Boyd deal falls over... again!

By Sean Car

For a second time in just over a year, the City of Melbourne has torn up its commercial contract for the redevelopment of the Boyd School site with its preferred developer.

The council issued a statement on June 30 stating that, after “careful consideration”, it had decided not to proceed with the sale and redevelopment of the land at 132 Kavanagh St to Cairo Melbourne Pty Ltd.

It did state, however, that the project’s latest setback would not delay the design and construction of the new Boyd Park.

In May last year, council formally announced that it had decided not to proceed with its original plans with the developer, which was previously operating the project under the name Mackie.

Mackie first entered into a commercial agreement with the City of Melbourne back in 2012.

While council allocated $200,000 in last year’s budget for marketing and legal fees associated with putting the site back on the open market, it elected to re-enter a contract with the developer in September.

News later emerged in November that Mackie/Cairo’s finances had been tied up with the same Filipino company, Goshen Capital Resources, which was linked with former Family First senator Bob Day’s bankruptcy.

Despite real concerns surrounding the developer’s financial credibility, the City of Melbourne proceeded with Cairo under a renewed contract, which resulted in a slightly larger park.

At the time, former Councillor Stephen Mayne told Southbank Local News the developer had to “jump through a lot of hoops” in order to convince council it could fulfill its end of the new contract.

Asked whether its measures were comprehensive enough in hindsight, a council spokesperson said the sale did not proceed because “relevant documentation wasn’t signed”.

Cairo Melbourne Pty Ltd director Oliver Mackie did not respond to Southbank Local News when contacted for comment.

The council spokesperson said that, while it would start a new tender process for the sale of the site later this year, its priority was to construct the new park.

“This will not delay the design and construction of the new Boyd Park,” the spokesperson said.

“Our priority is to get a new park up and running as soon as possible and $1.7 million has been committed towards building the new park in our 2017-18 budget.”

The spokesperson said council would proceed with the park design based on community feedback received in 2014, with a concept design to be released to the public in September.

Continued page 2.

Boyd turns five!

The team at the Boyd Community Hub celebrated the community facility’s fifth birthday with locals in style this month. Story and pictures on page 15.
What makes up Southbank?

By Sunny Liu

The recently released 2016 census shows Southbank’s population has soared from 11,235 in 2011 to 18,808.

The population boom is matched with an explosion in the number of apartments, which has nearly doubled from 4983 units in 2011 to 8137 in 2016.

The number of families is up from 2519 in 2011 to 3965, making up 47.4 per cent of all Southbank households.

Single-person dwellings constitute 34.7 per cent and group dwellings constitute 17.9 per cent of all households in Southbank.

With a median age of 30 and with 57.5 per cent of the population aged between 20 and 34, Southbank residents are a very young age group in Victoria, where the state median age is 37.

Some 42.8 per cent of Southbankers are tertiary-educated, dwarfing the average 17.8 per cent across Victoria.

Apart from the young and educated characteristics, the Southbank population is also largely single. Some 60.7 per cent of the residents have never been married.

The young, smart and single Southbank residents are more likely to rent than to own. Most people (63.6 per cent) are renting their home, compared with 33.9 per cent who own their property.

Southbank’s location of envy means the median rent here is much higher than Victoria’s median and people do not feel the need to drive.

The median weekly rent in Southbank is a whopping $511, while across Victoria it is $325. Only 7.9 per cent of Victorians do not own a motor vehicle, but 34.4 per cent of Southbankers do not have a vehicle.

Southbank residents’ high income also makes the high rental costs seem relatively affordable. The median personal weekly income is $980 and median household weekly income is $1852 in Southbank.

In comparison, the median personal weekly income in Victoria is $644 and $1419 for a household.

Southbank is a multicultural hub. Some 20.9 per cent of Southbankers identify their ancestry as Chinese, 14.1 per cent as English, 8.6 per cent as Australian, 5.5 per cent as Irish and 4.9 per cent as Indian.

Some 46.2 per cent of residents speak a non-English language at home.

The top non-English languages spoken at home are Mandarin (15.4 per cent), Cantonese (3.4 per cent), Spanish (2.8 per cent) and Indonesian (2.7 per cent).

Southbank is a popular place of residence among immigrants, with only 29.5 per cent of Southbank residents born in Australia.

Some 13.2 per cent of residents were born in mainland China, 4.6 per cent were born in India and 4.1 per cent were born in Malaysia.

Second-generation immigrants, with both parents born overseas, constitute 63.2 per cent of the Southbank population.

Many (41.8 per cent) of Southbank residents say they are not religious and 15.3 per cent are Catholic.

The numbers of men and women in Southbank are quite balanced, with 50.3 per cent men and 49.7 per cent women.
Bollards installed

The State Government has been installing anti-terrorism concrete bollards unannounced and overnight, including at Queensbridge Square on June 23.

A batch of bollards appeared at the intersection of the Southbank Boulevard footpath and Queensbridge Square, as well as at the Queensbridge St border of the square.

The safety barriers are installed at areas with high pedestrian traffic, in light of recent global terrorism-related attacks and vehicle rampages on pedestrians.

Some of the first bollards were installed in the Bourke St Mall, the site of a massacre when a car ploughed into pedestrians and killed six people in January.

Premier Daniel Andrews said: “There’s no time to be wasted here. When we think about London, when we think about other events, tragic events on the other side of the world and events very close to home, there’s no time to be wasted.”

The concrete bollards will be replaced by a network of permanent and retractable bollards and street furniture, funded by a $10-million chunk of the 2017/18 state budget.

“But, we’re not going to wait for that work to be done. That will take some time,” Mr Andrews said.

“This is not about alarming people, it’s simply indicating that we are prepared and that we are doing everything that we need to do to keep Victorians safe,” he said.

Terrorism expert at Victoria University, Professor Ramón Spaaij, said over-reliance on obvious public security measures could be problematic.

“The more of these measures you put in place, the more people start to feel unsafe,” he said.

“People start noticing the increased security and start assessing the possible risks and threats. They can help by diverting attacks away, simply because these lone individuals may not have the ability to overcome these barriers. Then the problem is target displacement.”

Other locations where bollards have been installed so far include Federation Square, Flinders Street Station, Southern Cross Station, Queen Victoria Market and Boathouse Drive under Princes Bridge.

Winter thrill in Southbank

The four-metre high, 36-metre long ice slide returns for its second year of winter thrill at Southbank Spillway.

Hosted by Eureka Skydeck, the two-lane giant slide welcomed more than 11,000 sliders last year.

Powered by a fine misting system at -12 degrees and complemented by a faux snow-making machine, the slide is open to the public until July 16.
On June 8, State Parliament’s Environment and Planning Committee released its report into the Owners Corporations Amendment (Short-stay Accommodation) Bill 2016. The report recognises the problems that short-stays can cause and makes a series of halowarm findings and recommendations. And, while it recommends giving owners’ corporations (OCs) power to regulate, it stops short of recommending they be given powers to ban short-stays altogether.

The committee acknowledges the legitimacy of short-stays but says they need to be regulated to protect residential amenity. The committee’s report does little more than summarise the evidence it heard and, ultimately, it hands the problem back to the government to solve. On November 7 last year, the opposition referred the matter to the committee during the Bill’s second reading in the Upper House. The government has six months to respond to the committee’s report.

In his chairman’s foreword, opposition planning spokesperson David Davis said: “In my view the Bill will have to be substantially amended to address many of the issues raised in evidence and to strike a more appropriate balance between the rights of the peer-to-peer accommodation industry and the right of residents to quiet enjoyment of their own properties.”

“There is no doubting the growing importance and in particular the economic significance of the peer-to-peer accommodation sector and the aim of government regulation must be to ensure this sector thrives within a responsible framework that accords fairness and rights to those with whom it cohabits.”

Recommendation four of the report is potentially the strongest: “That, as part of its broader review of consumer property law, the Victorian Government considers the appropriateness of giving owners’ corporations of strata complexes power to regulate short-stay accommodation in their buildings.”

But a preceding paragraph makes clear the proposed level of regulation: “The committee recognises that apartment owners have the right use their properties within the law for short-stay accommodation. However, in the committee’s view owners’ corporations of strata complexes should be empowered to regulate short-stays within their complex. This should include the right to insist on legitimate inductions on building facilities.”

Owners’ corporations opposed to short-stays will gain some heart from recommendation nine: “That the Victorian Government, in its review of consumer property law, considers allowing owners corporations to levy fees on short-stay accommodation providers to cover increased maintenance and repair costs caused by their guests and the usage of these apartments. This should include a fair and equitable cap on the percentage of fees that may be levied.”

However, those wishing to limit the number of days an apartment can be rented will be disappointed with the committee’s response. “The committee does not support a restriction on the number of days an owner may let their property for short-stay. However it recognises that there is a need to regulate short-stay accommodation that falls within the scope of commercial-residential accommodation.”

And, on the other side, short-stay operators who had advocated for a system of self-regulation will also be disappointed. The committee said: “During the inquiry’s public hearings, stakeholders were unable to provide a compelling argument in favour of self-regulation through the code of conduct in lieu of legislation.”

And, while the committee clearly advocates regulation, it has offered the government little advice about how it should be done. The committee said: “Based on the concerns raised in evidence, the committee considers that the Bill is inadequate and unfair to many parties, including residents and, in some cases, those who are legitimately providing short-stay accommodation.”

Mr Davis said: “The legal position of short-stay accommodation and the ability of owners’ corporations to manage these matters within their own complexes will require the government to find a solution.”

The We Live Here anti-short-stay advocacy group has welcomed the committee’s report. As reported on page 19 of this edition, the group said: “We Live Here welcomes the recommendations made and so do our members who, until now, have felt their concerns have been ignored by the government and short-stay operators.”

“it is gratifying to know that politicians now understand that the short-stay issue is about safety, security and the unfair cost burden on the majority of owners.”

The issue of short-stay accommodation in residential buildings is no closer to being resolved, with a government committee examining the matter sitting firmly on the fence.

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Hoardings up on Riverside Square

Stage one of the Riverside Quay renewal project is already underway, despite members of its appointed community reference group claiming that final plans were adopted without their knowledge.

In partnership with the City of Melbourne, developer Mirvac first undertook community consultation with its reference group in early 2015.

The group was appointed to inform the design of the new public open space. It featured local residents and businesspeople, as well as representatives from the Southbank Residents’ Association (SRA) and the Yarra River Business Association (YRBA).

However, much to the surprise of the reference group members, hoardings went up around the space in May featuring finished renders of the how the revitalised open space will appear.

In a July 11 press release, Mirvac said its community reference group guided the direction of the public space, to be known as Riverside Square, through the design process.

While the final outcome is an overall positive one, some members of the working group told Southbank Local News that they felt frustrated by Mirvac’s lack of consultation on the finished plans.

Southbank Residents’ Association (SRA) president Tony Penna said communication over the project had been scarce.

“The project was supported by SRA after consultation with the developer early 2015,” he said. “SRA continued to work with the developer via the community working group to achieve what we believe will be an excellent outcome for the space.”

“Unfortunately, towards the end of the process we were left feeling forgotten about by the developer as communication was scarce.”

Despite the poor consultation, Mr Penna said he was looking forward to working with the City of Melbourne for stage two of the project, which extends from Eureka Tower to Southbank Promenade.

Mirvac’s final park design, which incorporates the section of land directly in front of its Riverside Quay office buildings opposite the Belgian Beer Cafe, includes 1200 sqm of new landscaping, outdoor working areas, communal facilities and seating.

While the space is owned by the City of Melbourne, Mirvac has funded stage one. Mirvac spokesperson Campbell Hanan said the new park was a great extension of its development.

“We’re extremely proud to have co-created a vision for the space with the community and the City of Melbourne,” he said.

“The importance of green open space in our cities is vital. Riverside Square is set to become a buzzing space activated by local workers and residents during the work week, in the evening and on the weekend.”

Riverside Square is due for completion in October.
Non-compliant cladding in Southbank

By Shane Scanlan

For all its high-rise, Southbank appears to be relatively free of the type of non-compliant building cladding that the Grenfell tragedy in London has brought into sharp focus.

Harvest Apartments at 144-150 Clarendon St was one of the first to be publicly revealed from a Victoria Building Authority (VBA) audit in 2015. The City of Melbourne’s municipal building surveyor (MBS) later deemed Harvest safe to occupy “conditional upon certain works being undertaken”.

We know this because Harvest was added to a publicly accessible list on the VBA website in October 2015.

What we don’t know is how many Southbank buildings are on a secret list of 17 buildings still not declared by the City of Melbourne. The city says they are all safe to occupy, but why the secrecy?

The council is prone to confuse leadership with paternalism and is affected by a culture which values avoiding risk much higher than including the public.

It’s almost certain that Elm Apartments is on the list of 17. Elm is one of six Melbourne properties on the Metropolitan Fire Brigade’s (MFB) heightened response list (along with Harvest).

The council says the list is secret because it doesn’t want to alarm people. It says it is dealing directly with affected owners’ corporations and it’s no one else’s business. But, given the seriousness of the issue, doesn’t the public have a right to know? Not everyone is an owners’ corporation executive member. What about other owner-occupiers? What about renters? What about hotel or short-stay apartment guests?

In answer to questions from Southbank Local News on June 20, Lord Mayor Robert Doyle defended the council’s approach. “We don’t make those public. The people who are in the building know. Their owner’s corporations know. We want to protect against a public alarmist view," Cr Doyle said.

“Let’s work things through this quite quickly. When this was first discovered, there were something like 170 buildings that were identified.” Cr Doyle then went on to explain why the process was taking so long.

“There is a remarkably small number of qualified building surveyors who can do the necessary work because, of course, many of them worked on these buildings in the first place and it would be quite inappropriate for them to be doing evaluations of their own work,” he said.

“So the cross conflict of interest meant there was a very small pool of expertise was available. Most of that fell to the City of Melbourne and our municipal building surveyor, the statutory officer who works here.”

“Of the buildings that were referred to us, we have moved through, on a risk profile, down to the last 17. We are hopeful that they can be resolved in a relatively short period of time.”

“We have worked very co-operatively with building owners and, in most cases, compliance measures, even when initially disagreed, have been agreed.”

“There’ll be a range of different possibilities for those last buildings.

We don’t want public alarm. If, however, we get to a point with some of those in the last 17 where there is a dispute about what would make a building compliant, we would be prepared to pursue that legally and, in that case, those buildings would be publicly identified.”

With the State Government on July 3 establishing a taskforce to investigate the extent of non-compliant cladding throughout the state, it is unlikely to have any impact on Southbank, as it has already been audited.
Why is the walkway closed?

The decking area on the Clarendon St footbridge has been closed for months due to safety reasons, Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre (MCEC) says.

The footbridge is privately owned by MCEC and a MCEC spokesperson said the bridge’s wooden section had been closed because “a number of the wooden boards have lifted, causing an uneven surface and thus a tripping hazard”.

The spokesperson said MCEC was commissioning and conducting an engineering report to determine the maintenance works required. But until the report is completed, the section will continue to be closed and pedestrians will continue to be deprived of the scenic view of the water and riverbanks.

MCEC has not given a timeframe for when the decking area will be re-opened.

MCEC said the bridge was “structurally sound” and was safe to cross on the concrete side of the glass wall.

Whiteman St resident Peter Gibbs, who uses the bridge almost daily, described the pace at which repairs were being undertaken as “bewildering, amusing and frustrating” and made a mockery of Melbourne’s status as the world’s most liveable city.

“If need be, I am happy to organise a working bee with a handful of friends and our cordless drills to fix the problem,” he said.

“Perhaps a snapshot taken from the same photopoint of the crossing included in each edition of the Southbank Local News will shame the crossing’s owner to undertake what appears to be one day (at most) of repairs.”

Site suspicion

Police are appealing to witnesses following two separate incidents at a disused Clarke St warehouse.

The first incident occurred on June 30, which resulted in a 34-year-old man being charged for allegedly setting a 33-year-old man on fire following an argument between the pair.

Ambulances arrived at the disused Clarke St building just before 1pm on June 30 and the victim was taken to hospital.

He was in hospital under police guard, suffering non-life threatening injuries.

The 34-year-old man and another 33-year-old man were arrested at the scene.

The 34-year-old was charged with intentionally causing serious injury, conduct endangering life and other assault-related charges.

A suspicious fire at the same location on July 6 followed this incident.

Emergency services were called to the warehouse just after 6.30am after neighbours noticed smoke emitting from the single story building.

Victoria Police released a statement that it believed no one was inside the premises at the time of the blaze and an arson chemist would investigate the scene.

The fire is being treated as suspicious and a crime scene guard will remain at the site.

Anyone with information about the fire is urged to contact Crime Stoppers on 1800 333 000 or make a confidential report at www.crimestoppersvic.com.au

The site in question is the subject of the controversial Elysium development, which was put on the market last year with an approval for a 74-storey mega-tower.

Police and fire fighters at the scene of the first incident at the disused warehouse on June 30. Photos: Twitter

Emergency services close off Hancock St on June 30.

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Guide dog in training

Southbank resident Sharon Palmieri has recently become the foster carer of 11-week-old Labrador, Albert, who is training to be a guide dog.

She took Albert home from Guide Dogs Victoria (GDV) when he was seven weeks old and had fallen in love with the puppy. "Albert makes everyone so happy. He has the ability to put a smile on everyone’s face," she said.

Ms Palmieri has always loved animals but does not think she will be able to commit to owning a pet for some 18 years. She and her partner made the decision to foster a guide puppy because they wanted to "pet their animal fix" while also helping people with a visual impairment.

Ms Palmieri raised another guide dog 10 years ago and said it was a very rewarding experience. "To think that Albert may be able to help other people is amazing. We want to give back to the community," she said.

Albert is winning hearts with his puppy eyes and sweet disposition, but raising him also requires a lot of work. "It’s like having a baby. It’s constant work," Ms Palmieri said. "We have to constantly be aware of where he is and what he is doing. Puppy raisers need dedication to raise and train a puppy."

Albert cannot be left alone for more than three hours at a time, although guide dogs in training can go almost anywhere with their foster carer.

Ms Palmieri also needs to conduct basic behavioural training for Albert. When Albert turns 12 months old, he will go through a final assessment to help determine whether he is fit to become a guide dog.

Little Albert seems to have great potential to eventually become a successful working dog. "Albert is a very smart dog. He already knows how to sit and wait. He is learning to ‘give’ when we want him to drop a toy," Ms Palmieri said.

Ms Palmieri is responsible for helping Albert socialise with people and familiarise with different environments, such as home, cafes, supermarkets and public transport.

She said she received training from GDV to ensure she is using appropriate methods to train Albert. "I’m being taught by Guide Dogs Victoria about how to teach Albert," she said. "I often attend information sessions and get visits from GDV staff to make sure we are doing the right things."

"Raising a guide dog requires a sense of responsibility and patience. I hope more people can foster puppies and help others," Ms Palmieri said.

Ms Palmieri is a wedding celebrant and has attended the weddings of some of her clients even want to invite Albert in public areas, wearing a guide-dog-in-training jacket, after he turns 16 weeks.

For more information on becoming a puppy raiser, visit guidedogsvictoria.com.au

Chinese New Year success

This year’s Chinese New Year Festival generated up to $27.8 million, a study by Victoria University (VU) academics has found.

A large part of the festival, which ran for 17 days in late January and early February, was based here in Southbank.

The VU team found that an investment of $925,283 by Chinese New Year United generated an economic benefit of between $22.7 million and $27.8 million.

“This is a large economic impact well above the initial cost of investments,” the VU report says. “This impact also leads to the development of approximately 3800 to 4600 equivalent one-year jobs.”

The researchers found that the festival “engaged” some 872,000 people. But, they said, most would have been in the area anyway and settled on an estimate of actual “attendees” of between 174,000 and 218,000 people. These are the people who set out specifically to attend the festival.

Festival organisers have a funding submission for 2018 before the City of Melbourne and, at this stage, it is unclear what the future of the event is.

The VU report said: “In summary, the 2017 CNY Festival has engaged a large number of visitors, and generated a sizeable economic impact through ‘additional’ expenditure, and the creation of a substantial number of related jobs, in the wider economy.”

“Overall, it has generally achieved its objectives and provided the foundations for its continued success. An important and commendable outcome was the extensive engagement with, and collaboration between, a broad and diverse range of stakeholders, including visitors, partners and sponsors.”

“As the festival expands in the future, this engagement and collaboration will be critical to its ongoing success.”
Southbank or “Southsea”?

Almost all of Southbank could be underwater if sea level rises by two metres by 2100.

The latest data from Coastal Risk shows large parts of Southbank, especially the area around Crown Casino and South Wharf, could be submerged if climate change continues at the current pace.

Dr Kathleen McInnes, climate-change expert at CSIRO, said Southbank could be particularly vulnerable to sea level increase.

"Even storm surges now cause problems in some suburbs, so sea level rise will only make things worse," she said.

"If sea levels rise by two metres then many coastal suburbs in Melbourne will be inundated, assuming no mitigation measures are put in place."

Dr McInnes said a two-metre rise in sea level would be possible in a "business as usual" scenario.

"It really depends on whether or not strong cuts to carbon and other greenhouse gas emissions are realised," she said.

"If emissions increase at the rate they currently are, we could reach a two-metre rise next century."

Dr McInnes also offered some tips on how Southbank residents could help slow down sea level rise to save their home.

"Living more sustainably, using less, wasting less, recycling, supporting renewable energy solutions are all things we can all be doing to reduce our carbon footprint and help to slow the rate of sea level rise," she said.

Southbank crime remains steady

The quarterly crime statistics show crimes in Southbank have increased by 4.8 per cent from 2015-16 to 2016-17 (year ending March).

A total count of 3278 crimes was recorded between March 2016 and March 2017, a small increase from the 3119 in 2015-16.

In 2016-17, crimes against the person, which include offences such as assault, robbery and harassment, surged by 30.8 per cent to 444.

Most of the crimes committed in Southbank fell into the property and deception offences category, with 2044 cases in 2016-17. But the number of crimes within this division reduced by 3.1 per cent.

Drug offences have also seen a small surge, up by 31.3 per cent from 198 cases in 2015-16 to 260 in 2016-17.

Overall, crimes in Southbank constituted 14 per cent of the total crimes committed in the City of Melbourne from 2016 to 2017.

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Yes, an extraordinary gift!
Further scrutiny over approval

By Sean Car

Councillors unanimously gave the nod to the new high-rise tower in April, which had already been the subject of 20 objections. News of the approval was reported in the May edition of Southbank Local News and the application was first reported in the March edition.

While located on the edge of Southbank’s low-rise precinct, its location in a 60-metre discretionary height control zone means that it is not subject to the same 40-metre mandatory limits, which are applicable on the other side of the street.

With neighbouring Sunday Apartments and Kings Domain (currently under construction) being of similar heights, the combination of precedents and discretionary limits meant councillors had no choice but to approve the application.

Some local residents, who have since caught news of the tower’s approval, took to the internet last month via the planningalerts.org.au website and provided their own scathing assessments of the decision. Resident Cameron wrote: “The reason I purchased in Coventry St was due to it being in the low rise part of South Melbourne close to the Arts Precinct, which by its very nature was not meant to be high density.”

“Since the rezoning to Southbank it’s almost like the planners have gone overboard and turning it into another problem area.”

Many other commentators were disappointed to learn that the building had already been approved.

One resident addressed her objection directly to councillor Jackie Watts: “Please reject the application for 83-89 Coventry St as it will stick up like a sore thumb on that corner, ruining the lower-rise streetscape on the two blocks from Wells to Sturt streets.”

Councillor assistance planning chair that laws needed to change in order to prevent such buildings from being approved. However, it was again this resident’s understanding that an approval had not yet been issued. In his response alerting the resident that a permit had already been issued for the development, Cr Leppert said: “The permit was issued based on informally substituted plans, which responded to concerns raised by our urban planners over the original plans.”

“The final plans were for a building that was under the height control of 60m, and compliant with the 10m tower separation requirements of the scheme.”

Planning Minister Richard Wynne missed a golden opportunity in 2016 to protect special character zones such Southbank’s low-rise precinct with mandatory controls via amendment C278.

However, very little has changed and unfortunately for the local community it would appear we may continue to see more opportunistic developments such as this come before planners for approval.

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A major artistic coup for Southbank

The forecourt of the Australian Centre for Contemporary Arts (ACCA) in Southbank will host the return of the iconic Melbourne Art Fair in 2018.

Returning as the region’s most significant platform for Australasian contemporary art, the fair will take place as the anchor event of Melbourne Art Week from August 2 to 5 next year.

Beginning in 1988, the biennial event provides a platform for artists, collectors, curators, arts professionals and enthusiasts to connect and engage with contemporary art, providing commercial and curatorial opportunities for galleries and their artists.

To be housed in a temporary structure outside ACCA, the fair will showcase 40–50 galleries from Australia, New Zealand and the region with a curated selection of some of the newest and most respected names in contemporary art.

The fair is expected to welcome some 20,000 visitors to Southbank’s vibrant Arts Precinct over four days and the revitalised show has been driven by a new look Melbourne Art Foundation.

New CEO and director Maree Di Pasquale brings international art fair expertise having worked in key global markets across Asia and the Middle East. She takes the helm after holding senior positions with key regional fairs, namely assistant director of Sydney Contemporary and founding director of Art Central in Hong Kong.

“With a highly selective offering, Melbourne Art Fair is set to become the premier showcase for leading Australasian contemporary (art), and will once again be instrumental in driving critical and commercial attention for galleries and their artists,” she said.

“It will play an important and iconic role in reaffirming Victoria’s profile as a commercial hub and centre for cultural accomplishments.”

Ms Di Pasquale is supported by a new look Melbourne Art Foundation board chaired by the founder of architecture giant SJB, Charles Justin, who is also a past president of the Jewish Museum.

Mr Justin said the Melbourne Art Fair had found a perfect new location in Southbank, which would help in its mission to support and promote contemporary Australian artist through commercial incentives.

“Southbank Arts Precinct is the ideal location for the revitalised Melbourne Art Fair as it embodies the creative diversity of its host city,” he said. “The precinct is a true demonstration of excellence in the visual and performing arts.”

ACCA’s distinctive rusty steel facade and world-leading artistic program is sure to offer an inspiring setting for Melbourne Art Week’s anchor event, being within walking distance of renowned precinct arts organisations and venues.

Gallery applications for Melbourne Art Fair 2018 open on July 15.
Visit melbourneartfair.com.au for further details.

Melbourne Art Fair

Pictured Maree Di Pasquale and Charles Justin
July at MRC

There are two wonderful performances by young musicians coming up in July at the Melbourne Recital Centre, featuring a myriad of instruments including violin, viola, clarinet, oboe, flute, double bass and piano.

Come and join the unconventional dance partners of the Kegelstatt Ensemble as they scurry and scamper, glide, stomp, lean and leap into the possibilities afforded by a startling array of wind and string partnerships, in the skilled hands of some of the 20th century’s greatest composers.

Prokofiev’s ballet music meets Schulhoff’s integration of Bohemian folk dance, with interludes of brief, intimate, eloquent duets by Carter and Ginastera.

The performance is sure to provide a lovely way to finish a winter’s day of work and will take place on Monday, July 17 at 6pm in the Salon at Melbourne Recital Centre.

However, the entertainment doesn’t finish there! On Wednesday, July 19 at 6pm come see Daniel de Borah with Greta Bradman after work as part of the Southbank Series in the Salon.

Daniel de Borah is one of Australia’s foremost pianists, highly sought after as a solo recitalist, collaborative pianist and concerto soloist.

Stellar soprano Greta Bradman will join Daniel for this recital of German Lieder, exploring some extraordinary examples of poetry brought to life in song.

For more information or to book tickets to both events visit www.melbournerecital.com.au
Transcending gender

Final year Photography Studies College (PSC) student Aaron Walker has been making waves in the international LGBTI community through his first major series on drag artist portraiture.

With a background in circus and production, Aaron said he had always held a passion for taking pictures mainly through performance and street photography. However, it wasn’t until he enrolled in a commercial major at PSC where he started exploring new ideas around portraiture, which was when he stumbled upon an opportunity to capture the world of drag artistry. Through a friend, Aaron was first offered a behind-the-scenes glimpse into the life of a drag artist at a drag show where he first captured some unique insights into how artists transformed themselves. “I looked at my shots afterwards and I wasn’t really interested in the after shots or the performance shots probably because I take a lot of those anyway,” he said. “That was in a way the superficial side of it because that’s what the audience sees, but I was interested in what the audience doesn’t see.” “I looked at the shots of them getting ready and I was much more interested in showing those. I was much more interested in those as well myself because I didn’t really know the work that’s involved.” After initially producing a handful of portraits and placing them online, the response to his series has snowballed and he has since exhibited at large galleries in Sydney and Melbourne, as well as the Midsumma Festival. The launch of his Melbourne exhibition at Chapel Off Chapel in Prahran was attended by international media from all around the world including Polish, Spanish, American, French and Italian press. He said it wasn’t until he began exhibiting that he realised the positive impact the series was having on the identity and awareness of the LGBTI community. “At first I didn’t realise that I was contributing to that conversation but then the more people I met I started to realise that it was really relevant and important work,” he said. “Drag culture is really interesting, as it exists within the queer community and for some it’s a real political statement.” “For others it’s lifestyle, escapism or just a bit of fun. For some it’s their way of connecting to the queer community and I find that constantly fascinating.” As Aaron has discovered through his interactions with drag artists, drag culture today is far more complex and sophisticated as opposed to the “trashy nightclub” tag it was once associated with. He said for many, such as Dan Ewell (pictured), being a drag artist was more about transforming into an alter ego, which helped to illustrate that identity wasn’t bound by gender. With plans to now create a book showcasing his portraits with stories from the drag artists themselves, he said he hoped to continue adding value to what was an important discussion. “This experience has given me a lot of confidence to approach and sit with people and help them open up and feel comfortable,” he said. “I learnt the things I wanted to learn but I also learned that you can position yourself politically and you can support an important cause through photography and it’s all about how you present it really.” To view Aaron’s work visit aaronwalkerphotography.com

OPEN DAY 2017

13 AUGUST 10am - 3pm

Get a taste of the PSC student experience and explore life at PSC and beyond!
E V E N T S

I A N V A N D E R W O L D E
July 20 - Photography Studies College
A former graduate of PSC, Ian was named landscape photographer of the year at the 2017 Australian Institute of Professional Photography Epsom Victorian Professional Photography Awards. He is a leading Melbourne-based commercial photographer with more than 30 years industry experience.
www.psc.edu.au

J A M S F O R J U N I O R S 6
July 22 - Josuki Auditorium
The earlier children listen to music, the more it will enhance their lives. This popular series of eight 30-minute workshops is designed for children up to five years and their parents and provides a valuable chance to listen and respond to popular repertoire.
www.mso.com.au

A U S T R A L I A N W O R L D O R C H E S T R A CH A M B E R
July 27 - Elisabeth Murdoch Hall
The AWO’s Chamber 8 on Tour are a supergroup of Australia’s finest musicians who work and perform with the world’s greatest orchestras. These extraordinary musicians will come together for just four concerts in 2017 as they tour their exceptional repertoire.
www.malthousetheatre.com.au

Y O U ’ R E N O T A L O N E
Aug 1 to 13 - Malthouse Theatre
A unique theatre-documentary, with main character Kim Noble’s own life as subject, You’re Not Alone is black comedy at its finest - a hilarious and ugly rampage through the fabric of human relationships.
www.malthousetheatre.com.au

G R E A T E R T O G E T H E R
Until Sep 17 - ACCA
Greater Together assembles eight artist projects that complicate individual notions of authorship to consider ideas of collaboration and cooperation as deliberate and productive means of agency and solidarity in a complex and changing world.
www.accatourline.org.au

L A W R E N C E W E I N E R: O U T O F S I G H T
Until Aug 7 - NGV International
A generic structure by American artist Lawrence Weiner. Based upon the concept of a hopscotch and designed for public institutions, OUTF OF SIGHT is flexible. The work is conceived to be exhibited in multiple languages. Weiner’s signature is his text-based work.
www.ngv.vic.gov.au

T H E K I L N
Until August 31 - NGV International
A generic structure by American artist Lawrence Weiner. Based upon the concept of a hopscotch and designed for public institutions, OUTF OF SIGHT is flexible. The work is conceived to be exhibited in multiple languages. Weiner’s signature is his text-based work.
www.ngv.vic.gov.au


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Cheers to five great years!

The team at Boyd Community Hub put on an absolute show for Southbank locals on July 6 and 7 to celebrate its five years serving the local community.

On July 6, the team hosted a wine, cheese and jazz night, which was attended by some 130 locals over the course of the evening. July 7 saw a day for families as the team put on a birthday party celebration featuring a theatre show and petting zoo. The two day event was a huge success and plans are already underway for Boyd’s sixth birthday! Enjoy some photos of the celebrations.

Father Bob’s community vision

Father Bob told Southbank Local News that he hoped to raise $1 million at his 83rd birthday gala ball on September 4 to put towards his vision, calling it his “birthday gift to the community.”

A concept design has already been prepared for the proposed facility, which aims to create a vibrant meeting place for the future community of Australia’s largest ever urban renewal site.

Included as part of Bob’s concept designs are plans for a facility comprising emergency housing units, an industrial kitchen, office spaces, public open space as well as a café and gallery.

The designs also feature a “village green,” which includes a community orchard and garden, as well as small paddocks for livestock with the entire design incorporating an environmentally sustainable focus.

While the plans state that the community hub would seek to reuse industrial facilities where possible, all new buildings would be constructed out of repurposed shipping containers.

Father Bob said the community facility would be a place that reflected and celebrated the history of Fishermans Bend in order to bring people together.

“Fishermans Bend was built on the traditions the Aboriginal people, the working class and the migrant settlers. The community hub is meant to be inclusive, where everyone has a place to all be in this together,” he said.

“It should be a place where the traditional owners of the land, migrant settlers over the years and new residents of high-rise buildings can all get together to build the local community.”

Having long outgrown its Gladstone St outreach centre in Montague, the foundation has already been seeking a larger facility for some time.

While much of Fishermans Bend is capital city zoned and privately owned, the main challenge for the project is acquiring a substantial piece of land to make the vision a reality.

However, if there was ever a man to make it happen, it’s Father Bob!

“We want to design a community hub that has everything the local residents need, from a garden to meeting spaces,” he said. “We will also bring community projects to the hub so kids can learn and grow their appetite for knowledge locally without leaving their suburb.”

“While building the community, we need to speak both the languages of the elite and languages of the disadvantaged. The hub will also be multicultural and inter-faith.”

The Father Bob Maguire birthday gala ball, which will be attended by Victorian Premier Daniel Andrews and Member for Albert Park Martin Foley, will be held on September 4 at Grand Hyatt Melbourne.

To book visit trybooking.com/book/event?eid=290888

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What’s in a name?

You may recall last month I wrote about a newly planted Hoop Pine I spotted on Kavanagh street and that I would ask council about its suitability in light of the Southbank Urban Forest Plan. I have had a response from council and they have agreed the tree had been planted too close to the footpath, but the species is appropriate for achieving the outcomes of the Urban Forest plan. We have been advised the tree will be relocated closer to the centre of this small ‘pocket park’.

I am pleased to report that the City of Melbourne has allocated $15.6 million for works in Southbank, including the Southbank Boulevard and Dodds St upgrades in 2017/18. Southbank Promenade is being given a face-lift to the tune of $2.9 million and a further $1.7 million will be spent on the commencement of the highly-anticipated Boyd Park.

Southbank will no doubt be looking forward to these improvements but we’ll be looking closely at how and when these funds will be spent as well as participating in further consultation on each of these projects.

While on the subject of Boyd Park, last week the council made a significant announcement that the agreement with the developer (Cairo Pty Ltd) had fallen through. The council was selling part of the block for a future high-rise development and, subsequently, it plans to embark on a new tender process. We’re not certain why the agreement didn’t come together, but I recall advising the council that, while the community objected to the sale of the land to build yet another high-rise in Southbank, we were dubious about the funding arrangements that Cairo was proposing. That said, we have been assured by the council the park will be proceeding and, as I mentioned above, the park has been funded in this year’s budget which is reassuring. We believe the draft concept plan will be available to the community in the coming month for comment.

Since my last column, I’ve been approached by several residents complaining that Southbank doesn’t have its own post office or bank branches and I readily agreed. Later that week on a trip to the GPO in the CBD, I thought on this further and realised it was only a short walk from my residence in Southbank. I decided to look into this further, and after “googleing” post offices, I learned that Southbank is surrounded by a number of post office choices.

From a rough central Southbank location of the intersection of Power St and City Rd, there are seven post offices/shops within 1.5km, and three within 1km. Depending on where you live in Southbank, your nearest post office could be much closer. While the bank branches weren’t as prominent, there were still several branches within the same 1.5km radius, depending on which bank or financial institution you’re with of course. Having said that, banks are privately-owned and will decide on branches where they are commercially viable. While Australia Post is government-owned it also needs to be prudent when it comes to branch locations and investments.

Southbank once had an Australia Post outlet located at Freshwater Place, but after a number of years it closed because it was not commercially viable. Conversely, when looking at the post offices and bank branches in other suburban centres, residents frequently need to travel further than 1.5km to their nearest post office or bank branch. Also considering Southbank is the most serviced suburb for public transport, it is absolutely necessary for Southbank to have its own post office or bank branches? Particularly if they are not commercially viable?

Postcode boundaries aside, what’s in a name? Are we becoming too precious or entitled? Does Southbank really need bank branches and our own post office within our postcode? If you’d like to weigh in on the debate, feel free to send a letter to the editor and keep the conversation going.

After the success of our last “New-to-Southbank” event, we will be holding another event at Boyd in August and you’re all invited. Even if you’re not a new resident I can almost guarantee you’ll learn something new so please come along. You can register on our website at southbankresidents.org.au

Tony Penna
Tony Penna is the president of Southbank Residents’ Association.
southbankresidents.com.au

Michael Danby
Federal Member for Melbourne Ports
michael.danby.mp@aph.gov.au

Federal Politics

Explanation of NBN card mailout

With vast amounts of money being spent on television advertising for “Gen NBN” it is little wonder my office has been receiving many queries regarding the promised service, which we have been promised but have not been delivered.

Many of you would have received a card from my office regarding the “White Elephant” the NBN has become under the Abbott/Turnbull governments. You may now be waiting until 2019 for a paler version of the NBN that was originally planned by Labor.

When this card was sent out to residents I was aware that a number of premises in the Southbank area did have access to a lighter version of the NBN than that which Labor Southbank area did have access to a lighter version of the NBN that was originally provided under the Turnbull government. You may expect.

The material sent was not just seeking to inform the electorate of the slow pace of the roll out but also the type of connection being provided under the Turnbull government. Labor’s version of NBN is starkly different to that being rolled out by the Turnbull/Abbott governments. Labor proposed connecting fibre directly to the home, replacing our old, poorly maintained and out-of-date copper network.

Fibre has a much longer lifespan than copper and also has the capacity to provide far greater speeds. By keeping the existing copper network, we, the customers of NBN Co will have to pay for the replacement of the old copper network sometime in the near future.

It seems to me that, instead of buying the old networks from Telstra and Optus, that money would have been better spent rolling out the more reliable and longer lasting fibre option.

Rest assured, Bill Shorten and Labor’s policy is still to deliver the first rate fibre to the home service that Australian deserve and expect.

The ALP’s policy can be viewed on the party’s website.

Michael Danby
Federal Member for Melbourne Ports
michael.danby.mp@aph.gov.au
Being rather than doing

Like many other Melburnians, I recently caught a winter cold. It’s been lingering for a couple of weeks and only since I slowed down and got a couple of nights of solid sleep have I started to turn the corner.

But the slowing down part was hard. Perhaps you can relate. We tend to push ourselves. We try to “soldier on” by popping a few pharmaceutical products and pushing through. But true rest is often what’s needed most.

Resting, or just “being” rather than “doing”, can be quite a challenge. We live in our world where achievement is so important. If you’re not meeting that deadline, getting that promotion, or buying your second investment property, then something just doesn’t feel right. Whether our busyness is unavoidable or self-imposed, it can take its toll on us. This is why stepping back and finding some rest in spirituality can be so helpful.

A spiritual practice that helps you see yourself as having value regardless of your deeds can be incredibly liberating. Finding a higher power that accepts you just because you are rather than what you do is a great gift.

In the Gospel according to Matthew, Jesus addressed a crowd of people in Galilee and spoke of how enlightenment and divine wisdom come not from doing, but simply being – even being like an infant.

He would go on to unpack this notion further by expressing how no one knows what a gift. In other words, you can’t “do” knowing God, you can only “be” – like an infant – and receive God’s love, kindness and compassion.

In a high-pressure world of countless commitments to keep, what a relief it is to take a break in our spiritual lives. What a relief it is to know that with God there is a restful sanctuary where we don’t have to achieve and are valued just the way we are. If you’re feeling run down this winter, battling the dreaded huggy, or feeling stressed out at work or home, there is hope. There is a place of true rest, and that place is wherever Jesus is. After all, Jesus said: “Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest... for I am gentle and humble in heart and you will find rest for your souls.”

By way of brief introduction my name is Sara and I have been a resident of Montague for the past nine years.

Since moving into the area, I have seen many changes to the landscape. The flurry of activity, particularly in the past 12 months, can only be described as dramatic. As many are already aware the Fishermans Bend redevelopment is in full swing with a school and two residential developments near completion and many more about to begin.

With all this change, it makes one think not only about where the area is headed but also about its past. A couple of months ago I made the decision to see what I could find out about the area.

On initial investigation, I have come to know that the Montague of old, was a thriving and tight-knit community. Although still part of South Melbourne, the area bordered by Ferrars St to Boundary Rd and from City Rd to the railway line became known as Montague in 1883 after the establishment of the railway station, now known as stop number 126 on the 199 Port Melbourne tram line.

In 1875, the area had about 560 homes and by the turn of the century it had increased to more than 1000 with 22 streets and lanes. It had its own kindergarten, school, church, shops, pubs, police station and even a football team, the Montague Rovers.

At least a third of the homes were owner-occupied with many working as labourers, firemen, boilermakers, mariners and shipwrights. Montague was a working-class area and even though a bit rough and tumble, it was very much loved by those who lived here.

However, the land that this community was built upon was flood prone and, as a result, many of the homes became damp and decayed. This unfortunately contributed to the government declaring the area a slum and by the late 1930s the area had been marked for demolition by the Slum Abolition Board.

Over the course of the next 30 years residents were moved on. Many moved to neighbouring Port Melbourne and some left the area altogether.

By the 1960s the area was known as an industrial hub and still is today. However, some homes and businesses remained. To date, there are 11 terrace homes from the late 1880s still standing, nine homes built by the local government in the mid 1930s and two pubs – The Fleece Hotel and Wayside Inn.

It saddens me to think that, with all the changes Montague has seen and is experiencing, its history may be lost. It is my plan to find out much more about the area particularly about those who once lived and worked here.

Buildings can come and go but it is the community spirit that we should hold on to and foster. As we move rapidly toward the future, I can only hope that new residents along with the existing can revive old Montague and become a thriving and tight-knit community once again.
Letters to the Editor

My new toy is a joy
With reference to the article “A Vertical War on Waste” (SLN64), I promptly sought out the Smart Car and on Monday contacted the distributor, Zero Waste Systems, in Perth.

By Friday I was unpacking my new toy. And what joy! As a vegetarian, I have a lot of organic food waste that goes to landfill and this incredible little machine has enabled me to utilise the waste beautifully.

It smells like cooking food in the short period when it does smell, and is amazingly quiet.

After a market day that requires washing and cutting leaves and stems etc, I have since made five kilograms of organic fruit skins and vegetable waste into gorgeous dry organic compost that has found a home at a friend’s organic home garden and farm.

Finding a use for the compost might be difficult but I can guarantee you that anyone with a few pot plants or a garden will be falling over themselves to get their hands on this beautiful waste.

Highly recommended for apartment dwellers and about the size of a bread maker, with a capacity for one kilogram of scraps. Every apartment should have one!

Maxine

Bridge pain
Most days I walk across the Spencer Street bridge over the Yarra River and each time it frustrates me to be faced with a section of it closed. I am referring to the timber-decked pedestrian crossing connected to the south side of the bridge. It has been closed for eight months and not once have I seen any maintenance works occur. The signage connected to the chain that barricades the crossing has no explanation why it is closed, when it will be repaired and no logo or name of the responsible organisation.

Why it takes eight months to repair this pedestrian section of the bridge is bewildering, amusing, frustrating and makes a mockery of Melbourne’s status of the world’s most liveable city. By the time the crossing is repaired (assuming it will be in July 2017):

• a woman could conceive and give birth to a baby
• I could fly to the moon and return to earth 45 times
• Residential houses could be constructed and the occupied by its owners
• Australia’s Jessica Watson could sail around the world solo again with months to spare
• A full season of AFL would be completed
• The entire Spencer Street bridge over the Yarra River could be reconstructed – estimate only and assumes all the relevant designs and approvals have been attained.

Fingers crossed it’s repaired before the spring weather arrives.

Peter Gibbs

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Yarra River Business Association

Looking for the reset button for river businesses

As a modern business association, we tend to be forward looking most of the time, but it pays to take a look backwards from time to time.

We were recently looking at photographs of Southbank from 30 years ago and were astonished at the changes. It continues to change every month. A new park in Riverside Quay by Mirvac and City of Melbourne is underway. The imminent refurbishment of the promenade itself is well overdue and, of course, the start of our new linear park along Southbank Boulevard later this year should transform the precinct.

However, where things have not changed in 30 years is on the water.

Apart from the provision of a bit of public berthing infrastructure installed for the Commonwealth Games (now 11 years ago), the scenario is almost identical to 1987. Is it any wonder that we lag far behind most water-based cities of the world.

The fault does not lie with the river operators. They have been surviving for decades within a highly regulated, restrictive environment that emphasises what rents and fees can be squeezed out of them, rather than one that ensures an excellent on-water customer experience.

The Yarra River Business Lunch on July 14 will, hopefully, provide an opportunity to hit the reset button for the river. We will meet and hear from the new CEO of Parks Victoria, Matthew Jackson. Matthew has a business and nature-based tourism background, so let’s hope his tenure marks the beginning of a new, business-friendly era on the Lower Yarra.

The first sign of this new era may be the new floating pontoons to be installed in front of the Southgate complex. This was secured from the State Government by the Yarra River Business Association, with co-operation from the Melbourne Passenger Boating Association. After 20 years of complaining, visitors to the Southgate Promenade will at last be able to access and exit vessels safely and comfortably.

Winter in Melbourne has gone from a season where there was little to do, apart from the footy, to the point where July school holidaymakers are spoilt for choice. The ice slide is back on Southbank Promenade, Fed Square has rolled out an even better ice rink and associated activity this year, and thanks to the partnership between Vicinity Properties (DFO) and the restaurant group Hospitality One, the western end of South Wharf Promenade has been transformed into an undercover ice rink and toboggan slide.

The Yarra River Business Association is always on the look-out for new members to help swell its ranks and make its networking even more beneficial. If you think you could be better plugged into your local business community, please drop a line to the executive officer at exoff@yarrariver.melbourne, and we’ll send an information pack.

John Forman

John Forman is the president of Yarra River Business Association. www.yarrariver.info
“Airbnb is not accommodation sharing, it is formalised lending. Uber is not ride sharing, it is a transportation service,” so writes John Harvey of the University of Nottingham.

And he continues, “The sharing economy is a harmful misnomer. It conflates people who actually share with those who make money through a collaborative consumption.”

The sharing economy or, as others prefer to call it, the “collaborative”, “peer-to-peer” or “gig” economy continues to be a hot topic in our high density precincts. And interest has again been stirred by the recent release by the Parliament of Victoria of the Inquiry into the Owners Corporations Amendment (Short-stay Accommodation) Bill 2016 (June, 2017).

Here the Hon David Davis, MLC, chair, states: “The peer-to-peer economy of is growing in importance but must be regulated properly to ensure that unintended and unforeseen impacts on others are properly and fairly managed.”

Others will, no doubt, be writing extensively on the rights and wrongs of this document, but its release raises again questions on the potential for sharing in our vertical villages.

Some of this potential was highlighted in last month’s Melbourne Conversation series where the topic was: “Will the real sharing economy please stand up?” During this event we heard from a range of speakers, including Kate Trumbull from Car Next Door (a service linking private car owners with those wishing to rent their vehicles), Julie Miller Markoff from Hive Bendigo (a co-operative which aims to help local enterprises and people “own” Bendigo’s sharing economy) and Erz Imam from depot (a co-working space for small business and creatives). All of these presenters were, unsurprisingly, proponents of the sharing economy.

However, we also heard from Associate Professor Trebor Scholz from The New School, NYC. – a scholar-activist who is significantly less enthused about the current sharing economy.

In his latest book, entitled Uberworked and Underpaid: How Workers Are Disrupting the Digital Economy Prof Scholz writes about the rise of digital labour and looks at companies like Uber and Amazon Mechanical Turk and their promise of worker autonomy, choice and flexibility. He argues that these companies are thriving at the expense of employment and worker rights and calls for a stop to wage theft and “crowd fleecing”.

Interestingly, however, Prof Scholz is not a Luddite, wishing for the return of by-gone days. Rather, he advocates for a rethink and suggests that workers band together and themselves own the technology underpinning the sharing economy. He terms these technologies “platform co-operatives” and they already exist in the likes of Stockey United and Green Taxi Co-operative (and in fact, the previously mentioned Hive is more aligned with this approach).

As regards vertical villages, the notion of a residential co-operative is well established in cities such as New York and there are many stories about prospective owners having to gain approval from difficult boards, meet rigorous income standards and abide by stringent “house rules” when renovating or selling.

Our state, however, operates differently. Rather than co-operatives, most especially those in the same building, we have much in common – the same size windows and sliding doors and the same timeframe for replacing / updating electrical fixtures (like stoves and dishwashers). By banding together, our purchasing power could be significant (we are fast approaching the 200,000 mark just in the CBD, Docklands and Southbank). Of course there are costs involved, principally in terms of negotiating the deals and administering the online platform. This is where using a co-operative structure, based upon paid membership, may appeal as the “free rider” syndrome (i.e. people who don’t contribute but receive the benefits) can be managed.

This is admittedly an old notion with a new twist, specifically an enabling platform – but isn’t that really what the sharing economy actually is?

If you would like links to the research or organisations mentioned, please visit and like SkyPad Living on Facebook.

The Victorian Parliament’s Environment and Planning Committee has recommended significant changes to a Bill before Parliament aimed at regulating short-stay accommodation.

After a successful campaign by We Live Here, the Short-stay Accommodation Bill was blocked in the upper house and referred to Parliament’s Environment and Planning Committee.

The committee included Labor, Liberal and Greens members and was chaired by the David Davis MLC.

The Bill has now been thrown back to the lower house to be rewritten virtually from scratch.

“What is clear is the Bill presented to Parliament by the government did not address many of the key issues adequately,” Mr Davis said on tabling the report.

“Many provisions in the Bill were confusing and ambiguous. Other matters raised with the committee, but clearly of concern to many apartment dwellers, were not dealt with by the Bill at all.”

The committee has recommended that the Victorian Government consider giving owners’ corporations power to regulate short-stay accommodation in their buildings.

“Recent legal cases make it clear the current law is inadequate with owners’ corporations unable to adequately regulate or manage on behalf of residents in apartment towers,” Mr Davis said.

The committee also agreed with the Tourism Accommodation Association (Vic) that the government should investigate a registration and compliance regulatory framework for short-stay accommodation providers, where properties are listed for more than 90 days or a single owner has multiple listings.

We Live Here welcomes the recommendations to address concerns that thousands of residents share about the commercial short-stay industry.

The rapid rise of commercial short-term accommodation in apartment buildings is an unregulated industry and has resulted in significant detrimental impacts for residents living in those communities, including:

- Safety and security issues;
- Higher maintenance costs due to increased wear and tear; and
- Disruption to residents through unruly, offensive or noisy behaviour of short-stay guests.

Residents right across Victoria are growing increasingly frustrated and it’stra we found a solution that puts everyone on a level playing field.

We Live Here welcomes the recommendations made and so do our members who, until now, have felt their concerns have been ignored by the government and short-stay operators.

It is gratifying to know that politicians now understand that the short-stay issue is about safety, security and the unfair cost burden on the majority of owners. The short-stay industry results in an enormous increase in wear and tear caused by the overuse of lifts and common areas by short-stay guests and the tonnes of laundry that is dragged around every year.

We Live Here believes owners’ corporations should have the right of self-determination – the ability to pass and enforce a rule which might limit commercial short-stay accommodation.

Any rule would need to be passed by special resolution, with the acceptance of 75 per cent of lot owners.

We Live Here is a voice of reason in the short-stay debate. We are here to work with all parties, to ensure a level playing field that is good for residents, for businesses and the tourism industry.

Docklands school feedback

We Live Here congratulates the Victorian School Building Authority for its community consultation workshops in Docklands last month. Community members were given a well-structured forum to discuss and document issues and priorities. An online survey was also available to gather feedback from the community.

Key themes that emerged included developing a community and natural environment – we hope the government listens.

The workshop outcomes and online feedback can be found at: engage.vic.gov.au/docklandsprimary

At the workshops the information flow was primarily from the community to the government. As the project advances we hope to see the consultation continue and for detailed information to be published as it becomes available.

We Live Here will continue to support the Docklands school as an important part of developing a local community.

Campaign donations

As a not-for-profit organisation, donations from individuals and buildings keep our campaigns going. A special thank-you to those behind the generous and important financial support we have received recently.

To register as a supporter of We Live Here or to make a donation please visit our website at welivehere.net

We Live Here

ISSUE 65 | SOUTHBANK LOCAL NEWS | 19

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e-mails to campaign@ welivehere.net

Janette Corcoran

APARTMENT LIVING EXPERT

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Coffee meets culture

Southbank locals Anders McDonald and Paul Cook have joined forces to provide residents and workers with an added daily slice of culture to go with their coffees.

Having owned and operated Chelsini’s at Freshwater Arcade for the best part of eight years, Paul recently decided it was time to freshen up the look of his popular cafe. Five-year Eureka Tower resident Anders has been a regular at Paul’s coffee shop for much of his time as a Southbanker and they have become good friends over that period.

After completing the makeover of his new-look store, Paul, who is also a former Southbanker himself, had a freshened but empty wall space that required a bit of extra love.

Anders, a professional photographer, has since helped to fill the space with his images and he said the initiative had been great for both adding to Paul’s cafe and providing him with a space to exhibit.

“This is the first time I’ve exhibited and it’s been a really good joint venture between Paul and I and we’ve come up with something a bit different,” Anders said.

“Paul is a real people-person. Part of the reason you come here is because he’s a really good bloke and he looks after the customers and I’m fussy about my coffee and the way I’m treated and I wouldn’t go anywhere else.”

While he made his career as a consultant, Anders recently revisited his lifelong passion for taking photos by enrolling in a course at the Photography Studies College (PSC) on City Rd. His talents have already been recognized by the Australian Institute of Professional Photography (AIPP) and images from his latest series, Furtive, are currently on display and up for sale at Chelsini’s.

Having been well received by the local community, Anders will feature different series in three-month cycles with Paul, saying that it had been a great initiative for his business.

“When I started looking at renovations here there were so many ideas that I could take away but I really like the wood and with the frames and the couches the tones work really well,” he said.

“We used to have computer discs and pacman on the wall so it just wasn’t marrying to what the shop was. It’s now got a flow and aesthetically I’m convinced that we’ve got a more inviting space.”

Paul said that, while working in the Freshwater Arcade precinct had its challenges, the biggest positive about operating in the area was the sense of community amongst residents, workers and other tenants.

“It sounds very cliche but there is a lot of community down here,” Paul said.

“Particularly being a barista, it’s highly competitive but you get to have a lot of interactions and people really bond with your style and vice versa, so it’s really hard to have a bad day.”

And there is no better reflection of this community spirit than his friendship with Anders, who said that he “absolutely loved” life in Southbank.

Chelsini’s is located at 3 Freshwater Place, Southbank inside the arcade. To view Anders’ work or to get in touch visit andersartgallery.

History

The 1930s saw a revolution in hospital design in Melbourne, with a series of new hospitals constructed in the inner east, such as the Freemasons, the Mercy, St Vincent’s and the Epworth.

Styling was based on a European model, with wide balconies, colourful interiors, the latest machinery and equipment used to efficiently provide meals, the most up-to-date facilities in operating theatres, and the latest materials used to minimise dirt and dust.

On the south side of the city, Prince Henry’s Hospital (PHH) began to arise on St Kilda Rd in 1936 on a site next to the Melbourne Homoeopathic Hospital. PHH was built in sections and designed in the latest style (now known as Art Deco). The centrepiece was the highly stylised and rectangular 11-storey cream brick central block that dominated the skyline of what is now Southbank when it opened in October 1940.

The architectural firm of Leighton & Irwin was responsible for Prince Henry’s (and a number of other hospitals) and their design embraced the principles of fresh air, cleanliness and space and included facilities for out-patients, casualty, pathology and a nurses’ home.

As well as providing a full range of diagnostic, surgical (with air-conditioned operating theatres) and recuperative services for the sick, it was a fine teaching hospital. It supported about 330 beds and an extensive medical research division.

As usually happened in the development of hospitals, large sums of money were raised from the local community by auxiliary committees at events such as balls, fetes, community singing nights, massed-band performances on the MCG, card nights, sporting events (monster sports galas). Grants were also provided by South Melbourne Council.
Getting back to basics

– eat well, move and focus on happiness!

The healthy eating pyramid

I am constantly amazed at just how many people discredit the healthy eating pyramid that has continually evolved for over 30 years by Nutrition Australia and in 2015 was re-launched with a fresh new look and targeted health messages.

Here is the problem. Our nation continues to increase its overweight and obese population at an alarming rate and people keep blaming the pyramid for this increase yet, guess what? Very few people actually follow the guidelines?

If they did then I am almost certain that there would be a decrease in these rates of overweight and obese Australians. Instead, everyone seems to want to follow so-called celebrities such as Pete Evans or many others that push health supplements (ie. Anthony Knutafides and Herbalife) which is fast-becoming a multi-million-dollar industry.

Sure, we are all very different and there is no diet that suits everyone but we could all get back to basics and each as much unprocessed and fresh food and we would be a lot better off. Look up the healthy eating pyramid and see how you compare.

Move more

This sounds very simple but on the whole, we are either just getting too lazy or we are working way more and neglecting our health in the process. Perhaps it is a combination of the two?

There has been a massive increase in wearable devices and as a result more and more people are aware that we need to try and accumulate 10,000 steps or more in a day. This is a great start and I urge you all to take the necessary steps (pardon the pun) to increase how much you move over the course of a day, but I ask you, is that enough?

It is all good and well to focus on walking but it is our most basic and primitive movement pattern. We do it daily without raising a sweat and our bodies are very much conditioned to it.

What I feel we all need to do is find another form of activity to supplement this. Be it running, cycling, swimming, playing a team or individual sport, yoga, Pilates, tai-chi, I think we all need to find that extra “something” and commit to it once or twice a week.

Better still, and what I feel everyone should do, is a personally designed resistance or weights program that you can do at home, in a park or at the gym. It will help increase your metabolism, make you stronger, feel better, improve posture and really add something that your body needs!

Focus on happiness!

July 1 will be 20 years since I first started my career as a personal trainer and it is fair to say I have seen every type of client under the sun.

They all come with their needs and their wants and many of them are aesthetic and focused on looking better. As I have evolved and grown and as a father of three kids, I urge all of my and our clients to focus on happiness.

At the end of the day, we all want to be happy and I urge you to all take the time to reflect on your life, your relationships, your career and ask yourself “am I happy?”

Then set yourself (or seek guidance) some strategies that will make you happier and lead a more fulfilling life.

You will find that beneath all of this it may mean you would like to exercise more, it may mean more sleep, more holidays, work harder because you love your work. Whatever it is, focus on being happy and start today. Happiness should become your number one goal.

Justin Moran
Justin Moran is the Owner of Just In Time Personal Training.  www.justintimept.com

SOUTHBANK SUDOKU

A variation of Sudoku, with the letters SOUTHBANK replacing the numbers.

The rules are the same as regular Sudoku, each line of the must contain the letters SOUTHBANK as must each 9-square box.

This Sudoku is MEDIUM! Good Luck!

Last month’s Sudoku solution

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