

The voice of Southbank

SOUTHBANK Local NEWS

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Planning Minister stands firm on overshadowing

By Sean Car

In a decision that stunned many, Planning Minister Richard Wynne knocked back a \$1 billion proposal for 447 Collins St in the CBD last month, ruling that it would have “overshadowed the south bank of the Yarra River”.

On April 5, Minister Wynne announced that a negotiated outcome had been reached with developer Cbus for a development 21.6 metres shorter than the 164-metre proposal he rejected in March.

Cbus will now submit amended plans, which do not breach overshadowing prohibitions, before a building permit is granted.

Mr Wynne said amenity shouldn't be sacrificed for new developments and that the Government had helped deliver an outcome that contributed to the city while protecting the Yarra River.

“This project takes in an entire city block and we have taken the time to make sure we provide for a future landmark,” he said.

While a negotiated outcome has now been reached, Mr Wynne's decision left City of Melbourne councillors scathing last month, after they unanimously gave their approval to “minimalised overshadowing” last year in exchange for 2000 sqm of public space.

Lord Mayor Robert Doyle came out publicly last month slamming the decision, while the City of Melbourne's chair of planning Cr Ken Ong said “it sent a bad message to investment in our city”.

It marked the second time Cbus had plans rejected for the site after former planning minister Matthew Guy refused its original proposal in 2014 for a 300-metre tower that would have overshadowed Queensbridge Square.

After returning with plans for an eye-catching dual 47-storey tower, many had expected it to be a case of second time lucky for the developer, with its shorter proposal casting a shadow that would have just reached Southbank.

While the Melbourne Planning Scheme prohibits development casting a shadow over both the north and south banks between 11am and 2pm, councillors saw the proposal as a positive investment for a prominent city block.

Answering to the Lord Mayor's claims that the site had now become a planning political pawn, Mr Wynne told ABC Radio last month that the reasoning for rejection was simple.

“It's a building that was proposed at 164 metres which, in fact, overshadowed the south bank of the Yarra River,” he said.

Continued on page 5.



(Left to right) Emily Jory, First Cnst Steph Amote, Sgt John Colland and Snr Sgt Steve Bills at their new home.

Our police move in

The long awaited Southbank Police Station finally opened its doors this month, much to the delight of station commander Snr Sgt Steve Bills and his team. Read more on page 3.

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New hope for river governance reform

By Shane Scanlan

Local communities are confident that long-overdue reform of how our waterways are governed will be achieved, following a deputation to Environment Minister, Lisa Neville, last month.

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Deputation members have reported that Ms Neville has directed departmental staff to pursue the establishment of a single, independent waterways authority.

While no official announcement is expected, it is understood that Ms Neville supports the reform and has asked her bureaucrats to work out the best way to achieve it.

Waterways governance reform has long been an objective of the Yarra River Business Association (YRBA), the Melbourne Passenger Boat Association (MPBA) and the Docklands Chamber of Commerce.

Both the YRBA and the MPBA were represented on the recently-completed Lower Yarra River Use Future Directions Group's (LYRUFDDG) which last year recommended the formation of an interim committee charged with working towards a single, independent waterways authority.

However, in late February, departmental representatives told working group members that Ms Neville had rejected the governance recommendations.

Business members on the LYRUFDDG were bitterly disappointed but had taken heart from some yet-to-be-announced funding for badly needed local infrastructure and other sweeteners.

They have been reluctant to publicly comment further on the governance issue for fear of jeopardising the expected infrastructure improvements.

It appears that the Minister had, in fact, not rejected the reform agenda and has



now taken a personal interest in achieving appropriate governance.

As a result of the delegation, an event has been organised to consult further with the local community on the governance issue.

It is on Thursday, April 28 at Berth restaurant, 45 NewQuay Promenade, Docklands, at 5.45pm for a 6pm start.

Limited seats are available and participants must register to attend by emailing the Docklands Chamber of Commerce at admin@docklandsc.com.au

At the time of printing, it was uncertain whether Ms Neville herself would be attending, but delegation members reported

that she expressed a desire to attend.

The delegation was led by the Docklands Chamber of Commerce and included Docklands Community Forum and residential representatives.

The group presented Ms Neville with a document outlining its vision for the waterways and views on the current situation, including a series of case studies outlining how the current model is failing the waterways and the community.

This document can be found at:

www.docklandsc.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/Lisa-Neville-Deputation.pdf.



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Even more call Southbank home

By Nicholas Li

The latest figures from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) show that Southbank's current estimated population is 18,192.

According to the ABS data, a population increase of 1300 inhabitants in Southbank occurred between 2014 and 2015.

The findings show that Southbank's 8 per cent growth was the fourth highest amongst inner-Melbourne suburbs. Docklands experienced the most growth with 8.8 per cent, followed by Collingwood (8.6) and the CBD (8.3).

Southbank also reinforced its title as Australia's densest suburb, with figures showing that an extra 440 inhabitants per square metre were added to our suburb over the past year.

Southbank Residents' Association president Tony Penna said that while he wasn't surprised by the surge in Southbank's population, it did emphasise how desperately more public open space and community infrastructure was required.

Updates regarding the City Rd master plan, Southbank Boulevard transformation and Riverside Quay urban renewal project are expected to be provided by the City of Melbourne in the coming months, while plans for Boyd Park still remain uncertain.

Planning Minister Richard Wynne said, given the increases, improving access to services

in the city would be essential in the ongoing efforts to cater for growth.

"We need to make sure housing is available to everyone, delivering housing options through the city with the access to education, health services and transport people deserve," he said.

The State Government has targeted improving housing affordability by encouraging development across the city and Mr Wynne said proper planning was required.

"We are the world's most liveable city. People are naturally drawn to Melbourne and we

need to plan accordingly," he said.

More generally, the latest figures show Melbourne's population growth went up 2.1 per cent - adding 91,600 people during the year.

Despite being down from 2.2 per cent from the year prior, Melbourne is still experiencing the nation's fastest growth, ahead of Darwin, which is growing at 1.9 per cent.

Plans to develop an extra 640 hectares of land within five km of the CBD are currently under review.

Our police move in

From page 1.

The long awaited Southbank Police Station at 66 Moray St finally opened its doors for service this month, much to the delight of station commander Snr Sgt Steve Bills and his team.

Having operated out of the cramped and less suitably positioned St Kilda Rd Police Station for nearly 30 years, Snr Sgt Bills said they were now in an ideal location to better serve their local community.

"The station is about four times the size of what we had. We have modern, up-to-date facilities to run a professional police service from so we're very pleased to be here," he said.

"It's a good location for us - better than where we were from the point of view of where the majority of our work comes from. It's more accessible to the community that

we actually service."

The station's response zone covers from Yarra River in the north, Punt Rd to the east, High St to the south, St Kilda Rd to Dorcas St, and Kings Way to the Westgate Freeway. It also takes in Webb Dock.

Snr Sgt Bills said the Moray St location was also perfectly placed to help police access the busy Southbank promenade and entertainment precincts.

Counter service has officially begun operating and the station's new phone number is **8635 0900**.



The new Southbank Police Station at 66 Moray St is now open.



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Residents a low priority for council election

By Shane Scanlan

If you are a Southbank resident, the chances are you won't be voting in the council election to be held later this year, but your landlord probably will.

About a third of Southbank's residents appear to be enrolled to vote and, even then, there is little confidence in the accuracy of the roll.

According to the Victorian Electoral Commission, at the most recent count only 6732 locals were on the roll. According to latest ABS data it's estimated that 18,192 people now live in Southbank.

Under the current rules, a resident must apply to be enrolled to vote. Property owners, on the other hand, are enrolled automatically via the City of Melbourne's rates data.

Critics of the current system say there are many ways it unfairly favours business and non-resident landlord interests at the expense of local residents.

Business votes are actively pursued and council officers are currently surveying the municipality to ensure all eligible business occupiers are enrolled.

In a move that will somewhat address this

imbalance, the council will later in the year write to residential addresses where it knows no one is enrolled. But history shows that residents play only a small part in elections.

In 2012, the municipality had a residential population of about 110,000 but only 43,789 were enrolled to vote at the council election that year. Residential representation made up only 40.3 per cent of the voter roll in 2012.

Also in 2012, less than 60 per cent of enrolled voters bothered to cast a ballot at all.

It has been estimated that only 16 per cent of the total enrolled voters in the City of Melbourne can these days be "door-knocked". These voters are generally residents living in the more-established residential areas such as Carlton, North Melbourne, Kensington, East Melbourne and South Yarra.

In Southbank (and other urban renewal areas such as CBD and Docklands), residential voters generally live in "gated" communities and also no longer use land-

lines so they can't be contacted via phone..

Adding further to the disproportionate representation are entrenched transience and extremely high levels of overseas-born, language-challenged residents in urban renewal areas like Southbank.

Reaching these people and encouraging them to, firstly, enroll and then vote is increasingly difficult for residentially-focused candidates.

Expensive Australia Post-delivered, addressed mail is only really an option for the well-funded campaigns (did I hear anyone mention developer contributions?).

It also appears that hyper-local newspapers like this one are not on the radar of the advertising purchasing authorities.

For local residents, it is most likely that the October 22 City of Melbourne election will pass you by. You are too hard to reach for those who want your vote - which is exactly the way those who don't want you to vote would like it to stay.



Witness appeal

Police are appealing for details relating to an alleged robbery on February 11.

The robbery occurred in the mailroom of an apartment complex at Southbank Boulevard at approximately 8.15pm.

A man allegedly stole the mail of one of the apartment's occupants, forcing open a mailbox, and leaving after obtaining the contents.

Police have released CCTV images of a man they wish to speak to. He is described as bald and of a stocky build, with a fair complexion.

The man is about 183 cm tall, has a tattoo on his upper right arm and was dressed in a black t-shirt and shorts.

At the time of the alleged incident, he was seen wearing sunglasses on his head and wearing white runners.

If you have any information please contact crime stoppers at **1800 333 000** or visit www.crimestoppersvic.com.au



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WHERE THE HEART BEATS!

Planning Minister stands firm on overshadowing

Continued from page 1.

"It's in breach of the council's own planning controls so if the Lord Mayor is not prepared to stand by his own planning controls I will."

However, while the development was undoubtedly in breach of the north bank provisions, questions were raised regarding the minister's defiance that it would have overshadowed Southbank between the stipulated hours.

In their report last year, council planning officers had determined that the shadow would have only touched the edge of the south bank at the 2pm cutoff, which was ruled as not breaching the Southbank prohibitions.

When contacted by *Southbank Local News*, the planning minister confirmed that the shadow would have only skimmed Southbank.

"We're looking at an entire city block and a proposal, which would cast a shadow on the Northbank while skimming the Southbank," he said.

"I have been unequivocal from the beginning of my time as Planning Minister that I will protect the Yarra River from shadowing."

And, while the development would have been one of several others that already cast a shadow over the north bank, Mr Wynne said he didn't believe a precedent should be set.



An image from the City of Melbourne's planning report for 447 Collins St, which shows the shadow at the stipulated 2pm deadline just reaching Southbank.

The decision frustrated Cr Ken Ong, who argued that the overshadowing prohibition was only "discretionary".

"The proposal was judged against the original Melbourne Planning Scheme and it doesn't overshadow Southbank," he said.

"The new application had minimalised shadowing and we don't just look at the

height but how it will link people, movement and open space. The site had been misused for years and we thought this was a much better outcome."

Since Mr Wynne introduced amendment C262 last year, which implemented new interim planning controls, Cr Ong stated that the decision marked the first time council had been kept out of the planning process.

"A positive aspect of C262 was the agreement between council and the State Government to correspond more closely, which has been the case until now," he said.

"The minister has reached a point where he's decided he can make a decision irrespective of what the City of Melbourne is recommending."

"All I heard from my correspondence from the department was that it was likely to be rejected. I'm disappointed that this is the outcome as the department never came back to council about what could be done."

While council was left outraged, Southbank Residents' Association president Tony Penna applauded the minister's decision.

"From the beginning, we have fought hard to get this development to conform to the planning scheme to ensure the riverbank amenity is protected," he said.

"It appears developers just don't seem to care and expect that special consideration will be a given."

"This sends a strong message to developers to ensure they do their due-diligence before purchasing development sites to ensure they are able to turn a profit based on the planning scheme and not ask for special consideration."

Cbus was contacted by *Southbank Local News* for comment but did not respond.



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The sky is not the limit. The sewer is!

Southbank's sewerage system can't cope with projected growth and will have to be upgraded, according to the responsible water authority.

South East Water says the current system can barely deal with projected growth, but it will be working with the City of Melbourne and other relevant planning authorities to future-proof the ageing infrastructure.

According to the City of Melbourne's development monitor, Southbank is currently home to 8238 apartments and a further 16,180 are under construction, applied for, approved or mooted.

South East Water's media and issues advisor Matt Mollett said that, while the existing system had the capacity to allow for more growth, works were urgently required to cater for the huge influx of development.

"South East Water has rigorous monitoring and planning processes in place for the Southbank area, which oversee existing flows and capacity and predict future network requirements based on anticipated development," he said.

"While the area's existing sewer infrastructure still has room to allow for growth, its original design was for commercial and industrial use and, therefore, significant upgrades are planned for its two sewer mains."

"As with all major infrastructure projects,

we'll be working closely with local authorities and developers to deliver these improvements in a timeframe that supports new developments."

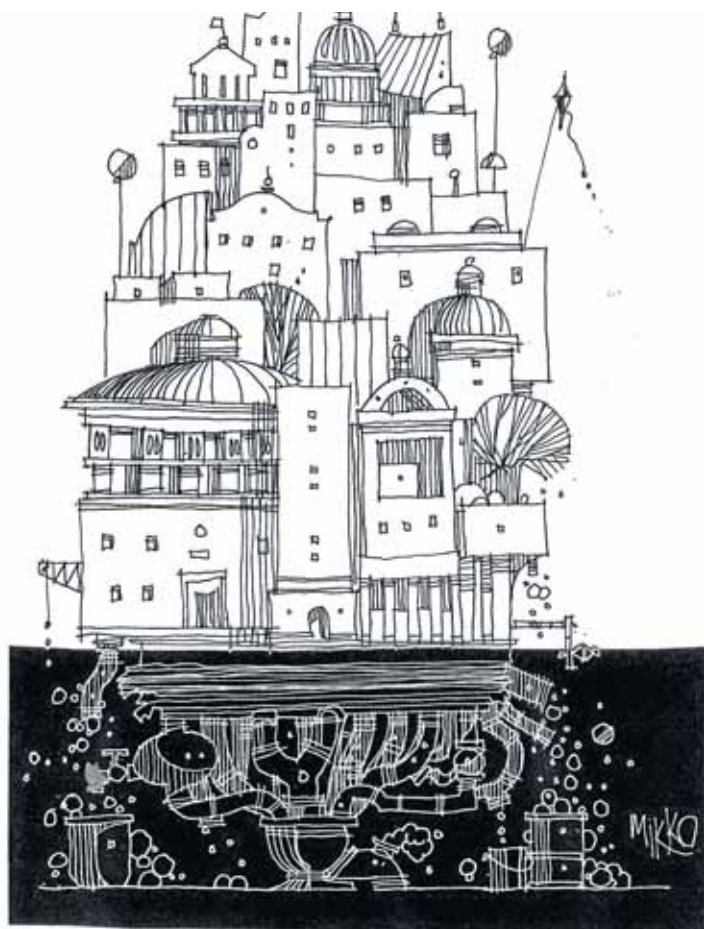
All of us can see the effects of population pressure on Southbank traffic and pedestrian use, with the latest ABS figures revealing that more than 18,000 people now call our suburb home.

And, with a finite amount of public space, there is a physical limit to growth.

So too, is there a physical limit on the subterranean services such as storm water, sewerage, potable water and, to a lesser degree, gas, electricity and telecommunications.

South East Water points out that a large proportion of its water and sewerage system dates back to the 19th century. It stands to reason that, as one of the oldest parts of Melbourne, Southbank has more than its fair share of ageing infrastructure.

While the water authority didn't provide a timeframe for which upgrade works would get underway, it is clear that the need to address growing development in Southbank is high on its radar.



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*ABC News | "Same-sex marriage plebiscite to cost \$525m" <http://goo.gl/37s4m6>



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A “gross overdevelopment”

City of Melbourne councillors lined up to express their frustration last month after they had no other choice but to approve a 20-storey development on Wells Place in Southbank.

The matter, which went before councillors at the Future Melbourne Committee meeting on March 16, drew a hostile response from councillors.

Despite receiving 33 written objections and obvious distain from all councillors, developer Headland Properties was issued with a permit to construct a slender 66-metre tower on a 202 sqm laneway site.

In what was an amended application, the City of Melbourne was initially forced to grant the developer a permit for a 17-storey tower in 2014 having taken it to VCAT on a number of concerns relating to safety and Victorian safe design standards.

However, after VCAT ruled that the Melbourne Planning Scheme did not place any restrictions on the developer, a mediated outcome has since led to an amended permit with what Cr Cathy Oke called “a whole lot of conditions”.

Key changes recommended by council’s planning officers included the provision of two apartments per floor (levels five and above) and the introduction of one-metre deep balconies south side of the tower to boost internal amenity.

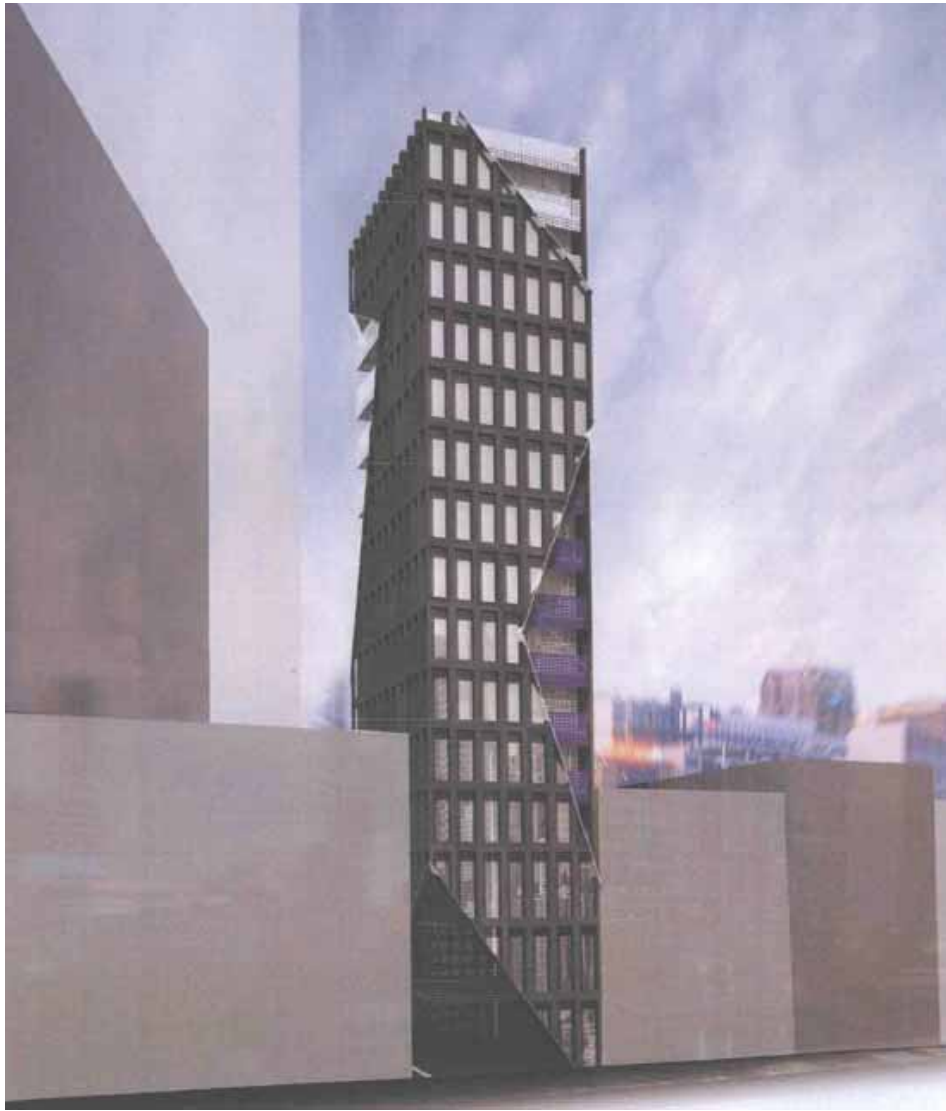
The building will comprise 32 apartments (two, two-bedroom and 30 one-bedroom), 14 car parks, 16 bike spaces and, according to councillors, a less than sufficient two-metre setback from its southern boundary.

Cr Rohan Leppert described it as one of the worst planning outcomes that had he’d ever encountered in the City of Melbourne, but said council had no choice but to support it.

“I think this a pretty shocking planning outcome for the City of Melbourne and it has to be in my top five or top three worst planning outcomes for the City of Melbourne, which I’m nevertheless supporting,” he said.

“Given VCAT’s history on this one it’s with no great pleasure that I think we’re left in no other position but to support this but I finish as I started by saying that I think this is quite a terrible outcome for planning in the City of Melbourne.”

Deputy Lord Mayor Susan Riley lined



Designs for 22-24 Wells Place, Southbank.

Image: The City of Melbourne.

up behind Cr Beverley Pinder Mortimer, Cr Arron Wood and Cr Cathy Oke to slam the proposal, labeling it a “gross overdevelopment”.

“To be quite frank I’m very reluctant to support this because it really is a gross overdevelopment on a handkerchief size piece of land that will not contribute to a good tapestry of the street,” she said.

Cr Stephen Mayne was last to weigh in on the discussion stating that, while council had done everything it could to prevent the development from going ahead, it had been “boxed in by VCAT”.

“I wonder if we should all hold our noses while we vote, I think this is the least emphatic unanimous vote I’ve ever been involved in,” he said.

“It’s almost like putting a dirty pair of socks in the laundry basket but clearly the sentiment is clear here.”

“You you have to think about what the outcome will be at VCAT and spending ratepayers money at VCAT and on balance I think we’ve got to the right position but I think we’ve made it abundantly clear that no one’s happy about it.”

Surge in crime

Southbank experienced a record increase in crime in 2015, according to statistics released last month.

Statistics show 2885 crimes were reported in Southbank in 2015, up a staggering 16.8 per cent on 2014.

While Southbank crimes comprised just 9 per cent of the total recorded crimes in Melbourne municipality, it reflects a negative trend that hasn’t seen a decrease since 2011.

The statistics show an overall increase in total crime in the Melbourne area, up from 32,747 crimes in 2014 to 33,334 offences in 2015.

Of these, the majority were recorded in Melbourne’s CBD, with 22,080 offences in 2015.

According to Southbank Police Station commander Snr Sgt Steve Bills, the overall crime increase in Melbourne, and particularly Southbank, was driven by property-related crime.

“I feel like I’m repeating myself again and again but the majority of the contribution for this latest spike is what we call property-related crime – so theft from motor vehicles, theft of motor vehicles,” he said.

“Particularly around Southbank, with all of our vertical housing, crime is around people not locking their storage cages because they don’t lock their cars, they don’t lock their storage cages because they believe that they’re in a secure area.”

Snr Sgt Bills urged residents to exercise greater vigilance with their belongings as property related crimes were very difficult to police.

“Unfortunately there’s not a lot that we can do about it because they’re very difficult crimes to prevent and the best way of prevention is from community involvement,” he said.

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Controversial tower on the market

In an approval that was slammed by Lord Mayor Robert Doyle in 2013, the slender 74-storey Elysium tower site has been put on the market by its developer.

The 54-56 Clarke St site, which currently holds an approved permit for the mega tower, was put up for sale by developer Matrix and Cube last month.

The proposed tower was slammed by residents of neighbouring towers as well as the City of Melbourne after it was approved by former planning minister Matthew Guy. The council took Mr Guy to VCAT over the approval.

While Mr Guy hailed it as a “revolutionary change for the way that we design buildings in Melbourne,” the Lord Mayor labeled the approval as “bad strategic planning”.

Designed by BKK Architects, the 244-metre tower will comprise 270 apartments.

While the development is currently listed with two different real estate companies, the project still has its own website, which allows parties to register interest.

An expression of interest campaign for the site’s sale is expected to run until April 11.



A visual render of Elysium. Image: BKK Architects.

A Big Belly of rubbish

By Nick Li

Three new Big Belly bins have been installed at Queensbridge Square in a new push by the City Of Melbourne to improve waste management.

At \$6000 a pop, the eco-friendly bins can hold up to 560 litres of rubbish, seven times more than a standard bin.

Lord Mayor Robert Doyle said the bins were the first of their kind in Victoria and would make collection more efficient.

“This is the first time these high-tech bins have been installed in Victoria,” he said.

“The bins include sensor technology that is solar powered, but the great thing about them is that they also compact rubbish as it’s collected, allowing them to fit more in.”

“A contractor is then alerted when the bin is 70 per cent full and needs emptying within the hour.”

In busy city areas, such as Flinders Street Station, bins are collected up to six to eight times a day.

Chair of the City of Melbourne’s environmental portfolio, Cr Arron Wood, said smaller bins across the city would be slowly phased out.

“We’ve also designed larger 240 litre steel bins to replace our standard 80 litre bins,” he said.



One of the new bins, which have been installed at Queensbridge Square.

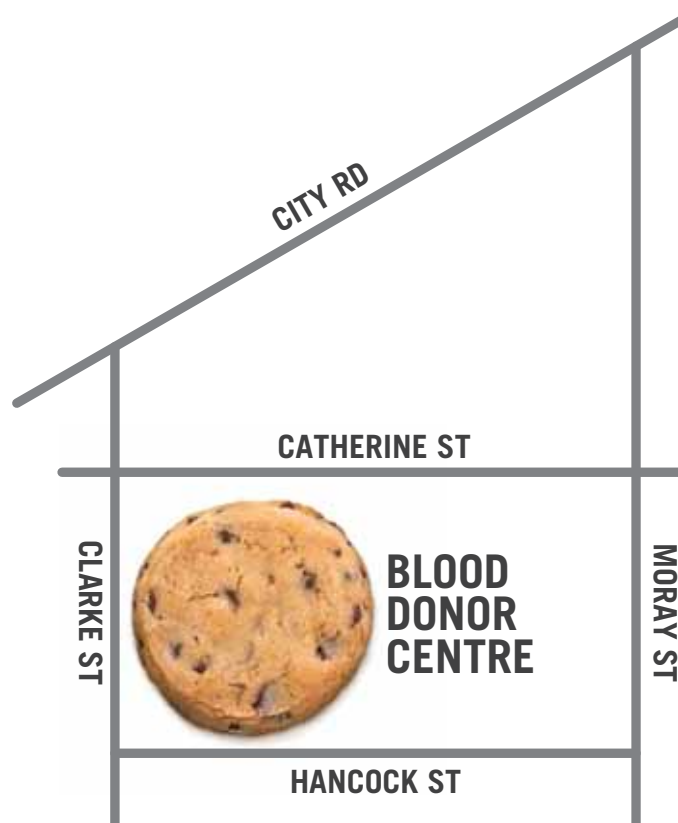
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The art of a true gift

A plaque was installed at the Donor Tissue Bank in Southbank last month, placing the finishing touch on artist and former Victorian emergency services commissioner Bruce Esplin's sculpture "The Gift".

As Victoria's first and longest-serving emergency services commissioner, it was this experience as well as his creative abilities as a renowned sculptor that led to the Tissue Bank approaching him to create the piece.

Tucked away at the front of the facility on Moore St, Bruce said the sculpture was the culmination of more than two years of tireless research, discussion and thought.

"One of the biggest privileges in my life was being asked to do this piece and it took a long time because I wanted it to be right and I wanted it to capture as much of the story as possible. There is a lot of emotion in it," he said.

"After a lot of discussion, we came up with the title *The Gift* because the reality is that it's a really significant gift that, at a minimum, can improve the quality of life of somebody and, at a maximum, can save a life and give them a life where they might not have had a life."

The Gift is an encapsulation of stories and vignettes detailing the emotions and issues surrounding tissue and organ donation in Australia and the story is told through two sculpted hands.

Carved in wood and cast in bronze and corten steel, Bruce said the colours reflected "the warmth of humanity". The piece features one hand giving and one receiving – each supported on a separate column.

The big, yet slim, receiving hand reflects fragility while the strong giving hand is attached to a spiraled arm, which Bruce described as "the spiral of despair" to reflect the rollercoaster of emotions from which a donation is often made from.

Each hand sits on top of its own column, reflecting the community in need and the community that can help. Both pillars are connected and disconnected by matte finished steel rods to symbolise conversations between nurses and families and the tissue donations that sometimes don't work out.

"That was really important to get that



Artist Bruce Esplin alongside his sculpture *The Gift*, which has been installed at the Donor Tissue Bank on Moore St.

message out there – that it's not a straight forward clinical supermarket arrangement. There are people and feelings deeply involved and there's only a short period of time for these questions to be asked," Bruce explained.

"At a time when people's emotions are at their rawest, these incredibly sensitive nurses make that first conversation about tissue donation, which is just incredible."

Another important symbol of the piece is the manner in which the receiving hand "comes out from the dark" under a stainless steel sheet which Bruce said reflected the nature of the conversation around tissue donation in Australia.

"There are a lot of metaphors and it's designed to stimulate the discussion and I've got a pretty strong view that we don't have it right in Australia. I think we don't talk about it enough," he said.

"I think there's so many people waiting for help and so much help that could be given. We really need to have a mature discussion around it and I hope that my sculpture can play a part in stimulating that discussion."

Head of the Donor Tissue Bank of Victoria, Stefan Poniatowski, said Bruce's sculpture perfectly summarised the emotions and complexities surrounding the issue.

"I think it's brilliant, I think it's absolutely nailed what the issues are and it does stimulate the conversation," he said.

"That's all that we're asking people to do is think about it, have a discussion about it and to make a decision really so even if that decision is no then that's fine."

The Gift is located at the end of Moore St in Southbank out the front of the Donor Tissue Bank. Next time you're in the area, feel free to wander down and observe this important public artwork.

Recognition for small businesses

Eligible local small businesses are invited to apply for this year's Lord Mayor's Commendations.

The annual awards, which started in 2005, recognise the commitment of long-term independent small and multi-generational businesses.

Business owners are eligible to apply for a bronze commendation after 10 or more years of operation in the municipality, a silver commendation after 25 or more years of operation, a gold commendation after 40 or more years and a platinum commendation after 50 or more years.

Families that have operated the same business in Melbourne for more than three generations are eligible for the Generational Family Business Commendation.

According to Lord Mayor Robert Doyle, small operators make up 80 per cent of all businesses in the City of Melbourne.

"Small businesses are the backbone of our healthy economy, they add character, colour and vibrancy to our streets, are a significant source of employment and enhance our reputation as the world's most liveable city," Cr Doyle said.

"Applications for this year's commendations are now open and I encourage operators and their customers to nominate and be part of this uniquely Melbourne tradition."

Since 2005 the commendations have recognised more than 500 small business owners, 18 family businesses and 20 recipients who had been in business in Melbourne for more than 50 years.

Applications are open until Friday, May 20 and the ceremony will be held on September 7.

For information visit www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/about-melbourne/celebrating-melbourne/lord-mayors-commendations or call 9658 9658.

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Left: (left to right) Southbank Donor Centre staff members Laura, Natalie, Sean, Shalini and Gantcho prepare to move to their new look centre on Collins St in the CBD (right).

Red Cross farewells Southbank centre

It's an exciting time for the Australian Red Cross Blood Service, as Southbank Donor Centre staff and donors prepare to farewell the facility and merge with the Bourke St Donor Centre next month.

The two centres will form Australia's largest donor centre on May 23 and the new centre will be open seven days a week, with around 60,000 donations expected to be collected in the first year of operations.

Blood Service spokesperson Doug Allen explained that, despite the excitement around the move, the Blood Service was concerned locals may hold off donating until the end of May.

"The teams and many of the donors are looking forward to moving into the state-of-the-art facility on Collins St in May," Mr Allen said.

"We are concerned, however, some donors may put off donating until we're in the new facility. We really need locals to continue donating at the Southbank Donor Centre on

Clarke St until final collections on May 20."

"Patients are relying on those donations coming in so it's absolutely vital people continue to give before we move - we still need you."

The merger was announced in June 2015 with the new donor centre expected to cost around \$3.85 million at completion.

Located at Level 1, 367 Collins St the centre is ideally located around 10 minutes from the two existing centres.

Mr Allen explained that the two centres were merging due to a need to streamline its inner city service.

"We currently have two large donor centres located within 1.8 km of each other," he said.

"Both sites were on the cards to be relocated and when we found this site it offered us the perfect footprint and location to create Australia's biggest donor centre."

"We'll be able to provide our donors with state-of-the-art facilities, fantastic access to public transport and also car parking."

"The change means we will be better equipped to meet the needs of patients now, and also cater for any future changes in demand for blood and blood products."

Mr Allen was also keen to put at ease those donors wondering if they'll still see the friendly and familiar faces from Southbank at the new site.

"We're very pleased to confirm all our staff from both donor centres will be making the

move with us, so donors will continue to see those familiar faces along with meeting some new ones," he said.

The Southbank Donor Centre (located at Level 1, 51-65 Clarke St, Southbank) is open six days a week to collect blood donations from the local community.

To make your appointment to donate please call **13 14 95** or visit **www.donateblood.com.au/make-appointment**

The centre is open from Monday to Thursday (7am to 7pm), Friday (7am to 6pm, closed on Saturdays and Sunday (8am to 3.30pm). Donors can find out more information about the move by visiting **www.donateblood.com.au/melbournecbd**



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BAR AND KITCHEN

Bitcoin opens for Knowledge Week

By Ella Gibson

“Connecting minds and creating change” – those are the values behind Melbourne Knowledge Week. The festival runs from May 2 to 8 and revolves around exploring innovations, collaborating with experts and grappling with the interconnected challenges and opportunities our city is facing.

And on May 3, the festival will come to Southbank when the Melbourne Bitcoin Technology Centre on City Rd hosts a talk on the many aspects surrounding its groundbreaking crypto currency technology.

The talk will discuss the ways in which Bitcoin is changing the landscape of electronic trade and payment and what Bitcoin has to offer individuals and groups in the local community.

Having spent the last 18 months pushing for a listing on the Australian Stock Exchange (ASX), Bitcoin business development manager Martin Davidson said the group was now looking to engage more with the local community.

“That is a real opportunity for us to really leverage our success because while we didn’t list on the ASX it’s a huge sign that people want to invest in this technology,” he said.

“We’re now consolidating our output and looking to re-launch the website and articulate the value proposition of what we’re trying to develop for small businesses and the local community.”



(left to right) Pantelis Roussakis, Ian Dickson, Martin Davidson and Jim Chen.

After launching a replacement prospectus on September 4, Bitcoin Group (BG) managed to raise \$5.9 million in the IPO. However, due to regulatory hurdles it wasn’t accepted, and has suspended its offer until it’s able to apply again.

A Federal Senate inquiry last year into Bitcoin resulted in the Australian Digital Currency Association (ADCA) suggesting that Bitcoin should be treated as a currency rather than a tangible asset subject to GST.

This is good news for potential Bitcoin adoption, as merchants are far more likely to accept a currency they don’t have to pay tax on.

Mr Davidson said the centre was now looking to open its doors to the community in an effort to educate the public about the advantages of Bitcoin technology.

“As more people start to use the technology and become more educated about how it works then regulation will hopefully accommodate that,” he said.

“Per capita users are high, but population-wise it’s still quite low,” he said.

Within the Southbank community centre, Bitcoin has 20 co-working spaces available for public use and the centre hosts a number of regular events and workshops as well as ongoing RMIT student projects.

During Knowledge Week, the centre will host an open day including information sessions and workshop presentations.

To find out more visit www.bitcoingroup.com.au

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Left: Playgroup was in full swing for the record breaking event. Right: The Australian Book of Records founder Helen Taylor, Minister for Families and Children Jenny Mikakos and Acting CEO of Playgroup Victoria Jason Doherty.

Playgroup enters the record books

By Jack Hayes

A Melbourne community playgroup has set a national record for Australia's tallest playgroup, after venturing to the top floor of Southbank's Eureka Skydeck.

The tall feat marked the start of National Playgroup Week on March 21, which celebrated the role playgroups provide in bringing together families to learn, play and support each other.

More than 40,00 children and 30,000 families participate in playgroups across Victoria, with more than 3500 playgroups running

across the state each week.

With residential living in Southbank at an all-time high, and expected to rise further, providing more playgroups is seen as a vital initiative for local families.

In addition to the launch of National Playgroup Week, the Minister for Families and Children, Jenny Mikakos, also

announced a \$50,000 boost to the State Government's Great Start Community Playgroup Fund.

The funding will provide parents wanting to create their own playgroup with grants of up to \$1000 for resources such as books, toys, and play equipment.

Ms Mikakos said the Government was

making Victoria the "Education State," and that started with supporting parents.

"We want every Victorian family to have the access to a quality playgroup close to home," she said.

"They are a great way for parents and children to make friends and establish networks in their local communities."

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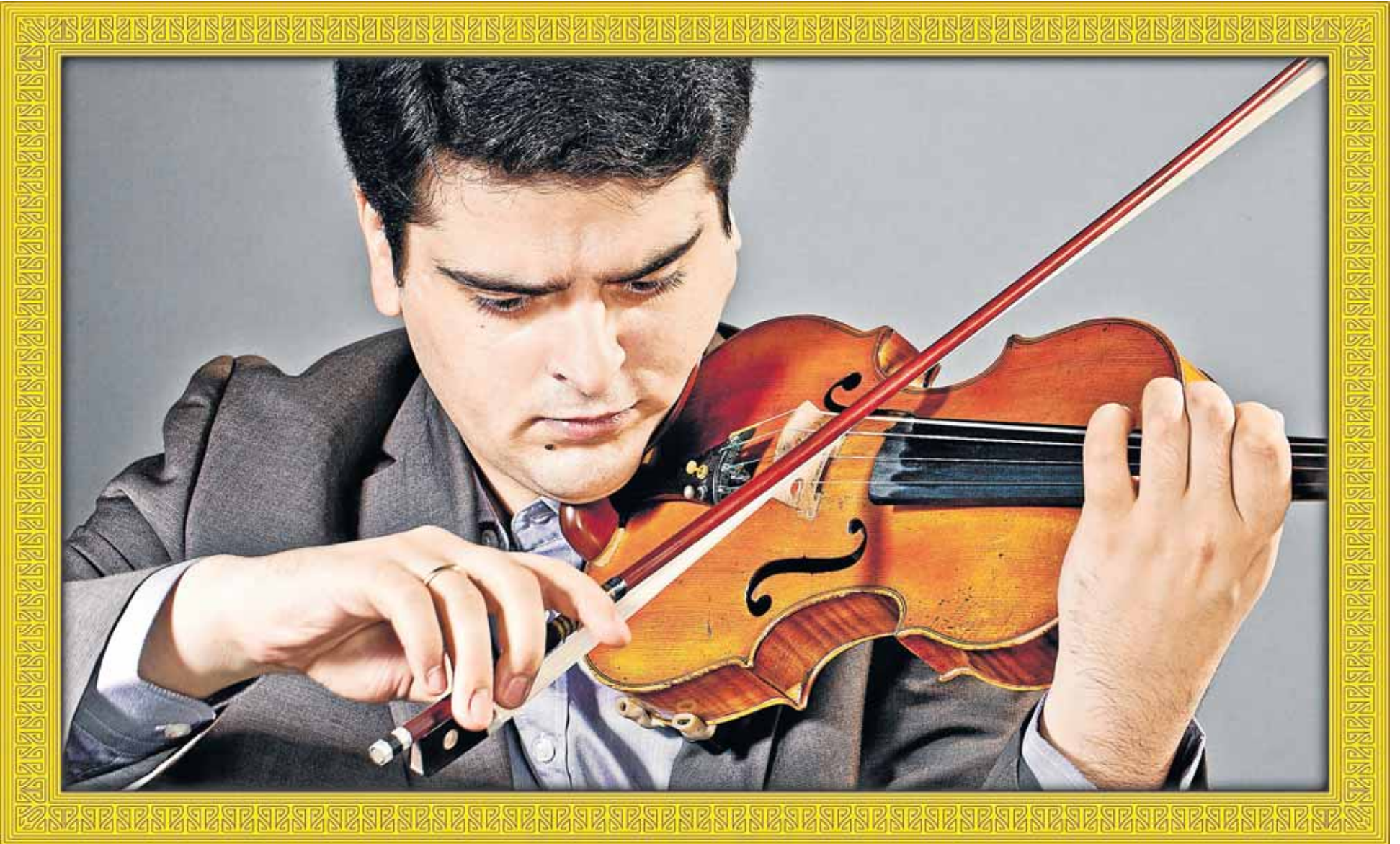
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THE ARTS PRECINCT



Michael Barenboim to make Melbourne debut



Virtuoso young violinist Michael Barenboim is touring Australia for the first time, stopping at the Melbourne Recital Centre for a solo performance on April 12.

The Berlin-based musician has an illustrious pedigree, having performed with the Vienna Philharmonic, Chicago Symphony and Munich Philharmonic Orchestras.

He is the son of the famous Argentine-Israeli pianist, Daniel Barenboim.

Inspired by his musical studies, Mr Barenboim's performances are a dedication to the pieces themselves.

"The piece of music is at the centre of everything. What I seek to convey depends completely on the music I play. One of the biggest mistakes one can make is to use the music for one's own message," he said.

"Quite simply, I am motivated by studying and performing music because that is the most important thing to me. I am lucky to be able to do that."

The recital at the Elisabeth Murdoch Hall will feature performances of works by Johann Sebastian Bach, whose music holds significance to Mr Barenboim.

"You get quite a complete idea of what music

meant at the time and specifically where it was played, ie the church and the court. There is a strong contrast between the dance movements of the partitas and the complex counterpoint in the fugues of the sonatas for instance. The one piece that breaks this separation completely is the standout piece, one of the most exceptional works of art in history: The Chaconne," he said.

Mr Barenboim will also be making stops at Adelaide's Ngeringa Cultural Centre and the Sydney Opera House during his Australian tour.

Story by Nick Li.

Finalists shortlisted

By Ella Gibson

Southbank's Grollo Equiset Garden, located between Hamer Hall and the Arts Centre, is one step closer to being transformed, with the shortlisting of architects.



Sydney based architecture practice Other Architects/otherothers were one of the five shortlisted finalists.

Five finalists were shortlisted last month as part of the National Gallery of Victoria's (NGV) annual architecture competition.

The NGV Department of Contemporary Design and Architecture announced the five Australian architecture practices on February 4 after the NGV's architecture commission judging panel worked through more than 90 entries.

The annual competition asks architects and designers to consider innovative ways to activate the Grollo Equiset Garden with an evocative and thought-provoking work of temporary architecture.

The competition is a two-stage design process. Stage one calls for design proposals, of which five are chosen to proceed to a paid stage two. The winning concept from that stage will be completed and constructed for October 2016. Senior Curator of Contemporary Design and Architecture

at the NGV, Ewan McEoin, said that the competition was symbolic of the NGV's new focus on architecture.

"There aren't many opportunities for speculative architectural projects. The competition has developed to provide an open opportunity for emerging architecture practices to present their work to the public realm," he said.

"Not only is architecture about the practical aspect, but it also has a cultural overlay in terms of how we utilise space and connect as people."

The shortlisted practices are M@ Studio, March Studio, Nervegna Reed Architecture, Other Architects/otherothers, and Thomas Winwood Architecture. The winning concept will be announced this month.

For more information visit www.ngv.vic.gov.au

Kip Williams to direct Miss Julie

By Jack Hayes

The Melbourne Theatre Company (MTC) welcomes one of Australia's most exciting and innovative young directors, Kip Williams, for his adaptation of August Strindberg's classic, "Miss Julie" - a play that questions issues of class, gender and sexuality.



Director Kip Williams (background) observes Mark Leonard Winter and Robin McLeavy during a recent rehearsal.

Williams joins Robin McLeavy (Hell on Wheels, Blinky Bill the Movie) as Miss Julie, Mark Leonard Winter (Birdland) as Jean and Zahra Newman (The Mountaintop) as Kristin for a classic story of yearning, choice and class warfare.

As the current resident director of the Sydney Theatre Company, Williams has received critical acclaim for his recent revivals of Macbeth and Suddenly Last Summer, for which he won the 2015 Helpmann Award for Best Director of a Play.

Strindberg's theatrical masterpiece is set on midsummer eve, a night filled with desire

when rules are broken, class barriers set aside and the young mistress of the manor can dance with whomever she pleases.

"Miss Julie is one of the canon's great psychological thrillers. It drips with an intoxicating sexual tension and a dangerous power play," director Kip Williams said.

"For generations, theatre makers have been drawn to it to reinvestigate questions of class, gender and sexuality."

Miss Julie runs from April 16 to May 21. For more information and ticket bookings phone MTC Box Office on 8688 0800 or visit www.mtc.com.au



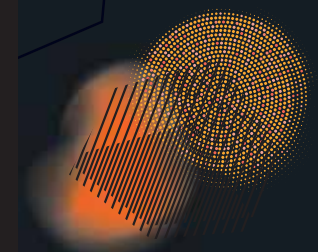
MICHAEL BARENBOIM VIOLIN

'As exciting a first appearance by an instrumental soloist as I can recall in years.' *Chicago Sun Times*

In his Melbourne Recital debut, acclaimed musician and member of a great musical family, Michael Barenboim performs four of Bach's intimate solo violin sonatas — touching upon every human emotion from tragedy to joy, solemnity and dancing grace.

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Learning the ropes

Profile by Sean Car



MO NG

While we're used to meeting the accomplished graduates and teachers of the Photography Studies College (PSC), first year student Mo Ng is only just beginning her journey to potential greatness.

The mother of two and former IT specialist said, like many others in her course, the motivation to pursue photography was something she only realised a little later in life.

After initially signing up to a six-month course with the intention of solely learning the technical aspects of the art form, she said it only drove her to want to learn more about photography's creative aspects.

"Initially I just wanted to see how much I could learn and I found that I learnt a lot within that six months so I've decided to continue," she said.

"I've never been a creative person, so this is the most creative thing I've ever done and that's why I feel like I can continue to learn a lot more creatively."

Having just started her second semester of an Advanced Diploma of Photography part-time, she said she had already learned many new things about her own creative abilities behind a lens.

And while teachers still encourage students in the early phase of their journeys to sample a range of different themes and mediums, Mo said she had already developed a strong interest in both travel and urban street photography.

"I'm trying to challenge myself a little bit with that style with minimalism and pulling out details from the urban environment," she said.

"Then again, the assignment right now is focused on urban landscape so I'm trying to take that into account when I walk through the city or anywhere to look at the big picture as well as going into the details."

Looking forward to further study, she said



One of Mo's latest urban photograph's exploring minimalism.

she held no expectations on what she may discover about herself and she is keen to maintain an open mind as she continues the rest of her course.

"I don't want to close off anything and I think that's what they do at the start of the course is not to close any doors off and just try everything," she said.

"The teachers are all working photographers and they're all different. Some have their own art exhibits. We all come in with different skills and they are very good with helping all needs," she said.

"I think in the six months you get the technical aspects but if people need a little bit of help creatively it's definitely

worthwhile doing the course."

She said the college fostered a wonderful learning environment and recommended anyone considering learning more about photography to give it a go.

"Everyone is in a similar boat and we all come in once a week on Fridays and love catching up and discussing what we've been doing during the week," she said.

"People will tell what they've been trying and then we can go home and work on it ourselves so we all have similar interests, which is great and we help each other out. I love it here!"

To view some more of Mo's works follow her on **Instagram @mngphoto**.



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EVENTS



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www.musicaviva.com.au/hough



THE GYPSY PALACE

April 17 - Elisabeth Murdoch Hall
In this evocative ensemble project, MCO virtuosic director Rebecca Chan weaves a colourful and entrancing musical tapestry, tracing the spirit and energy of gypsy music across half a millennium of music.
www.melbournerecital.com.au



LEE ABRAHMSEN & OMEGA ENSEMBLE

April 28 - Salon
Critically acclaimed soprano Lee Abrahmsen joins Sydney's Omega Ensemble for a chamber recital exploring works by Schubert, Strauss and Poulenc.
www.melbournerecital.com.au



THE GLASS MENAGERIE

May 18 - June 5 - Merlyn Theatre
This play introduces one of Tennessee Williams' most legendary characters - the formidable Amanda Wingfield, a faded Southern Belle with delusions of grandeur. William's intensely vulnerable characters are poignantly realised in this production, which stars one of Australia's great actresses Pamela Rabe.
www.malthousetheatre.com.au

JAZZ HIGH TEA

May 1 - The Pavilion
Melbourne's two great loves, food and culture, converge in an afternoon of high tea and Australia's finest Jazz talent. The May edition of this elegant high tea experience welcomes Kimba & Ryan, together with their longtime double bass collaborator Mark Elton.
www.artscentremelbourne.com.au

MISS JULIE

April 16 - May 21 - Southbank Theatre
Director Kip Williams brings to life a thrilling revival of Strindberg's enduring classic featuring the mesmerising Robin McLeavy, Mark Leonard Winter and Zahra Newman for a tale of passion and power that no one can afford to miss.
www.mtc.com.au

ANDY WARHOL AND AI WEIWEI

Running until April 24 - NGV International
This major international exhibition features two of the most significant artists of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries: Andy Warhol and Ai Weiwei. Presenting the work of both artists, the exhibition explores modern and contemporary art, life and cultural politics through the activities of two exemplary figures.
www.ngv.vic.gov.au

NEW 16

Running until May 8 - ACCA
NEW16 brings together eight newly commissioned projects by emerging artists around Australia. Curated by Annika Kristensen, the artists display a common interest in navigating and negotiating various tensions and thresholds.
www.accaonline.org.au



UNREPRESENTATIVE SWILL

May 3 - Salon
A musical narrative inspired by famous speeches. Queensland's Topology and The Australian Vocies bring provocative text and exceptional musicianship together to create a musical narrative inspired by famous speeches delivered throughout Australian history.
www.melbournerecital.com.au



PEDDLING

April 21 - May 6 - Southbank Theatre
A terse-versed one person play starring Darcy Brown. An urban story told in jagged jolting freeform snap-rap, about kids who get knocked down early and never get a hand up. Susie Dee directs this complex and exhilarating production for secondary students, which will premiere at Southbank Theatre.
www.mtc.com.au



CANZONI DI MIO PADRE

May 1 - Melbourne Recital Centre
Canzoni Di Mio Padre is set to dazzle Melbourne, orchestrated by the ever talented Daniele Ciarleo, the concert will showcase a 55 piece symphonic orchestra. Guests to the event will be treated to a collection of Neapolitan and popular Italian music inspired by the legends of Enrico Caruso and Luciano Pavarotti and sung by tenor soloists.
www.melbournerecital.com.au



ROMEO AND JULIET

April 14 - May 1 - Fairfax Studio
Visually stunning in its nod to the layers of storytelling and the history of the play, it will feature a talented cast, including Alex Williams (*Underground: The Julian Assange Story* and *INXS: Never Tear Us Apart*) as Romeo and Kelly Paterniti (Bell Shakespeare's *As You Like It*) as Juliet.
www.artscentremelbourne.com.au

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Local student shows off her wares

By Jack Hayes

Holmesglen's Southbank campus fashion student Yan Ho was recently selected to showcase her collection as part of the Virgin Australia Melbourne Fashion Festival (VAMFF).

The event, spearheaded by Study Melbourne, as part of VAMFF's Cultural Program Project Series, celebrates the next generation of Victorian designers.

Yan, who hails from Malaysia, had her collection, *5 Elements*, chosen to represent the season of summer as part of VAMFF's *Four Seasons in One Night* event.

The inspiration for Yan's collection came from the five Japanese elements of fire, water, earth, wood and metal.

"The quilting pattern on each piece captures my mood and feelings. It's how I show my emotional connection to the garment," Yan said.

For Yan, fashion has always been her life so choosing Melbourne as her place of study was a simple decision.

"I love it here. It is such an innovative,

exciting, adventurous and modern city. It has really helped inspire my designs," she said.

Yan's teachers at Holmesglen are immensely proud of her being able to represent the institute.

"Yan's collection was fresh, innovative and is representative of the versatility of Holmesglen graduates," head of fashion Julie Wright said.

"Yan is a dedicated student with a strong future in fashion."

Holmesglen's city campus is located on St Kilda Rd, and is home to an amazing fashion program, with access to industry standard facilities.

For more information on Holmesglen's fashion courses, please contact 03 9564 1602 or fashion@holmesglen.edu.au



Holmesglen student Yan Ho with a selection of her prized garments.



Coffee Concerts



Our social series for 2016 is filled with inspiring performances, great company, tea, coffee and cake at the Melbourne Recital Centre in Southbank.

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BOOKINGS

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The Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre hosted another record breaking Good Friday Appeal last month.

Records broken yet again

By Ella Gibson

Victoria's 85th Good Friday Appeal at the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre (MCEC) at South Wharf was another smashing success, raising a record breaking \$17,445,624 for the Royal Children's Hospital.

More than 80,000 Australians flocked to South Wharf on Good Friday for the annual event, raising much-needed funds for children in need.

Director of the Appeal, Anne Randall, praised the generosity of those who attended or donated to the event.

"We owe a huge thank you to the communities across the state who have donated time, resources and funds to achieve this incredible result for the kids once again," Ms Randall said.

Over the last three years, MCEC has helped the Good Friday Appeal take the Channel 7

Telethon, Kids Day Out activities and Night Show to new heights and it shows no signs of slowing down.

MCEC chief executive Peter King said the entire team was incredibly proud to support such an iconic event.

"It is our pleasure to open our doors to the

public for such an important event, and be able to deliver another record-breaking result, underpinned by our great community coming together," he said.

Since its inception in 1931, the Good Friday Appeal has contributed more than \$308 million to The Royal Children's Hospital.



LORD MAYOR'S COMMENDATIONS 2016 Celebrating small business

Are you a long-serving small business owner?

Applications are open for the Lord Mayor's Commendations, which celebrate the long-term commitment of independent small business proprietors and generational family businesses in the City of Melbourne.

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Applications close Friday 20 May

melbourne.vic.gov.au/commendations
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with Tom Hoffmann

Christianity and the absurd

If it's par-for-the-course – which I imagine it is – for a first year philosophy undergrad to fall head-over-heels in love with Albert Camus and absurdism, then I was a very average university student.

Camus' philosophy was the kind that turned everything I thought I knew on its head and I was ready and willing to dive headfirst down the rabbit hole with him. I found his novel *L'Étranger*, often translated as *The Outsider*, to be so incredibly intoxicating. It wove a certain way of thinking, questioning and living through a vivid tapestry that made me want to sit on an Algerian terrace house balcony and smoke cigarettes all day, thinking deep and meaningful thoughts like the protagonist.

Absurdism, of which Camus could be called the father, essentially suggests that life has

no meaning, but that we can find meaning in the meaninglessness.

The definitive Generation X film of the 90s, *Reality Bites*, had a character by the name of Troy Dyer who lived the absurdist philosophy to a T. He riffed on life, saying: "There's no point to any of it. It's all just a random lottery of meaningless tragedy and a series of near escapes ... So I take pleasure in the details. You know ... a Quarter-Pounder with Cheese, those are good; the sky about 10 minutes before it starts to rain; the moment your laughter becomes a cackle ... and I sit back and I smoke my Camel Straights, and I ride my own melt."

One might think that a Christian, even more so a mature Christian, and even more so than that a pastor would have to reject such notions. To that, I say, nonsense!

Christianity is all about seeing light in seemingly impenetrable darkness, it's about finding hope in utter hopelessness. My faith tradition doesn't try and distance itself from normal human experiences like sadness, doubt, confusion and it doesn't even try to transcend the seeming absurdity of life.

The Christian God, revealed in Jesus of Nazareth, isn't a supreme being we can only commune with if we're able to transcend the directionless life. Jesus came to earth to be among us because life was absurd, because there was no way for it all to come together with any kind of symmetry.

What draws me to Christianity is the way Jesus makes the absurd intelligible. Jesus showed that the state of human existence was so absurd that the deity needed to die – that's how absurd life was and is!

Friedrich Nietzsche, my other favourite philosopher, famously stated, "God is dead." While Nietzsche probably wouldn't be a fan of me as a Lutheran pastor – and would be even more horrified by me co-opting his famous thesis – God did die.

The Christian church celebrated this on Good Friday. Jesus Christ, God's own son, died on the cross in an act of gracious solidarity with the human being who says, "I can't find meaning, I can't transcend, it's all absurd!" Jesus died to bring life and meaning to us, because without him it is just a random lottery of meaningless tragedy and a series of near escapes.

Sound absurd? Well, it is. But in the best possible way.



SOUTHBANK RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION WITH TONY PENNA

This month we have great news for Southbank. Firstly I was thrilled to see the Southbank Police Station finally opened.

It has been years in the planning with so much dialogue that many of us probably started to wonder if it would ever happen at all. Well I certainly felt that way.

I know this police presence will be welcome across all corners of Southbank. I frequently communicate with the station commander, Snr Sgt Steve Bills, and I know he is just as excited.

Last month I was delighted to learn that the controversial Cbus application for the old Suncorp site on Collins St in the city has once again been rejected by the Planning Minister citing overshadowing.

Around 18 months ago we fought hard to stop this development by lobbying the then

Planning Minister Matthew Guy after the Melbourne City Council endorsed the plans despite their contravention of the planning scheme – namely overshadowing the north and south banks.

Our prized sunlight in Queensbridge Square would have been lost forever at the very time of day when it is most appreciated by visitors and locals.

Our lobbying at the time was successful so the developer went back to the drawing board. While their new plans were a remarkable improvement and had come a long way, the shadowing was still far from acceptable.

We once again lobbied council to reject the application but they endorsed it again.

The planning minister has since negotiated an agreement with the developer for a shorter building and we commend him for taking a stand to protect our scarce public open space from overshadowing.

We hope it sends a strong message to developers to undertake due-diligence prior to purchasing land for development.

If the planning scheme is not going to allow the site to turn a profit, then don't purchase it! Thank you Richard Wynne.

Almost as exciting is news that Vic Roads is

planning on widening the Swan St bridge by one lane. As many of you would be aware, the traffic congestion this bridge creates has a flow-on effect from Alexandra Ave all the way down to City Rd.

VicRoads has contacted me about this project and is planning to work with SRA and arrange public consultation so we can all learn about the scope of their project and share with them our ideas on how it can be improved and our current experiences.

Watch our Facebook page for any updates or, better still, sign up and support your local community voice and get the latest news first hand – southbankresidents.com.au.

Tony Penna - President

St Johns
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Letters to the Editor

Send your letters to news@southbanklocalnews.com.au

Fix Queensbridge Square

Congratulations on a fine local newspaper.

May I suggest an issue for you to cover? It's what many local residents think is the failure of Queensbridge Square.

This is supposed to be the heart of Southbank. Yet it's a bleak, dirty and windswept disappointment.

Trees and shrubs are minimal. The red amphitheatre is an eyesore. Seagulls feed off the detritus of McDonald's and then deposit white crap all across the square.

Trash isn't cleaned up quickly or properly. The council ignores ugly graffiti in the area for years. Witness the mess where the square meets the bridge – a rocky pool of garbage.

See the full-colour words on the side of the old rail bridge on the side that faces the vaults. They've been left there for two years. Homeless people are using the square and environs in growing numbers as a place to sleep and beg.

It's time the council took a close look at all of this and adopted appropriate action.

The key point here is that this is part of Melbourne's most popular and important tourist precinct, as surveys have show.

Surely we can do better than this.

Graham Barrett

We Live Here

Watch out for our petition

In a few weeks the We Live Here movement will be launching a campaign in the form of a petition via change.org to gather support for the regulation of short-term letting in residential buildings. We are hoping for a massive response and encourage you all to get involved.

Short-term letting in residential buildings is not being adequately addressed by any level of government.

High-rise Class 2 residential apartment buildings are springing up without much thought given to the residents who will live there.

It is all about the planners and developers, along with others with vested interests such as short-stay operators, AirBnB, etc who are being heard and considered before the residents have a chance to have a say.

We are fast becoming a taking economy for opportunists and not a sharing economy for communities.

This is now going to change with the launch, in a few weeks, of a petition for the regulation of short-term letting in residential buildings to 30 days or more, in line with residential tenancy agreements.

This would exclude hotel-style operations in residential buildings that are not designed for them.

Cities around the world, including New York, London, San Francisco, Vancouver and Barcelona have been grappling with this problem. Now it is Melbourne's turn.

Why short-term letting MUST be banned for minimum stays of less than 30 days in residential buildings:

- They are a haven for short-stay operators who run hotel-style Class 3 operations without paying commercial rates and taxes, including GST;
- They do not contribute to the cost of wear and tear of the building brought about by their operations. This is borne by the owners through increased levies;
- Residential Class 2 buildings are not designed for Class 3 hotel-style operations as they are non-compliant with Fire Safety Regulations and OH&S requirements for disability access;
- They are an increased insurance and security risk;
- No owner or long term resident is safe from having a hotel room "pop up" near them; and
- Community-building is impossible if one has to share with people who stay for a short time and are gone.

We need YOU to help ensure governments sit up and take notice.

It is time we, the residents, had a voice.

Details of how to sign the petition will be provided in the next We Live Here column, and via our website. All current subscribers will also be mailed directly. If you haven't already registered please do so now at www.welivehere.net

Owners Corporations Act 2006

Consumer Affairs Victoria has released an issues paper on the Owners Corporation Act 2006 and is seeking submissions from all interested parties by April 29.

For more information visit www.consumer.vic.gov.au/resources-and-education/legislation/public-consultations-and-reviews/consumer-property-law-review/issues-paper-2-owners-corporations

This will be discussed in more detail in next month's column. Please use the time to consider the issues you are most passionate about and let us know so we can include them in the discussion.

Tram Bridge across the Yarra stopped by passionate residents

This column is delighted to report that at a recent public forum on the urban renewal of Fisherman's Bend, the Minister for Planning Richard Wynne announced that the proposed tram bridge across the river from Yarra's Edge, previously approved by the former Minister for Planning, Matthew Guy, would not go ahead.

This is a major victory for the residents of Yarra's Edge, led by Phil Spender, and demonstrates how community groups, if passionate enough, can make their voices heard.

Please contact us at campaign@welivehere.net if you have issues you would like to have addressed or we can publicise in this column. We also welcome and encourage input and contributions from YOU on the issues that affect YOU.



www.welivehere.net
emails to campaign@welivehere.net

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OWNERS CORPORATION LAW

With Tom Bacon

How to restrict the potential for intimidation at meetings and on the common property.

My colleagues in the United States that practice law in the field of Homeowners Associations (HOAs) are currently grappling with a big legal issue. And I'm very glad that here in Australia, we won't have to deal with it.

A number of HOAs and condominium complexes are attempting to pass rules that would prohibit guns from being brought to meetings on common property.

Ordinarily, it would be a constitutional and inalienable right in the USA for persons to carry guns with them on common property, however recently the courts have held that HOAs can pass rules designed to "promote the health, happiness and peace of mind of the unit owners".

The pro-gun community argue that carrying guns to meetings will ensure the happiness and peace of mind of owners, as they should feel secure and safe, while the anti-gun lobby argue that carrying guns to a meeting would provide no peace of mind to unit owners at all, and could lead to intimidation and the threat of violence in a setting where issues such as raising special levies, repairing building defects, terminating service providers and enforcing community rules need to be discussed and resolved.

A determination on this legal issue is pending in the US courts. For safety's sake, I hope that a precedent can be established to restrict and prohibit guns at meetings. However, from a legal perspective, I foresee that the court would be duty bound to uphold the constitution and to declare that owners may carry their guns to protect their homes.

I'm certainly thankful that we live in a society where citizens carrying guns for protection is outlawed. As a lawyer, I've been to my fair share of hostile meetings, but fortunately I've never had to consider wearing a bulletproof

vest to a meeting. Besides, it would look too bulky underneath my suit.

Jokes aside, there is a worrying pattern developing in Australia. I've now attended several meetings where security contractors have been present. I've broken up a fist fight that started between two owners over whether to repair building defects or sue the developer.

In Sydney in 2014, a strata manager was shot in the neck at a special general meeting. The shooter, a male elderly pensioner that was later found by the courts to be "mentally incompetent" had set out to kill the strata manager and to take his position. Apart from the gun, he was also carrying a long kitchen knife and several clips of ammunition.

A survey of strata managers found that more than 70 per cent reported feeling unsafe and intimidated at meetings within the last 12 months.

Certainly, it is not that I believe that one isolated incident of gun violence in Sydney could spark a trend of similar incidents. Indeed this could be the only incident involving a gun at an OC meeting in Australia's history, and clearly not a cause for concern.

However, my concern is that the potential for faulty decisions to be made due to threats of violence or intimidation (with no guns present) at a strata meeting could have serious legal implications.

I have seen it happen time and again, and I should think that bringing in the secret ballot process as part of Consumer Affairs Victoria's legislative reforms in this area would go a long way to addressing issues of intimidation on the common property.

Tom Bacon is the principal lawyer of Strata Title Lawyers.

Tom@stratatitlelawyers.com.au



Wonderfully-rich chance encounter

By Jack Hayes

Ambling through the greenery along Southbank Promenade, Steven and his miniature Dachshund Lola were keen for a chat.

Steven, a self-confessed Jack of all trades, master of none, and his 18-month-old pup only moved to Southbank in January.

"I used to manage hotels, spent 10 years in Hong Kong International School, had our own café, spent a year in the Territory doing road works. Just about everything really," Steven said.

Admittedly, Steven says Southbank isn't the most ideal place for his little companion, but Lola is starting to get used to her new surrounds.

"I just try to get her out all the time, take her to a few parks around the area. I'm not supposed to, but I let her off the leash here

so she can run up and down," he said.

Steven has moved back to Melbourne from Hong Kong with his wife in order to spend more time with his daughter.

"She is one of the lead performers for the Australian Ballet Company, so she is doing pretty well for herself at the moment," he said.

"I'm not sure what I'm going to do for work now, might have to put some of my skills to the test."

After a fantastic and unexpected chat, Steven and Lola wander off through the Southbank crowds.



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FACES OF SOUTHBANK

Question:

If there was one thing you could change about Melbourne, what would it be and why?



KATIE GIBBS, PERSONAL ASSISTANT

"I would have more festivals in winter. There are so many in summer, I just think we could use a few when it gets cold."



MARK LUCHAVEZ, SALES MANAGER

"I would fix the public transport. I don't actually take public transport that much, but I drive across the city everyday and the stress that is put on the roads is crazy."



RICHARD JORDAN, THEATRE PRODUCER

"I would have more theatres and creative spaces for performers. It is a great way to encourage performers old and young to pursue the performing arts."



SAMANTHA DEPREZ, HEALTH AND SAFETY CO-ORDINATOR

"Maybe more accessible public spaces and parks. Places people can go on their lunch break, a walk or running for their well-being."



MARINA SANTA-MARIA, TEACHER

"I would probably make some changes to the public transport system. Try to make it more reliable for commuters."



JASPREET SINGH, CLEANER

"I would change the Melbourne Star to make it more appealing. I went to Singapore last year and they have a ferris wheel where you can sit and have meals. I would do something like that."

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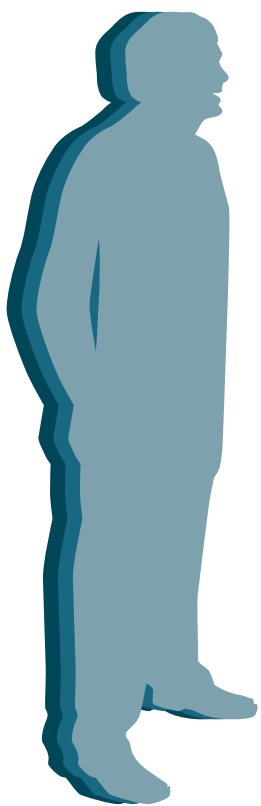
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The original voices of Southbank

Having founded the Southbank Residents' Group together in 1998, inaugural president Ray McDonald and former public officer Faye McDonald have helped shape a lot of important changes in our community.



SOUTHBANKER

Profile by Sean Car

Living in what was originally the former IBM building, the couple downsized to the retrofitted Southside Tower complex on the corner of Sturt and Coventry streets from their Templestowe home in 1996.

To this day, their apartment still boasts one of the most undisturbed views of Southbank and Ray said it had provided them with the perfect vantage point to witness the area's growth over the past 20 years.

"We rather liked the view and they said well everything's for sale naturally. We went away and thought about it, stuck down a deposit and then three years later when it was finished we moved in," he said.

"For us the city has moved right around and the view has only enhanced we think. There used to be hole where you could look through in to the distance and see the city but now it's all built up."

The pair was the first of any residents to move into the building, which they said was still so new that it was still being completed around them at the time of moving in.

Back then the area around them was still being marketed as "Southbank Village" and the conversation around development and planning for the community was one they

thought needed to be championed more strongly.

"When we first came there was a lot of building going on and there were a lot of plans to build all sorts of buildings around this area and that was the origin of the Southbank Residents Group," he said.

"We used to have all of our meetings at the Malthouse Theatre, which was quite a big area and we'd get the hall practically full because people were a bit more involved in those days."

"We started it because we were disgusted with what was going on and I think it was a good move. I'm glad that it's sort of gone on because you don't want it to be static and the people that are in it seem to be active now."

With the help of former politician and inaugural vice president Bill Stephen, who has since passed away, the group was responsible for driving many important changes, including the introduction of the area's first mandatory height limit.

While the pair had numerous visits to VCAT and continued to champion change at the helm of the group for several years, Faye said, like all things, it eventually reached a point where it was best to hand over the

reigns.

"You get tired as well you get tired of the hassles," she said. "We don't go very much anymore. It's better to let them do their own thing. You don't want people hanging around."

"We did what we had to do and we knew it was time to step aside. We were tired so it's worked out very well."

Our community has much to thank Ray and Faye for in providing Southbank with its voice, and the pair still write submissions and have their say on many important issues affecting our neighbourhood.

While Ray is a retired biomedical engineer, Faye still works part-time as a registered nurse at Royal Freemason's and she said they both continued to enjoy life in Southbank mainly for its convenience.

"The location here is just terrific. We've got trams, we walk into town and the city is quite friendly. It's a real community for us now. We've met quite a lot of people along the way so it's been really good."

"We love Southbank and we've done pretty well as far as we're concerned and we're still reasonably happy."



DO IT YOURSELF with KATHLEEN TOOHEY

Haymes PaintRight Southbank

Time to get creative

I thought it was time we threw another project out there. This time it's something extra creative that demands you use your imagination and can be used to decorate any kind of space – be it a child's room, teenagers' room or living space.

I picked up these wooden arrows while out and about and decided they would look so great with a bit of paint applied.

First things first – supplies. To complete this project I used the following: Haymes Paint Sample Pots; Haymes Paint Designer Finishes Copper Paint (for a little sparkle); a Sequence can opener; and a Rokset artist brush set. You will be able to get these at your local paint store.

Now I want to clear something up before we proceed. I decided against undercoating these, as I knew I didn't want to coat the whole surface, only pieces. So I made the decision to just apply an extra top coat if necessary, luckily for me that two coats were enough.

I also decided against sanding the arrows, as I liked the rough edges and thought they added character.

Lastly, I also decided against using tape for straight lines, again, I wanted an imperfect look.

Otherwise, I would also recommend tape, sandpaper and undercoat for the best



possible finish.

Now all that was required for this was for me to choose my colours and then to use my imagination to apply the paint in an interesting manner and create a look I was happy with.

Selecting colours was fun in itself. Haymes has a great range of colours to choose from. I selected Haymes Mars, Surf Green and White.

I knew I wanted each arrow to be different and knew I wanted a geometric design on it, but otherwise I had no idea what was going to happen – which is part of the fun! I started

with one colour and just went from there. My only real guideline was that all colours were balanced across the arrow and there wasn't a stand-out of any kind.

I started off with just a few bits of each colour and then applied more if I thought necessary. Once I was happy with the designs, I added some sparkle. I used the bottom end of a paintbrush to achieve dots and used the smallest artist brush for any lines. Again, I just applied this until I was happy, nothing previously thought out.

Now if you aren't comfortable free styling, then simply plan out your design using a grey lead pencil. Just be sure to use very light lines. You don't want grey lead bleeding through the paint.

I was really happy with these and think they look great!

This sort of project can be made to suit any surroundings, you would just need to choose your colours appropriately and paint a design that suits the room.

In the end, just have fun!



HEALTH & WELLBEING

with Justin Moran

Just In Time Personal Training

There's so much on offer to get active in Southbank!

Living in Southbank offers so many fantastic options for you to get active and keep active! Not only are there many fantastic walking and running tracks (including the ever-popular Tan) but you also have some great bike paths starting right at your doorstep.

If you are looking for more than that then here are a few structured ways that may suit you and your level.

Gyms and fitness facilities

Southbank is home to the now established Genesis Fitness Club positioned in the Freshwater Place precinct and offers your basic gym membership as well as fitness classes and personal training.

New on the scene is F45 training located on Power St (next to Central Equity) which essentially is a 45-minute dynamic and functional form of group fitness training. More tailored for the 20-40 age group, this may be your style and offers personal training too.

Lastly you have the option of Platinum Athletic Fitness, which has just opened a state-of-the-art facility at 412 City Rd.

All of these options are available and will have staff available to guide you through their options and many offer free trial sessions, so why not give them a go and see if it works for you!

Residential apartment gyms

As a mobile personal trainer who frequents many residential apartment gyms in and around Southbank, it is clear to see that so many of you have access to a free resource (albeit included in body corporate fees).

The quality of residential gyms provided are continually improving too, so why not use and incorporate them into your exercise routine. I know first-hand that many residents balk at the cost of a weekly gym membership and instead have a personal trainer specifically devise a suitable exercise program for their particular needs and goals utilizing their apartment gym or have a personal trainer visit them weekly or fortnightly to keep them on track.

The Boyd Community Hub

Have you ever visited the Boyd Community Hub? Located at 207 City Rd, this hub of activity offers way more than just a Library, creative space, maternal and child health services and a fantastic café (KereKere)! It is home to many free and/or inexpensive fitness options. Some of these include our very own FREE Just In Time Personal Training "more than just a walking group" held every Wednesday morning from 9.30-10.30am which has now been going strong for just over 6 months. There are also other

offerings such as yoga, you and your baby moving together, hula hooping/booty camp and fitness fusion with more to come if increased community attendance – so get down there and check it out for yourself!

Just remember that with any choice of activity that you make, please be careful to choose an activity and/or provider that is going to work for you. Ensure that any trainer or instructor has your best interests at heart and not their own. Remember that is it your body and injury is going to hinder your efforts to get more active, so choose wisely!

If you'd like to read more on many topics, why not head to my blog - <http://justintimept.com/category/blog/>

For a more information, exercise guidance or if you have any questions feel free to contact me www.justintimept.com

Justin Moran

0411 798 934

justin@justintimept.com

Just In Time Personal Training

Businesses in Southbank

Your local physio

Having operated in Freshwater Place for close to 10 years, Elite Sports Physio's Sriyan Peries can safely be regarded as Southbank's local physiotherapist.



Elite Sport Physiotherapy's Sriyan Peries and Rhona Guerin.

While many may not know it, Mr Peries has been helping locals overcome their injuries for nearly a decade out of a small treatment room at Genesis Fitness.

Having witnessed the area develop around him over the years, he said the growth of Southbank had been both exciting and good for business.

"I've spent so much time in the office that I'll often forget to take a look out and see what's going on in the immediate area and sometimes I'll look up and ask myself whether I've seen that building before," he said.

"Seeing Southbank and the Freshwater Place area get as busy as it is has been a huge positive for me."

As well as providing a friendly and reliable service over many years, Sriyan said much of his business's success could also be put down to its city-centric location.

"It's probably a combination of convenience as well as it's a little bit of a niche area that there's not a lot of competition around but, with anything to do with Southbank and the CBD, everything is about convenience," he said.

"You want to be able to duck out for whatever it is on your lunch break or in between meetings to go shopping or, in this case, physio."

While the business most commonly treats athletes it does indeed cater to all, with services including spinal manipulation, sports physiotherapy, massaging, dry-needling, clinical pilates and a range of rehabilitation programs.

It also treats motor vehicle accident and work-related injuries and, as of this year, has introduced a gap payment of \$15 for every

Workcover and TAC consultation.

Sriyan said being located in a gym had also provided an added service of convenience for personal trainers (PT) and gym users alike over time.

"You do occasionally get some who are unfortunate enough to injure themselves on the gym floor so you figure, if they have the time to come to the gym three times a week, there's no reason why they can't see the physio at the same location," he said

"If they do need close monitoring by their PT for their injury we're not sending letters back and forth or anything like that they can just pop in and tell us what injury they have and we can tell them how to manage it."

While treating local people's injuries over many years is undoubtedly the most rewarding part of his job, Sriyan said the most satisfying part of physiotherapy was building relationships with everyone he treats.

"I think one of the best parts about my job is that it's quite a social job and often you can almost go on auto pilot," he said.

"You actually do get to learn a lot about the person themselves and not just about their injuries and sometimes you end up getting entire families coming in."

"I've had a few families that I've seen every member of their family over the course of time so that's a very satisfying part of my job."

Elite Sports Physiotherapy is located at Genesis Fitness at level three, four Freshwater Place in Southbank.

For more information visit www.elitesportsphysio.com.au

A gym like no other

The brand-new, state-of-the-art facilities at Platinum Athletic Fitness on City Rd are set to provide a game-changing platform for how residents of Southbank and the inner city do fitness, health and wellbeing.



Some before and after shots of the empty warehouse turned state-of-the-art fitness and wellbeing centre.

Housed in more than 2000 sqm of space in a retrofitted warehouse, the new health and wellbeing centre boasts facilities that can't be compared to anything Melbourne has seen before.

Managing director Shane Reeves said the business's model was summed up by its tagline "Where The Heart Beats", which symbolised an effort to amalgamate care and hospitality with fitness and wellbeing.

"I've just felt, through the evolution of time and the way civilization in inner-city suburbia is 'go, go, go', no one puts in the time to make it personable, so there's no hospitality in hospitality anymore and there's no hospitality in gyms. There's no personality," he said.

With a background in both hospitality and fitness, Shane said the fundamental purpose underlying the business was about creating an environment that would foster those two forces.

With a decorated background in fitness that has included roles from Australia to the Middle East, operations manager Ali Armeda said the business's model was what attracted him to come on board.

"To be honest, there was nothing like this concept - where everything you could get is a one-stop, along with obviously the service and the philosophy that we're trying to go for - I strongly believe this is what the market needs," he said.

"I think it's a great concept and, from speaking to our members on what we're trying to achieve, it already is working because it's what they want!"

The giant facility includes Australia's largest high-altitude training room, dream pods, biotherapy rooms, ice recovery baths, anti-

gravity yoga, group exercise and meditation rooms, a beep-test track, a DJ stage, a cafe and much more.

Shane said the facility was designed to accommodate everything under one roof in order to create a central location that would help save its members both time and money.

"When we're speaking to our clients, they go to their yoga studio, they go to their cross fit studio and then they go to their gym," he said.

"They spend \$250 to \$300 a month. For what they spend here we're saving them anywhere between \$100 and \$200 a month because we've got those services on site. Our goal is to give our clients hours back in their week."

The City Rd centre is also ideally located in the middle of Southbank, South Melbourne, Albert Park and Port Melbourne next to the tram stop and many other essential services including South Melbourne Market.

Ali said he and all of the initial 30-plus staff members were determined to create a community environment that its members could call a second home.

"If we notice a member isn't coming, we want to pick up the phone and find out why they're not coming. Is there something we can do? Is it a lack of motivation, is it personal issues? What can do to get you into the club?"

"We want to create that community and care factor that gyms are lacking nowadays."

Platinum Athletic Fitness is located at 412 City Rd.

For more information visit www.platinumathletic.biz

2016 WHAT'S ON COMMUNITY CALENDAR

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Meeting on selected dates and various locations, IMLAC takes in the city's parks, its culture, fabulous eating options as well as festivals, galleries and concerts.
website www.life.org.au/imlac or call Carolyn on 9696 1090



THIRD SATURDAY OF EACH MONTH

DADS PLAYGROUP @ BOYD

Are you a dad living within the bounds of the City of Melbourne? Here's something just for you. Dads are invited to bring their preschool child(ren) along. Bookings:
kirsty.bates-webb@melbourne.vic.gov.au

TUESDAYS - THURSDAYS & SATURDAYS

CHUNKY MOVE DANCE CLASS

Mondays to Thursdays and Saturdays at 111 Sturt St. Chunky Move dance classes are the perfect way to unwind, get fit and improve flexibility and strength.
www.chunkymove.com



WEDNESDAYS

FITNESS FUSION @ BOYD

If you're looking for a great way to start the day, come along to Fitness Fusion at Boyd for a series of fun and challenging exercises. Starts at 6.45am and finishes at 7.45am.

TUESDAYS

SOUTHBANK ROTARY

Rotary Club of Southbank meets weekly for dinner on most Tuesday evenings throughout the year at Federation Square. Visitors are always welcome.



TUESDAYS

LAUGHTER YOGA @ BOYD

Laughter Yoga is a unique concept that allows you to laugh even when you least feel like it and is ideal for all ages. Sessions are at Boyd Community Hub, Assembly Hall each Tuesday at 6pm



OPENING APRIL 7 @ BOYD

PHOTOBOOK MELBOURNE

Photobook Melbourne presents its first solo show for 2016: internationally renowned Dutch photographer, Awoiska van der Molen. Opening from 6pm - 9pm.
Exhibition runs from April 7 - 30

WEDNESDAY APRIL 6

BATTLE OF THE TOWERS

Local residents are invited to take part in Boyd's first ever free Southbank Community Trivia Night. For more information see the article on page 12 of this edition.

APRIL 23 - MEET AT BOYD

SOUTHBANK ARTS WALK

Rediscover Southbank's iconic arts venues and history with this free guided walk. Storyteller Dale Campisi will take you on a walk to discover the arts in Southbank.

Tickets: www.eventbrite.com.au



SUNDAYS

ARTS CENTRE MARKET

Meet over 80 of Victoria's finest artisans first hand. Discover how these unique artworks are made, chat directly about the products, inspirations and techniques.

www.artscentremelbourne.com.au

TUESDAYS @ BOYD

HULA HOOPING & BOOTY CAMP

Incorporating 80's Dance, 90's Hip-Hop Dance, Booty Dance, Hoop-Aerobics, Hoop-Hop, striking your tree pose with Yoga, Hula-Hooping tricks, and LOTS of Hilarity.



WEDNESDAYS @ BOYD

FREE WALKING GROUP

Join local fitness experts JustInTime as they lead a 'not just walking group' for Boyd walkers. The program runs on Wednesdays from 9.30am to 10.30am.



FIRST THURSDAY OF EACH MONTH SUNRISE PROBUS CLUB

For over 50s living in Southbank. Join for fun, activities, events and friendship. First Thursday of the month at Library at the Dock 10am. Contact Sue 0425 831 954.
www.clubrunner.ca/mspc

SECOND TUESDAY OF EVERY MONTH

LIONS CLUB

The new Melbourne City Southbank Lions Club hosts its monthly meetings at Boyd from 7pm until 8pm. All welcome.

Email chengji1214@gmail.com for more information

APRIL 15

SEE MAKE PLAY WORKSHOP

A free monthly toddler and parent workshop that fosters the development of creativity and early literacy skills. This month's theme is friendship and belonging.

SECOND WEDNESDAY OF EVERY MONTH

READING CIRCLE

A free and informal chat about whatever it is we've been reading. Fiction, non-fiction, plays, poems, travel writing, biography – anything at all!

6pm - 7pm @ Boyd Library

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