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I'm a Southbanker  
Photo by John Tadigiri

As businesses in our normally bustling precinct forge ahead during the next six months and beyond, *Southbank News* brings you inside some of our beloved venues to connect with your fellow Southbankers. *Continued on page 9.*

## Release of Montague plans delayed

WORDS BY Sean Car  
PLANNING

City of Port Phillip Mayor Bernadene Voss has called on the state government to release the the precinct plans for Montague, which she said were “done” and ready for public consultation.

It comes after City of Port Phillip CEO Peter Smith informed councillors on July 1 that the release of the plans had been delayed by the state government until after the local government elections in October.

The CEO’s report on July 1 stated that the release of the Montague Precinct Plan had “been approved” and that the council was to be updated with a detailed review of the precinct plan in early July.

The timing of the release for community engagement was scheduled for August, but the state government has since decided to delay the release in response to COVID-19.

Mayor Bernadene Voss, who sits on the Mayor’s Forum for Fishermans Bend and has been central to the council’s efforts in helping deliver the precinct for many years, has questioned the delays.

Having publicly announced that she would not be running again in the October 24 elections, she said that starting the consultation process with a new group of councillors would be detrimental to the engagement process with the Montague community.

She said that the plans were “fantastic” and that there was no reason to hold them back from the community.

But a spokesperson for the state government said that the precinct plan for Montague was yet to be finalised.

“The Montague Precinct Implementation Plan is yet to be finalised. The Victorian Government is continuing to work in partnership with the City of Port Phillip on progressing the Plan and its completion remains a priority,” the spokesperson said.

“The precinct has a pipeline of potential future  
*Continued on page 8.*

## “Defining case” on short-stay looms

*A short-stay operator is seeking damages from the owners’ corporation (OC) of Southbank’s Prima Tower in what some have billed as a “defining case” in the context of COVID-19.*

WORDS BY David Schout & Sean Car  
STRATA

Marcela Zamora, an apartment owner at the 72-storey tower on Queensbridge St, claims that the building’s OC illegally prevented her and other owners from leasing apartments to anyone for less than 90 days from March 23 to May 4.

In response to the coronavirus pandemic, Prima Tower’s OC had passed a resolution that restricted any use of a lot which caused a health and safety hazard and contravened the state government’s stay-at-home directions, including for the use of short-stay accommodation.

But Mrs Zamora, an accountant who manages a small number of properties with her husband, said she believed that the OC had leveraged the pandemic to administer the ban, noting that it was imposed before stay-at-home directives were issued by the government.

“It’s wrong,” she said.

“The law says you can’t stop me from leasing my property, whether it’s for one night, or whether it’s long-term.”

She said she had initially abided by the ban and provided a lease of more than 90 days to a family unable to fly home due to COVID-19 restrictions.

But in early May, she alleged that the 90-day rule was overturned by the OC and replaced by a process requiring all owners to provide it with at least 48-hours’ notice to vet guests before entering the building.

Mrs Zamora said she ordinarily leased her Prima apartment for short-term stays of less than 90 days but had already made a commitment to accommodate the family based on the OC’s ban. She is now seeking

damages of \$14,000 through the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT).

“I can’t be sending away a family with young children looking for something. I stuck to my word,” she said.

“To lend a hand then be slapped in the face, it’s hard.”

Friction between residents and short-stay operators who utilise leasing websites like AirBnB is common in high-rise living.

Permanent residents often argue that the strain on amenity caused by short-term tenants, sometimes dubbed “party guests”, is excessive and that damage to common property is not unusual.

But while the Prima OC’s move on short-stays has come in response to COVID-19, arguing that the flow of guests posed an unacceptable public health risk to all owners, Mrs Zamora argued that dictating how she could utilise her property was against the law.

“There are more than enough cases in the judicial system that prove this is illegal. So, as a lot owner, I asked myself ‘are they not aware? How can they not be aware?’ We elected them in good faith to act in our best interest,” she said.

Prima Tower’s strata services are managed by Melcorp Strata, an associated company of developer PDG.

Melcorp Strata general manager Donna Rowe told *Southbank News* that, due to upcoming legal proceedings, it would not be commenting on the matter.

But while some have billed the case as “defining”, CEO and principal lawyer at Strata Title Lawyers Tom Bacon told *Southbank News* that it  
*Continued on page 3.*

COUNCIL AFFAIRS, PAGE 04

### A Freckelton report released



FEATURE, PAGE 07

### B Central Equity co-founder honoured



COMMUNITY, PAGE 10

### C Locals band together under Hope Delivery



WATERWAYS, PAGE 11

### D River cruises start up



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# Election jigsaw puzzle falling into place

WORDS BY *Sean Car*  
ELECTIONS

A debate among City of Melbourne councillors over the state government's proposed safe injecting room near Queen Victoria Market (QVM) on June 23 has potentially helped to answer a lot of questions about October's local government elections.

What was already clear before the debate is that all candidates vying for office on October 24 will be going up against a Labor Party ticket spearheaded by Slater and Gordon's Phil Reed as its Lord Mayoral candidate.

With the remainder of the ticket consisting of Wesa Chau (Deputy Lord Mayor), former Member for Melbourne Jen Kanis's partner Davydd Griffiths and Glen Eira councillor Mary Delahunty, Labor looks to be giving its bid for Town Hall a serious shake.

But the real questions still surround the current Lord Mayor Sally Capp and the Deputy Lord Mayor Arron Wood. While Capp has made her intentions clear to run for the city's top job for some time, Cr Wood has largely remained coy.

But the past few months have all but confirmed a build-up to a Lord Mayoral tilt for Wood. Between appearing on the TV series *Filthy Rich & Homeless*, earning a generous spread in the *Sunday Herald Sun* and receiving a timely Queen's Birthday honour, one senses he's building his profile for something.

Sally on the other hand has only been in the top job for a few years following the demise of former Lord Mayor Robert Doyle. Having come into office through a by-election, she has no experience in running a full-blooded election campaign and all eyes are on who she includes on her ticket.

And on June 23, some pieces of that puzzle appeared to have fallen into place.

The Deputy Lord Mayor had moved a motion to reject the Cohealth site on Victoria St near the Queen Victoria Market (QVM), citing

that an overwhelming number of traders and residents were against the state government's nominated location for an injecting room.

However, on the stroke of the meeting, the Lord Mayor foreshadowed an alternative motion to Cr Wood's, stating that "carving out" sites this early in the picture would only limit council's negotiating powers with the state government.

And with Minister for Mental Health Martin Foley having the final say on where a safe injecting room is located within the City of Melbourne, a majority of councillors ultimately agreed with the Lord Mayor's approach six to four, with Cr Philip Li Liu abstaining.

But it was who voted with the Lord Mayor that provided great intrigue. Namely, Cr Kevin Louey.

Having been around Town Hall for nearly 20 years both as former Lord Mayor John So's chief of staff and a three-term councillor, Louey would provide Sally Capp's ticket with valuable experience and strong connections to Melbourne's Chinese community.

And having historically sided with councillors Wood, Beverley Pinder and Susan Riley, who all previously ran together alongside Robert Doyle, a rare speech in support of the Lord Mayor on June 23 would appear that he has changed allegiances, and that a deal has been done.

What was clear at the meeting was that there was no love lost between Sally and Arron. Cr Wood was clearly frustrated at being ambushed by Capp's alternative motion, accusing her of "playing politics".

If there was any doubt whether he would run for Lord Mayor before the meeting, his championing of the injecting room issue combined with his square-off with Sally Capp all but ensured it.

While, publicly, he continues to "consider his options", his slamming of the Lord Mayor on Neil Mitchell's 3AW radio program the following morning further added to the intrigue, claiming that Town Hall's independence was

under threat of the Labor Party which he believed had done a preference deal with the Lord Mayor – an allegation strongly refuted by Labor.

With nothing left to lose it appears that Arron Wood will, in fact, run for Lord Mayor, and it is understood that Cr Pinder will run as his deputy. While Cr Riley is expected to run on his ticket, who else makes up the numbers remains unknown for now.

On the opposing side, one assumes that Kevin Louey would run first on Capp's ticket, if, of course, a deal has been done. That leaves the question of who would run as her deputy, which has long understood to be Labor Party member Cr Nicholas Reece. And having turned down a spot on the Labor ticket, a Capp-Reece campaign sounds likely.

For now, the rest of the Capp ticket remains a mystery, as do the intentions of the rest of the current sitting councillors.

As usual, the Greens will run a ticket with Cr Rohan Leppert expected to sit first under a sacrificial Lord Mayoral candidate. However, his experienced colleague Cr Cathy Oke is understood to not be running again, potentially leaving the door open to a new Greens face on council.

That leaves councillors Jackie Watts and Le Liu up in the air. While Watts would undoubtedly run on a Gary Morgan-led ticket if she was to go again, the suspected deal between Capp and Louey could see Philip Le Liu resort to the option of running a Liberal Party ticket as a way to winning another term on council.

That leaves the accidental councillor in chair of transport Nicholas Frances-Gilley, who is unlikely to run again ●



Sean Car

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# CELEBRATING OUR COMMUNITY CHAMPIONS



This year, the City of Melbourne's prestigious Melbourne Awards celebrate community champions who have stepped up during the COVID-19 crisis.

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CITY OF MELBOURNE

# “Defining case” on short-stay looms

Continued from page 1.

could potentially only be considered as “defining” in the context of providing OCs with greater clarity during COVID-19.

Mr Bacon said that the Lim decision in Doncaster by VCAT back in 2018 already clarified and confirmed that an OC may first require an induction by the building manager and three days’ notice between guests arriving; well before COVID-19 and the issuing of public health orders.

While he wouldn’t comment on the alleged 90-day ban, only to add that the actions of Prima’s OC weren’t “squeaky clean”, they needed to be considered in the context of all laws in Victoria and Australia, and not just through the “narrow prism” of the *Owners’ Corporation Act 2006*.

“By virtue of sections 4 to 6 of the *Owners’ Corporation Act 2006*, an OC actually has incredibly wide powers vested in it to carry out the functions imposed by the rules, the act, the regulations, and any other act or law in Victoria and the Commonwealth,” he said.

“An OC has also been vested with ‘all other powers necessary to enable it to perform its functions’. In addition, an OC must also act honestly and in good faith, and must exercise due care and diligence.”

“With all of the above in mind and in the backdrop of the COVID-19 pandemic, I can’t see how any OC could be criticised by a short-stay operator in these circumstances for imposing certain restrictions.”

“The Public Health Safety Orders are laws, and those laws must be obeyed by an OC. A building manager must have an accurate register of who is present in the building, for contact tracing by health authorities.”

“They [Prima Tower OC] have over-reached in their resolution and have not sought proper advice, and they will come in for criticism from VCAT. But I doubt that the short-stay operator will obtain any orders in her favour.”

However, the President of the Victorian Accommodation Industry Association (VicAIA) Linton Wood said he believed that the case could prove crucial, describing the Prima OC’s actions as “completely unacceptable.”

“To be not following any of the rules, in fact any of the laws, that are in place to make sure that the lot owners’ best interests are represented and then just pushing their own personal agenda to ban short stays. It’s just not okay,” he said.

Mr Wood said an OC could not legally restrict how long an owner leases their premises for, pointing to the case won by Docklands short-stay operator and former VicAIA president Paul Salter in 2016.

Mr Salter was successful in a landmark



▲ Marcela Zamora.

*“With all of the above in mind and in the backdrop of the COVID-19 pandemic, I can’t see how any OC could be criticised by a short-stay operator in these circumstances for imposing certain restrictions.”*



Supreme Court decision that went against the OC at Watergate Docklands apartment complex, which had tried to prevent stays of less than 30 days at the 18-storey tower.

“As a lot owner you’ve bought an asset, you want to make money from the asset, and the owners’ corporation has no power to restrict how long or short you rent out your property for. You can rent it to a tenant for three months, you can rent it to another resident for a couple of nights or a couple of weeks.”

Mr Wood said VicAIA would be assisting Mrs Zamora in her legal battle.

Harish Nair, senior associate at Hicks Oakley Chessell Williams and lawyer representing Mrs Zamora, said the case was currently in a preliminary stage, and would be heard at the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) on July 28.

He too said the matter could become a defining case for strata law in Victoria.

“I would agree with that,” he said.

“There are a number of things managers and committee members of OCs need to learn; that they are only responsible for handling the assets of the common property, which is what OCs are created for. When they go beyond those rights, it becomes very questionable whether they’re acting in the interest of everybody in the building.”

But Mr Bacon said all OCs had a delicate balancing act to consider in responding to these unprecedented times.

“On the one hand, lot owners and lessees have freehold and leasehold rights to sub-let, licence and otherwise invite guests to come stay in their apartments for however long or short as they please, and the OC has to respect those rights,” he said.

“But on the other hand, the OC has the duty to act in the best interests of all owners and occupiers and must do all things necessary to ensure the safety and the health of all of the existing owners and residents in the building.”

“When you weigh those two competing interests in the context of COVID-19, the health and safety of over 1000 owners and residents in the building must necessarily outweigh the rights and expectations of an absentee Airbnb landlord to rent the unit out to whomever of the general public that desires to use it, in order to turn a profit.”

Harish Nair said that if there was a negligence claim on the part of the OC, then the case may head to the Supreme Court.

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# Get on with the Bend

WORDS BY *Meg Hill*  
PLANNING

The City of Melbourne wants to play a greater governance role in Fishermans Bend, and has called on the state government to prioritise the delivery of public transport to the precinct.

In a council report considered by councillors at the Future Melbourne Committee (FMC) meeting on July 7, after the July edition of *Southbank News* was published, it called for a “greater role” in future governance and decision-making.

This motion was preceded by another at the same meeting which considered a planning scheme amendment that would pave the way for the development of the University of Melbourne’s \$2 billion Fishermans Bend campus at the former GMH site on Salmon St.

Council planners support the new campus, but raised concerns in their report about heritage retention and built form.

The state government’s focus on Fishermans Bend has been largely squared on the delivery of the employment precinct in an effort to create a National Innovation and Employment Cluster (NEIC) centred on advanced manufacturing and design. The new university will be constructed in the heart of this precinct.

But while the government’s efforts to deliver 80,000 new jobs to the precinct by 2050 are backed by the City of Melbourne, it has called on a change to governance arrangements that will allow it to play a greater role in helping fast-track key projects like public transport.

The report by council’s management requested:

- An immediate commitment to funding of the tram extension [over the Yarra River] in order to secure the future University of Melbourne campus.
- Accelerate timeframes for completing the business case for the tram extension.
- Commitment to medium-term delivery of rail to Fishermans Bend.

“The challenges posed in the current structure include role clarity across Government and lack of commitment to funding and delivery of critical, catalytic infrastructure projects (such as the tram, train and open space) potentially reducing investor confidence and adversely affecting development momentum,” the report stated.

“Success is underpinned by the delivery of the tram and rail extensions into and through the precincts to provide accessibility for the expected 80,000 residents and 80,000 jobs anticipated for the area.”

The report reasoned that, although the governance structure for Fishermans Bend was complex, the point of transition from planning to delivery raised an opportunity for reassessment ●

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# Freckelton report released

WORDS BY *Sean Car*  
COUNCIL AFFAIRS

The findings of a report commissioned by the City of Melbourne investigating claims of sexual misconduct by former Lord Mayor Robert Doyle were made public on July 6 after Victoria Police dropped its investigation last month.

Victoria Police confirmed on June 25 that no charges would be laid against the 66-year-old following a two-year investigation by the Sexual Crimes Squad into a complaint made by Kharla Williams.

Mr Doyle resigned as Lord Mayor in 2018 following accusations of sexual harassment by two councillors, which he continues to deny. In 2018, a separate council-initiated investigation conducted by Dr Ian Freckelton QC found Mr Doyle's conduct towards the two councillors could constitute sexual harassment and gross misconduct.

Ms Williams made a formal complaint to both the council and Victoria Police regarding separate allegations about Mr Doyle's behaviour at a Melbourne Health dinner in 2016, which was also investigated by Dr Freckelton.

After resigning, Mr Doyle's lawyers launched Supreme Court action preventing the council from publishing the findings of that investigation, which was later withdrawn in 2019. Then newly-appointed CEO Justin Hanney said last year that the findings would be made available to Ms Williams once the police investigation had concluded – a promise he reiterated on June 25.

And on July 6, a supplementary report of the independent investigation was released by Mr Hanney at the consent of Ms Williams.

The report concluded that, based on the *Briginshaw* standard (considering the seriousness of the findings and their potential consequences), Mr Doyle behaved in a sexually inappropriate way towards Ms Williams at a Melbourne Health event on June 25, 2016.

The report found Mr Doyle, who attended the event as Lord Mayor and Melbourne Health chairman, behaved in a "sleazy" and "sexually inappropriate way" towards Ms Williams, who was attending the event with her then-fiancé Dr Mark Walterfang, who was seated on the other side of her.

Mr Doyle was accused of repeatedly placing his hand on the inside of the leg of Ms Williams, who was seated next to him. He was also accused of speaking to her in a "sleazy and inappropriate way" and placing his hand on her lower back near her buttocks after drinking "substantial amounts of red wine".

In his report, Ian Freckelton, QC, found the allegations raised by Ms Williams and Dr Walterfang to be "compellingly credible".



▲ Former Lord Mayor Robert Doyle in 2016.

*"There was no justification whatsoever for Mr Doyle's behaviour — it was completely inappropriate and there was no contextual legitimacy for it."*



"I have reached the firm conclusion that their accounts are compellingly credible," Dr Freckelton wrote. "There was no justification whatsoever for Mr Doyle's behaviour — it was completely inappropriate and there was no contextual legitimacy for it."

"It was opportunistic and occurred in circumstances of significant power imbalance between Mr Doyle and Ms Williams."

"Mr Doyle's conduct was foreseeably highly distressing and was fundamentally inconsistent with the dignity of the office of Lord Mayor and the reasonable expectations of the public as to how a Lord Mayor should behave."

Dr Freckelton noted in the report that between January and August 2018, Mr Doyle was invited on numerous occasions to attend an interview, speak to investigators on the phone and provide evidence and submissions through his solicitor.

"In the period of 14 months commencing January 17, 2018 Mr Doyle did not avail himself of any of the options offered to him to participate in the investigation," Dr Freckelton wrote.

"Instead he asserted through his solicitors that the allegations raised by Ms Williams did not fall within the terms of reference for the investigation and that he has not been well enough to respond to what has been alleged against him."

"He has had ample and fair opportunity to provide accounts of events. Put another way, he has been extended full natural justice and procedural fairness."

Robert Doyle didn't respond to *Southbank News* for comment.

City of Melbourne CEO Justin Hanney said the issues that confronted the council in 2017 and 2018 were "very serious" and it had since taken significant steps to improve its workplace.

"We acknowledge the great courage shown by the women – including Ms Williams – who called out the behaviour of Mr Doyle and came forward," he said.

"Our organisation and those who represent it must ensure that the working environment is safe, equitable and free from sexual harassment."

Since the events, he noted that the council had taken significant steps to improve our workplace policies and processes, including:

- A new code of conduct for councillors
- A suite of new policies and protocols to report sexual harassment and inappropriate behavior, and in relation to the consumption of alcohol
- The introduction of an Independent Adviser to support councillors in reporting complaints of inappropriate conduct
- Councillor training and education on new policies and ways to report misconduct
- Successfully advocating for changes to the *Local Government Act 2020*.

"We commit to our staff and community that we will continue to hold ourselves accountable and uphold a culture that does not tolerate misconduct and supports the calling out of unacceptable behaviour of all types," Mr Hanney said ●



## Vale Marcus de Rijk

OBITUARY

Marcus de Rijk, an esteemed Southbank community resident, passed away in early June following a tragic accident.

Born in Holland in 1968, Marcus moved to Australia with his family as a teenager where he made Melbourne his home.

In the ensuing years, he studied at Latrobe University where he forged a career in computer science, excelling in learning management systems and delivery of online courses. Moving to RMIT in 2015, Marcus continued his commitment to ensuring accessibility and equity for all students by championing inclusive learning practices and systems.

Committed to the community and extremely generous with his time, Marcus volunteered for several community organisations including Food Share, and the Southbank Residents' Association (SRA), where his knowledgeable and wise advice was reflected in submissions to the City of Melbourne to improve the liveability of the Southbank precinct.

A passion for music led to Marcus entertaining crowds at events and festivals around Australia, as well as pursuing a hobby in hand-made guitar making. When the Rats of Tobruk Memorial Pipes & Drums Band put a call out for new members, Marcus was quick to join, and went on to play with them for many years and became a life-long member. It was through his enthusiasm for music, that he met and married the love of his life and fellow musician, Claire, who is expecting their first baby this month.

Marcus had a positive influence on many people's lives as a leader, advocate, musician, volunteer, colleague, friend, or family member. His sudden passing is a great loss to our community and his absence will be deeply felt, however, his achievements, contributions and optimistic approach to life have, and will always be, an inspiration to those that have known him.

Vale Marcus de Rijk – you will be missed and always remembered ●



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## Central Equity co-founder honoured

WORDS BY *Sean Car*  
FEATURE

Southbanker Eddie Kutner, one of the co-founders of prominent Southbank developer Central Equity, was appointed as a Member of the Order of Australia (AM) on the Queen's Birthday last month.

The German-born Kutner, who migrated to Australia as young person with his family in the 1950s, was recognised last month for his contributions to property development, financial sectors and science.

While he described the recognition for his work as an honour, he said it was only due to the "village" of people who had supported him, namely his wife of more than 50 years and his family as well as Central Equity co-founders John Bourke and Dennis Wilson.

But while he acknowledged the "stability" that the people close to him had always provided, he pointed back to his earliest memories of arriving in Australia in reflecting upon what it meant to be recognised in such a context.

"I can recall even from the very early days when we got here my father's guidance to me was to 'embrace Australia,'" he said. "Sure, you bring some multicultural aspects, but the main game is to embrace Australia – that was one of the main messages when we got here."

It's a powerful message when one considers the impact such words have had on Mr Kutner's life since.

One only has to take a look to Central Equity's staggering contribution in creating what we know today as Southbank. Since its first completed Southbank development in 1995, its 29<sup>th</sup> – Focus on City Rd – is currently coming out of the ground.

From its first developments in Carlton in the 1980s, Central Equity has gone on to become one of Melbourne's biggest developers and he said the greatest source of pride, particularly in Southbank, came from helping create a sense of community.

"When I walk down the street and I see people walking up and down the footpath shopping

or in their gym gear it's a great source of pride that you've actually contributed to creating a community," he said.

"I sit here in Southbank and I look out at the buildings and I'm proud of all the other developers' buildings just as proud as I am of mine. It's pretty unique and it's come together."

His success in property development has also allowed him to pursue some of his other great passions in science and art.

He said that as a young man he had the choice to go commercial or scientific in his professional pursuits. While science "wasn't recognised as something you could make a living out of" at the time, he said that it was "all around us."

Through his long association with National Science and Technology Centre Questacon, he founded not-for-profit science-arts organisation Wonderment Walk in 2013. The initiative, which aims to create accessible open-air galleries of sculptures and installations that combine science, mathematics and art, has already seen projects commissioned throughout Melbourne.

Its next project, *Waterlines* by artist Ian Strange, has been donated to the City of Port Phillip. It will be placed at Kirriip Park across from the new South Melbourne Primary School in Southbank and represents the area's association with water and flooding.

"It's not just the sculpture because it's across the road from the new school and we're putting together an education package, so hopefully all the kids will come and they'll study ecology, water flooding, low-lying areas, the impact of urbanisation so to me that's all science. Every day you walk through it. You live through it," Mr Kutner said.

"It's our backyard. We're all now designing buildings that deal with it so when there is flooding it doesn't affect the security, nor the ambiance of the place."

While it felt "surreal" looking back to when it all began in Australia for Eddie, he said it had been a privilege to contribute to Australia by doing what he loved.

"It's great to do what you love. It becomes part of your life as opposed to a job," he said ●

## Cladding fast track concerns

WORDS BY *Meg Hill*  
BUILDING

The state government has announced that its plan to fix flammable cladding will be fast-tracked, with the number of buildings rectified per year doubled.

The government's \$600 million plan to fix flammable cladding was originally designed to rectify up to 100 buildings per year.

However, on June 23 the government announced the program would be accelerated, with work to start on up to 400 buildings within two years.

The plan involves Cladding Safety Victoria (CSV) working with selected builders to rectify their projects at no profit. Minister for Planning Richard Wynne said participating builders would have to pass rigorous tests.

"Only reputable builders will be eligible for the accelerated program. Those found to have done the wrong thing will not be able to participate," Mr Wynne said.

"This is a chance for the original builders to become part of the solution and keep their workers employed during these challenging times."

Paul Morton, CEO of Lannock Strata Finance, said he welcomed the state government's proposed fast tracking of cladding rectification.

Lannock Strata Finance lends loans to apartment owners in need of covering the gap between government assistance and the total cost of cladding rectification.

"Many owners are facing difficulty in obtaining personal finance or increases to their mortgages in order to be able to fund a special levy to pay for cladding repairs," he said.

"For owners living in properties that may not be compensated, Lannock provides a viable and immediate funding alternative. We can finance the works immediately without a single owner having to increase their mortgage."

"Later on, if their property does qualify for government assistance, owners' corporations (OCs) can use these funds to repay the strata loan early. Being able to proceed with cladding repair works quickly also restores value to each individual property."

But some experts have raised doubt about the program.

Strata Title Lawyers CEO Tom Bacon said the problem was the actual resourcing of CSV.

"The announcement made by the Victorian Government is an incredibly ambitious proposal, and most likely done with the best of intentions," he said.

"Unfortunately, CSV has not been resourced properly by the Victorian Building Authority (VBA) and by the Victorian Government, and

*"Unfortunately, CSV has not been resourced properly by the Victorian Building Authority (VBA) and by the Victorian Government, and that is why we have seen significant delays in commencing the pilot project with even the first 15 buildings struggling to get under way."*



that is why we have seen significant delays in commencing the pilot project with even the first 15 buildings struggling to get under way."

"So, the proposal for 400 buildings to get underway within two years is going to require either significant additional staff numbers and resources being added to CSV, or it is going to require significant trust being extended to builders and project managers to undertake the works proactively and with little red tape."

Mr Bacon said it was the latter – pro-active work with self-certification and little red tape – that led to the cladding problem in the first place.

Apartments owners have also reacted hesitantly. We Live Here president Barbara Francis said it was a "knee-jerk reaction from a government under siege, trying to look as though they are doing something".

"How will the government's proposal actually work, and at what cost?" she said ●

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## Release of Montague plans delayed

*Continued from page 1.*

development, serviced by existing public transport infrastructure and investment in community facilities which provides an opportunity to contribute to Victoria's economic recovery."

While a strategic plan for Montague already exists within the planning framework for Fishermans Bend, along with the other four precincts, the next stage of precinct planning maps out the detailed implementation arrangements, including key community infrastructure.

The existing strategic frameworks are also already supported by planning controls, which was finalised by Minister for Planning Richard Wynne back in October 2018.

Fishermans Bend Development Board chair Meredith Sussex said that while releasing the implementation plans was of high importance, the challenges of COVID-19 meant that implementation in Fishermans Bend was currently the Board's major priority.

"While seeking public feedback on the Montague Precinct Plans is of great importance, the current focus of the Board is about implementation and working on the 'nitty-gritty' of delivering on development in Fishermans Bend," she said.

"The importance of implementation has been elevated in response to the economic pressures of COVID-19, and while the detailed precinct planning is a priority, there are more pressing priorities in Fishermans Bend at present."

"The governance structures, through various committees and the Mayor's Forum, are working better than ever, and the Board looks forward to revisiting this important work in Montague with all stakeholders at the appropriate time."

Montague Community Alliance convener Trisha Avery said the release of the plans were long overdue.

"The Montague Community Alliance is mindful that the Fishermans Bend Development Board and Taskforce are fully engaged in responding to the current pandemic. We are grateful for their hard work," she said.

"However, we the community, have been waiting seven years for a precinct plan ... a plan that would provide some certainty of how our living and working situations for the residential, business and development community will be affected."

"We don't need less certainty during this difficult time, we need more and we also need clear communication about the plans that we know are near, or are completed." ●

## Protected cycling lanes fast-tracked

WORDS BY *David Schout*  
TRANSPORT

The City of Melbourne has aimed to install separated cycling lanes on Queensbridge and Whiteman streets within the next 12 months as it ramps up its bicycle infrastructure pledge.

In a move that further accelerates a "bicycle friendly city" shift, the council announced a network of dedicated lanes that seek to both increase cyclist numbers and maintain rider confidence on the roads.

By July next year, the council is looking to install cycling lanes from the north end of Queensbridge St up to the City Rd intersection.

Further, it will extend the current bike lanes on Normanby Rd into Whiteman St, until the Queensbridge St intersection.

The lanes, if approved by the state government, will be "protected"; that is, will provide cyclists with a physical barrier to motor vehicles.

In the council's extensive research before the release of last year's 10-year transport strategy, many current and would-be cyclists reported feeling intimidated on inner-city roads.

"By fast-tracking the delivery of bike lanes on key routes, we're creating streets that people can feel confident riding along, which in turn will free up space on our roads, buses, trams and trains," Lord Mayor Sally Capp said.

"Our research shows that it's essential to create physical protection from motor vehicles to encourage more people to ride in the central city."

Town Hall had already committed to long-term cycling infrastructure reform prior to now, but the sharp rise in cycling during the COVID-19 shutdown has hastened their plans.

"Riding and walking have increased in popularity during the pandemic. As people return to the city they will want to travel in ways that allow them to maintain physical distance," Cr Capp said.

"I look forward to seeing lots of Melburnians enjoying our city on bikes – as I do – especially those who've taken up riding as a way to stay fit and healthy during the pandemic."

The upgrades along Queensbridge St and Whiteman St would complement recent council commitments to install protected lanes along Kavanagh St and Southbank Boulevard, the latter of which is aimed to divert cyclists away from the contentious Southbank Promenade.

The new separated bike lanes are currently being installed on Kavanagh St in addition to many new bike lanes already completed along Southbank Boulevard. A new signalised crossing is also planned near the tram stop beneath the Kings Way overpass, which will form part of the cycling connection to Kavanagh St.



▲ Southbank Boulevard (top) Kavanagh St (bottom).



▲ New cycling lanes (green).

The council's transport portfolio chair Cr Nicolas Frances Gilley said once these works were complete, there would be an uninterrupted network of bike paths along Moray St, Kavanagh St, Southbank Boulevard and north to St Kilda Rd, or east along Linlithgow Ave and the Yarra Trail.

"It's fantastic to see the protected bike lanes along Kavanagh St starting to take shape," he said. "The lanes will make it safer and much more enjoyable to ride around Southbank."

"Once the Kavanagh St bike lanes and the crossing under Kings Way are complete, there will be an uninterrupted network of bike paths for people to ride from South Melbourne and Southbank to the heart of the city, or to the eastern suburbs."

"The community has had input on the final designs and we've had working groups with owners' corporation members, the Bicycle Network and Southbank Residents' Association."

"With six new trees to be planted in Balston Street as part the works, it's a great outcome for Southbank."

"Southbank is a thriving tourist and residential area now and is set to boom over the next 15 years, so good cycling infrastructure is critical to maintaining Southbank's liveability."

The measures are all aimed at removing more cyclist from the dangerous Southbank Promenade, which was rated in the top 10 scariest cycling spots in Melbourne in a recent survey completed by more than 6000 cyclists.

The BikeSpot survey allowed cyclists to

pinpoint dangerous locations within the city on a map, and the vexed stretch of pavement featured as the seventh-worst.

The survey, run by mapping website CrowdSpot and charity the Amy Gillett Foundation, allowed cyclists to not only mark unsafe spots but provide comment, which many did.

By contrast, the separated southbound cycling lane on St Kilda Rd (next to Queen Victoria Gardens) was rated in the top 10 safest.

"It's awful all the way along Southbank [Promenade]," one responder said. "At 5.30/6pm there are so many bikes going both ways and pedestrians in big groups going out. It's dangerous for everyone and very stressful cycling along here. Bikes and people need to be separated urgently."

Last year the council announced that while the Southbank Promenade would continue to be a shared space, it would aim redirect cyclists onto new lanes on Southbank Boulevard.

The Promenade upgrades, which will include new seating and the planting of native trees, were originally planned to begin in 2020, however are now more likely to commence in 2021 ●



*David Schout*  
JOURNALIST  
DAVID@HYPERLOCALNEWS.COM.AU

# Connect with your local community

The **Southbank Community Hub** is a free online space to connect with fellow Southbank locals, stay in the know, post requests for help, share skills and local knowledge, ask for recommendations, discover local services, classes, retailers, events and more!

This Facebook group is owned by **Southbank News**.

If you're a local resident or business you can join up here:

[www.facebook.com/groups/southbankcommunityhub/](http://www.facebook.com/groups/southbankcommunityhub/)







# I'm a Southbanker

## Stories from the locals you know

Southbank and South Wharf are a vibrant mix of residents, workers and businesses. Over the past 20 years they have evolved from just places to live into communities with a growing heart. We invite you to get to know some of the personalities behind the shops, bars, restaurants and cafes. Drop in for a chat, enjoy a drink or meal with friends, because it's your "front yard", and it's you who make it our "home".

### ASADO

5 Riverside Quay, Southbank  
asado.melbourne Ph 9088 8600



Most Southbankers have probably been allured at some stage by the delectable smokey flavoured aromas that waft from Asado's open fire pit and three metre charcoal parilla grill.

Asado pays homage to the incomparable style and culinary ethos of Argentinian slow-cooked barbeque. Adding to the South American authenticity of the restaurant are the numbers of international staff who serve front-of-house and behind the scenes, like restaurant supervisor Francesca de Sanctis (pictured).

However, these staff were hardest hit when the lockdown started because of their lack of access to government assistance. The parent San Telmo company moved quickly

to set-up "Asado-to-go" take-away service and an online ordering service for a variety of grocery boxes, meal boxes, heat at home items, take away and pantry essentials. The service was managed and operated by the international staff, with all profits going to them – 35 people in total.

The generosity of all those who supported them during that time meant that Asado could provide a staff meal every day – even for those who were not rostered on. Without the support of the Southbank community, many of those international staff would not be here today. Staff like Colombian Francesca de Sanctis are forever grateful to the Southbank locals who helped them get their team through an incredibly difficult time.

"One of the most positive things I took from the takeaway shop is that, for the first time, people from different positions were united and working together to achieve the same thing, because we all had the same worries," she said.

"There were no positions or a hierarchy as such. I've got to meet people that worked for the company who I didn't even know before. It was a great, humbling experience."

### La Camera

MR2/3 Southgate Ave, Southbank  
lacamerasouthgate.com Ph 9699 3600



La Camera needs no introduction as a business that is thoroughly connected to its local community. It has been operating in Southgate for more than 20 years and its community nights and operatic dinners are legendary in Southbank.

The first Monday night of every month is a special gathering place for "the locals", where information and gossip about "the hood" is swapped over plates of food.

It's a family business through and through. Lino and Paul Scidone operated La Camera in South Yarra before heading riverside to become one of the early tenants of the Southgate complex. They have grown-up with the Southbank community and owe a lot of their success to the huge word-of-mouth endorsement.

La Camera's food is authentic Italian. In fact, Paul Scidone says several of the recipes come directly from his mother Chiara Scidone's (pictured) cook book, which have become favourites with customers over the years. If you were to visit the Scidone household, you would probably have Chiara serve you up one of these favourites from the La Camera menu:

Nonna Chiara's traditional pork and veal lasagna is a La Camera dining staple, featuring pork and veal, with parmesan, garlic, mozzarella, tomato and fresh herbs.

The winter vegetable minestrone is a hearty Tuscan style soup with winter greens, beans, root vegetables, potatoes, garlic, fresh herbs and parmesan.

La Camera's polpetta is a delicious combination of veal and porcini meatballs with napoli.

### Belgian Beer Café

5 Riverside Quay, Southbank  
belgianbeercafemelbourne.com.au  
Ph 9690 5777



Who better to profile Southbank's Belgian Beer café than Belgian-Australian Yannick Verjans, who started working there six years ago while backpacking. He liked us so much that he is now a permanent resident and is well on his way to becoming an Australian citizen.

Yannick says matching beer to food is as important as matching wine. To cleanse the palate or break through

heavier foods that are cheesy or fatty, Yannick suggests Leffe Blonde with cheese croquettes, Duvel with chicken parma or Rodenbach Grand Cru with fried camembert.

He says "pairing" the beer will allow for similar flavours to engage, blend and therefore enhance the experience. His suggestions for pairing include Kwak with porterhouse steak, Exit Milk Stout with Belgian waffles or Stella Artois with fish and chips.

Beer and food combinations with different flavour profiles can change and accentuate desirable flavours in both aspects. Yannick suggests trying a heavy, darker beer with a creamy dish, a hoppy beer with a spicy dish, or a soft pale ale with a savoury dish. For example, he says combine Rochefort 10 with Roquefort mussels, Lindemans Pecheresse with calamari, or Wolf of the Willows XPA with the Belgian beef burger.

The Belgian Beer Café in Riverside Quay has remained open right through the lockdown to serve Southbankers and it's proud to sponsor the Rotary Club of Southbank.

### Pure South

3 Southgate Ave, Southbank  
puresouth.com.au Ph 9699 4600



Lots has changed in Southbank during the past 20 years and Pure South's Restaurant manager Peter Leary has seen most of it happen. He supervises staff and customers in the iconic restaurant that forms one of the bookends of the Southgate complex.

Peter arrived as the inaugural restaurant manager at Pure South Dining in 2003, joining founder Philip

Kennedy in bringing beautiful, fresh Tasmanian produce to Southbank palettes. He cemented himself into Southbank life when he bought into the business a couple of years later and when his wife Desi began work as the breakfast show producer over the road at ABC Radio.

He gets a ground-up view of the precinct every morning and evening as he rides his bike to and from work. At home he's involved as an enthusiastic volunteer at his son Seth's U/13 junior footy club.

Peter's time in Southbank pre-dates most things you see today. He also witnessed just about every busking show ever devised, as Pure South overlooks one of Melbourne's prized busking sites, at the end of Southgate Avenue. The ground floor all-day dining venue Pure South Kitchen is probably the best people-watching place along the river.

What's Peter's favourite dish at the moment?

"My current go-to dish is a great combination from two of our best producers and suppliers from Tasmania: Hardy Family Octopus, Mount Gnomon Farm chorizo, peperonata, basil," he said.

### South Wharf

South Wharf Promenade  
southwharfmelbourne.com.au



A winter shopping fix at South Wharf

Okay, it's now cold and a bit wet outside, but Southbankers can still get their shopping fix by heading down to DFO South Wharf, without having to get out of their cars.

The huge array of shops is right on our doorstep and the heap of parking means it is only steps from your car to heated shopping comfort.

Ask for a parking discount voucher from any of the stores, cafes or restaurants, because it will cut your parking cost in half.

Once comfortably inside, you have 180 Australian and international brands to browse around, and most of them are up to 70 per cent off regular retail prices. Winter is a great time to do a bit of home "nesting" and DFO Homemaker is a one stop shop for homewares needs. There's an enormous range of home décor, furniture, home electronics and kitchenware brands.

When you're all shopped out, take a very short stroll to the historic South Wharf Promenade to breakfast, lunch, dine or just enjoy a drink and snack in the beautifully restored heritage cargo sheds that overlook the river. At the moment, Common Man, BangPop, Meat Market, Plus 5, The Boatbuilders Yard, and Charlie Lovett South Wharf are all open.

So, there's your winter weekend outing taken care of. If you're lucky enough to not have to work, or are taking an iso-break, then it's all available to you seven days a week.



yarrariver.melbourne





## Free takeaway curries outside Rockpool

WORDS BY Rhonda Dredge  
COMMUNITY

It's a pleasant change to be working outside with a table of free food to support those without incomes.

Diana Montenegro is the manager at Spice Temple but she's now supervising Hope Delivery.

"A lot of international students have lost their jobs," she said.

"They're here on a working holiday and staying at backpackers and we're trying to feed them."

The table has become a familiar sight outside Rockpool, a classy diner near the casino.

Diana said they were giving away more than

600 meals a day, packaged for reheating at home.

Beef kofta and vegetable curry were on the menu when *Southbank News* visited.

"We initially gave the food to those who worked around but we want to reach people in need. You don't know their circumstances," she said.

"My partner works with international students and every individual student is trying to survive."

She said there were usually 25 people on the Spice Temple roster as the front of house team. "Now I count 10. Everyone else has gone back home."

Hope Delivery started in May under the umbrella of the Rockpool Foundation and will continue until the end of August ●

## Childcare comes to Melbourne Square

WORDS BY Sean Car  
EDUCATION

The operator of Southbank's newest childcare at Melbourne Square has been appointed ahead of the new facility's opening at Kavanagh St later this year.

As part of the completion of stage-one at the development, Melbourne Square will open its own on-site childcare facility – the Nido Early School – a subsidiary of nationally regarded provider Think Childcare.

Already taking enrolments, Nido offers 87 places across an learning space spanning 1250 sqm. And for busy parents there will be convenient undercover pick-up and drop off facilities to make life easier.

Nido will be located on level-two of the development with views over Melbourne Square's new 3700 sqm public park, and will complement its residential and office towers by providing a much-needed learning environment right at the doorstep of residents, as well as for workers at MSQ Commercial and the local community.

The childcare centre will also be co-located within the development's planned retail precinct, which includes new cafes and a full-line Woolworths supermarket.

The Nido collection of Early Schools for children was launched in 2014 and champions a unique approach to learning, inspired by the Reggio Emilia philosophy - a long-standing



Italian education concept which fosters an environment for children where they are encouraged to create, trust, explore, discover and excel.

Expressions of interest for enrolments at the new Nido Early School are now open and the centre is expected to open following the completion of stage-one of the development in

**For more information:**  
[nidoearlyschool.com.au](http://nidoearlyschool.com.au)

# Renewable energy ramped up

WORDS BY Katie Johnson  
ENVIRONMENT

Several prominent Melbourne universities, businesses and factories will now be powered by wind energy after securing a renewable energy deal through the City of Melbourne's second major bulk-buy project.

Facilities such as RMIT's city campus, Midtown Plaza, The Strand Arcade and office buildings throughout the city will benefit from the Melbourne Renewable Energy Project (MREP) deal, which kicked off on July 1.

Deputy Lord Mayor Arron Wood said that the 10-year deal was an exciting step towards a greener city.

"Combined, the two projects represent the equivalent of a five per cent reduction in the city's emissions, and a tangible shift towards renewable energy in the national grid," the Deputy Lord Mayor said.

"It's equivalent to providing enough renewable power for more than 22,000 households a year. When you add MREP1 that jumps to enough power for 40,000 households a year."

Through MREP 2, the multi-million dollar purchasing agreement was made last month between seven major energy users, including RMIT University, Deakin University, Cbus Property, ISPT, Fulton Hogan, Citywide Asphalt, and Mondelez International.

Together they secured 110 GWh of renewable electricity per year to 14 shopping centres, nine office buildings, seven educational campuses, and four manufacturing facilities.

"Most of the wind power will be produced at the Yaloak South Wind Farm near Ballan, with the remaining energy coming from other wind farm projects in regional Victoria," Cr Wood said.

The majority of the partners were shifted to wind after their contracts began on July 1, with many of their facilities now 100 per cent powered by wind.

One of those major partners was RMIT, which now has a significant portion of its city campus generated through renewables, including lecture theatres, laboratories, libraries, study spaces, and The Capitol theatre.

RMIT executive director of property services and procurement Chris Hewison said RMIT was excited to be part of the buying group as it aligned with the university's goals.

"RMIT's ongoing involvement in the project is an opportunity to demonstrate sustainability leadership in our community while driving significant progress toward our goal to be carbon neutral by 2030," Mr Hewison said.

This project follows the success of the first MREP deal, which saw council lead a consortium to purchase 88 GWh of renewable energy, and led to the construction of an 80 MW wind farm at Crowlands, near Ararat.

Environment portfolio chair Cr Cathy Oke said that the deal was part of a larger plan by the council to fast-track a range of initiatives to further reduce its carbon emissions, including reaching council's zero emissions target 10-years earlier by 2040.

"The second Melbourne Renewable Energy Project will reduce greenhouse gas pollution by 123,000 tonnes a year, that's the equivalent of taking more than 28,000 cars off the road every year," Cr Oke said.

"We have already reduced emissions from the City of Melbourne's operations by more than 50 per cent in six years and we're accredited as



▲ Yaloak South Wind Farm near Ballan.

“It's equivalent to providing enough renewable power for more than 22,000 households a year.”

being carbon neutral – but we must do more, and we can't do it alone.”

Aside from the environmental benefits, the Deputy Lord Mayor said that by having these ambitious renewable targets, the council is able to employ people during the critical period of COVID-19.

"This deal is so important in the time of coronavirus because the transition to renewable energy isn't just good for the environment, it's also really good for the economic certainty of businesses," Cr Wood said.

"You get long-term price certainty and it creates a lot of jobs during COVID, particularly in regional Victoria."

Overall, Cr Wood couldn't be happier about the positive effects MREP 2 will have for all Victorians.

"This is my little passion project and doing this is my favourite part about being on council," Cr Wood said.

"Whenever I talk about it I can't help but get a smile on my face." ●



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▲ Steven Michalasz at work at Southgate.

## River cruises start up

WORDS BY Rhonda Dredge  
WATERWAYS

The temperature was dropping, the drizzle was about to start and there had been just three passengers on a boat that carries 80.

Yet ticket-seller for Melbourne River Cruises Steven Michalasz wasn't complaining.

The popular cruise boats are back and operating along the Yarra.

"We're the only company that's re-opened," Steven told *Southbank News*, and in the circumstances, that's big news.

The company has six boats moored along the riverbank and is monitoring custom.

The 11am cruise on the *Spirit of Melbourne* travelled up the Yarra to Herring Island on a very quiet Friday in July.

After several sunny days the temperature had dropped to 11 degrees, putting off the city's potential passengers apart from three.

"I'm warm enough," Steven said. "I'm wearing a thick coat."

As businesses come to terms with the economy and the worsening weather, Melbourne River Cruises is confining its operations to operating on Friday, Saturday and Sunday.

"We opened on a Monday but closed again when there weren't many people around," Steven said.

It mightn't be a party waiting on the dock but staff are supported by JobKeeper payments and there are no hard-luck stories to be found here.

"I'm at work. I'm okay." ●

## Community Chest

WORDS BY Meg Hill  
COMMUNITY

The Community Chest is a small charity and op shop that has helped shape South Melbourne's community landscape since 1946.

Maintaining a focus on the suburb for 74 years, it has helped establish aged care homes and youth centres and has donated hundreds of thousands of dollars to community groups.

And on July 1 the Chest had its lease at 200 – 202 Bank St renewed for another five years by the City of Port Phillip, in the latest recognition of the charity's local work.

Long term store manager Dallas Hall told *Southbank News* the Chest was unique in the area and among charities.

"All the money we make here in the store goes back into the local community through local community groups. I've been here for 21 years and we're one of the few independent charities still running," she said.

"I call us the true local. We do have other charity stores in South Melbourne, and they all do a great job, like the Salvation Army, but we're the one true local organisation."

The charity was founded in 1946 by the former council – the City of South Melbourne – local businesses and community representatives.

In 1949 the Chest purchased a factory at 421 Coventry St for conversion into a youth centre run by the YMCA.

In the early 1950s it underwrote the establishment of the Claremont Home for the Aged.

The Chest's first shop was located on Park St until 1983, when it moved to its current location on Bank St.

The property was offered to the Chest by the council at a rate of \$1 per annum to honour the charity's work. The building is itself a part of the suburb's history. It was built in 1895 by former Mayor of South Melbourne John Boyd.

Since 2010 the lease has been extended for five years at a time.



Over its most recent five years, the Chest has awarded \$260,000 in grants to 29 local organisations. The grant money is raised through the Bank St op-shop.

"Once a year we hand out grants, any community groups located in the City of Port Phillip can apply to us for funding," Dallas Hall said.

"At the moment we've got applications open. They will close in August. We've got a sign in our window for community groups wanting funding, they can come in and get an application form."

"At the end of the year we have a presentation for successful applicants, they give a talk on what they're going to do with the money, and we have an afternoon tea, it's a really nice local community gathering."

A team of 16 volunteers help run the shop operations, which resumed in May after a few month's closure due to the pandemic.

"I started as a volunteer 21 years ago," Dallas Hall said.

"I started because I was living next door and I wasn't working. My kids were very young, and I thought it'd be a great thing to do just to have some interaction with people and not be at home with young children all the time."

"I've lived around here for 40 years and it's a community that I love and a really nice atmosphere working within it." ●

## ABC up next on Southbank Boulevard

COUNCIL AFFAIRS

Works on transforming Southbank Boulevard into a new linear park will move to the section in front of the ABC this month after the recent completion of the new "Arts Gateway" space in front of Southbank Theatre.

The council said that the new arts gateway space had delivered 1200 sqm of new public open space for Southbank, including locally sourced quartzite stone from Castlemaine, 55 large native trees, 16 large grass trees, and a variety of ground level planting, seating, furniture and lighting.

Works completed include stone installation and landscaping in front of the Melbourne Recital Centre and Southbank Theatre, tree and ground level planting and new bluestone footpaths.

Bike lanes along the edge of the roadway have been asphalted, and are now open to the public.

"The new landscaping, plantings and seating has created a vastly improved area for locals, concert goers and visitors to enjoy when the COVID-19 restrictions have been lifted," Lord Mayor Sally Capp said.

Construction will now shift to the new civic space located in front of the ABC building between Moore and Sturt streets.

These works will include the demolition of the old roadway to make way for construction of the open space, which includes lawn areas, seating, planting and trees. The council said more information would be released on these works in July.

The City of Melbourne included a further \$12.8 million in its recent budget towards helping fast track the completion of Southbank Boulevard.

### Bridge closure extended

In a further capital works update, the council has confirmed that the Evan Walker Bridge will remain closed until August 1 ●

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# DRIVE THIEVES AWAY

Police are urging motorists to take precautions with their vehicles and valuables.

- Ensure your vehicle is locked, including all windows and doors
- Remove all valuables from your vehicle, or put them out of sight
- Park in a well-lit and secure area - a garage or carport where possible
- Keep your car keys secure at all times

If you are a victim of theft, call the Police Assistance Line on 131 444 to make a report. Call Triple Zero (000) for immediate police attendance.

VICTORIA POLICE  
CR. 08.04.20

## Drowning out COVID-19 with live music



WORDS BY *Katie Johnson*

Tucked beneath an office building in Gladstone St, the café is decked out in old-fashioned decor—including faded wooden tables, stools made from old drums of Mansion Wax Polish, and a vintage petrol pump.

Amid the retro interior is owner Dave Wright, who is always behind the counter making every single cup of coffee and greeting people by name.

Dave and his wife bought the business in early 2013, back when the café was called Gasolina and had been operating for six months.

But being a musician himself, he decided to give the café a more fitting title.

“Jimmy the Saint is a character from a really early Springsteen song. And since my wife and I both worked in the music industry we obviously brought that influence with us,” he said.

For the past few years the café has enjoyed regular business, with loyal customers coming in day after day to enjoy a cooked breakfast.

“It’s always been a really good, regular business which allowed us to be a single income family,” Dave said.

“We’ve always stuck to basics, offering wraps, simple burgers, American style sandwiches, salads and a unique coffee blend from local, boutique coffee roaster STRADA.”

But after crushing COVID-19 restrictions forced them to shut for 10 weeks, re-opening has not been without its challenges.

“It’s disheartening to stand in a business you’ve owned for seven years and wait for customers to walk in,” he said.

“Restrictions have cut business by about 60 per cent so you need a strong mental capacity to get through it and adapt.”

Despite the difficulties, Dave is staying positive with the help of great staff that have stuck with him throughout the years and by adapting to the circumstances.

“Everyone’s had to adapt during this time. I’ve noticed that by reducing our offer, wastage is really kept to a minimum and it’s reduced our overheads which makes a huge difference,” he said.

From late June, Jimmy The Saint also started offering live concerts on Friday evenings, which include a dinner and show package limited to 15 people.

“It’s been really well received and has sold out every night. Moving forward it’s something I’ll continue doing, especially while the live sector is in such a crisis and there’s nowhere for people to play,” Dave said.

And after the success of the first show on June 26—which included local artist Charles Jenkins and Dave’s own band: Dave Wright and the Midnight Ramblers—Dave has been flooded with requests from other local bands looking to do shows.

“It’s a great thing because it helps musos get gigs and provides boredom relief for people who would normally be going to see live bands,” he said.

“We try to support local music and businesses as much as we can.”

Jimmy The Saint is located at 15 Gladstone St, South Melbourne ●



*For seven years, Jimmy The Saint has been providing warm service and exceptional coffee to Montague locals looking to step out of the office and into a time capsule.*

**For more visit:**  
[jimmythesaint.com.au](http://jimmythesaint.com.au) and  
**enjoy Dave’s music at:**  
[davewrightandthemidnightelectric.com/the-midnight-ramblers](http://davewrightandthemidnightelectric.com/the-midnight-ramblers)

## ApartmentBuyer grant launched at Melbourne Square

*To celebrate 55 years in property development, Melbourne Square developer OSK Property has unveiled a new \$25,000 grant program aimed at helping prospective home buyers during COVID-19.*



WORDS BY *Sean Car*

Starting from July 1, Melbourne Square’s ApartmentBuyer bonus provides property buyers who missed out on the Federal Government’s \$25,000 HomeBuilder stimulus package (benefitting those who are building a new home or renovating their existing home), with the same amount of savings if they purchase a two- or three-bedroom Melbourne Square apartment.

Under the program, you don’t have to be a first homebuyer or earn a certain amount to qualify – the ApartmentBuyer incentive applies to any two- or three-bedroom Melbourne Square residential unit purchased from July for a limited time.

In addition to ApartmentBuyer, first homebuyers at Melbourne Square are also eligible to receive a further \$10,000 thanks to the government’s First Homebuyer grant – translating to

a total savings of \$35,000. It also comes with potential stamp duty savings for those who purchase their dream homes in Melbourne Square in the months of July and August.

OSK Property sales and marketing director Scott Jessop said the launch of the 55<sup>th</sup> birthday incentive created a rare opportunity for prospective apartment buyers to get on the property ladder, and own a piece of prime inner-city Melbourne.

“By launching the ApartmentBuyer incentive at Melbourne Square, we are opening our doors again to allow private tours of our beautifully completed brand new apartments, all while making it more financially accessible for our customers to purchase their dream home. We invite homebuyers to join us in celebrating our proud legacy of 55 years of excellence,” he said.

“We hope homebuyers take advantage of this incentive to realise their vision of owning their ideal inner-city home.”

### Celebrating 55 years

OSK Property has an illustrious story that began from OSK Holdings, which started from humble beginnings as a small stockbroking business in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, in 1963.

Today, OSK Group employs more than 2000 employees throughout Malaysia and Australia, while the OSK Property team has successfully delivered a broad range of properties from large-scale townships to niche high-rise buildings, as well as managing a portfolio of investment assets including retail and commercial office properties.

OSK Property’s success in Asia and unwavering commitment to quality, innovation and excellence saw it take its most daring step yet in 2017 when it launched its first flagship Australian project in partnership with the Malaysian Employees Provident Fund – the Melbourne Square project on Kavanagh St.

Melbourne Square is one of the largest mixed-use developments in Victoria, located alongside Southbank’s acclaimed Arts Precinct. Since then, OSK Property has been working closely with a specialist team of renowned experts to deliver the Melbourne Square vision – Cox Architecture, Carr Design, Multiplex and Sinclair Brook.

Melbourne Square has already accomplished a lot to-date and has positioned itself to be a long-term player in the Australian property market. Since welcoming its first residents in January 2020, Melbourne Square has also opened our stunning new 3745 sqm public park – the largest of its kind in Southbank ●

**For more information:**  
[melbournesquare.com.au](http://melbournesquare.com.au)

# The Arts Precinct



## Arts Centre gives emerging artists a platform in isolation

*With restrictions threatening to decimate Melbourne's arts sector and make live performances a thing of the past, 2020 is a difficult time to be a young composer.*

WORDS BY *Katie Johnson*

But despite the ongoing challenges, Arts Centre Melbourne is still doing its part to support emerging artists through its award-winning mentorship program, *5x5x5: Memory*.

Running since 2013, *5x5x5* is a bi-annual program which selects and commissions five young artists to create five-minute works in response to a theme, which are then published by the Arts Centre.

But for the first time in the program's history, program director Simon DeLacyLeacey said the works were being produced in the artists' home studios rather than in-house at the Arts Centre.

"With the pandemic we've had to leap into the digital realm, exploring what artists can do in isolation," he said.

"And in the midst of cancelling shows and all of the incredible work the Arts Centre puts on, *5x5x5* was one of those programs we could still use to support young artists through this time."

DeLacyLeacey said that *5x5x5* had been adapted so that everything from the production to mentorship was now digital—ensuring that young artists didn't miss out on this crucial opportunity.

"It can provide an awesome opportunity for these emerging artists to utilise their home studios and get some limelight, which is especially important during this time," he said.

"The feedback, moral support and networking provided by the program allows them to hone their craft while they're working in isolation."

As one of the only programs which offers young composers the chance to increase their professional networks and public profiles, entry

into *5x5x5* is always highly sought after.

But this year there was an overwhelming response to the program, as emerging artists from all over Melbourne applied for selection.

"One of the hardest parts was choosing five emerging artists out of 60 applications, especially when there's so many talented artists out there," DeLacyLeacey said.

One of those five emerging artists was Sue-Anne Tan, who was shocked to learn she had been chosen.

"It felt really surreal because I submitted the application during a busy-period during university and I wasn't expecting the call," she said.

As an international student from Malaysia who has been unable to see her family for months, she interpreted this year's theme of "memory" by delving into the loneliness coronavirus restrictions had caused.

"Being away from home has not been great in terms of lockdown, it gets very lonely, restrictive and claustrophobic sometimes. So, I wanted to make something that other people in that situation can relate to," she said.

For Sue-Anne, the process of making music at home and being mentored digitally by this year's mentor, Kate Neal, has been a positive experience.

"I actually prefer the electronic medium so I'm really enjoying the process of creating music at home," she said.

"It's been really helpful to get Kate's feedback so I can improve my sound."

And despite the challenges the pandemic has posed to the arts, Sue-Anne believes it has also paved the way for new digital opportunities.

"Ordinarily young composers would already be struggling, so this just makes it 10 times worse," she said.

"But at the same time, people are turning to look at different mediums now, so there's a lot more focus on producing at home."

Artistic mentor Kate Neal couldn't have agreed more.

As a first-time mentor of this program with 20 years' experience in the industry, she's seen first-hand how important the digital medium has

become.

"In some ways the artists have more freedom this year, as they can adapt their work with technology and there's no live performance," she said.

Neal also said that while mentoring digitally via Zoom could be tiring at times, it's a tool which she was grateful to have.

"We can share audio, share sessions, share screens and I can see into their logic file or their construction file," she said.

"So, we're lucky in the music industry that we can do that, because you wouldn't be able to do that with things like dance choreography," she said.

So far, the Victorian government has provided over \$15 million in survival packages for Melbourne's art sector.

But as young artists are often the ones to miss out, Neal believes programs like *5x5x5* are more important than ever.

"It's just so important and I wish there were more platforms like this. For composers and sound makers at the start of their journey, there's so few opportunities and funding," Neal said.

"This is a wonderful platform that nurtures the voices of young artists."

The compositions of the five emerging artists will be published online from July 20 at [artscentremelbourne.com.au](http://artscentremelbourne.com.au) ●



CRITIC



▲ A proud symbol stands alone at a crossroads.

## Isolated from memory

WORDS BY Rhonda Dredge

*Vault* stands in a proud place in the centre of the Arts Precinct, a symbol of Australian modernism, but has it been forgotten?

The controversial sculpture turned 40 on May 1 this year without a fanfare.

Birthdays celebrations in the COVID-19 era can be low-key.

Charles Nodrum Gallery has come to the rescue by offering a small replica of *Vault* for sale from an edition of 12 by the artist.

"Almost immediately after its installation, the backlash against *Vault* was rife," Nodrum said, who represents 79-year-old Ron Robertson-Swann, the sculptor.

A Tandberg cartoon of the day shows a colour code for Melbourne's City Square, where the sculpture was first installed, as grey with *Vault* in brilliant yellow. The work soon became known as the *Yellow Peril*.

The art world loves controversy and the fate of *Vault* as a symbol of resistance was sealed by the bad press it received.

"Few artworks have been involved in such a conflict," Nodrum said. "Eventually, about a year later, the work was removed in the dead of night and re-located to a part of the city few people frequented."

Now, 40 years down the track, *Vault* has emerged not just as one of Melbourne's icons

but arguably as the best-known public sculpture in Australia, Nodrum said.

"The now eponymous 'Swann yellow' and the tensely balanced diagonals of its hard-edge geometry have been re-called, borrowed and extended by architects and designers across Australia."

The replica of *Vault* and other small editions cast in steel by the sculptor in 2012 could be deemed examples of what theorists are now calling recession art.

Australian Centre for Contemporary Art (ACCA) will run a podcast on July 13 of a lecture by Peter Cripps that defines recession art as small, replaceable and clever.

"This includes the development of new strategies for the sale of works, the possibility of replacing parts as they sell with replicas," the blurb for the lecture said.

**The works can be viewed on the Charles Nodrum Gallery website**  
charlesnodrumgallery.com.au ●

**For information about ACCA's podcast visit:**  
acca.melbourne

## Testing Grounds launches Help Desk



*Southbank's free community arts open space Testing Grounds recently launched a virtual portal helping artists and independent companies develop their creative practices.*

Open now until August 7, Help Desk is a new initiative aimed at helping artists through COVID-19.

Artists simply submit an enquiry via an online form, telling Testing Grounds what they would like help with, and a friendly creative mentor (an experienced producer or curator) will contact them for a 40-minute chat.

"They can pick their brains and get experienced industry advice for free!" program director and curator at Testing Grounds Arie Rain Glorie said.

"Help Desk operates on a first-in, best-dressed policy. People can get in touch now to secure themselves a meeting."

The program's creative mentors are Erin Milne, Erica McCalman, Jemma Andrews and Testing Grounds staff ●

**For more information visit**  
testing-grounds.com.au



## Fight the good fight

*There was an uncertain re-opening of Southbank's Arts Precinct in the last week of June, with the National Gallery of Victoria (NGV) leading the pack with some prominent posters and recent acquisitions.*

WORDS BY Rhonda Dredge

As much of the city went back into lockdown, other arts venues were more cautious about letting in the public.

Australian Centre for Contemporary Art (ACCA), Buxton Contemporary and Margaret Lawrence galleries remain closed.

And Arts Centre Melbourne announced the "ghost lights" would stay on because of the worsening health situation, with scheduled re-opening events put on hold.

It's now time for artists to register for The Fringe Festival and that organisation is optimistically inviting proposals for "Pants On" events in November.

"Just because we're social distancing doesn't mean you can't (safely) share your art face-to-face," a festival spokesperson said.

It would take a brave artist to come up with a

proposal in this climate. Most arts organisations are focusing on fundraising, recession strategies and mental health issues.

So it was with a good deal of trepidation that visitors approached the NGV to see what it had in store for them in terms of an art experience.

Just a few people moved timidly towards the fortress-style building to talk to the security guard.

Miraculously, everyone was let in even if they hadn't booked – a friendly gesture by gallery management.

A guard at the gallery exit was unobtrusively clicking a counter as people left to maintain a limit of 600 visitors in the gallery at any one time.

Gone are the long queues and rabbit warren interior of former days. There are no blockbuster exhibitions and what appears to be a new, wide ramp takes visitors steadily up through the floors.

Art in the time of corona is quite a different problem for curators. The last big exhibition, *Haring & Basquiat*, with its importation of famous works and copious interpretations, was aimed at attracting crowds.

Now galleries want to keep them under control. The *Winter Masterpieces* has been cancelled and instead visitors are encouraged to use their own imaginations to hunt through the regular exhibits.

A recent acquisition is a drawing by Francoise Gilot, a girlfriend of Pablo Picasso's, entitled



▲ The NGV bookshop and café re-open tentatively with some encouraging posters by Kelly Doley.

*Adam Forcing Eve to Eat the Apple*, which is displayed in front of a stylish portrait of a woman in 1950s Paris, also by Gilot.

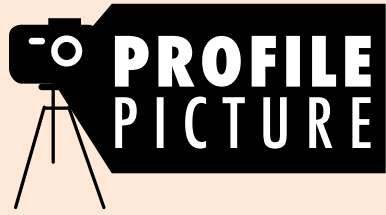
Picasso has obviously influenced Gilot. They lived together for almost a decade. But in this amusing parody of his work she has rejected his overbearing presence.

The NGV bookshop has also re-opened with new spacious displays, including some encouraging posters for the COVID-19 era and what

appears to be an influx of radical books.

It can be difficult for artists working alone. The Victorian Collage of the Arts (VCA) is still devoid of students and the spark is difficult to produce in a vacuum. Artists generally need something to push against to produce work.

With some predicting a more middle-of-the-road approach, the posters "Don't Give in to the Fear" and "Fight the Good Fight" show what Kelly Doley learned in 2014 from feminism ●



LETITIA GREEN



## Behind the Windows

*As the people around her entered lockdown earlier this year, Letitia Green reached out to connect with her community the way she knew best: through art.*

WORDS BY *Marco Holden Jeffery*

Her series *Behind the Windows*, submitted for her final assessment of semester two at the Photography Studies College (PSC), captured the people she met and encountered in their own homes as she went for her daily walk.

"Life as we knew it, freedom and travel, has changed within an instant, along with a depth and breadth of layered feelings now present,

[and] the portraits aim to depict these feelings in a provocative manner," Letitia said of the series.

The photos were certainly provocative: the example shown featured a young child, a mix of curiosity and confusion on her face, perhaps unable to understand the severity of the pandemic but aware something is nonetheless amiss.

"The series is really about exploring the people behind the windows and their emotions: the hope, the boredom, the fear, the playfulness," Letitia said.

The lockdown brought a similar mix of emotions for Letitia, as she juggled her part-time studies, her own creative design business and homeschooling her six-year-old daughter.

But despite admitting the workload was "really challenging", Letitia seemed happy to be engaging with even more creativity outside of her work.

"It's a really good balance, I'm only taking on projects that I love and working with clients I

want to work with," she said.

A self-made professional fashion designer and visual artist, Letitia was relishing the opportunity PSC was giving her to upskill and expand her enviable arsenal of creative skills.

"For me, photography is another way to make art, it's a way to connect with people and bring meaning to my life," she said.

"I've found my passion in photography is taking portraiture and capturing people in those meaningful moments."

Photography had already opened other creative doors for Letitia: she was a committee member and photographer for Beaumaris Modern, a non-for-profit organisation dedicated to documenting and preserving mid-century modern architecture in her home suburb of Beaumaris.

"It's a great way to get involved with the community and connect with different people in the design and art industry who are passionate

about the same things," she said.

Letitia's professional practice was already well-established: she started producing work for her own fashion label in 2014 after working in commercial fashion and as a freelance illustrator and designer.

Since then, she expanded her offerings into visual art and product design, opening up a whole new world of exposure - work featured in New York Fashion Week, a guest speaking spot at the Melbourne Fashion Festival, and a scarf worn by pop star Rihanna.

Although originally Letitia had started studying photography to complement her existing art and design skills, she saw photography becoming a much more key component of her professional practice in the future.

"I still want to work in the fashion industry, but by doing creative fashion shoots and developing and working on portraiture, either for a client or just to explore and play," she said ●



© Aaron Walker Part-Time Advanced Diploma Graduate



Looking for something to do over winter in isolation? If so, maybe it's time to reignite your passion for photography, upgrade your skills for your work/business, or explore a potential career change?

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SOUTHBANKER

# Kids on one side and entertainment on the other

WORDS BY Rhonda Dredge

In the north-east corner of Southbank is a long triangular stretch of grass just by Hamer Hall, which is also just big enough for soccer practice.

This is Pamela Whiting's front yard and she's getting ready to kick a ball with Alex and Olivia.

The Quay West resident moved here 21 years ago for the arts and the river.

During the lockdown she's become an aficionado of online concerts and podcasts and is a donor to many of the arts organisations that surround her.

"I've saved a lot of money," she said. "I had tickets to all sorts of things."

The productions are still closed but she has her grandkids back for the day after not seeing them during lockdown.

Fundraising is Pamela's profession and she's relaxed about the many appeals for money from arts organisations that are struggling.

"They've been absolutely fantastic about staying in touch with people," she said. "I feel so sad they were unable to do their productions live."

"I think the Arts Centre has communicated well with their requests for support. They've been quite doable. They've provided a lot of information about the artists without being demanding about fundraising. I'm expecting their requests and I continue to give."

She's also contributed to Entertainment Assist which helps with the mental health of entertainers.

"They're not well-paid, they're always

travelling and they get terrible money and don't have the opportunity for ongoing relationships," she said.

The downturn in the economy means that her own investments are worth a lot less than in January but her main fear is a return to isolation.

Like many Southbankers, her solace has been in the sunshine and the river, compensation for the collapse of social lives dependent on dining out and keeping up with the arts.

There's no denying that Southbank has looked like a ghost town along the riverbank.

The presence of one or two walkers is not what businesses are used to. She's worried that those trying to open up will close again without the passing trade from IBM, the Herald and Weekly Times and Arts Centre Melbourne.

Pamela works from home, lives alone and has spent a lot of time in her own company.

She meets a friend every evening for a walk and is relieved that the Botanical Gardens have re-opened but is worried that her kind of lifestyle may be under threat.

"I'm really anxious we'll all be locked up again," she said.

The rowing clubs have remained open and she's been able to take out a scull each morning.

The pool at her apartment block is also open for two at a time and the twins have been booked in for a swim.

That's as much pleasure that can be squeezed into their visit during the school holidays ●

▼ Pam Whiting and her two grandchildren ready for action.



ST JOHNS SOUTHGATE

# One step forward two steps back

*It was all going so well!*

Our go-hard-go-early approach to lockdown in Australia was lauded as an example of how it should be done. As restrictions were eased, we were feeling pretty good about ourselves, perhaps too good in Victoria.

More recently, we have found ourselves being tested by a spike in community transition, just as we have emerged back into the community. There has been more than a bit of moaning and groaning about reimposed restrictions or the delaying of restriction easing. But in this pre-vaccine coronavirus era, a back and forth, an expanding and contracting, an emerging then retreating might, I suspect, become an all too familiar pattern.

Jesus of Nazareth was no stranger to such patterns. He had a curious, if not bizarre, initial

emergence into the public sphere which was straight away followed by a necessary retreat. When, as an adult, Jesus was ready to commence his preaching and teaching, he was baptised in the Jordan River. It was a big occasion.

The Holy Spirit descended and the voice of God was heard affirming Jesus. It would have seemed that from there on it would only be onward and upward for this messiah who had just been designated the chosen one by God in heaven. But that was not the case at all. Immediately following, he was whisked away into the wilderness where for 40 days he was tested by the devil.

Our experience over these coming months (perhaps longer) – while being less likely to be accompanied by the voice of God booming from heaven, or conversations with the devil – will be marked by contrast. We are going to have to learn to adapt to the highs of

re-emergence being tempered by the testing periods of retreat. And even if things are going nicely for a while, and we think we have nipped it in the bud, the virus will still be out there, lingering, waiting for an opportune time.

In the scriptures, we read that after Jesus was tested for those 40 days in the wilderness, that the devil then left him. Left him, yes, but until an "opportune time". Even Jesus could not avoid that opportune time that would be seized upon by his foe, and we are unlikely to heed every COVID-19 challenge off at the pass. But what we can be sure of, is that like Jesus would sacrifice a great deal to ensure the foe would not be the ultimate victor, we have skilled researchers working incredibly hard to find a vaccine so that hope might be restored to our communities.

Their tenacity and drive should encourage us to partner with the dance of emergence and

retreat with as much grace and good humour as we can muster. But for those times when the isolation or economic impact is testing us to our limits, we can look to Jesus who was tested fiercely too, and who promises new and eternal life that, in the end, will prevail over any and every devilish challenge ●



*Tom Hoffmann*  
TOM HOFFMANN IS THE PASTOR AT ST JOHNS SOUTHGATE CHURCH.  
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**Connect with us on Facebook during these challenging times**

**Stay safe and well and may God bless you!**

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METRO TUNNEL



# Tunnelling in full swing

*Tunnel Boring Machines (TBMs) Millie and Alice are making great progress, with Millie now having completed more than a quarter of her journey towards the eastern tunnel entrance in South Yarra and Alice not far behind.*

Having progressed more than 170 metres through the Anzac Station box under St Kilda Rd since being launched in April and May, both TBMs *Millie* and *Alice* have so far completed more than 311 and 211 metres of the Metro Tunnel, respectively.

Crews of 10, including a TBM operator, are working around the clock on each tunnelling machine as the TBMs move underground excavating rock and soil, then progressively lining the tunnel with concrete segments. Above ground, works are continuing to complete construction of the Anzac Station roof.

The station is being built “top down”, with the walls and roof built first followed by excavation underneath. This methodology minimises disruption and keeps the community moving safely around the worksite.

### Roadheader breakthrough under Swanston St

Workers have excavated deep under Swanston St to create a space longer than a city block and as deep as a five-storey building for the Metro Tunnel Project’s new Town Hall Station.

An excavating machine known as a roadheader broke through recently into the central cavern, where another two roadheaders had been excavating the station and three underground passenger walkways with entrances at Federation Square, City Square and Flinders

Quarter (next to the Young & Jackson Hotel).

More than 42,000 cubic metres of soil and rock was dug by the roadheaders — with the machines now set to dig another eight metres down to the final depth of around 33 metres.

The roadheaders – named *Lily*, *Sharon* and *Clara* – have been operating around 25 metres below one of Melbourne’s busiest streets since late 2019. The machines weigh up to 118 tonnes and are equipped with cutter heads that can cut through rock three times harder than concrete.

This means that the full length of future Town Hall Station is now connected underground from Collins St to Flinders St and to Federation Square.

Town Hall Station will give commuters access to Melbourne landmarks such as Federation Square and the Arts Centre and other popular tourist locations and allow passengers to switch easily from Metro Tunnel services to City Loop services at Flinders Street Station.

Work continues across Metro Tunnel sites in accordance with strict safety measures – supporting jobs and supplying businesses through the coronavirus pandemic ●

**For more information visit:**  
[metrotunnel.vic.gov.au](http://metrotunnel.vic.gov.au)

OWNERS' CORPORATION LAW

## Keeping the lights on during COVID-19

I've been getting a number of questions from owners' corporation (OC) managers, building managers and committee members over the past few months, so I thought I would publish some of the more common questions with my answers as below:

### Is the OC legally required to re-open the pool and/or gym in my complex?

The situation is changing because at the time of publication, there had been increased numbers of community transmission of COVID-19, so here is hoping that no further public health orders are required to be put in place by the government.\*

As of June 21, 2020, the Victorian Government has allowed public gyms and pools to re-open with a maximum of 20 persons allowed, and with social distancing required to be in place, at 1.5 metres.

A gym or pool in a residential building is not a public space, and the OC (through its committee) bears the responsibility for these common

property areas. If the gym or pool is currently closed, the OC may prefer to keep it closed.

However, in my view, as long as there are rigorous cleaning protocols in place, together with restricted swipe card access and/or a sign-in sheet before people use the facilities, then it will be possible to re-open these facilities safely.

### What is an OC's duty once it has been confirmed that a resident has tested positive for COVID-19?

Where there is a confirmed case of COVID-19 in a building, it is important to strike the right balance between protecting the remaining residents and other people on site from exposure, while also protecting the privacy of the individuals involved.

Given that the affected resident will be required to quarantine for the duration of their illness, and contact tracing will be undertaken by the relevant authorities which will ensure affected lot owners will be notified where

necessary, a non-specific notification to owners would be a sufficient response from an OC.

The OC may also wish to enquire with the affected resident if they require assistance in terms of contactless provision of necessities in this time.

Where there is a greater risk of exposure to an infected resident, such as with essential services contractors, the committee, OC manager, building manager and any contractors with a risk of potential exposure will need to be advised to ensure that there are sufficient protections in place where access is unavoidable.

### Can the annual fees and the budget still continue even if an annual general meeting (AGM) has not been held?

A number of buildings are having their AGM's remotely, by way of ballot forms or on-line via video conferencing.

However, if a particular building has not utilised the above alternative ways to hold a meeting, it can hold a committee meeting to pass a resolution to set a budget for the next financial year, but subject to ratification at a special general meeting or the AGM as soon as

it is safe to do so.

### Can an OC use its funds from the capital works fund to provide cashflow and relief from raising new levies?

No, not without passing a special resolution under Section 44 of the *Owners' Corporation Act 2006*.

Depending on how large the building is, it may be difficult to run a ballot to pass the necessary special resolution.

Other states and territories in Australia have passed legislation over the COVID-19 period to deal with this exact situation, however Victoria has not followed suit.

This should be a priority for the new Minister for Consumer Affairs Melissa Horne once she takes control of her new portfolio ●



Tom Bacon

TOM BACON IS THE PRINCIPAL LAWYER OF STRATA TITLE LAWYERS.

TOM@STRATATITLELAWYERS.COM.AU

## Reopened for business

Flora Indian Restaurant: 238 Flinders Street

As coronavirus (COVID-19) restrictions start to ease, Flora is excited to welcome you back for an authentic Indian dining experience. Flora will continue to operate between 10am – 8pm in cooperation with social distancing protocols without sacrificing on their ever popular over-the-counter service style.

For more information, follow Flora on Facebook and Instagram or visit [floraindian.com.au](http://floraindian.com.au)



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LINCOLN FERRIE, SCIENTIST  
 "I plan to take my girlfriend to the Great Barrier Reef so we can go scuba diving and sit on white sandy beaches."



RYAN COCHRANE, BAR OWNER  
 "Canada. I've always wanted to go and now it's at the top of my list."

# Faces of Southbank

Question:

Where's the first place you'll travel when restrictions ease?



JORDAN FRIGO, EXERCISE PHYSIOLOGIST  
 "Probably New Zealand because it's close, easy and has beautiful places to hike."



JASON WALTON, SALON OWNER  
 "Hawaii, I think, to get some sun and some surfing in."

HEALTH & WELLBEING

## Anxiety in social settings

### What is social anxiety?

Social anxiety involves fear of certain social situations, especially ones that are unfamiliar or where you might be watched and judged/evaluated by others.

The thought of these situations brings so much fear that it may lead the individual to go to great lengths to avoid them, which can pose a huge disruption in life. People with social anxiety may also fear being scrutinised or embarrassed in public, there is a fear that they might not measure up when compared to others.

Situations that could trigger social anxiety may include meeting new people, public speaking, performing on stage, making phone calls, going to parties, and many more.

There are four thinking styles that may fuel social anxiety:

1. Mind reading - assuming that you know what other people are thinking about you, and that they think negatively of you in the way you might see yourself.
2. Fortune telling - predicting that the worst will happen in future situations, that you know something will go wrong; making you anxious before the situation even takes place.
3. Catastrophising - making things more serious or exaggerated than they are, such as if people notice that you are anxious it will be terrible or disastrous for you.
4. Personalising - assuming that all people are focusing on you negatively or that other people's negative thoughts have to do with you.

### How to reduce anxiety

To avoid the four unhelpful thinking styles of social anxiety, there are three main tips you can utilise to reduce anxiety in social situations:

- Challenge your negative thoughts: To challenge negative thoughts you must first identify the negative thoughts that are automatically there when you think about

social situations - an example of this is if you have a big presentation coming up, thinking that you are going to fail or people will think you are not capable of doing it. In this case try analysing and challenging these negative thoughts: is it certain that these bad things are going to happen? What is the more realistic outcome and positive outcome from this situation?

- Move your focus to others, rather than yourself: If you are socially anxious, sometimes you turn inwards to how people may be judging you or thinking about you in this situation. To combat this, put your focus on other people, engage and make a real connection without thinking about what others might be thinking of you, listen to what is being said by others and focus on staying in the present moment rather than worrying about what you are going to say or feeling disappointed that you may have said the wrong thing. Keep in mind that your nervousness or anxiety is not as visible as you may think, and if someone does notice you are nervous that does not mean they will think negatively about you.
- Control your breathing and your body: When anxiousness takes over you may begin to breathe more rapidly which can trigger more physical symptoms of anxiety such as dizziness or muscle tension. In learning to slow your breathing this can reduce physical symptoms of anxiety and bring you back into the moment ●



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# Southbank Sudoku

### Last month's Sudoku solution

U	O	S	K	T	N	B	H	A
N	H	K	U	A	B	O	T	S
A	B	T	H	S	O	K	U	N
K	T	O	A	B	U	S	N	H
H	A	N	O	K	S	T	B	U
S	U	B	N	H	T	A	K	O
T	S	A	B	U	H	N	O	K
B	N	U	S	O	K	H	A	T
O	K	H	T	N	A	U	S	B

A variation of Sudoku, with the letters SOUTH BANK replacing numbers.

The rules are the same as regular Sudoku, each line must contain the letters "SOUTH BANK" as must each 9-square box. This Sudoku is MEDIUM, good luck!

	K	T		B				
		H					T	
A		O						S
S	O	A			K			
				A	U			
				N		A	K	B
T						K		U
	B					S		
				S		H	B	

# Pockets of joy

*It was such a treat to see both familiar and new friendly faces at our June meet-ups!*

It had been a while since we last got to see our neighbours. So, the pure joy and lively conversations that were happening while gardening (keeping a respectable distance from one another, of course) was refreshing for everyone.

We focused on garden maintenance, while we admired how well-maintained it has been during the restriction period, all thanks to two of our most passionate gardening volunteers in the group, Faye and Huguette.

Due to their tireless work and their genuine enjoyment for gardening, all Southbankers could walk by and enjoy a beautiful pocket of green in our very concrete-heavy neighbourhood, and even pick some fresh organic vegies for a salad or dinner on their way home.

We saw families spending time at the garden, showing their children how food and plants grow, young couples taking joy in harvesting food for their shared meal, and people of all different ages and ethnicities picking a variety of flavourful herbs. We even got an email from a couple who recently moved here, telling us how the community garden played a significant role in their decision to move to Southbank! How wonderful is that.

It makes all our volunteers' work feel even more worthwhile, when we get to hear and see how people are enjoying it beyond our expectations, how it brings a smile and a bit of joy in their day. While making it easier to live more sustainably by having locally grown food with a low footprint right at their doorstep.

While our next two meet-ups are set for Saturdays July 11 and 25, 10am at Boyd as usual, they are tentative at the moment, while

we keep an eye on how the second COVID-19 wave moves. We will still restrict the number of participants to 15, if not less, and we will require everyone to register their seat through Eventbrite so that we keep track of numbers. We recommend watching our Facebook page or emailing us to confirm that the meet-ups are going ahead as scheduled and to get the registration link. Both meetings will focus on gardening and tending to our new little guest worms ...

Yes, you read it right. We have our own two Hungry Bin worm farms, with thousands of worms to care for over the next month! The two bins are on loan from the City of Melbourne to help keep them healthy while council staff work from home. We were excited to welcome these worms and get our members more comfortable with composting in general and in how to interact with composting worms.

This will be very useful for when the community composting hub we are working on delivering is up and running. These worms are only accessible to our members, to make sure they are fed correctly. If you're interested in getting involved, we encourage you to join the group. It's free and we only ask for an interest in sustainability and in meeting more people in your community.

During July we'll continue to work on delivering the education days we can move online, while leaving the ones that require physical participation for later in the year. As a reminder, these six education days are part of the Connected Community council grant we received. They're all themed around sustainability solutions across different areas (e.g. "Conscious Consumerism and Fast Fashion", "Apartment Gardening 101", etc.). Watch our Facebook page or join the group for more details.

Last but not least, we were very honoured to be nominated for the 2020 Sustainable Cities Awards! These awards are state-wide, organised by Keep Victoria Beautiful in partnership with the state government. Their aim is to recognise



and celebrate positive actions taken by communities in urban areas to protect and enhance their local environments. Communities that work hard to make Victoria special, sustainable and liveable. Considering how much phenomenal work is done by so many awe-inspiring organisations and communities across the state, this is a huge honour for our group to even be considered, let alone nominated for these awards!

The judging phase is starting soon and we should know if we are a finalist in the environment category in early October. We would love to bring a second prestigious award to our beloved Southbank. So, wish us luck!!!

About the group: A solutions-focused group of Southbank residents working to bring positive change in sustainability practices and education to our neighbourhood, while building

a wonderful community of like-minded people. 2019 Environment Melbourne Award winner ●

**Reach us at:**  
[southbanksustainability@gmail.com](mailto:southbanksustainability@gmail.com) or [facebook.com/SouthbankSustainabilityGroup](https://www.facebook.com/SouthbankSustainabilityGroup)



*Artemis Pattichi*  
 SOUTHBANK SUSTAINABILITY GROUP  
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## WE LIVE HERE

# Short-stays in the aftermath of COVID-19

*An open Letter to the Premier of Victoria and the Lord Mayor of Melbourne ...*

For years we have lobbied for the regulation of the short-stay industry, especially in high-rise residential strata buildings not designed for hotel-type accommodation.

Our pleas have mostly fallen on deaf ears and the current changes to the legislation are proving to be unworkable.

However, a microorganism in the form of a coronavirus, devastating in so many ways, appears to have intervened to bring the short-stay juggernaut to a crisis point.

Once the COVID-19 pandemic took hold and lockdowns commenced around the world, including in Melbourne, it quickly became apparent there was no place for short-stay operations in non-commercial high-rise buildings.

The problem is fundamental: there is no means to limit the spread of the virus or to enforce social distancing rules in the short-stay environment.

In a very brief period, many of the commercial short-stay operators have abandoned our buildings and a number have gone out of business altogether.

Former short-stay apartments are now being rented out long-term and owners are discovering – what we have known for a long time – that investors can earn more from long-term renting than from short-term.

Now that restrictions are gradually being lifted, we must not allow a return to the bad old days where greedy commercial operators don't contribute to wear and tear, security is compromised and the amenity we have rediscovered, disappears again.

We must emphasise that we have no problem with individual owners renting out a room in the apartment they are occupying, which was what short-term letting was all about in the first place.

So, please Mr Premier and Lord Mayor, listen to our pleas and work with us to create a long-term solution beyond lockdown.

The current decimation of the short-stay industry is but a grimly fortuitous artefact of COVID-19.

The short-stay industry needs to be properly regulated – we cannot rely on a deadly virus to protect residents' rights to security and quiet enjoyment of their homes.

There must be a level playing field for all.

Yours sincerely,

*We Live Here, on behalf of the countless residents affected by unregulated short stays over the past few years.*

### What if you are not on the VBA list?

What happens if your building has non-compliant cladding and you are not on the Victorian Building Authority's (VBA) list? We Live Here has been contacted by one such building.

### Case Study

The owners' corporation (OC) for a medium density building in suburban Melbourne was requested by its insurance company to confirm its cladding status.

The OC arranged for core samples to be taken from the cladding surrounding the building and the façade at the front entrance, and all were found to be non-compliant. Fire services engineers were engaged and deemed the whole building to be high risk, with the facade (the escape route) most urgently in need of replacement.

Quotes have been obtained to replace the facade, but no decision has yet been made on how this would be paid for - from the OC's maintenance fund or from owners directly via a levy. This work has not yet commenced.

For the remainder of the building, which would be considerably more expensive, the OC was hoping to tap into the \$600 million fund announced by the state government.

The difficulty was - how?

The building has not received a Building Notice or Building Order, or any notice from the VBA or the local council that the building was at risk. It was only through the insurance company that they had learned about their issue.

A phone call from We Live Here to Cladding Safety Victoria (CSV) confirmed this building was not on their cladding list nor on the VBA's cladding list.

The OC was then advised to contact CSV and request help to work through the process of finding out if they could be eligible for funding. We shall provide an update in our next column.

Our advice if you are in a similar position with non-compliant cladding and not in the system is to contact CSV and request assistance from a CSV customer liaison officer.

Email [support@claddingsafetyvic.gov.au](mailto:support@claddingsafetyvic.gov.au) or phone 1300 456 542.

### How many buildings have been approved by VBA for funding?

We have asked CSV how many buildings have already been approved for funding and we are yet to receive an answer. What we do know is that at least 487 buildings been referred to the CSV. These buildings are now being "prioritised" by CSV. CSV says that it is reviewing 60 buildings a month.

### Municipal Building Surveyor - clarification

We have received clarification from Cladding Safety Victoria (CSV) regarding CSV information in our previous column.

The Victorian Building Authority (VBA) has been appointed as the Municipal Building Surveyor (MBS) for buildings outside the City of Melbourne.

Affected buildings within the City of Melbourne will continue dealing with the Melbourne City Council's MBS.

### Request for information

Please let us know if commercial short-stay operations have continued in your building during the COVID-19 pandemic and what steps, if any, have been taken to curb their activity.

### Campaign donations

As a not-for-profit organisation, donations from individuals and buildings keep our campaigns going. To register as a supporter of We Live Here or to donate, please visit our website at [welivehere.net](http://welivehere.net). We Live Here does not accept donations from commercial tourism interests ●



*Barbara Francis & Rus Littleton*

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 LEARN MORE AT [WELIVEHERE.NET](http://WELIVEHERE.NET)



# Pet's Corner

## Spoiling princess Chloe



Tracey and her husband were juggling two young children when Southbank News met them at Walter Reserve in July.



WORDS BY *Katie Johnson*

Despite the gloomy, cold weather and light rain, seven-year-old Maltese Chloe was clearly enjoying being taken for her daily walk as they ran around the trees.

“You can tell how much we love her considering we’re walking her in the rain with the kids,” Tracey said.

Chloe often gets taken for walks around

Montague, although the spoiled pup also enjoys a lie-in at home.

“She’s more human than dog-like. She sleeps with her body under the sheets in our bed like a human,” Tracey said.

Apparently, Chloe’s palate is human-like too, and she won’t accept meals that aren’t prepared to her tastes.

“If bacon’s too crispy she won’t eat it. She’s a bit of a princess.” ●

### SKYPAD LIVING

# Coming out of COVID-19 with a silver lining

*With the easing of COVID-19 restrictions there may be a greater recognition of vertical living challenges!*

In this column I previously wrote about the particular challenges faced by vertical villages dealing with COVID-19, chief among which were:

- Interpreting public health orders: whose responsibility is it to enforce?
- Promoting safety and cleanliness: determining closure criteria and exceptions;
- Managing Building Security: negotiating and monitoring access channels;
- Disclosure: determining legal requirements in terms of health and privacy;

The pressure of needing to act quickly, combined with a lack of established connections between our vertical villages, saw each having to develop their own approach to dealing with COVID-19. This has resulted in great variation in the procedures and protocols implemented within our residential buildings – some of which are now beginning to be questioned!

However, dark clouds sometimes have silver linings and there appears the glint of one for our vertical villages.

This takes the form of recognition of our sector – specifically, that high-rise residential living is now mainstream but is also a different way of living and needs to be recognised and supported as such.

This glimmer of light (to continue the cliché) was seen at last month’s Future Melbourne Committee meeting on June 2 when the Lord

Mayor Sally Capp proposed a motion on apartment living. This motion noted that “apartment living has for many years been a fast growing part of the City of Melbourne delivering lifestyle, social, environmental and economic benefits for Melbourne”. The motion went on to note some distinct challenges for those living in close proximity and proposed several actions including a forthcoming “Virtual Support Workshop for the Strata Community” - an undertaking being progressed by Cr Nicholas Reece.

The proposed motion drew interesting comments from some councillors, revealing that some might not be as au fait with our way of living as we might expect. However, the motion was carried unanimously, and we now await the virtual workshop.

What has also occurred this month was a community led event entitled “Coming Out of COVID19 – for Owners’ Corporations (OCs)” hosted by the Docklands Representative Group (DRG) – of which I am a member!

On the evening of June 18, the DRG hosted a webinar featuring *Docklands News* and *Southbank News* columnist Tom Bacon (CEO of Strata Title Lawyers), along with representatives from the Department of Justice and Community Safety (the entity responsible for our *Owners’ Corporation Act 2006*).

Around 90 webinar attendees listened to the discussion on two pressing issues:

- Reopening common property – what powers and responsibilities do OCs have?
- OC funding stress - waiving, delaying or reducing OC fees and interest – what can be legally done?

While emphasising the point that the event offered only general information and not legal

advice, these two issues were considered in relation to the actual legal authority of OCs: what powers do OCs have when reopening common property? Must they reopen closed facilities? Can OCs restrict access to common property?

In relation to OC funding, it was noted that COVID-19 has brought significant financial hardship to owners through possible job loss or, if an investor, decreased rental income. At the same time, there are additional building expenses related to COVID-19, such as increased cleaning costs, increased security costs and new expenses for hygiene and safety resources. As OC fees are the key source of funding for the operation of vertical villages, the impact will be severe if many owners fail (or are late) to pay. The webinar considered the powers which OCs have (or do not have) in relation to setting and changing fees, penalties, and budgets and also discussed strategies such as billing individuals for use of specific amenities.

For those interested, a recording of this webinar is available at [docklands.org.au](http://docklands.org.au).

Feedback from webinar attendees indicated a great interest in future sessions focussed on the needs of OCs. And this is timely input for the forthcoming City of Melbourne’s virtual workshop – which I will report on in my next column! ●



*Janette Corcoran*

JANETTE CORCORAN IS AN APARTMENT LIVING EXPERT.

LEARN MORE ON FACEBOOK.COM/SKYPADLIVING/

### SAFETY & SECURITY

## Looking out for signs of a drug lab

*We are all firmly in the grip of the COVID-19 pandemic, which has resulted in higher than normal vacancy rates in apartment buildings for both private rentals and short-stay accommodation options in Southbank.*

Competition to attract renters and holiday makers has seen a reduction in pricing. Cheaper rentals are attractive to manufacturers of illegal drugs such as methylamphetamine (ice), amphetamine (speed), ecstasy and heroin.

The process of “cooking” ice and other meth-based drugs involves the use of dangerous chemicals including lithium metal, liquid ammonia, LPG, acetone, hydrochloric acid and caustic soda. The commonly known term for this type of drug manufacturing is a clandestine laboratory, i.e. clan lab.

Rental properties can become contaminated when tenants recreationally use or manufacture illegal substances on the premises. Contamination levels vary, however, manufacturing or “cooking” methylamphetamine can result in properties needing to be stripped and cleaned.

Residents should be aware of the following signs of a clan lab in an apartment:

- Chemical smells and odours similar to varnish/paint thinner, vinegar/sour smells, ammonia.
- Chemicals and equipment.
- Glass equipment and cookware.
- Portable gas tanks or other cylinders not normally used inside.
- Chemical stains around household kitchen sink, laundry or toilet.
- Yellow/brown staining of interior floors, walls, ceiling and appliance surfaces.
- Pseudoephedrine tablet packaging lying around or in the rubbish.

If you suspect that there is a clan lab in your apartment building, do not approach it (or the tenants for that matter) as the chemicals inside could be dangerous or even lethal. Instead report it to Crime Stoppers on 1800 333 000 or Southbank Police Station on 8635 0900. If you are a property owner and locate items described above, do not move or disturb anything and immediately contact 000 or Southbank Police Station on 8635 0900. Highly skilled members from Victoria Police’s Clandestine Laboratory Squad will attend and assess the clan lab and arrange for it to be dismantled.

### Theft

Theft from motor vehicles continues to be a driver of crime in Southbank. Police are urging residents to take precautions with their vehicles and valuables by:

- Ensuring your vehicle is locked even when in secure apartment parking;
- Remove all valuables from your vehicle or put them out of sight if you cannot take them with you; and
- Park in a well-lit and secure area – use your apartment carpark in preference to parking on the street.

These simple steps can prevent you from becoming the target of a thief ●



*Senior Sgt Alex O'Toole*

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HISTORY

# Red Cross and Southbank

*The Red Cross, a renowned international organisation, has long played an important role in Southbank and other parts of South Melbourne.*

In 1914 the Red Cross established a committee to provide support for parts of the community and in subsequent decades Red Cross workers played a key role in the dispensing and delivery of food, clothing and medicine (such as delivering insulin shots to diabetics from the 1920s), as well as taking ex-servicemen on outings. Many returned service personnel depended on the Red Cross for the comforts that make all the difference to an invalid, which the Repatriation Department, with all its up-to-date establishments and methods, could not provide.

But perhaps the most important role of the Red Cross in Southbank was to provide canteen services at the new Repatriation Clinic at 310 St Kilda Rd, next to the Victoria Barracks. Opened in 1937, the stylish, Art Deco clinic replaced a nearby rudimentary clinic and catered to the needs of ex-military personnel, providing basic X-rays, dressing of wounds, massages from two masseurs, a theatre for performing minor operations under local anaesthetics, psychiatric treatment and a dispensary. Nurses enjoyed its beautifully lit, shiny, modern rooms, with many labour-saving devices.

The canteen was set up soon after the building

opened. Open between 10am and 4pm every day, a team of female volunteers dispensed tea and cocoa, coffee, sandwiches, biscuits and cake, fruit and cigarettes, invariably in a cheerful manner, to hundreds of patients (about 300 per week) who gathered in the large Main Hall in the heart of the building to await treatment.

Many attended regularly for a period of years and looked forward to the cheerful banter that accompanied the daily provision of services from the Red Cross volunteers. Despite being downstairs, the canteen was a cheerful place, with fresh flowers and comfortable chairs. Funds to provide these services were raised by a round of social activities, including dances, jumble sales, handicraft shops, and large-scale appeals.

But there was never enough money or staff and a major task was the recruitment of volunteers to serve the veterans. Some of the staff who were there on opening day would go on to spend many enjoyable years at the clinic. The canteen, with its subsidised meals, was also popular with workers from nearby offices and workplaces. Where else could you get a pie and a hot drink for sixpence!



After being empty for over 20 years, plans for the restoration of the building and establishment of a veterans' art centre and workshops are well under way, being led by Australian National Veterans Arts Museum (ANVAM). The former clinic is now awaiting transfer from the Commonwealth Government to the City of Melbourne, and one of the proposed features of the refurbishment is a commercial café which will continue the long tradition of providing food and drink to the users of the building ●



*Robin Grow*

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MONTAGUE COMMUNITY ALLIANCE

## So near, yet so far ...

*We were nearly there ... or so we thought.*

It has been great to move around, travel around Victoria and go back into restaurants, swimming pools and move into a new normal.

Up until late June, Montague had a feeling of being back to normal e.g. parking was difficult again, the 109 tram was starting to fill up, other South Melbourne Market shops had opened, restaurants and cafes looked full, shops were opening and the sense of the community always being in a hurry was back in the air ...

The following week was a whole other story. There is little or no foot traffic, except for the tradespeople working on the numerous construction sites. The local coffee shop in Gladstone St which had been almost back to its usual frantic pace has hardly anyone in it, and there are loads of parking spaces. School holidays may have something to do with it, but those times don't normally result in it being quite so quiet around here. However, our

close-knit community is looking out for each other and we remain connected and engaged with our precinct, albeit with social distancing.

We have an update on Kirrip Park - apparently it was always meant to be an on-leash park, but no one did anything about communicating that for 20 months. The council officers responsible did not let the community know in advance that it was changing to an on-leash area, how disrespectful!

One of the significant areas of focus for the Fishermans Bend Taskforce and the Cities of Port Phillip and Melbourne, is to create "communities". Well that occurred naturally by folks from Montague, Ferrars St and surrounds and Southbank getting together on weekend mornings, with their dogs, to enjoy Kirrip Park. We looked after the park, picking up rubbish and it was through our communication to the council that a second rubbish bin was installed and areas of the park that were damaged were fixed. This new community has disappeared as we all need to exercise our dogs in on-leash areas, and as well as the dogs socialising, we did too and I know we are all missing that.

Question for all the powers that be ... why can't we have the park as leash-free on

weekends? There is literally no one else using it on weekends ... and when I went there last weekend, the park is strewn with plastic bags, cigarette butts and empty drink receptacles ... this is the consequence of bad community engagement and no happy park users to pick up rubbish and look after the park.

The City of Port Phillip elections are coming up in October and the candidates are beginning to emerge. This year the elections will be contested by all the major political parties and some independents. We hope that they will all take the time to understand all parts of Fishermans Bend and the Montague Precinct in particular.

And two more very important points:

The Montague Precinct Plans are completed ... and we are calling for them to be released for community consultation NOW!

The only thing we know for sure (although there is much speculation of other items) is that there will be traffic lights installed at Buckhurst and Montague streets to provide safer connection for pedestrians across Montague St.

Please release the plans ... it's been eight years since we had plans for the area released! And we look forward to hearing directly from the

Fishermans Bend Taskforce to set up the next Montague Working Group meeting.

The second point is to offer our gratitude to the Mayor of the City of Port Phillip, Cr Bernadene Voss. We understand that Bernadene is stepping down as a councillor at the next election and we are sad to hear this. Bernadene has been an advocate for the Montague community and attended our first ever meeting in 2013.

Thank you Bernadene and we wish you every success for the future and look forward to your further involvement with our precinct.

If you have any comments or ideas for content of this column please contact us on email below or our Facebook page @MontaguePrecinct, or on Twitter @MontComAlliance. We welcome your comments ●



*Trisha Avery*

TRISHA AVERY IS THE CONVENER OF THE MONTAGUE COMMUNITY ALLIANCE.

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SOUTHBANK RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

## Vale Marcus de Rijk

It is with great sadness that I advise of the passing of a treasured committee member, Marcus de Rijk, who was recently so suddenly taken from us by a tragic accident.

Joining Southbank Residents' Association (SRA) after moving to Southbank three years ago, Marcus had been a valued member of our committee and will be sorely missed.

His love for Southbank was translated into his commitment on our committee and he was always so generous with his time.

More can be learnt about Marcus in the obituary on page 4. SRA passes its condolences to his wife Claire whom is due to have their first child this month.

It is that time of year again where council considers the budget for the next financial year. Sadly, and as has been usual for the past four years, the City Rd upgrade is lacking. In fact, missing this year. And once again, my questions to council officers are not fully answered.

However, I did get some of my questions

on the delays answered by the council's CEO Justin Hanney. Despite the masterplan indicating City Rd West should be finished by now, in years gone by we have always been told the delays have been attributed to the concurrent works on Southbank Boulevard and Boyd Park, even though these concurrent works were acknowledged in the masterplan. Mr Hanney has advised the delays are now in the hands of VicRoads who are yet to formally schedule the works with their department. It makes me wonder when the council actually reached out to VicRoads for them to have not scheduled these works after four years. In light of the challenges the council faces with COVID-19 and its first ever deficit, SRA did not request a special adjustment to the budget this year.

Talking about COVID-19, it is certainly a disappointment the government seems to have been let down by some rogue security operators which has put our community into a level of despair. In light of the lockdown of the nine

housing commission towers, owing to their heightened risk of transmission from high-density living, some residents have expressed their concern that this could happen in our Southbank buildings too. My opinion is, while there is a risk this could happen anywhere in any high-density building, the significant difference between the locked-down buildings and ours is that we are not living in as cramped or shared conditions. These are housing commission properties where they often have a greater sense of community within their buildings which leads to greater interaction. But they also have many more shared facilities, such as their laundries. There is significantly more interaction between residents in these housing commission towers than the everyday interactions in our typical Southbank tower. While it is no reason to let our guards down, I think we need to put our buildings into perspective when comparing. In any case, I am sure it must be a devastating experience for those residents, and I wish for a speedy and safe resolution to their situation.

As always for this time of year, our SRA

AGM is scheduled to be held in August. It will be a virtual meeting and we will share the details in next month's column. SRA members will need to ensure they have renewed their membership to be eligible to vote. If you are not yet a member and would like to support your local community advocacy association, then please sign up at our website, [southbank-residents.org.au](http://southbank-residents.org.au), or maybe you might like the opportunity to contribute to your community by joining our committee? If you would like to know more about our committee please reach out to me at [president@southbankresidents.org.au](mailto:president@southbankresidents.org.au).

Stay safe everyone and remember to keep your distance! ●



*Tony Penna*

TONY PENNA IS THE PRESIDENT OF SOUTHBANK RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION



## 公寓楼短租的“定义性案例”

撰稿: David Schout 和 Sean Car

一个短租经营者正在向南岸(Southbank) Prima大楼的物业管理机构寻求损失赔偿, 这被称为是在COVID-19疫情下的一个“定义性案例”。

Queensbridge街72层楼的公寓业主马塞拉·萨莫拉(Marcela Zamora)声称, 自3月23日至5月4日期间, 公寓物业管理非法阻止她和其他业主将公寓出租给任何为期不到90天的租客。

为了应对COVID-19疫情流行, Prima大楼的物业管理通过了一项决议, 限制租用任何会造成健康和安全危害的公寓, 包括短期住宿, 违反了州政府的居家规定。

会计师萨莫拉夫人与丈夫一起管理着少量公寓, 她认为大楼物业管理利用了COVID-19疫情来实施这项限制, 并指出该限制是在政府发布居家规定之前实施的。

她说:“这是错误的。”

“法律上是不能阻止我出租我的房产, 不管是一个晚上的出租, 还是长期出租。”

她说, 最初她也遵守了这个物业管理的限制, 向一个因COVID-19疫情而无法飞回国的家庭提供了90多天的租约。

她指责物业管理在5月初又推翻了这个90天的限制, 取而代之的是一项新的程序, 要求所有业主需要至少提前48小时提

供租客入租前的审查报告。

萨莫拉夫人说, 她通常是短期(不到90天)出租她在Prima大楼里的公寓。但这次她已经根据物业管理的限制, 承诺为那个家庭提供住宿。她已将此事提交维多利亚民事行政仲裁庭(VCAT), 要求赔偿14000澳元的损失。

她说:“我不能让一个有小孩的家庭再去寻找什么。我信守我的诺言。”

“我不能出尔反尔, 我做不到。”

大楼常住居民和Airbnb短租经营者之间的摩擦在大楼公寓中时有发生。

常住居民经常抱怨, 短租客(有时被称为“派对客”)给大楼居住舒适性带来压力, 以及对大楼公共财产造成的损害时有发生。

尽管Prima大楼物业管理采取的新短租举措是为了应对COVID-19疫情, 认为租客的流动性给所有业主带来了不可接受的公共健康风险, 但是萨莫拉夫人说, 这种如何使用自己财产的号施令是违法的。

她说:“司法系统中有足够多的案例可以证明这是非法的。作为一个业主, 我问自己‘难道他们不知道吗? 他们怎么会不知道呢?’我们选举了他们, 相信能为我们最大的利益而工作。”

Prima大楼的分契式物业管理服务是由开发商PDG的附属公司Melcorp Strata物业管理公司来承管的。



Melcorp Strata的总经理唐娜·罗(Donna Rowe)告诉本报, 由于即将进行的法律诉讼, 她不会对此事发表评论。

然而有些人认为该案是一个“定义性的”案例, Strata Title Lawyers律师事务所的首席执行官兼首席律师汤姆·培根(Tom Bacon)向本报表示, 在COVID-19疫情期间的背景下, 为物业管理机构提供更清晰的条款, 该案例可能被视为“定义性的”。培根先生表示, VCAT早在2018年在

Doncaster做出的Lim裁决已经阐明并确认, 物业管理可以首先要求大楼管理员向租客进行入住介绍, 并在客人入住前三天通知; 这个裁决早在COVID-19疫情发生和发布公共卫生令之前。

尽管他不愿对所谓的90天限制发表评论, 但他补充说, Prima大楼物业管理的做法并不是“无可指责的”, 需要在维多利亚州和澳大利亚的所有法律背景下进行考虑, 而不能仅仅根据“局限的”《物业管理法2006》。

## 加快修建自行车道

撰稿: David Schout

墨尔本市政计划在未来12个月内, 在Queensbridge街和Whiteman街上修建独立的自行车道, 以实现其加快自行车基础设施建设的承诺。

为了进一步加速“便于骑行者城市”的转

变, 市政宣布了修建一系列专用自行车道, 旨在增加骑行者的人数, 同时保持骑行者对道路的信心。

市政议会计划在明年7月之前修建从Queensbridge街北端到City路口的自行车道。

此外, 还将把Normanby路现有的自行

车道延伸到Whiteman街, 一直到Queensbridge街的十字路口。

如果州政府批准的话, 这些车道将受到“保护”, 即为骑行者提供对机动车辆的物理障碍。

去年市政在发布10年交通战略之前作出的研究报告指出, 许多现在和未来的骑行者说, 他们在市中心道路上骑车感到害怕。

市长萨莉·卡普(Sally Capp)表示:“通过在关键道路上快速跟踪自行车道的流

量情况, 我们正在创建让人们充满信心的街道, 进而也可以释放我们的道路、公共汽车、电车和火车上的空间。”

“我们的研究表明, 设立物理障碍, 保护骑车者免受机动车的伤害是至关重要的, 可以鼓励更多的人骑车去市中心。”

市政在此之前已经承诺进行长期的自行车道基础设施改革, 但是在COVID-19疫情封闭期间, 由于骑行者数量的急剧增加, 从而加速了这个计划。



## Rockpool餐馆 免费送餐

撰稿: Rhonda Dredge

为了帮助那些没有收入的人, 餐馆另设桌子提供免费送餐, 这可是一个令人欣慰的景象。

戴安娜·蒙特纳古露(Diana Montenegro)是Spice Temple餐馆的经理, 但她现在正在负责“希望送餐服务”(Hope Delivery)。

她说:“许多国际学生都丢了工作。”

“他们在这里打工度假, 住在背包客旅店, 我们设法让他们有饭吃。”

Rockpool餐馆外的这张餐桌已经成为皇冠赌场旁边这家高级餐厅的熟悉场景。

戴安娜说, 他们一天要分发600多份食

物, 打包回家可再加热。

在本报到访时, 菜单上有牛肉咖喱饭和蔬菜咖喱饭。

她说:“我们最初把食物给了那些在附近工作的人, 但我们想要接近更需要的人, 因为你不知道他们的情况。”

“我伴侣的工作和国际学生有关, 了解到每个留学生都在努力生存。”

她说, 我们Spice Temple餐馆通常有25人在店堂工作。“现在只有10个人上班, 其他人都回了家。”

这个由Rockpool基金会资助的“上门送餐服务”始于5月, 并将一直持续到8月底。

## 增加使用可再生能源

撰稿: Katie Johnson

墨尔本市政的第二个大宗购买再生能源交易项目, 可使墨尔本几所著名的大学, 企业和工厂获得风力发电所提供的电力。

这些用电设施包括墨尔本皇家理工大学(RMIT)的市中心校区、Midtown Plaza、The Strand Arcade和整个市中心的办公楼将受益于7月1日启动的墨尔本可再生能源项目(MREP)的交易。

副市长阿伦·伍德(Arron Wood)表示, 这项为期10年的交易项目是迈向绿色城市令人振奋的一步。

副市长说:“这两个项目加在一起, 相当于市中心的排放量减少了5%, 同时也是国家电网确实向可再生能源转变”。

“这相当于每年为2.2万多个家庭提供足够的可再生能源。加上MREP1项目, 每年可为4万个家庭提供足够的电力能源”。

有7个主要能源用户于上月达成了价值数百万澳元的MREP2购买协议, 其中包括墨尔本皇家理工大学、迪肯大学、Cbus Property、ISPT、Fulton Hogan、Citywide Asphalt及Mondelez国际公司。

他们总共为14个购物中心、9栋办公楼、7个教育校区和4个生产制造单位每年提供110 GWh的可再生能源。

伍德议员说:“大部分风力电能来自巴兰(Ballan)附近的Yaloak南方风力发电厂, 其余的来自维多利亚远郊的其他风力发电基地”。



7月1日合同生效后, 大多数的合作方都将转向使用风力发电能源, 他们当中有许多已经是100%的使用风力发电能源。

其中一个主要的合作伙伴是RMIT, 其市中心校区现在有相当一部分电力是来自可再生能源, 包括梯形讲座教室、实验室、图书馆、学习空间和Capitol剧场。

RMIT物业服务与采购执行总监克里斯·休伊森(Chris Hewison)表示, 墨尔本皇家理工大学很高兴成为购买集团的一员, 因为这与大学的目标一致。

紧随着第一个MREP交易项目的成功, 这个项目由市政牵头, 集体购买88GWh的可再生能源, 并在阿拉拉特(Ararat)附近的Crowlands建造了一个80MW的风力发电厂。

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