20 years.

Small businesses are key to our city's economic growth and liveability and Melbourne is full of fantastic success stories.

Do you know a small business that's been running in the City of Melbourne for more than 10 years, or deserves acknowledgement for their contribution to the city? Encourage

them to apply for the Lord Mayor's Small Business Awards.

These awards also recognise outstanding organisations in the Small Business of the Year Award and the Small Business Innovation Award.

Apply by 29 April at melbourne.vic.gov.au/smallbusinessawards

Have your say on our urban forest plans

Help us plan the urban forest in your neighbourhood. We're creating tree planting plans for the next 10 years, and we want to hear your thoughts.

Join us at our community workshop, let us know your thoughts via our online survey or read more about our Urban Forest Precinct Plans for your neighbourhood.

KENSINGTON

Where: Kensington Town Hall

When: Saturday 20 April

Time: 10am - 2pm

NORTH AND WEST MELBOURNE

Where: Jean McKendry Neighbourhood Centre

When: Saturday 11 May

Time: 10am - 2pm

Register your interest at participate.melbourne.vic.gov.au/urban-forest

ADVERTISEMENT
Your City of Melbourne community update



Park ranger Isaac Dodd with some of his colleagues

A WILD LIFE: PARK RANGERS RESCUE ROOS AND REPTILES

A roo on the hop in Carlton. A blue-tongue lizard basking in a laneway. Ducklings in distress. Our park rangers have seen it all and know just what to do. So – before you step in – give the experts a call.

Our park rangers do important work – helping visitors, keeping our parks safe and protecting the City of Melbourne’s urban ecosystems through a range of programs.

The team members have diverse experience in fields including conservation, environmental science, outdoor education, and wildlife rescue and rehabilitation.



Isaac with the sedated kangaroo

It’s just as well the rangers are multi-skilled, because they often have some wild encounters. Like tailing a lost young kangaroo that was reported to be hopping up Lygon Street, as ranger Isaac Dodd explains.

“I was driving the ranger ute, snaking my way up through Carlton following reports of the roo,” Isaac said.

“He’d ended up in an apartment block backyard, highly distressed, cornered in by a resident’s dogs, trying to dig under a pool fence. I was first on the scene.”

Ranger Isaac helped remove the dogs to calm the kangaroo down, and called in reinforcements from Vets for Compassion, Wildlife Victoria, Victoria Police and other agencies. Meanwhile, residents helped hold up a roo net.

The vet team arrived and swiftly darted the kangaroo, sedating him for an in-field assessment, while another local helped by acting as a makeshift stand for an IV bag.

“It was a real team effort, with so many people and agencies working together. Thankfully the vets found the kangaroo was in great health, just overheating from the stress,” Isaac said.

“Once he’d cooled down, he was released to join up with a mob of roos out at Plenty Gorge. A volunteer patiently stayed with him throughout a three-hour nap, then after a groggy wake-up he hopped away to join his new family.

“It was a perfect outcome, even if it left him with a nasty hangover.”

Wild animals that are sick, injured, displaced or orphaned may need our help, but Isaac encourages you to think carefully and get an expert’s advice before you capture or move a creature.



The kangaroo waking up at Plenty Gorge



Many native Australian birds – like lorikeets and magpies – fledge on the ground, so they might look like they’re in distress. But removing them from their parents’ sight could be the wrong choice.

“Some birds fledge on the ground. After leaving the nest they can spend a few weeks unable to fly, building their strength and learning ‘how to bird’ while their parents protect and feed them from overhead,” Isaac said.

“Often these young fledglings can be hard to differentiate from their parents.”

Escaped pets can also cause a fuss in the middle of the city, like when Isaac received a report of a blue-tongued lizard in one of our iconic laneways.

“Although blue-tongues are native to Melbourne, this one had the colours of a Queenslander and was precariously basking in a busy CBD laneway,” Isaac said.

“He was very comfortable being handled, indicating he was an escaped or released pet. We contacted Reptiles Victoria and the team ensured he went to a special rehab and rehoming program.”

Our rangers’ other adventures include fishing a group of ducklings out of a deep drain with a long pool net and caring for a concussed sacred kingfisher before releasing the bird at Ron Barassi Park in Docklands.

HOW TO CARE FOR LOCAL WILDLIFE

Call an expert before taking action

If you spot an animal in trouble, report it to Wildlife Victoria by visiting wildlifevictoria.org.au or call their 24-hour hotline on 8400 7300. They’ll call in our park rangers to help if needed.

Understand natural behaviours

Get to know local species to recognise natural behaviours, like birds that fledge on the ground.

Don’t feed wildlife

Human food isn’t meant for animals. For example, ducks can’t digest bread – it causes severe illness. Animals who are fed can also become dependent and forget how to find their own food.

Keep your cats indoors

Cats are by far the biggest killers of local wildlife.

Leave water out for wildlife when it’s hot

Not all creatures can balance on the rim of a bowl, so add a rock for smaller creatures like lizards to drink from, and sticks so they can easily climb out.

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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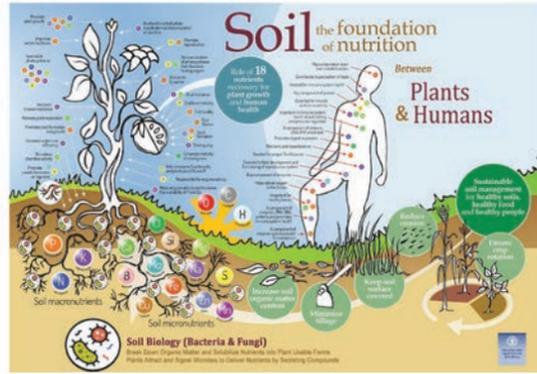


Look down: what lies beneath our feet can help restore our climate health

“

History and research teach how nations have risen and fallen by the fertility of their soil as the human population has increased and, therefore, agriculture demands more of soil.

”



We still see globally where in those lands whose soils have degraded, war tends to follow as people move to better soils to try and make a living and territorial issues arise.

We have damaged more than a third of our soils on the Earth through harmful agricultural practices and destruction of forest and natural environments. Scientists estimate that by 2050, 90 per cent of our soils will be degraded.

As these nations, are we facing a similar collapse, about which history warns us?

Many scientists now consider us to be living in the Anthropocene, an age where humans are the single most defining geological force of the era.

Only 7.5 per cent of the Earth's surface provides the soil that we rely on to grow our food, and it is remarkably fragile. This topsoil is disappearing 10 times faster than it is being replaced.

Healthy soil allows water, nutrients, air, plant roots and microorganisms to move through it and facilitate their important role. It contains the right balance of pH and nutrients allowing soil microorganisms to thrive and foods for plants.

Healthy soils contain a dynamic living ecosystem with a diverse range of microorganisms, including bacteria, fungi, protozoa and nematodes – just a gram of soil can contain as many as 50,000 species (the soil food web), all interacting with each other to keep their soil habitat healthy and productive.

A healthy soil food web provides protection against pests and diseases, inhibits the growth of weeds, is not easily eroded by wind or water and retains more moisture.

This soil food web also plays a critical role in maintaining multiple of the Earth's "big cyclical systems" such as the carbon, nutrient, nitrogen and water cycle. By us having damaged more than a third of our soils, this third can no longer fulfil these functions.

We can regenerate by providing the soil life with what it needs to rebuild and continue its vital work.

Soil likes to be covered and not disturbed; tilling destroys the soil structure and the soil life by exposing it. Monocultures, chemicals, and fertilisers destroy many thousands of species.

Globally, Earth-caring practitioners have found amazing techniques to rapidly build soils and their fertility naturally. Dr Elaine Ingham's soil institution has educated thousands about how to rebuild the soil life with bio-complete compost and liquids and adopting farming techniques to ensure soil biology survives.

Simply, our role is to stop the damaging practices and feed the soil life.

The Kensington community has built more than six local composting hubs with help of grants, local volunteers, local organisations and groups to generate compost to build the fertility of our local soils. ●

Jacqui van Heerden

CO-CONVENER OF TRANSITION TOWN KENSINGTON
 JACQUIVANHEERDEN@GMAIL.COM



Our shared stories: celebrating together

Cultural Diversity Week was celebrated a little late at our house this year, but it was worth the wait!

WORDS BY REBECCA SMITH



On Tuesday, March 26, Kensington Neighbourhood House and the Kensington Reconciliation Action Group ran a beautiful community event celebrating dance in culture.

Given the 2024 Cultural Diversity Week theme was "Our Shared Stories – Celebrating Together", we decided to focus on dance as a common language. Dance is a beautiful form of communication, a way to preserve culture and a means of storytelling. Each year we welcome participants from more than 60 different countries so we had no shortage of tales to tell and dance moves to try.

We started with a session on sharing dance stories. We invited students from our English Language class along with students from North Melbourne Language and Learning to share information and stories about dance in their own cultures. Naturally, this led to some impromptu dance performances in the classroom!

We then headed outside to join up with parents, grandparents and children from playgroup, along with more KNH students and other community members to welcome Mandy and Kiera from Djerri Djerri.

Djerri Djerri are the only Wurundjeri female dance group, and are Traditional Custodians of Narm (Melbourne) and surrounds. Djerri Djerri means Willy Wagtail in Woiwurrung. Mandy and Kiera shared stories about the meaning of dance in Wurundjeri

Woi Wurrung culture, personal stories of their families and their own journeys to connect with their culture.

They then ran a "ngarra" (dance) workshop for everyone – learning the moves as we went along. It was very special to see every single person joining in, from little three-year-olds to one senior community member who pushed aside her walking frame in order to master the Willy Wagtail dance! Together we stepped, stamped, swayed, and twirled in an admittedly uncoordinated, but very joyful, celebration of community.

For many it was their first introduction to Wurundjeri culture. As one participant put it: "I was born here and in 67 years, this is the first time I've had the chance to learn about First Nations culture. We weren't taught anything about this in school. I found it very humbling."

The Kensington Reconciliation Action Group will be hosting another event with Djerri Djerri later in the year. You can contact Esther on 9376 6366 if you are interested in learning more. ●

HISTORY

Lest we forget

It is timely to consider the North Melbourne War Memorial, situated on the corner of Hawke and King streets, as we prepare to celebrate ANZAC Day.

WORDS BY FELICITY JACK HOTHAM HISTORY PROJECT

It is also referred to as a cenotaph, which means a sepulchral monument to honour someone whose body is elsewhere.

It was unveiled by Lord Somers, Victoria's Governor, on Sunday, July 11, 1926, having been erected by members of the North and West Melbourne Red Cross Society and paid for by public donation.

Mr Clement Davies, the society's president, gave a speech in which he quoted the figures of 1240 men enlisted from North and West Melbourne, of whom 520 had died. Lady Somers laid the first wreath at the base of the memorial, and friends and relatives of those who had died added flowers that rose to a height of several feet (*The Argus*, July 12, 1926).



A traditional ceremony is held every year on the Sunday before ANZAC Day that is organised jointly by the Australian Legion of Ex-Servicemen and Women together with North Melbourne's The Centre. This year it will be held at 2 pm on Sunday, April 21.

The memorial stands on a two-stepped base, the lower base bearing the names of the three major theatres of the First World War: "Palestine", "Gallipoli", and "France".

Although it was built to commemorate those killed during World War I, the memorial has been extended to include later wars: the Second World War, and wars in Korea, Malaysia, Sabah Sarawak, and Vietnam.

The National Archives of Australia quotes a total population at the time of the 1914-1918 conflicts of about four million, and the 416,809 men who enlisted for service represent 38.7 per cent of the total male population aged between 18 and 44. Of these, an estimated 58,961 died, 166,811 were wounded, 4098 went missing or were made prisoners of war, and 87,865 suffered sickness.

The total battle casualties for the Australian Imperial Force in Palestine and Syria were 416 officers and 4435 other ranks, with 96 officers and 1278 enlisted men dying from wounds and disease (City of Paramatta History website).



Much has been written about the fighting in Gallipoli and France. But the campaign in the Middle East that was fought to defeat the Ottoman Empire has not been as extensively covered. The history of Palestine and the Middle East is complex, but the recent book by Ranulph Fiennes tells the story of Lawrence of Arabia in an absorbing and easily read way that gives an insight into the history of the area and helps give an understanding of the root of some of the problems that are being played out in Palestine today.

H G Wells wrote the book *The War That Will End War*, published in 1914, shortly after the war began. The words were also used by US President Woodrow Wilson to justify America's entry into the war in 1917. But the war's legacy has generated more and more conflicts, the most immediately concerning being the current war in Palestine.

So let us not forget the approximately 33,000 killed, 79,000 wounded and 7000 missing Palestinian people at this stage in the current conflict, as well as those Israelis captured and killed by Hamas, as we reflect on the meaning of ANZAC Day. And let us not forget the mental health issues and post-traumatic stress, and ongoing physical and psychological trauma that will live with the populations of both Israel and Palestine into the foreseeable future. ●



March musters

How good to see young kids and families and friends enjoying themselves at our two community events last month!

We couldn't have asked for better weather – blue skies and glorious sunshine for our Neighbours Day picnic on March 17, and a fine morning for the Easter egg hunt on March 24. The Galada Avenue reserve was in perfect condition, thanks to the City of Melbourne's parks and garden staff.

Judging by the turnout, Parkville Gardens seems to be home for an increasing number of young children. They had a grand time on both days.

At the picnic they had fun with the range of games Parkville Gardens Residents' Association (PGRA) provided,

but the standout success of the day was the Taekwondo demo by the team from Hall's in West Brunswick. Full marks to the young people who displayed their craft so impressively and engaged so well with their audience. They had the kids' rapt attention. We'd be happy to have them back!

And a round of applause for the PGRA barbecue team that cheerfully cooked up a steady stream of veg and non-veg food for everyone to enjoy.

Kids' scavenger skills were on full display at the Easter egg hunt. The moment the countdown to the search reached zero they took off like lightning to hunt and gather – no chance of any eggs being left on the reserve undiscovered. It's what we love to see – neighbours, friends and strangers coming out together to enjoy the fun and the company.

Our City of Melbourne neighbourhood

partner Nas Mohamud joined us and took advantage of our community picnic to get a number of attendees to complete the Parkville Neighbourhood Survey. Well done, Nas! And once again PGRA thanks the council for the funding that makes these events possible.

On a sadder note, we pay tribute to former PGRA committee member in its early years, Dennis Green, who died last month. Dennis maintained his interest in and support for the local community while also being of service to his fellow residents in the retirement units at Mercy Place. We're grateful for the contribution he made over time. Vale Dennis.

Reports of break-ins and thefts from cars have been on the increase in recent months. Police have issued a reminder for car owners to make sure they lock their vehicles and don't leave valuable items inside.

Please report all incidents to them.

Don't call 000 unless it is an emergency or if you are witnessing a crime being committed. Call the police at either North Melbourne on 9244 2268 (24 hours) or Flemington on 9244 2242 (9am to 5pm).

Our next event is planned to be a community dinner at the Reggio Calabria Club in June. More about this next month.

In the meantime, enjoy the emerging colours of autumn. ●



Tom Knowles

PRESIDENT
PRESIDENT@PGRA.ORG.AU

METRO TUNNEL



Metro Tunnel turn-up-and-go services tested for the first time

Victorians are a step closer to turn-up-and-go services as train testing on the Metro Tunnel Project ramps up.

Teams put the trains and systems through their paces as services ran as frequently as two minutes apart through the tunnels between West Footscray to Hawksburn last month.

The major milestone was reached during testing along the Sunbury and Cranbourne/Pakenham lines using the new high-capacity signalling system, which allows trains to run closer together.

It comes after test trains first entered the Metro Tunnel in July last year.

Testing started at slow speed before trains reached 80km/h – the same speed at which passenger services will run when the Metro Tunnel opens in 2025.

These early tests laid the foundations for the project to complete more complex testing on the systems, such as high-capacity signalling.

This cutting-edge technology is similar to adaptive cruise control in cars, but for trains. A train's location is wirelessly communicated to other trains and back to signal control centres.

This allows trains to safely move closer together, compared to the existing system, which uses stop and go lights to let drivers know when it's safe to go.

The team will start test running timetabled services with drivers and station staff in a dress rehearsal later this year, to ensure everything is ready for a safe and reliable opening for passengers.

The Metro Tunnel is the biggest upgrade to Victoria's train network since the City Loop opened in 1981 and will provide more choice and connections for Victorians with five new state-of-the-art underground train stations.

It will connect the busy Sunbury and Cranbourne/Pakenham lines via twin tunnels under the city, creating an end-to-end rail line from the north-west to the south-east and better connecting all Victorians to jobs, health, and education. ●

Pet's Corner



West Melbourne's very own curious George

George the Pomeranian Chihuahua loves exploring his West Melbourne home, with owner Melanie in tow.

The pair can often be found strolling the local streets. There are few places where George is happier.

"He loves his daily walks – two if he can guilt me into giving him another one ... I take him around sunset and not when it's too hot. It's good that it's cooling down now," she said.

When it comes to food, George can be a little bit picky. The Pomeranian Chihuahua loves treats, and Melanie is more than happy to cater for her furry friend.

"He likes the fresh foods. He's a bit fussy ... he likes something a bit more tasty, I guess, or if I cook him something," Melanie said.

George and Melanie love to spend time together, and their walks keep them connected with the local community.

"Usually, I just take him around the block here ... and it's just a good way to see what's going on. It's nice in the city because there's always people around," Melanie said. ●



QUESTION:

What brings you to West Melbourne today?

Faces of North West City



MOHANA
I'm trying out a new camera.



IAN
I'm on my lunch break and I'm going for a walk.



CHRISTINA
I'm visiting a friend.



FELIPE
I'm resting.

KENSINGTON ASSOCIATION

Fun and convenience versus safety

“

The Melbourne e-scooter trial has been extended, and e-scooters are here to stay.

”

The Minister for Public Transport recently announced that there was “more work to do on safety and compliance to ensure that e-scooters are safe when they're made permanent later this year”. This seems to me to be a welcome development, however, the task of ensuring safety and compliance is significant.

In the March 2021 edition of *North West City News* (NWCN) I opined that “cars and trucks [on our roads], particularly at speed are the surest way to thwart the evolution of any community ambience”. Surely all residents would support enhancing “community ambience”, so this move towards enabling smaller scale personal mobility vehicles seems a good one, however, residents are also concerned about safety.

We know some speed-freaks and hot-heads are more into their adrenaline rush

than they are into community and personal safety. In December 2023 the Australian Medical Association called for stricter rules around e-scooters given the significant level of injury because of their use.

In March 2022 (NWCN), a month before private e-scooters became legal in the public domain, I told the story of my own scooter jaunt, and wondered how police are actually going to catch e-scooter speedsters. I'm still wondering.

I've been at meetings at Melbourne Town Hall where police recognised the problem but seemed to be searching for solutions. I suggested a “posse of police riding V8 equivalent scooters”. How else are they going to catch them? It's clearly a compliance problem; I suggest more of a “human nature” issue than a “rules and regs” issue.

In March 2022 private e-scooters were the problem – they were illegal and there was an inconsistency between the regulation of e-scooters and e-bikes. While this has more or less been solved since they've been legalised, there is still a problem with e-skateboards.

While they are frequently sighted on paths and roads, they are still illegal in Victoria, but legal in some other states. The safety and compliance issues are identical



to those for e-scooters.

I believe we can welcome the expansion of transport options (like e-scooters) that are of smaller scale, environmentally friendly, and convenient. Compliance with speed and safety regulations will probably remain a problem to wrestle with, both for injury prevention, and for “community ambience”.

I'm thinking about pedestrian needs (the old “Shank's pony”). Pedestrians are also using smaller scale “transport”, and are often unnerved by the weaving, swerving and speed of bikes, scooters, and skateboards. Especially in communities like Kensington and North Melbourne, with growing populations, and closely connected commercial precincts.

The safety of pedestrians should be a top priority; we should aim for a pedestrian-friendly ambience. ●

Simon Harvey
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ASSOCIATION.ORG



ELLEN SANDELL

GREENS STATE MP FOR MELBOURNE

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

(03) 9328 4637
office@ellensandell.com

55 St Andrews Place
East Melbourne VIC 3002



A familiar face takes the reins at Simonds Catholic College

From guiding the inaugural cohort of Year 12 students in 2011 to now leading the school as principal, Robert Anastasio knows West Melbourne's Simonds Catholic College (SCC) like few others.

WORDS BY
JACK HAYES



It was a decision that brought brothers in differing years together on one campus and one that has yielded huge benefits for staff, according to Mr Anastasio, by removing the barriers of junior and senior school teaching.

"It has been a really positive move forward for our team and how they progress as teachers," Mr Anastasio said.

"We now have almost every teacher in our ranks, teaching something at VCE level."

"While our team and cohort will grow as we welcome our new facilities, we are a small and specialised school, and it will remain that way."

According to Mr Anastasio, smaller class sizes allow for greater learner and teaching outcomes, with Simonds typically operating well below the Victorian average at approximately 18 to 20 students per class.

"Naturally, there are growing pains in having a campus in construction, but it has been incredibly important to keep students, families and staff together as one," he said.

"Our teachers and learning support team are phenomenal, we can cope with a diversity of learners, and we welcome new families, from all backgrounds and beliefs, to become part of our wonderful college community." ●

For more information:
sccmelb.catholic.edu.au



Leaders in Family and Child Support law

Robert McHugh and Simon Bacon first met during a case opposed to one another in court.

WORDS BY
JACK HAYES



While the pair operate separate firms, Mr McHugh under his own name at 446 William St, West Melbourne, and Mr Bacon as managing director of Manby & Scott Child Support Lawyers at Normanby Chambers, 430 Little Collins St, Melbourne, they have formed a partnership built on symbiotic referral of cases and long-standing respect.

Mr McHugh, a senior accredited family law specialist, and Mr Bacon, one of the country's eminent practitioners in child support law, have nearly 80 years of combined experience representing and supporting families in some of their most challenging times.

Robert A. McHugh, Barrister and Solicitor

With a Master's in law and an accredited family law specialist, mediator and arbitrator with the Australian Institute of Family Law Arbitrators and Mediators, Mr McHugh is one of Melbourne's leading practitioners in his field.

In what is often an incredibly "complex and frightening" area of law, Mr McHugh provides sound and reliable advice on matters, including property settlements, Binding Financial Agreements (BFA), pre-nuptial agreements, parenting rights, divorce, and de facto relationships.

"Family law is a very complex area, it's often frightening for people, but it's incredibly important to have the right support around people," Mr McHugh said.

He added that people were increasingly seeking pre-nuptial or pre-cohabitation agreements known in Australia as BFAs which set out exactly how property and finances will be divided in the event of a relationship breakdown. The BFAs are designed to oust the jurisdiction of the Family Court and to thereby avoid the cost and stress of having the matter dealt with by a judge.

Mr McHugh is a firm believer in seeking to resolve family law disputes, be they over children, property, or finances, by negotiation and mediation and to avoid having to issue legal proceedings unless the circumstances require it.

"I understand that people are anxious about lawyers and how much it could cost them but I'm always up front about what a matter may cost or keeping them advised as to what an ongoing matter is costing them."

Mr McHugh offers a free first consultation.

For more information:
mchughlaw.com.au



▲ Robert McHugh (left) and Simon Bacon (right), Normanby Chambers, Little Collins St.

Manby & Scott

As a pioneer of child support law in Australia, Mr Bacon's "niche" expertise has earned a reputation and client base that stretches across the country.

It's an area of law, he admits, that is unknown to many and "something that practitioners and even judges struggle to understand".

"When I came into the law in 1989, child support law changed fundamentally. Bob Hawke stood up and said, 'by 1990 no Australian child will live in poverty.' What he was referring to is fundamental changes in child maintenance law," Mr Bacon said.

"I found it very interesting, and I found that few lawyers knew about it, and I could run circles around them in court because of it. I have really enjoyed it and spent my whole working career doing it."

"Child support law covers various areas. Sometimes it covers paternity disputes, where a woman gives birth to a child and alleges a man is the father, and he says he isn't."

"Other times there are cases involving paternity testing where the parentage of the child is in dispute. Often a woman will say a man is the father of her child and he has questions about that. The law now can order the parties to participate in DNA parentage testing which is absolutely definitive."

According to Mr Bacon, other typical cases are disputes in the amount of child support that should be paid by a parent, as well as overseas child support matters, enforcement of child support debts, child support stay orders and the preparation of private child support agreements.

Manby & Scott are recognised as a leading authority among the small group of child support lawyers in Australia. ●

For more information:
childsupportlawyers.com.au



STATE MP

Since Labor has been in power ...

For almost a decade now, rents in Melbourne have increased by around 58 per cent. You might think it's just bad luck, but it's really because Labor hasn't managed the economy well.

WORDS BY
EVAN MULHOLLAND
MP FOR NORTHERN METRO



Projects are blowing out to extraordinary levels under Labor. There's a \$21 billion blowout on the North East Link, a \$4.7 billion blowout on the West Gate Tunnel and a \$3 billion blowout on the Metro Tunnel. Last week, a Parliamentary Budget Office analysis revealed that the first two stages of the Suburban Rail Loop would cost more than \$216 billion – a jaw-dropping price tag for

a project that is not supported by transport experts and is designed to shore up support in their marginal seats.

How does this relate to rents, you may ask? It's a fair question and there's a good answer.

Victoria's mismanaged projects and finances result in ever-growing debt. We now have more debt than New South Wales, Queensland and Tasmania combined. To pay for it, Labor has increased virtually every tax and charge on the books. Land tax is no exception.

The land tax-free threshold has been reduced, there are additional flat fees and the rate on most properties has increased. Even the Treasurer admits that the hike will cost Victorian households an additional \$1300 every year. But we don't have to take the Treasurer's word for it.

One of the most established approaches to thinking about the real estate market is the DiPasquale-Wheaton model. It tells us that when taxes on rental providers

increase, so too do rents. It's almost as certain as night following day.

When land tax goes up, some of that extra cost gets passed on to renters. Increases also reduce the viability of rentals, resulting in them being withdrawn from the market. In turn supply is reduced, resulting in higher rents as renters compete for less rentals.

It's become so bad that analyst firms like Propertyology are now advising rental providers to boycott Victoria because of high taxes and regulation. Many have told me they're going to exit the market after receiving big bills from the State Revenue Office.

Labor's mismanaged "Big Build" is compounding the problem in other ways. It's pushing up the cost of materials and labour, making it harder to build new homes, sending building companies broke and creating a nightmare for their customers losing deposits. Only months after promising to build 80,000 new homes a year, it's falling apart faster than the Commonwealth Games.

All this shows. When Labor was elected, Melbourne had more than 12,000 homes available to rent. Despite a flood of press releases about homebuilding, there are less than half that now.

Worse still, when supply drops, so does quality. There's less competition. As we all know, when there's less competition, you get worse service. I'm sure anyone who's had to stand in a long line to see an expensive, mouldy apartment or an old, run-down house can relate.

So, there you have it. Labor has mismanaged projects and the economy, and renters are paying the price. Victoria needs strong economic management. We need to ensure projects are properly managed and confidence is returned to the rental market. We don't need more of this tired, old Labor government.

Evan Mulholland is the Liberal MP for the Victorian Upper House seat of Northern Metropolitan. ●

Quiz



1. What is the capital of Norway?
2. With 11,000 residents, Kensington makes up what percentage of the total population of the City of Melbourne?
3. According to the City of Melbourne, in what year will the redeveloped Kensington Community Aquatic and Recreation Centre open?
4. By which name was Audrey Kathleen Ruston better known?
5. Which actor played Private Ryan in the film *Saving Private Ryan*?
6. What is unique about The Briscoe by Kinleaf, a residential building on Hawke St, West Melbourne?
7. The smallest known deer in the world, the Pudu, lives on which continent?
8. Brandon Flowers (pictured) is the lead singer of which band?
9. What is the name of the animal health company moving into the former CSL side in Parkville's biomedical precinct?
10. Which car manufacturer shares its name with an ancient Persian god?
11. Public housing residents have filed a lawsuit against the Victorian Government over what?
12. An almost 170-year-old 'Geelong and Melbourne Railways 1857' sandstone plaque has been installed at what new North Melbourne location?

QUIZ SOLUTIONS

1. Oslo
2. Seven per cent
3. 2025
4. Audrey Hepburn
5. Matt Damon
6. It is a build-to-rent development
7. South America
8. The Killers
9. Zoetis
10. Mazda
11. Public Housing demolition plans
12. Arden Station

5x5

No. 035

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

S		A		S
	U		I	
A		O		A
	E		E	
S		E		Y

SOLUTIONS

SPARS, CUBIC, AROMA, NEVER, SEEDY

PUZZLES AND PAGINATION
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April, 2024

Sudoku

No. 034

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

EASY

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

HARD

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

SOLUTIONS

EASY

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

HARD

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

Wordfind

Theme: Reptiles

The leftover letters will spell out a secret message.

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

- | | |
|------------|----------|
| ALLIGATOR | MONITOR |
| BOA | PYTHON |
| CHAMELEON | SNAKE |
| COPPERHEAD | TIGER |
| CROCODILE | TORTOISE |
| DRAGON | TUATARA |
| IGUANA | TURTLE |
| LIZARD | VENOMOUS |

Secret message: Cold-blooded beings

Crossword

No. 034

ACROSS

- 1 Crumbled (9)
- 6 Celestial being (5)
- 9 Tall structure (5)
- 10 Cue and ball game (9)
- 11 Maltreatment (5)
- 12 Lifeless (9)
- 13 Utmost (7)
- 14 Football (6)
- 17 Conquer (6)
- 20 Defamation (7)
- 23 Express regret (9)
- 25 Beget (5)
- 26 Lab worker (9)
- 27 Christmas song (5)
- 28 Hate (5)
- 29 Nice guy (9)

1		2		3		4		5		6		7		8
9						10								
11						12								
13								14		15				
														16
	17	18				19		20					21	
22														
23				24							25			
26											27			
28								29						

DOWN

- | | | | | | |
|---|-------------------------------|----|---|----|-------------------------|
| 1 | Quaint houses (8) | 6 | Evidence of being elsewhere (5) | 18 | Terminate (7) |
| 2 | Legal case (7) | 7 | Rubbish (7) | 19 | Elevating (7) |
| 3 | Harmony (9) | 8 | Inferior (6) | 20 | Add sugar (7) |
| 4 | Lofty (7) | 15 | Traditional (9) | 21 | Explanatory drawing (7) |
| 5 | Australian currency units (7) | 16 | Founding Father of the US, Benjamin - (8) | 22 | Sickness (6) |
| | | | | 24 | Possessor (5) |

SOLUTION

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

Codeword

No. 034

7		13		16			20		R	21	4	20	2	20	14	15
20				12			24		R		23			10		19
	R	19	17	16	12			20	17	8	12	21				1
8			13					10		12		1				4
20	3	13	10	5				3	13	Q	10	19	17	21		
20					19			12			10		8			
22	13	5	20	17	20			18	13	6	21	12	2			
			10		20			24		12					13	
9	13	8	1	12		R	19		8	13	11	12	8			
13			21		10			6				10			20	
	R		19	17	9	13	6		19	2	6	13	23			
10		17			R		12		13		10		12			
8	10	16	16	12	8	21	12	2			8	22	15			

SOLUTIONS

X	Y	G	N	J	A	O	I	K	B	W	O	R
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13

1	14
2	15
3	16
4	17
5	18
6	19
7	20
8	21
9	22
10	23
11	24
12	25
13	26

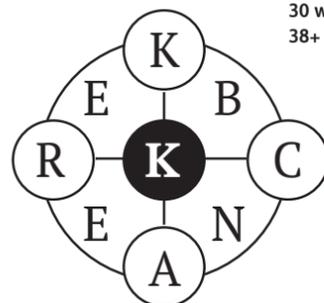
9-Letter

No. 034

Today's Focus:

- 22 words: Good
- 30 words: Very good
- 38+ words: Excellent

Using the nine letters in the grid, how many words of four letters or more can you list? The centre letter must be included and each letter may only be used once. No colloquial or foreign words. No capitalised nouns, apostrophes or plural words ending in "s".

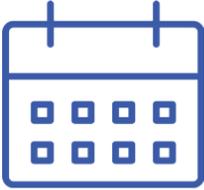


Reference:

Collins Concise English Dictionary

SOLUTIONS
ake, back, baker, bake, bank, banker, bark, beak, beaker, beck, berk, karee, keck, keen, kern, knack, knacker, knar, knee, kraken, nark, neck, rack, bracken, brake, break, BREAKNECK, cake, canker, cark, craek, creek, acker, rank, reek, reek, reek

WHAT'S ON April



Autumn is here and with it comes another huge month in Melbourne's event calendar. Keep up-to-date with everything happening in your neighbourhood.



NOAH SPIVAK: SHADOW OF ANOTHER
Noah Spivak's current processes collaborate with the alchemical world, creating temporal artworks that express a deep adoration (and understanding) for the materials used.

West End Art Space, 112 Adderley St

UNTIL APRIL 13, 11AM - 4PM



BREAKING ICE: IMAGING AND IMAGINING THE ANTARCTIC PENINSULA
A special event at One Star Gallery.
2.15pm Improvisation to video featuring Hemi Titokuwaru & Barbara Horning.
3pm son/spoken word performance.

One Star Gallery, 301-303 Victoria St

SUNDAY APRIL 14, 2PM - 4PM



THAI SUNDAY MARKET
Indulge in a sensory journey through authentic Thai flavours, from aromatic curries to spicy street food delights, explore more than 20 stalls offering unique crafts, handmade treasures, and traditional Thai artwork

EziStreet, 275 Macaulay Rd

SUNDAY, APRIL 21



APRIL/MAY EXHIBITIONS AT KINGS
Visit the three new exhibitions at Kings Artist Run during April and May. Come along to the opening launch on Thursday, April 25, 6-8pm.

KINGS Artist-Run, 69 Capel St, West Melbourne

SUNDAY, APRIL 21



VALERIE SPARKS: SANCTUARY
Populated with radiant images of red flowering gums, pink proteas, white waratah, magnolia grandiflora and other native plants, the *Sanctuary* series blurs the boundaries between fantasy and reality.

Galleriesmith, 170-174 Abbotsford St

UNTIL APRIL 27, 11AM - 5PM

Flemington Kensington
Rotary



FLEMINGTON KENSINGTON ROTARY CHARITY TRIVIA NIGHT
Welcome to the Rotary Club of Flemington Kensington Charity Fundraising Trivia Night. The kitchen will be open from 6pm and drinks are available at bar prices. Tickets are \$10.

Flem-Ken Bowls Club, 407-411 Racecourse Rd

SATURDAY MAY 4, 6.30PM

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: 1PM - 3PM



BAKERY HILL DISTILLERY TOUR & TASTING
The 90 minute event includes a detailed guided tour of the distillery, conducted by a distiller himself where you will learn how Bakery Hill produces its malts.

Bookings essential: bakeryhill.com/pages/tours
411 Macaulay Rd, Kensington

SUNDAYS: 2PM - 3.30PM



TECH HELP FOR OLDER PEOPLE
Tech Connect offers FREE weekly one-on-one hour sessions and monthly group workshops with trained and skilled "Lively Tech Helpers". Bookings essential.

Kensington Neighbourhood Centre
healthyageing@melbourne.vic.gov.au
9376 9743 | trybooking.com/CLFSX

FRIDAYS: 9.30AM - 12.30PM



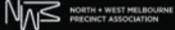
TECH HELP FOR OLDER PEOPLE NTH MELB
Tech Connect offers FREE weekly one-on-one hour sessions and monthly group workshops with trained and skilled "Lively Tech Helpers". Bookings essential.

Jean McKendry Neighbourhood Centre
healthyageing@melbourne.vic.gov.au
9328 1665 | trybooking.com/CLFKR

FRIDAYS: 9.30AM - 12.30PM

IRREGULAR

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

 NORTH + WEST MELBOURNE PRECINCT ASSOCIATION

IRREGULAR
As part of Melbourne Design Week 2024, the North and West Melbourne Precinct Association presents, *IRREGULAR* - a hyperlocal festival of ideas for the people who live, work, and play in North and West Melbourne.

irregularfestival.com.au

MAY 23 - 25

Business Directory

PRECINCT



SCHOOL



Oil Painting for Beginners

Professional artist Lily O'Connell will guide you through the many facets of oil painting from surface preparation to colour mixing and application. Lots of time to practice techniques and you'll complete a finished piece over the course.

Mondays 15 Apr - 17 Jun
6.30pm-8.30pm \$200/\$125 (conc)

Kensington Neighbourhood House
www.kensingtonneighbourhoodhouse.com

Sunday Art Sessions

Monthly art-making afternoons in a relaxed and friendly environment.

Sun 21 April - Acrylic painting
Sun 19 May - Fabric painting
Sun 16 June - Polymer clay

2pm - 5pm \$50/\$30 (conc)



ph. 9376 6366



Do you operate a business in North or West Melbourne?

The North & West Melbourne Precinct Association (NWMPA) invites all local business owners and operators to become a member of the association and help shape the future of our distinctive pocket of Melbourne. Visit northwestmelbourne.com.au to learn more.



NORTH + WEST MELBOURNE
PRECINCT ASSOCIATION

