

SOUTHBANK NEWS

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▲ Lord Mayor Sally Capp and Southbank Residents' Association president Tony Penna.

Community forum to shape Southbank

If you have an interest in the future of postcode 3006, then pencil Tuesday, March 23, 6pm (for a 6.30pm start) at Metropolis Southgate in your calendar.

WORDS BY *Sean Car*
PHOTOGRAPHY BY *John Tadigiri*
PLANNING

In response to a number of local issues including the sale of land at Boyd Park and delays to major projects at Southbank Boulevard and City Rd, the Southbank Residents' Association (SRA) will stage the Southbank Community Forum to allow locals to hear directly from the City of Melbourne's senior management.

In addition to Lord Mayor Sally Capp, Deputy Lord Mayor and chair of planning Cr Nicholas Reece and deputy chair of planning Cr Rohan Leppert, the council's deputy CEO Alison Leighton will be in attendance along with the council's capital works and infrastructure managers Roger Teale and Jonathan Kamouris.

The three members from the council's senior management will sit on a professional panel, which will also

include planning experts Hodyl & Co founder Leanne Hodyl and RMIT University Professor Michael Buxton.

The theme of the event – *Southbank - Where to from here ...* – will explore the visions laid out in the Southbank Structure Plan 2010 to see how Southbank is tracking on both current and future projects.

With the support of Lord Mayor Sally Capp, from 6.30pm to 7pm, the SRA will launch its history book *Tall Storeys & True Tales* in celebration of the association's 20th anniversary in 2018. Written by long-time resident Lynne Lumsden with a foreword by Member for Albert Park Martin Foley, the book covers SRA's entire history representing the Southbank community and will be available to purchase on the night. The forum will then begin at 7pm and include 30 minutes towards the end of the night for Q&A.

SRA president Tony Penna, who will moderate

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Residents weigh in on Southgate redevelopment

WORDS BY *Sean Car*
PLANNING

Local residents living in Quay West are the latest to express concern about the way in which Southgate's owners ARA Australia are planning for the centre's redevelopment.

While *Southbank News* has previously reported on issues raised by Southgate's tenants, residents living within the precinct along Southgate Avenue have added their voice to a growing list of worries about ARA's proposal.

In May last year, ARA announced that it had submitted a development application to the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) for a new 21-storey office tower and more than 10,000 sqm of new-look retail space across four levels.

In a statement issued at the time, ARA Australia said that it had looked to capitalise on the state government's fast-tracking of building permits amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

A lack of consultation, fears about both project and traffic management during construction, proposed changes to Southgate's easements and potential disruption, and loss of privacy and noise from a new 2000 sqm public space are just some of the concerns raised by Quay West residents.

While it's understood that initial consultation began with residents in December regarding the proposed changes to Southgate's easements, residents say ARA Australia hasn't committed to any further consultation as it awaits approval from Minister for Planning Richard Wynne.

Southbank News understands 25 individual Quay West residents have sent letters of objection to the Minister for Planning since December in relation to the proposal, which they say remain unanswered. Quay West residents say they have

also been in discussions with neighbours at 28 Southgate as more locals seek answers from ARA into potential impacts of the proposal.

In a letter addressed to the Minister for Planning, one resident, who wished to remain anonymous, said they had only learned about the plans to demolish existing buildings on Quay West's doorstep in July last year.

"I am not, in principle, opposed to the development but strongly believe that there must be significantly more consultation with affected parties prior to planning approval," the letter read.

"It is critical that the approvals process for such a prominent site, with significant implications on the liveability and amenity of residents in the precinct, involves an appropriate consultation process."

"The consultation to date has been limited to the variation of easements. This low level of consultation is not appropriate, and consultation must be undertaken much more widely."

Residents also argue that the proposed 21-storey office tower did not adhere to the Melbourne Planning Scheme (DDO60) and would undermine the "special character" of existing low-scale urban form along the Yarra River corridor.

In response to issues raised by residents, a spokesperson for ARA Australia told *Southbank News* that it was currently following "standard application process", which involved the submission of high-level master planning to the authorities.

"Should these high-level plans be approved we will be holding a number of consultation and feedback sessions for residents and community members, to help inform the next stages of detailed planning," the spokesperson said.

"Subject to approval of our development application, detailed

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The deadline for the April edition is April 1, 2021.

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Community forum to shape Southbank

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discussion and questions on the night, has billed the community forum as the most important event in the SRA's history.

He said that while the evening had been triggered by many delays and setbacks to City of Melbourne-led projects, the event was not an opportunity to "bash the council" but rather have a dialogue about the next chapter in Southbank's evolution.

"Everything will be coming back to the Southbank Structure Plan. Are we on track to achieve what was originally planned? Or was it a pie in the sky idea?" Mr Penna said.

"The whole motivation for the meeting is because of that concern and that frustration from the community. We were all excited when we heard about the City Road Master Plan and Southbank Boulevard but the delays combined with the sale of land at Boyd Park was kind of like the icing on the cake. We've had enough."

"If this is the first 10 years of that 30-year plan, well what are the next 20 years going to look like?"

"This forum is not going to be an opportunity to beat up the council. It's a positive forum to look forward to what's coming."

One major project proposed in the Southbank Structure Plan, which Mr Penna said would be up for discussion on the night, would be the illusive plan to connect the "two halves of Southbank" by creating a park across the freeway at the entrance to the Domain Tunnel.

History book launch

To kickstart the night, SRA will launch its 20-year history book titled *Tall Storeys & True Tales, The first 20 Years of the Southbank Residents' Association* from 6.30pm to 7pm.

Speaking with *Southbank News* this month, the book's author Lynne Lumsden, who compiled the history during her time on the SRA committee between 2017 and 2018, said she was really pleased with the outcome.

From what was originally established as the Southbank Resident's Group under the inaugural

“

I was really pleased to do the history because it shows how a dedicated group of volunteers can make a difference.

”

leadership of Ray McDonald and Bill Stephen in 1998 through to the current era under president Tony Penna, the book details every success of this integral community association.

Lynne Lumsden said the story of SRA was an important one to tell.

"There was a lot of impetus to do it [establish SRA] in the early days. They [residents] were going to be completely overtaken by relatively high-rise buildings. I was really pleased to do the history because it shows how a dedicated group of volunteers can make a difference," she said.

"I think the tenacity of the original presidents, and Tony [Penna] of course, is just amazing. They could have given up. Working with the City of Melbourne is never easy!"

"We can be very proud of the work SRA has done. Their biggest victory was Boyd in my opinion. It's a lovely building and a great centre for people; the heart of the community."

For more information or to register for the Southbank Community Forum scan the QR code on page 6 of this edition •



Residents weigh in on Southgate redevelopment

Continued from page 1.

construction management plans (including traffic management) must be prepared and submitted to the relevant authorities for approval prior to works commencing. These plans will also be communicated to residents."

"We have not been privy to the [25] letters referenced at this stage. We encourage those members of the community with any questions or concerns to contact us directly – we have an email set up for this purpose southgate_development@ara-group.com."

The spokesperson added that ARA was "very excited" to provide an additional 2000 sqm of public open space to Southbank, known as the "River Meadow", as part of its proposal and that the City of Melbourne would play a key role in managing the space.

It also argued that the variation to the public easements were "minor" and that the adjustment would result in increased functionality, improved access and a "better overall outcome" for the likes of Quay West and St John's Church •



Sean Car

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For more information:
southbankresidents.org.au

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PROPERTY

Southbank residents are being “let down” over City Rd delays

WORDS BY *Jess Carrascalao Heard*
PLANNING

The Southbank Residents’ Association (SRA) has reiterated its disappointment over City Road Master Plan delays ahead of a community forum later this month.

SRA president Tony Penna said locals felt they had been “let down on numerous fronts” by the City of Melbourne’s failure to commit to a new timeline for the project, which was originally due for completion in 2023.

The master plan’s original timeline outlined works to have started by mid-2017, with five of its six action points either completed or well underway by 2021.

- The six key action points on the award-winning Master Plan are:
- Street upgrades to City Road West (between Clarendon St and Power St)
 - Reimagining of Kings Way undercroft
 - Street upgrades to City Road East (between Power St and St Kilda Rd)
 - Public/private realm upgrade for the Arts Centre/St Kilda Rd
 - Connect the gardens, with a new pedestrian crossing at Alexandra Avenue
 - An expansion of the bicycle network within Southbank

To date, only the Alexandra Avenue pedestrian crossing, and some expansion of Southbank’s bicycle network, have been delivered as part of the project.

Cr Rohan Leppert, who seconded the motion for council to endorse the City Road Master Plan back in 2016, said he understood residents’ frustrations.

“Southbank residents endorsed the City Road Master Plan in 2016 and expect the council to deliver it,” he said.

Funds have also been allocated for an off-leash dog park under Kings Way southern undercroft, with construction expected to begin in the first half of this year.

But plans for crucial street upgrades to City Rd itself are still not available, with detailed planning of the upgrades taking longer than the original two-year allocation in the timeline.



▲ The Kings Way undercroft at City Rd - a major action point in the master plan yet to be realised.

Original projections saw the construction of City Road East and West taking up to three years each to complete, meaning any works beginning on these action points in the future would see the project blow out past the original completion date of 2023.

Mr Penna estimated that the plan was at least two years behind schedule and said residents had been provided “no updates on what a new timeline will look like”.

“They [the City of Melbourne] did all this consultation, they hype it up ... they released a timeline and right from the get-go they never started that timeline,” he said.

A City of Melbourne spokesperson said, “Council has communicated at key project milestones, including key planning points, and prior to undertaking works.”

The council’s Participate Melbourne website for the City Road Master Plan does indicate timeframes for some of its action points, but for City Rd East and West, and the Arts Centre/St Kilda Rd upgrade, it states that “these actions will be progressed in the coming years”, with planning and advocacy work “currently underway” for their future delivery.

One part of the City Road East upgrade in the Master Plan – the removal of slip roads at the City Road/Southbank Boulevard intersection – has been finished as part of the transformation of Southbank Boulevard.

The brainchild of the council’s former director of city design Rob Adams, the construction of

Southbank Boulevard was prioritised ahead of City Rd despite being planned and endorsed by the council earlier.

While Southbank Boulevard was due to be completed last year, budget blowouts and delays have dogged the project, which only last month completed its third stage – a new civic space outside the ABC building (read more on this page).

By contrast, City Road West, which was supposed to begin construction in 2018 and finish in 2020, has not yet been planned.

The Southbank Boulevard project is indicated in the City Road Master Plan as an “influencing project”.

A City of Melbourne spokesperson said that both projects were large and complex proposals, and though both had progressed since endorsement, they were progressing on different timelines.

Mr Penna said it would be “an absolute nightmare” to run the two projects concurrently.

“They’ve [the council] proven themselves unable to deliver that [Southbank Boulevard] project. If they can’t deliver that project how can they deliver City Road concurrently?” he said.

All upgrades to City Rd also require the cooperation of a number of key stakeholders, including VicRoads, Yarra Trams and the Department of Transport.

Cr Leppert said the onus was on council to broker arrangements across a number of levels of

government.

He also said that “financing these projects has always been the central challenge”.

But former Cr Stephen Mayne, who held the position as the council’s chair of finance when the City Road Master Plan was endorsed, said funding capital works should not be a problem for the City of Melbourne.

“They should be spending \$130 million a year on capital works ... you’d easily be able to accommodate City Rd if you were spending \$130 million a year,” he said.

Mr Mayne is confident, however, that the Master Plan will go ahead.

“You don’t bring out a master plan just to put it on the shelf and have it gather dust,” he said.

Cr Leppert said that City Rd’s transformation into a “high amenity, tree-lined, people-friendly street” would be the “single most important

intervention into the public realm that any level of government can make for the Southbank community”.

The SRA’s Community Forum later this month (read more on page 1) will focus on the council’s Southbank Structure Plan 2010 and Open Space Strategy 2012, which both point to the City Road Master Plan.

Mr Penna believes the master plan is important for the area, not only for safety, with improvements to roads a key part of the upgrades for City Rd, but also for its amenity.

“City Road West is critical for safety,” he said ●



Jess Carrascalao Heard
JOURNALIST
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Civic space complete at Southbank Boulevard

CAPITAL WORKS

An important milestone in the \$47 million Southbank Boulevard upgrade has been reached within budget and on time, with work on the new civic space outside the ABC centre completed this month.

The 2200 sqm plaza of open space was unveiled by Lord Mayor Sally Capp on March 5, with new lawn, bluestone paving, and picnic tables, benches and barbecues installed. A central stone terrace has also been built with data and electrical points for outside radio broadcasts and community events.

The council said the third stage of the project had created up to 15 local construction jobs.

Lord Mayor Sally Capp said the majority of the park was now ready for use, with further tree planting to take place in April, to ensure the best growing conditions.

“This is an important milestone in the Southbank Boulevard upgrade and this section of work took six months to complete,” the Lord Mayor said. “We’ve laid bluestone paving, added the lawns and planted nine drought-resilient Mexican fan palm



▲ The Lord Mayor tries out a new barbecue.

trees which are a very tall, fast growing species and will help balance the scale of the adjacent building and the new park space. A further 40 trees will be planted in April.”

“I’d like to acknowledge the patience of local residents and tenants, including the ABC, during the construction phase which at times has been disruptive and has unfortunately suffered a number of delays.”

“As we now move to delivering the next stages of this project, I hope workers, residents, theatre goers and people visiting the area can enjoy our brand-new civic space.”

The next stages will deliver two neighbourhood parks totalling 2730 sqm, the first between Moore and Kavanagh streets and the second between Fawkner St and City Rd ●

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/

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Southbank businesses have received reactivation grants

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LOCAL BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT

Businesses across Melbourne are finding creative ways to innovate and evolve in response to COVID-19.

To support the COVID-safe reopening of our city, the City of Melbourne partnered with the Victorian Government to deliver up to \$10 million in small business reactivation grants.

Among the more than 1100 businesses awarded funding, Southgate

Melbourne received a grant to introduce outdoor dining zones and infrastructure to support its tenants.

Bluetrain Restaurant also received funding to plan for COVID-safe remodelling and marketing.

If you own a business, visit melbourne.vic.gov.au/business to subscribe to the Business in Melbourne newsletter and explore the support on offer, including grants and outdoor dining permits.

For one-on-one advice, you can also call our dedicated Business Concierge Service on 9658 9658 (press 1 for business), or enquire online at melbourne.vic.gov.au/business

Information and events in this publication are current at the time of printing. Subsequent changes may occur.

THREE WAYS TO HELP SHAPE MELBOURNE'S FUTURE

Join conversations to influence the City of Melbourne's long-term vision for the municipality through community engagement platform, Participate Melbourne.

As 2021 takes shape, there are a number of projects on-the-go and we are seeking feedback from people of all ages and backgrounds during March:

1 Community vision

Help shape a bright future for Melbourne by taking part in a local community vision survey or workshop.

Your thoughts are important to us as we evolve our aspirations for the city and look to update Future Melbourne 2026, our 10-year plan for the city that was released in 2016.

2 Health and wellbeing

What can we do to help Melburnians lead happy and healthy lives? Share your feedback to help identify priorities for our Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan and guide our work for the next four years. Some of the key areas are food security, climate change and mental health.

3 Towards a smoke-free Melbourne

Did you know that the City of Melbourne already has 12 smoke-free areas, and a vision to make Melbourne a smoke-free city by 2025? Share your feedback by registering for our community panel or via our quick online survey.

For more information, visit participate.melbourne.vic.gov.au and sign up to receive updates.



IN-BRIEF

NIGHT-TIME ECONOMY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The City of Melbourne is creating a new advisory committee that will advise Council on the growth and sustainability of social, cultural and economic activities that happen between 6pm and 6am. The group will include retail, hospitality and creative industry leaders.

MARITIME HERITAGE

Melbourne has a rich seafaring history and the City of Melbourne is exploring ways to celebrate this, together with the Victorian Government. This includes exploring possible uses for the Mission to Seafarers building in Docklands. Have your say by 15 March at participate.melbourne.vic.gov.au

RAINBOW CARERS

Do you provide unpaid care to an older person, or someone living with a physical or mental health condition or disability? The City of Melbourne offers supportive programs for carers, including a dedicated group for LGBTIQ+ carers, in partnership with Queerspace. Find out more at melbourne.vic.gov.au/carers

ELIZABETH STREET

Works are underway to create more space for people and a more appealing streetscape on Elizabeth Street. Due for completion in May, the transformation between Flinders Street and Flinders Lane will add 400 square metres of pedestrianised space. Learn more at melbourne.vic.gov.au/cityprojects

MELBOURNE FOOD AND WINE FESTIVAL

Support local businesses by choosing from more than 50 events at restaurants and venues across the city, including pasta-making workshops, riesling and Thai dinners, chef collaborations and more. From 12 to 31 March. melbournefoodandwine.com.au

COUNCIL MEETINGS

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Promenade cyclists in the gun

WORDS BY *David Schout*
PHOTOGRAPHY BY *John Tadigiri*
SAFETY & SECURITY

Police will be targeting speeding cyclists along Southbank Promenade in March in a bid to improve safety along the busy thoroughfare.

On February 24, Victoria Police launched a three-week operation to target those travelling greater than 10km/h on the contentious stretch of path.

Those who are clocked at higher than the limit could face a fine of up to \$1,652.20.

Southbank Acting Senior Sergeant Brett Sidebottom said “Operation River Run” was about protecting those on foot.

“Pedestrians are among our most vulnerable road users – if involved in a collision there is very little that protects them from impact,” he said.

“It is incredibly dangerous for all path users to have riders zooming past pedestrians at a great speed, particularly when we have more people coming back into the city visiting the wonderful food and entertainment precincts along Southbank Promenade.”

The operation was also set to be checking electric bikes and scooters, which have also been a source of contention for some time.

Under state laws, scooters cannot travel on footpaths faster than 10km/h or operate with a power output of more than 200 watts.

“We know more people are choosing options such as electric bikes and scooters to get around the city, and we want to make sure their devices are up to standard and in line with current regulations,” Senior Sergeant Sidebottom said.

But Bicycle Network CEO Craig Richards said a \$1,652 fine was “extraordinary” and questioned why the operation was taking place now.

“It’s more than three times the amount of some drink driving fines,” he said.

“There are rarely incidents between people riding and people walking at Southbank Promenade. The timing of this blitz is hard to



understand as it’s still very quiet there.”

Mr Richards advised those on two wheels to ride at about the pace someone can run in order to remain within the limit. Lord Mayor Sally Capp said while the promenade would remain a shared space, the City of Melbourne would encourage cyclists to utilise soon-to-be-completed alternative routes.

“We are aware of conflicts between pedestrians and people riding bikes on Southbank Promenade and are currently delivering an alternative cycling route,” Cr Capp told *Southbank News*.

“We have delivered protected bike lanes on Linlithgow Avenue and Southbank Boulevard and will complete works on Alexandra Avenue to link this route to the Main Yarra Trail. Once it has been completed, we will encourage cyclists to use the new route rather than using Southbank Promenade.”

“We’re also planning additional bike lanes

along Queensbridge St, Whiteman St and Flinders St in the future to provide alternatives to riding along the promenade.”

In the council’s 2016-2020 Bicycle Plan, a “floating pontoon” (similar to those seen upstream at Burnley) was suggested along the Yarra River to veer cyclists away from Southbank Promenade.

However, investigations found this could impact access for tour boat operators.

In 2019 the council announced a \$5.1 million upgrade to Southbank Promenade, which has not had a major upgrade in more than 25 years.

The project – which included new seating, native trees, garden beds and bluestone pavement – was put on hold last year, and its start date is now unknown.

Promenade problems

In a 2020 survey completed by more than 6000 cyclists, Southbank Promenade was rated in the top 10 scariest cycling spots in



Melbourne.

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.” ●

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Southbank Community Forum

Southbank – Where to from here?

6pm Tuesday 23rd March, 6:30pm start, Metropolis Lvl 4, Southgate. **Free Event**

Hosted by the Southbank Residents' Association and moderated by president Tony Penna, local residents and businesses are invited to come along and hear from the Lord Mayor Sally Capp and a delegate of senior councillors and council management regarding the future of postcode 3006.

With a professional panel assembled, including ...

- **Prof Michael Buxton** – Professor of Environment and Planning at the School of Global, Urban and Social Studies, RMIT University
- **Leanne Hodyl** – Founder of Hodyl & Co, former City of Melbourne Manager Urban Strategy and a 2014 Churchill Fellow
- **Alison Leighton** – City of Melbourne Deputy CEO, General Manager Strategy and Planning
- **Roger Teale** – City of Melbourne, Capital Works
- **Jonathan Kamouris** – City of Melbourne, Major Capital Works and Infrastructure

The theme *Southbank — Where to from here?* will explore the visions laid out in the Southbank Structure Plan 2010 to see how Southbank is tracking on major projects, including the City Road Master Plan, the sale of land at Boyd Park and Southbank Boulevard. Locals will hear from experts, councillors and the City of Melbourne and be given the opportunity to ask questions about the future of the area and our local community.



Register with QR code.

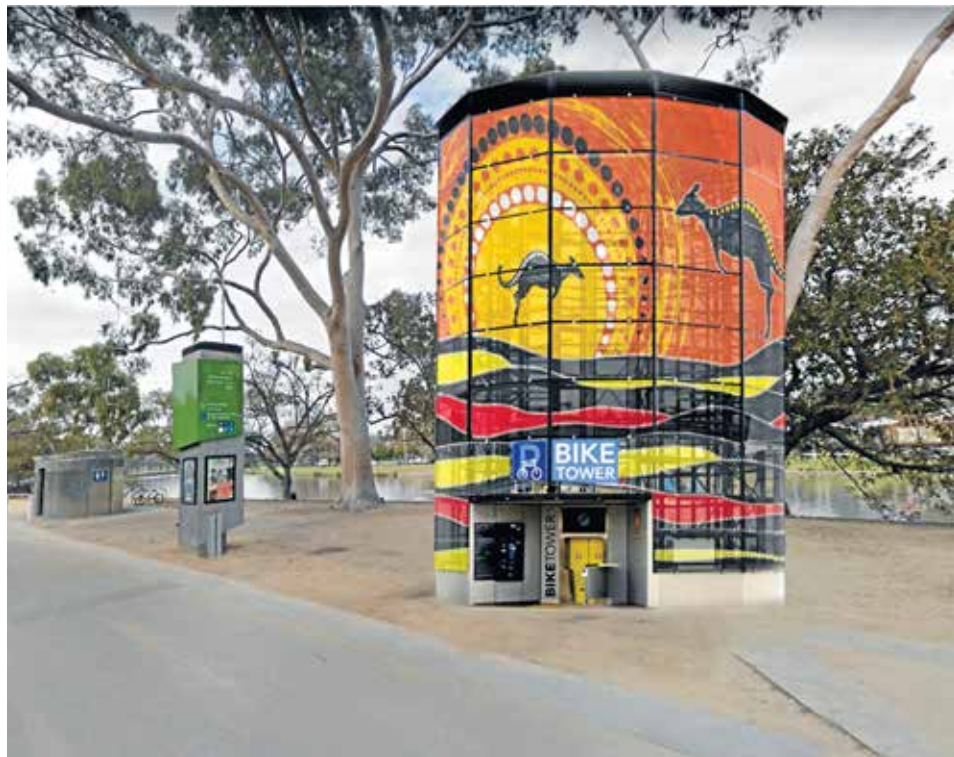
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Tall Storeys & True Tales

The first 20 Years of the
Southbank Residents Association

Join the SRA at 6:30pm, with the support of Lord Mayor Sally Capp, to launch its history book in celebration of the association's 20th anniversary in 2018. Written by long-time resident Lynne Lumsden with a foreword by Member for Albert Park Martin Foley, the book covers SRA's entire history representing the Southbank community and will be available to purchase on the night.



▲ A render of how a bike stacker would look like between Federation Square and the Yarra River.

Is this the new way to store bikes in the city?

WORDS BY *David Schout*
TRANSPORT

You might have seen them abroad in cycle-friendly European cities, but could multi-storey bike parking towers be making their way to Melbourne?

The latest high-tech design by Smart Stackers is completely automated, and the company is keen to roll out its towers in busy end-of-destination areas like Southbank or the CBD.

The technology, developed in Prague, has been in use in Europe since 2012.

After a trip, cyclists can insert their bike at the opening of these towers, and the robotic system moves the bike to a free spot within the tower.

Since integration, there's been zero break-ins or breakdowns.

One Smart Stackers Bike Tower houses more than 100 bicycles, in the space of around four car parking bays.

During 2020 the number of cyclists in Melbourne grew as locals sought a new leisure activity or socially-distanced way to get around.

And numbers are expected to continue rising

throughout 2021 as people look to avoid growing congestion on the roads.

Olympic gold medallist Anna Meares said it was important for any large city to have safe end-of-trip facilities for cyclists.

"Bike sales have always been high but since the pandemic, they have sky-rocketed," she said.

"We have the chance in 2021 to leverage this influx of interest and continue to encourage the use of bikes as a mode of transport by embracing a safe, accessible, hygienic, space-saving storage solution like Bike Towers."

The towers also include space to store helmets, bags and child seats, in an environment that protects against the elements and theft.

The start-up is seeking local and state government support for its facilities and has pitched itself as a modern solution that supports active mobility, eases road congestion and promotes urban sustainability.

If approved it would seek to integrate the use of Myki cards for payment.

"We hope that through cities embracing this revolutionary end-of-trip facility, we can encourage more Australians to choose cycling as their main mode of transportation," Smart Stackers CEO Rod McQueen said ●

Positive local response to NGV Contemporary

WORDS BY *Rhonda Dredge*
ARCHITECTURE

There are some pretty heroic buildings around the island site earmarked for the new NGV Contemporary in Southbank Boulevard.

There's the Conservatorium of Music by architect John Wardle on the diagonal corner across Sturt St.

And the ABC studios directly opposite were designed by Cox Architecture.

But there are also the more austere forms of the National Gallery of Victoria (NGV) and their gardens closer still.

Art galleries are meant to be all about the art but the building does have an impact. Should it be subservient or heroic?

Architects around the country are discussing these issues with the release of the design competition last month by the state government for redevelopment of an office building into the new gallery.

Expressions of interest close on March 30 and local Southbank firm Fender Katsalidis is throwing its hat into the ring.

On its design team is James Pearce who designed MONA in Hobart.

The firm also designed Buxton Contemporary, the Ian Potter at the University of Melbourne, Bendigo Gallery and Grangula in Canberra.

"My particular leaning is that a building should have character,"



▲ (Left) The future site of NGV Contemporary and (right) ABC and Melbourne Recital Centres.



James said. "It should be an actor in the play. It gives the curators something to bounce off."

Times have been tough for everyone and local architects are applauding the state government's decision to limit the competition to Australian firms.

"It's fantastic that the government is encouraging Australian architects," James said. "We're going for it. So will everyone."

James hopes the decision to support Australian design is not just a result of COVID.

"Hopefully there's a wonderful confidence in the skills we have in Australia," he said.

Competitions bring out ideas that

haven't been considered, Fed Square for example. "Even though it's had its critics, it works," James said.

As a local, James is excited about the sections of Southbank behind the river, the small independent cafes in containers, the squares and laneways that have been created between towers.

The site of NGV Contemporary was triangular, lower than the garden at the NGV but connectable, he said.

The competition favours more experienced firms by putting a proviso of entrants having a staff of 30 or more.

But smaller firms can band together, encouraging collaboration ●

Training ground for baby falcons

WORDS BY *Rhonda Dredge*
ENVIRONMENT

On Monday, March 1 there was a strange sighting down at Westgate Park.

At 11am birdwatcher Joshua Clark saw a baby Peregrine falcon swoop.

He didn't take a photo so *Southbank News* has no record of the event.

The baby swooped, at the world's greatest speed for a bird, on a grebe, a small water bird that looks like a duck.

"The mother was teaching it how to dive bomb off the CFMEU crane," Nick Brinkley said. Mr Brinkley is the general manager of Westgate Biodiversity, a small organisation that manages the park.

He didn't see the novice successfully engage in a hunting incident but news was reported back to him by the bird watching group.

"There has been some unsuccessful hunting," he said, sadly. "One crashed down on a road at great speed."

Now it looks like they've learned their lesson and are using the CFMEU crane, which adjoins the lakes, to dive bomb.

The falcons belong to the famous CBD family filmed at the top of a building and posted on YouTube. You could call them celebrities they've had so much media.

The success of this latest hunting trip is due to the behaviour of the grebe, according to Nick.



"They are the best swimming water birds but clumsy flyers so they're perfect prey," he said.

The falcons catch them when they're coming back up from a dive, presumably spotting their characteristic ripples in the surface of the water.

Nick was pleased that Westgate Park was the place the mother falcon had chosen to train her young.

"It's the biggest community-run park within five kilometres of a CBD in Australia," he said. "It's genuinely that unique."

The stories that emerge from Westgate Biodiversity are inspiring and mostly pertain to this 50-hectare strip of land that has been replanted with indigenous vegetation and is now visited by 140 species of bird.

During the lockdown the group planted mistletoe to increase the number of species and claims greater success rates than the City of Melbourne.

A friendly rivalry spurs on the group, the small guys keeping up an optimistic stance against the big guns of the CBD ●

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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".

Ponyfish Island

Andrew Mackinnon

Yarra Pedestrian Bridge, Southgate Ave
manager@ponyfish.com.au



The happy coincidence of new friendships and diverse talents back in 2010 saw the birth of Ponyfish Island, which spearheaded the on-water activation of the Lower Yarra River that we now take for granted.

One of the directors, Andrew Mackinnon, remembers it particularly clearly. The then 30-year-old had been in business for 10 years. To celebrate the personal milestone, he diverted his deposit for a house into the brave, new venture with DJ/musician Grant Smillie and hospitality entrepreneur Jerome Borazio.

They had been brought together through former barrister and MP Clem Newton-Brown, who had held the head-lease on the small pad of concrete under the Yarra footbridge for many years. It was designated in the planning scheme as "a place of public enjoyment" but after many years of selling ice creams and coffees in summer, Clem was looking for a new approach.

Jerome's hospitality background, Grant's eye for detail and media connections, when added to Andrew's creativity, saw it transformed into something special, although until it achieved a liquor licence it seemed like an expensive folly that could have taken Andrew's house deposit down with it.

However, on the afternoon of being granted a liquor licence the three friends celebrated with beers at the pointy end of Ponyfish. It attracted the attention of passers-by, who ventured over to join them. Within a week there was a queue along the footbridge to get in, and – COVID withstanding – Ponyfish has traded day and night, 365 days a year since then. Rather than wallow in self-pity, they used the 2020 lockdowns to transform the venue.

It has had three "facelifts" over 11 years, but the latest has been a complete makeover; from rustic charm to a cool Miami/ art deco look. The stylish aesthetic and enhanced customer service is soon to be teamed with a new menu which is heavy on fresh seafood. Add in an expanded range of higher quality drink options and Ponyfish is ready to launch into the next decade.

Andrew Mackinnon still runs his advertising services company and creative agency "Taboo" with his brother, but Ponyfish is clearly still a beautiful passion for him. He admits that he spent the first decade of his working life dabbling in "bits and pieces" of entrepreneurial ventures, which included nightclubs, promoter, DJ-ing and even creating a new beer. Along with Grant and Jerome, he fell in love with the island in the Yarra and was not daunted by the seedy reputation the space had acquired during the early 2000s. Space has always been a challenge for supplying the food and beverage services, but back of house can now accommodate two chefs and their kitchen.

Just as fascinating is how the three directors have remained such good friends, despite the ups and downs of commercial life. Despite Grant now being based in Los Angeles and Jerome on the Peninsula, they manage to catch-up weekly to discuss their "love-child" and once a year they head off on an international mystery adventure to strengthen the bonds, to celebrate the friendship and to toss-around new ideas.

And why it is called Ponyfish? The name comes from the 2004 Bill Murray film *Life Aquatic*, where he searches for the elusive Ponyfish Island.

"I suppose the three of us are also hopeless explorers, who periodically return to our island marine lab' on the Yarra to plan our next dream", says Andrew.

Melbourne River Cruises

James Gantidis

Vault 11, Banana Alley, 365 Finders St
(03) 8610 2600 info@melbcruises.com.au



The Gantidis Family has been synonymous with the Lower Yarra River for the past 40 years. Since 1981 Melbourne River Cruises has run sightseeing tours and corporate events - day-in, day-out – regardless of seasons and weather. Only the COVID 19 lockdown saw them having to break their outstanding 40-year service.

James Gantidis has been Director since 2000, following in the footsteps of his brother Peter Jnr and his father Peter Snr. However, James was no novice to the business when he took over the reins,

having served his "apprenticeship" as a riverboat captain in the business for nearly 20 years.

In fact, it's James' time at the wheel of the vessels that provides his fondest memories, such as hosting Prince Charles, Arnie Schwarzenegger and the Real Madrid, Juventus and the Brazilian national football teams. The river was much dirtier and snagged in those early days, so boat captains were often required to discreetly strip off to their undies and dive overboard to free-up a tangled propeller. One river captain – an ex British commando scuba diver – used to announce the procedure to guests, then strip nude before disappearing overboard. The boats were changed from propeller to jets many years ago to make life easier for the captains and crew, though it significantly reduced the entertainment factor for guests!

Arts Centre Melbourne's Sunday Market

Jane Hoiting

sundaymarket@artscentremelbourne.com.au

General and Stall Enquiries: (03) 9281 8581



Many people think that community markets just "happen", but for the Coordinator of Arts Centre Melbourne's Sunday Market, it calls upon all her career skills acquired through the wholesale travel industry, film and TV production, as well as nearly 20 years in event management.

While COVID-safe practice has temporarily reduced stalls to about 25 along the St Kilda Road pedestrian strip, there are normally around 80 handpicked, high quality stalls lining the pavement and lawn between Hamer Hall and Arts Centre Melbourne's Theatres Building.

Long time Southbankers will even remember when upwards of 150 stalls were crammed under the overhanging apron of Hamer Hall, along Southbank Promenade. The entire market moved upstairs in 2010 when Hamer Hall started on its renovation. Regular market goers will recognise some of the faces that are still behind stalls after nearly three decades.

Jane's career has taken an intriguingly zig-zag path since leaving the family farm in Central West NSW. The 1980s were spent in wholesale travel, the 1990s and early 2000s were spent in TV and film production in the UK and northern Europe. She returned to Australia in 2004 with the licence to bring the French outdoor photographic exhibition *Earth and Above* to Melbourne, Sydney and Perth over a 3-year period between 2006 and 2009. She then undertook a variety of events and small businesses, including ownership and management of Williamstown's 'New to You' pre-owned fashion market, before taking on the Arts Centre Melbourne role in October 2019.

Each market takes days of administration to organise, including selection, allocation, invoicing, compliance work and anything that will inevitably crop-up on market day. She describes each week's lead-up as like putting together a big jigsaw, especially at the moment when many stallholders are still a bit jittery about returning. Balancing the style and format of stalls to curate a diverse and interesting market of homemade goods takes patience and diplomacy. There's an inhouse selection committee comprising six Arts Centre Melbourne team members, who assess the quality of materials submitted by aspiring stallholders and who look at photos of their stall presentation.

Despite the meticulous planning, a forecast of strong wind can cause last minute adjustments, but apart from high winds and COVID-19, the much-loved, colourful market has always operated in some form. The market has always been popular with international and interstate visitors looking for a unique gift to take home, however in the current climate there's plenty of local and return shoppers seeking out special gifts.. Stallholder selection is now focused on products that will appeal to a more local group of customers. The successful stallholder is one who produces a great product and who is savvy about how they present and sell it, says Jane.

It's obvious that Jane is a "people" person. She's travelled the world meeting all nationalities and personalities, especially in traditional marketplaces. She nominates the Souk of Damascus as one of the most amazing markets she's experienced, with Pakistan's outdoor markets close behind.

As a mature age student Jane completed a degree in social science. At one time she held a fellowship of London's Royal Geographic Society, which enabled her to dig-deep into her love of historical geography. Otherwise, you're likely to find her writing, doing jigsaws and tapestry. She says the repetition, designs and colours were just the thing to get her through Melbourne's lockdown.

Arts Centre Melbourne's Sunday Market operates on Sundays 10am – 4pm.

Melbourne River Cruises (MRC) grew out of a trip back to Greece for the Gantidis family. Peter Snr had run a very successful food business in Newport since the mid 1960s. The vacation showed Peter Snr how tourism had pulled that country out of poverty, and it also introduced him to the role that ferry services could play in a tourism economy.

There had been ferry services on the Yarra since the mid 1800s, but the ferries had fallen into disrepair after the 1950s. Peter Snr had a challenge to convince authorities to grant him a licence to operate upon what the MMBW then referred to on their maps as "Main Drain No.1".

The first boat *Yarra Princess* was designed and built in Melbourne for Lower Yarra conditions. Patronage built steadily through school groups, charters and BYO catered special events, then big business started to warm to the idea of taking their corporate hospitality events onto the water.

The mid 1980s saw the company build its second boat, and the State Government – now convinced about the viability of the business – encouraged MRC to base themselves in the Banana Alley Vaults and even built them a commercial kitchen and a dedicated wharf. Business continued to grow, but James says it was joining Tourism Victoria's first overseas trade missions to Japan, New Zealand, USA and the UK in the early 1990s that brought them international connections and relationships, which really boosted their marketing activity. The opening of Southgate in 1993 also gave the river a commercial focus and MRC's trade continued to grow, including sightseeing tours that ran late into the night. An Australian Tourism Award and an induction into the Victorian Tourism Hall of Fame followed.

The company's success saw it buy up struggling smaller operations. In 2004 it took over the floating restaurant *Florence on the Yarra* and renamed it *Spirit of Melbourne*. It's still Melbourne's only restaurant on the water and James says that guests are often amazed at the water views of Melbourne skyline and the quality of the food and beverage. Food is prepared in the Banana Alley kitchen, then cooked onboard by a qualified chef. The all-inclusive dinner cruise of \$145 per person (including quality beverages) operates Thursdays to Saturday nights.

For any Southbankers who haven't experienced the *Spirit of Melbourne* dinner cruise, or would like to do it again, use promo code SOM20 and get 20% off when you book online at melbcruises.com.au



Development in Montague “powering on”

WORDS BY *Katie Johnson*
PLANNING

The Montague precinct of Fishermans Bend is already a hub of development, with multiple high-rises being constructed around the suburb. But as Australia’s largest urban renewal precinct, which the state government envisions will have 80,000 new residents by 2050, there is lot more development in the pipeline. Fishermans Bend Development Board chair Meredith Sussex said that Montague would be elevated as a suburb once all of the construction was completed.

“Currently there are 10 developments under construction in Montague valued at around \$650 million,” Ms Sussex said.

“It will encompass about 2000 new dwellings and 8000 square metres of employment space—so there will be jobs in the same area people are living.”

At the end of last year, Minister for Planning Richard Wynne approved a number of new developments which total around 713 new dwellings.

One of those approved projects included a new build-to-rent development at 85 Gladstone St to be undertaken by US property firm Greystar.

Having purchased the three-tower site from CEL Australia for \$65 million in December, Greystar plans to begin both projects this year, delivering hundreds of new rental homes to the Montague Precinct.

Ms Sussex said that the board was delighted in the interest Greystar had shown and that the build-to-rent development would be a “high-quality product”.

“It’s exciting because people are thinking about living differently in the urban environment even when they’re not necessarily able to buy in the urban environment,” Ms Sussex said.

She also said there had been discussions with a number of other developers who were looking at Montague for new commercial and residential permits.



▲ Developments along Normany Rd are just some of many projects under construction in Montague.

However, with the uncertain COVID environment there had been less of a rush on building residential dwellings.

“Although we have an uncertain market due to COVID, development is still going strongly,” Ms Sussex said.

“We also have a new supermarket being built on Plumber St which the locals are really pleased about because it knits the community together.”

Ms Sussex said that overall, development in Montague was strong and more people were seeing potential in the precinct.

“Given 2020 was an extremely difficult year for everyone, Fishermans Bend is still powering on and people are really seeing the opportunity with how close it is to the city,” Ms Sussex said ●



Land swap for promenade park

WORDS BY *David Schout*
PLANNING

The City of Melbourne has swapped a small parcel of land with a developer in exchange for a new public park on Southbank Promenade larger than two basketball courts.

In what was hailed a “terrific transaction”, a small corner of land at Ezzo House on Riverside Quay was granted to developers, who plan to turn the former home of ExxonMobil into a 30-storey commercial building.

In return, the council have been granted 1000 sqm of space it planned to transform into publicly-accessible green space on the waterfront.

Planning chair and deputy mayor Nicholas Reece said the 166 sqm council-owned corner of land “serves no purpose” and the transaction was a win for Southbankers.

“I can understand why at first blush some people, particularly residents, in Southbank might wonder why the city was going about transferring a 166 sqm portion of Riverside Quay to a private interest,” Cr Reece said at a February 23 council meeting.

“But of course, there is a very, very good policy reason for that.”

“Here we are in a city of over five million people — you don’t get more prime real estate, than absolute riverfront, right in the heart of the city, down on Southbank. Under this

agreement, we’re going to see that 1000 sqm become new publicly-accessible open space which all Melburnians can enjoy. And I think that’s going to be a truly wonderful thing for the city. I’m really, really looking forward to the plans coming forward.”

The lack of open space in Southbank has long been an issue.

The suburb is the most densely-populated in Australia, and the dearth of nearby public areas has been the source of angst among local residents.

Greens Cr Rohan Leppert said the move was much-needed.

“From an environment portfolio perspective, the creation of new public open space in the densest part of the City of Melbourne is very welcome and exactly what our policy talks about.”

However, nearby residents have already expressed concern about the planned development, which would double the current 15-storey building at 12 Riverside Quay.

Cr Leppert referenced the “hotly contested” debate at an October 13 Future Melbourne Committee (FMC) meeting last year where some Eureka Tower residents complained about the daylight impact of the development, which would be set back by around 20 metres.

The final decision on the development will go before Minister for Planning Richard Wynne ●

Owners’ corporation changes shut down

A bid to make it easier for owners’ corporations (OCs) to take legal action against corrupt developers has been shut down in the Victorian Upper House.

WORDS BY *David Schout*
STRATA

Amendments put forward by the Victorian Greens, which also sought to impose a three-year cap on all contracts entered into by a building developer, received no support from both major parties.

Introduced by MLC for Northern Metropolitan and the leader of the Victorian Greens Dr Samantha Ratnam, The Greens argued that the 1.5 million Victorians who live in or own property within an OC setting were not adequately supported by current legislation.

They sought to reduce the threshold to trigger legal proceedings against a developer within an OC from 75 to 50 per cent.

“I’ve spoken to many residents in the big apartment towers and they don’t feel supported by the current OC laws. This bill was the perfect opportunity to fix that,” Greens Member for Melbourne Ellen Sandell said.

“The Greens’ amendments would have tightened the rules on what potentially corrupt developers could do while supporting residents to take legal action against them. We will continue to advocate for those residents until the government provides them with adequate protection and support.”

The amendments looked to lower the barrier for OCs seeking legal action particularly around building

defects and cladding rectification, which has become a significant issue in recent years.

They also sought to protect building occupants against long-term contracts entered into by the developer at the completion of a building’s construction, in which subsequent owners are then forced to foot the bill.

Reports suggested some of these were uncompetitive “multi-decade contracts”.

Strata Title Lawyers CEO Tom Bacon said he was disappointed by the response of the major parties.

“I’d say that owners’ corporations all throughout Victoria will be dismayed by how out of touch both the Labor and Liberal parties are with their constituents,” Mr Bacon said.

“Both major parties defeated the Greens’ sensible amendments to limit all management and facilities contracts to three years, and to permit owners’ corporations to sue developers and builders for defects and flammable cladding by ordinary resolution. We see now where the favouritism lies. It’s not with owners and investors and everyday folk. It’s with the developers and construction companies, and with election donors.”

Mr Bacon said the result did not bode well for OCs going forward.

“We can no longer expect any consumer protection from the government for the apartment sector. Frankly, apartments do not represent a good investment in Melbourne

We see now where the favouritism lies. It’s not with owners and investors and everyday folk. It’s with the developers and construction companies, and with election donors.



any more.”

The Labor government defended the bill — titled *Owners’ Corporations and Other Acts Amendment Bill 2019* — after rejecting the amendments.

“This bill delivers a package of 36 substantive reforms that streamline and modernise the regulation of the Victorian owners’ corporations while enhancing protections for lot owners,” Minister for Local Government and Suburban Development Shaun Leane said in the Legislative Council on February 16.

“This is done by improving the quality of owners’ corporation managers, expanding and improving developers’ duties to the owners’ corporations they create, improving governance and financial administration and internal relations of owners’ corporations, and improving the regulations of owners’ corporations in retirement villages.”

Minister Leane argued that the potential impacts of limiting service contracts to a maximum of three years could be “severe”.

“The consequence could be severe, particularly for utility providers, who require certainty beyond three years for the viability of their businesses. It could result in owners’ corporations struggling to find businesses willing to provide the most basic services — that is, water and electricity — given that the contracts would be for a maximum of three years,” Mr Leane said.

Barbara Francis of resident lobby group We Live Here criticised both the government and opposition in failing to properly address issues raised by The Greens.

“They’re [The Greens] the only ones that have any real handle on what’s going on,” she said.

The Greens also sought to lower the barrier for owners to install solar panels on a building’s roof from a “special resolution” (75 per cent OC vote) to an “ordinary resolution” (50 per cent), but this too received little support.

While all three amendments were

all rejected by the government, Samantha Ratnam used the opportunity to press the government on the delayed review of the *Short-stay (Accommodation) Act 2018*, which was earmarked for 2020.

“The short-stay industry has largely been left to set its own rules, with the government only intervening to implement a complaints process and avoiding implementing any real regulation of the industry,” Dr Ratnam said.

“Now we are facing the need to reinvent our cities in light of the havoc wreaked by COVID, this is a perfect time to be looking at how we make our cities more liveable.”

Minister Leane said the review would “start this year”.

The passing of the Amendment Bill was celebrated by the short-stay accommodation industry, with The Hotel Conversation reporting that accommodation industry agency ResortBrokers had led a campaign to amend the proposal which would have limited service contracts to three years.

“The company [ResortBrokers] engaged with the key ministers including the Victorian Treasurer, Minister for Tourism and the Minister for Consumer Affairs and successfully achieved an amendment to the Bill which effectively protected contracts that facilitated hotel and serviced apartment operations from the restrictions of Section 67B,” the report stated ●

VIRID vertical gardens brings nature indoors

WORDS BY *Katie Johnson*
ENVIRONMENT

As apartments get taller and living spaces become more compact, city-dwellers are looking for ways to bring a slice of the outdoors into their homes.

For those without a backyard this can take the form of the odd pot plant around the house, but for the past four years VIRID Vertical Gardens on the corner of City Rd and Ferrars St in the Montague Precinct has been offering a more creative solution.

Co-owner and microbiologist Hugh Frith (pictured) said that vertical gardening was a great way to get the benefits of being in nature while at home or work.

“Humans have a connection to plants that goes back centuries, you can feel it when you look at something green and it’s instantly satisfying to the eyes,” Mr Frith said.

“Particularly when you’ve been locked up at home like we have been, people are much more relaxed and enjoy the space more when you look up and there’s green all around.”

Since 2018 the South Melbourne business has been providing unique wall gardens to apartments and commercial spaces all around Melbourne.

VIRID offers plant walls which include succulents, moss, and even “food walls” with vegetables and herbs.

After spending 30 years in horticulture, Mr Frith said he prided himself on the quality of the plants VIRID sold.

“All of the plants are grown by us in offsite greenhouses using natural, organic methods with no harmful chemicals,” Mr Frith said.

“The plants are also able to absorb the benzene, ammonia, formaldehyde and other pollutants emitted by apartment furnishings that are toxic to humans.”

Some of the benefits of having vertical plant walls include decreased stress, more oxygen in



the space, better air quality, soundproofing and heat control.

Co-owner John Papalia, who has been building and designing vertical gardens for 15 years, said the heat control was one of the biggest benefits for small apartments.

“As properties become smaller and smaller, it’s a great space saver, looks fantastic, and uses 95 percent less water than a normal garden,” Mr Papalia said.

“It also helps with temperature control in the properties that get hot easily as they absorb reflective heat.”

Having plants in the workplace or home also has a host of emotional benefits.

VIRID landscape architect Rachael Soccio said that vertical gardens had a unique ability to elevate a space and bring joy to those working in it.

“I think it becomes a much better environment for people to live and work in, they’re more relaxed, they’re not as stressed, and green is such a beautiful colour to be around,” Ms Soccio said.

“Plants takes hard spaces and soften them.” ●

For more information:
viridverticalgardens.com.au



Katie Johnson
JOURNALIST
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▲ From left: Hiliary Baxter, Siena Verity, Nick Murray and Hannah Murphy on the lawns of the VCA.

The music therapists are back

WORDS BY *Rhonda Dredge*
EDUCATION

Orientation Week was cancelled this year because of lingering fears that the COVID virus was once again taking off.

There was no free food, live music nor smoke ceremonies at the Victorian College of the Arts (VCA) to welcome new students.

“I heard that someone got something for free,” Hannah Murphy, a music therapy student, said.

There were events on line but these don’t pack the punch of a gathering of like minds on the lawns of the country’s premier arts faculty.

But Hannah doesn’t care. She is back with her mates, sitting a regulation distance apart, in full view of academics.

The University of Melbourne has opened and they’re due for a lecture so there isn’t much time for lingering.

The four second-year students are studying for a Masters of Music Therapy. They spent almost the entire first year of the course at home.

“We were at uni for two weeks,” Hannah said. “It was hard collaborating on Zoom.”

In music therapy techniques such improvisation and songwriting are used to achieve non-musical aims, she said. “It’s not easy working with a client on-line.”

At least the group of Masters students invented a new word while at home – “comfortability”.

“I’m sitting in it,” Hiliary Baxter said. “You can just be comfy at home. You don’t have to go to uni. You can still be in your PJs.”

Now they are back and ready to begin improvising again ●

Freshwater Place finds home for local artwork

WORDS BY *Micaela Togher*
ARTS & CULTURE

New artwork is being displayed on empty shopfronts at Southbank’s Freshwater Place under a City of Melbourne initiative to display works by local artists on temporarily vacant spaces.

Kala Spencer’s piece *Akurrknge* can now be seen at the former home of TGI Friday’s which closed its’ doors last year.

In January 2021, the City of Melbourne learned that 13 per cent of street facing shopfronts in the municipality were vacant, with a further 13 per cent closed due to COVID-19.

Vinyl artworks by Victorian artists currently feature on 23 vacant shopfronts with an additional 22 to be installed over the next two months.

Lord Mayor Sally Capp believes the empty storefronts to be a “visible reminder” of the disproportionate

“

We want visitors to be greeted with a visual feast instead of empty shops.

”

impact of COVID-19 on the economy of Melbourne.

“We are investing in these creative programs as a short-term measure to ensure our streets remain appealing and continue to encourage people in our inner-city areas,” the Lord Mayor said.

It is hoped the initiative will encourage businesses to re-invest and revive the City of Melbourne’s economy.

Artworks are being installed across a variety of locations including Bourke St, Elizabeth St and Niagara Lane in the CBD.

The City of Melbourne is also working with precinct associations, businesses and commercial real estate industries to create opportunities for start-ups, local creative and not-for-profits to make use of the temporarily vacant spaces.

Cr Roshena Campbell said the council was doing everything it could to support those businesses struggling due to the global pandemic.

“We want to convert our vacant shopfronts into open air art galleries. We want visitors to be greeted with a visual feast instead of empty shops,” Cr Campbell said.

The investment is part of the joined \$100 million Melbourne City Recovery Fund launched in partnership with the Victorian Government ●



Arts Precinct

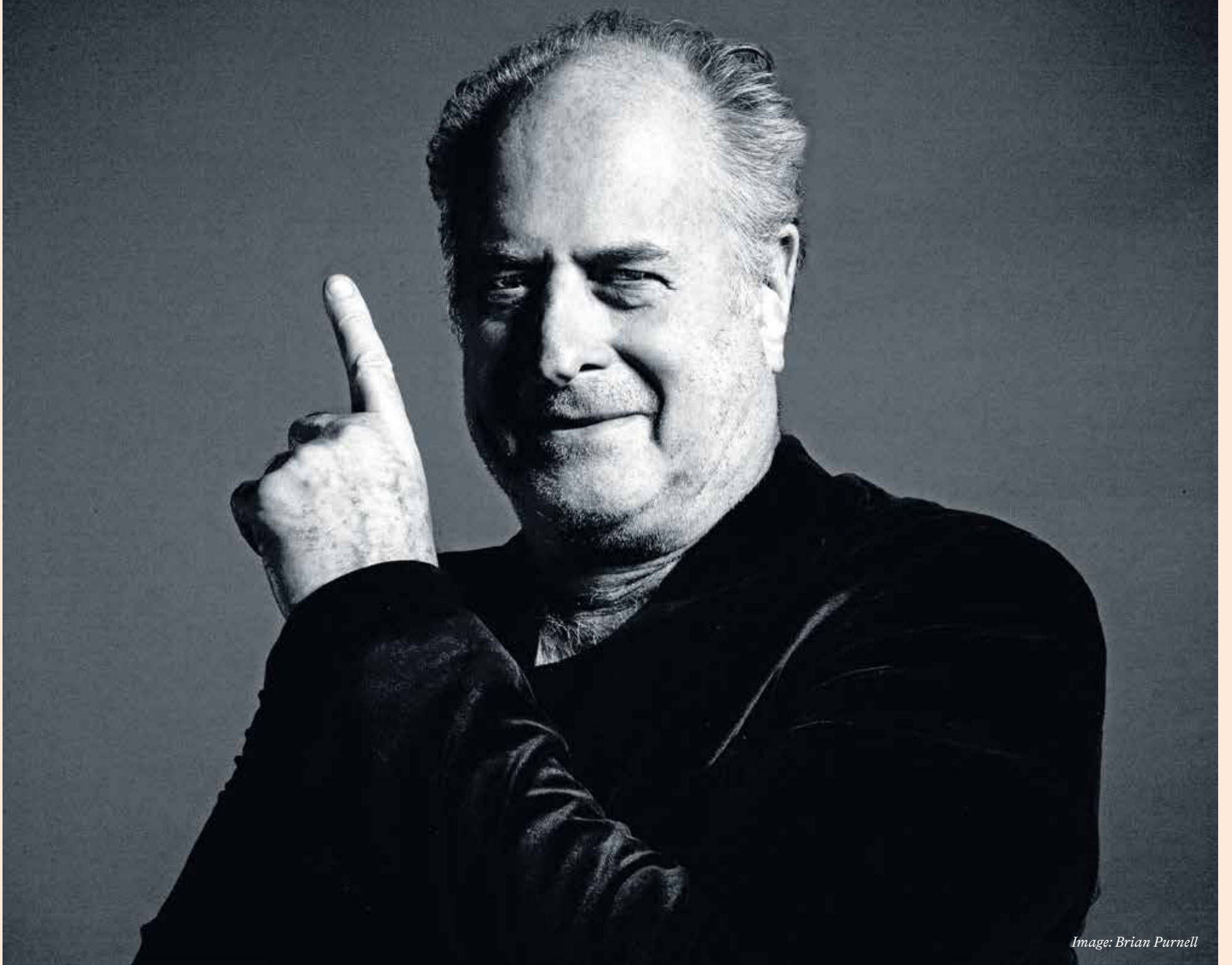


Image: Brian Purnell

Michael Gudinski

The Bart Cummings of the Melbourne music scene, Michael Gudinski of House Mushroom passed on in the first days of March.

People were sad and shocked to hear of this. He was a titan in the music industry. Mercurial, temperamental, passionate, a bloke Bruce Springsteen called a “music man”. He was a promoter who was determined to support the artists. Through lockdown 2.0 and beyond he was giving everything he had to make things happen in the music industry.

Gudinski had the ambition to make Skyhooks, the band that he managed, to be the biggest act in the land. Skyhooks were blessed with a charismatic front man in Graham “Shirley” Strachan, the genius of Greg Macainsh’s catchy and topical songwriting and the theatrical flair on guitar of Red Symons. They were trailblazers, singing about Balwyn, local night-time scenarios and living in the ‘70s. *Ego Is Not A Dirty Word* encapsulates the band’s upfront confident posture. This attitude is exemplified by the riff rama of *You Just Like Me ‘Cause I’m Good In Bed*. *All My Friends Are Getting Married* is an ironic dig at marital contentment. *Horror Movie* is more than ever appropriate. Skyhooks had great songs. Gudinski backed Skyhooks and Greg Macainsh’s songwriting to the hilt. There’s a bit of Skyhooks in Australian Crawl.

The larger-than-life Gudinski was also part of a syndicate that won the Melbourne Cup three times as owners. What could be more thrilling than winning a Melbourne Cup as an owner?

Winning it two more times. He recognised that horse-racing is one of the most spectacular sports entertainment events in the world. A St Kilda supporter, in 2010 it was so close, yet for the bounce of the ball, so far. Countless musical acts like Jimmy Barnes, The Church, Kate Ceberano, Paul Kelly, Sports, Stephen Cummings, I’m Talking, Machinations ... all benefitted from his drive, determination, insight and wisdom.

Michael Gudinski organised the first legendary Sunbury Rock Festival, back in the day when Peter Brock in a Torana XU1 raced against Allan Moffat and Leo Geoghan in their Ford Falcon GTHO Phase III. And later he would organise many massive benefit concerts on a grand scale. Gudinski will be missed.

The City of Melbourne did a great job in extending Melbourne Music Week, creating many more gigs and extending the festival to encompass all of summer. Very innovative and creative programming resulted in there being a real buzz around town in the music scene. These extra gigs included a clutch of shows on a Monday night at the Sydney Myer Music Bowl where pubs like The Old Bar and The Tote curated a couple of bands. Cash Savage and The Last Drinks and The Meanies were two highlights.

Innovation was shown by the team from Mushroom when, to signpost the beginning of musical gigs returning to Melbourne, Daryl Braithwaite

played a series of pop-up shows around De-graves St and Bourke St.

An interesting fact is that a day or two before-hand, Daryl Braithwaite and his two bandmates and the technical group drove around the alleys of Southbank and Port Melbourne, getting the groove going in setting up quick for improv shows on the street. Kind of like a pre-season Formula 1 test. Working things out in the alleys of Southbank, with no audience and then descending upon the city and performing to the crowd. Daryl Braithwaite’s shows were part of Melbourne Music Week Extended. When writing about the passing of Michael Gudinski, he wrote that he recalled seeing Michael Gudinski beaming like a Cheshire cat as he sang outside Pellegrini’s Bistro on Bourke St. The music man was digging the music returning to the city in venues.

The Australian Music Vault also paid tribute to the music man, who was a founding patron of the Vault.

Gudinski’s tireless lobbying and support of the Australian Music Vault led to its funding by the Victorian Government and eventual launch in 2017; a permanent space that charts the story of contemporary Australian music from the 1950s until today showcasing the iconic people, events and places that define Australian music.

This project was one of Gudinski’s lifelong

dreams and his passion for it was a constant source of inspiration for the Australian Music Vault and Arts Centre Melbourne teams. As well as being the visionary behind the Vault, Gudinski was also founding patron alongside other icons of the Australian music industry including Tina Arena AM, Kylie Minogue AO, Archie Roach AM and Ian “Molly” Meldrum AM.

“I am deeply saddened by the passing of industry giant and champion of Australian music, Michael Gudinski,” Arts Centre Melbourne CEO Claire Spencer AM said. “He was a friend to many of us at Arts Centre Melbourne but it was his advocacy and commitment to realising the Australian Music Vault where we are truly indebted to him. Just as he shaped the Australian music industry in this country, Michael’s legacy will live on at the home of Australian music stories, the Australian Music Vault. My sympathy to Michael’s wife Sue, his two children Matthew and Kate, and to all those who loved him. I will miss him terribly.” ●



Chris Mineral

MINERALSANDS@HOTMAIL.COM

Buxton to see the light once again

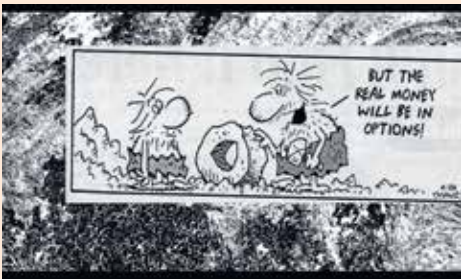
WORDS BY *Jack Alfonso*

Buxton Contemporary will reopen its doors on March 12 for its new exhibition *This brittle light: Light Source commissions 2020-2021*. Displaying six works created by leading artists in the past year and featuring perform-in-your-home mail art, AI-powered digital media, video and installation, the exhibition will run all the way through to June 20 this year and will be free to the public. The works are a result of Buxton Contemporary's commissioning of leading Australian artists during the past 12 months to develop a series of new projects under the *Light Source* title. Due to the epoch that these projects were developed in, themes such as human fragility, resilience and imagination mesh with each of the participants' individual artistic pursuits. All of these projects have already been presented either digitally, online or remotely, but have been given a new lease of life as a series



presented together within the walls of Buxton Contemporary. The projects themselves engage and explore both local and global concepts, including hu-

mour, ritual and the role of art in society. The series further deconstructs corporate duplicity, neoliberalism, the climate crisis, humanity's fraught relationship with nature, the opportunity



to learn from diverse cultures, systems of knowledge, the continuing impacts of colonialism, and the complex and evolving dynamics of the global political economy. The featured Australian artists include Taloi Havini, Laresa Kosloff, Nicholas Mangan, Stuart Ringholt, Grant Stevens and Hossein/Nassiem Valamanesh, and will be curated by Melissa Keys. A seventh commission planned by Destiny Deacon and her long-time collaborator Virginia Fraser, however could not be fulfilled due to Fraser's passing. In its place, an existing collaboration between Deacon and Fraser will be included as an acknowledgement of their involvement with the series, and to honour their previous collaborations and timeless contributions to art, culture and social change. Buxton Contemporary will be open to the public from Wednesday through to Sunday, 11am to 5pm from March 12 ●



French impressionism to feature at NGV

The National Gallery of Victoria (NGV) has announced its 2021 Winter Masterpieces season featuring the French Impressionism exhibition from The Museum of Fine Arts in Boston.

WORDS BY *Micaela Togher*

Opening on June 4, the exhibition will feature an internationally exclusive presentation of more than 100 impressionist works – including 79 that have never been exhibited before in Australia. Artworks by Claude Monet, Pierre-Auguste Renoir, Edgar Degas and Camille Pissaro are among those featured in the exhibition. Minister for Creative Industries Danny Pearson hopes the collection will delight audiences and offer a much-needed boost to local tourism in Melbourne's centre. "This is an opportunity for Victorians to enjoy an incredible collection

of international artworks right here at home," Mr Pearson said. French Impressionism is this year's offering for the annual Melbourne Winter Masterpieces series, which has been running since 2004. The series is designed to bring major international art exhibitions exclusively to Melbourne each year. *She-Oak and Sunlight: Australian Impressionism* will be hosted by NGV Australia at Federation Square and features more than 250 works from collections around Australia. Impressionism was born in 1870's and '80s France and revolutionised the art world – featuring distinctive brush strokes, an emphasis on the depiction

of light and movement and wielding the power of vibrant colours. NGV Director Tony Ellwood said audiences would have the opportunity to study the masterworks up close for the first time on Australian shores. "Paintings by the Impressionists are beloved world-wide for the artistic innovation and visual curiosity they represent, as well as their breathtaking use of colour," Mr Ellwood said. *French Impressionism* will run from June 4 to October 2 at NGV International in Southbank. *She-Oak and Sunlight: Australian Impressionism* will run from April 2 to August 22 at NGV Australia, Federation Square ●



Major new exhibition at ACCA

A major new exhibition of work by Yhonnie Scarce will open at the Australian Centre for Contemporary Art (ACCA) this month.

WORDS BY *Micaela Togher*

Entitled *Missile Park*, the exhibition will include a series of new commissions as well as a comprehensive survey of Scarce's work from the past 15 years. Born in Woomera, South Australia, she is known for creating works of cultural and political significance. Often referencing the ongoing effects of colonisation on the Aboriginal community, her research has explored the impact of the relocation of Aboriginal people from their homelands and forcible removal of children from their families. Belonging to the Kikatha and Nukunu peoples, Scarce is known as a master glass-blower which she puts to the service of spectral installations, drawing on the experience and strength of her

ancestors and sharing their significant stories from the past. Scarce's work has been exhibited worldwide with recent projects being shown at the Pavilion of Contemporary Art in Milan, the Museum of London in Ontario, Canada and the National Gallery of Modern Art in New Delhi, India. *Yhonnie Scarce: Missile Park* is being developed by ACCA and directors Max Delany and Liz Nowell in collaboration with guest curator Lisa Waup. The exhibition will run from March 27 to June 14 at ACCA, and the Institute of Modern Art in Brisbane from July 17 to September 19. Acca.melbourne ●



CRITIC

New direction for the Malthouse

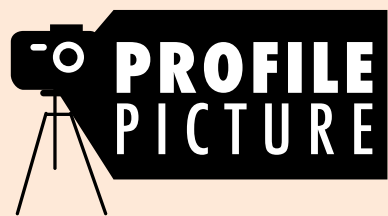
WORDS BY *Rhonda Dredge*

Three writers are collaborating on the next production at the Malthouse, an immersive show called *Because the Night*, and there is a text but you could say that it has been upstaged by the visuals. Actors will roam between 32 rooms in one large chamber but the Malthouse is not revealing any more about the sets until the play opens on March 23. Mark Pritchard, new works manager, said that the production was more about the design than the script. The theatre's new approach is not just a one-off COVID response to working in small enclosed theatres. Work will still be shown inside and outside the building but the traditional theatres won't be used this year, the Malthouse has revealed to *Southbank News*. "We won't be doing the standard things this year," Mark said. As part of its new more flexible push, the company has done a national call-out for an Innovation Award that closes on March 28 and has been posted on its website. The call-out asks for a proposed new work and a sample of a previous work but it does not require a complete script. "People shouldn't write scripts and send them to us," Mark said. "We want to be part of the journey." *Southbank News* was unable to find the announcement on the website. However, the Malthouse has made a commitment to work with the winner to stage its play. "There's a myth that plays that win awards don't get performed," Mark said. "This is an



▲ The foyer of the Malthouse offers many creative opportunities for playwrights.

award but not a finished play." He said that other companies awarded prizes for completed plays but then didn't put them on. "We want to talk about proposals," he said. The award heralds a more freeform approach to both the facilities and the written word. Even the foyer of the Malthouse could be used as a performance space, Mark said. "We're not blowing up the theatre. We're shifting in a new direction." ●



GARY TATE

The accidental artist

It was pure chance that led recent Photography Studies College (PSC) graduate Gary Tate to study photography.

WORDS BY Micaela Togher

"One of my best friends is a professional photographer, I saw some of his work and thought I'd like to do something creative," Gary told *Southbank News*.

2020 marked the beginning of Gary's final year at PSC, coming with a set of challenges he never saw coming.

"We were at PSC for one week before COVID hit. If it weren't for the lecturers, I probably would have deferred," he said.

Gary, who credits photographers Arthur Felling and Tim Hetherington as his major influences, believes the lockdown period that followed forced him to explore different styles of photography.

"A lot of us had to do things we wouldn't have thought we'd have to and ended up falling in love with a form of photography we never would have done. I ended up loving landscape photography," Gary said.

Despite his newfound passion for different styles, Gary is certain where he sees himself in the years to come.

"Most of the time I contact bands or performers but now I'm starting to get some of them contacting me. I'd love to be able to say, I'm sorry you'll just have to wait until I can get around to see you," Gary said.

Until then, Gary is learning through his experiences with the artists he photographs.

"It's a really strange thing – a lot of times they [artists] ask if I was happy with what they did. They have as many fears as photographers do. We all have a lot of self-doubt, probably because we are all putting ourselves out there," he said.

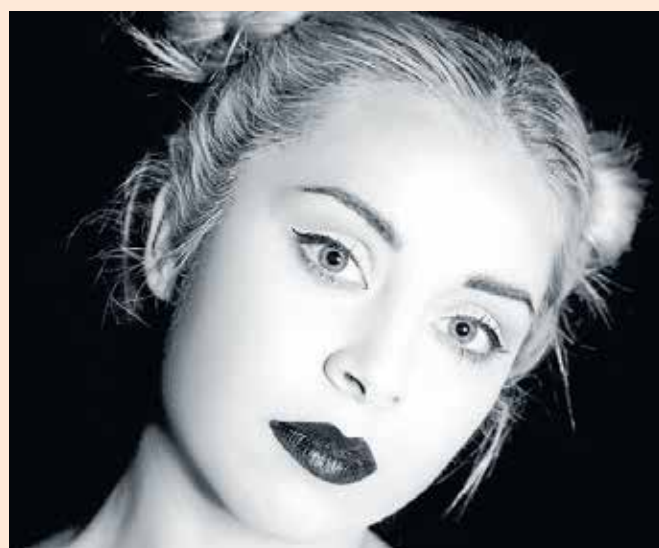
He also has a message for any budding pho-

tographers thinking about exploring their creative side.

"Anything that's crazy that comes into your head, you turn it into a photograph and people think you're sane. It's very cathartic, everybody should try it. You never know what could happen," Gary said ●

For more information:

Instagram @taken_by_tate_photos



© Oliver Hodgkins PSC Graduate



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San Telmo is serving up Argentinian feasts in Meyers Place

OUTDOOR DINING EXTENDED

Dine with friends in an iconic Melbourne laneway or pop-up parklet to support local businesses as they continue to adapt to COVID-19 restrictions.

The City of Melbourne has extended its outdoor dining program until mid-2021 to provide further support to hospitality businesses. The extension will allow outdoor dining spaces to remain until Wednesday 30 June.

Nearly 1500 permits for outdoor dining have been issued across the municipality, and more than 200 outdoor dining ‘parklets’ have been installed, to help venues reopen and continue operating.

The City of Melbourne will invest \$2.2 million to extend the program as part of the joint \$100 million Melbourne City Recovery Fund in partnership with the Victorian Government.

This brings the total investment in outdoor dining infrastructure, maintenance and repurposing of laneways to \$7.7 million.

What businesses are saying

The City of Melbourne surveyed 150 of the more than 180 businesses with outdoor dining ‘parklets’ in January to gather feedback and inform decision making on the future of extended outdoor dining.

The survey indicated that outdoor dining ‘parklets’ had helped 81 per cent of businesses to reopen, 76 per cent to maintain seating capacity and 72 per cent were either satisfied or very satisfied with their ‘parklets’.

A comprehensive evaluation of the program will be considered by councillors later this year, including an assessment of the economic benefits and recommendations for the program beyond June 2021.

WHAT IS A PARKLET?

The outdoor dining program has seen cafes and restaurants expand onto footpaths, laneways and on-street parking spaces. When parking spaces are used in this way, the new dining areas created are known as parklets. Keep an eye out for them in your neighbourhood and stop by for a meal to support local business.

A word from the Lord Mayor

Lord Mayor Sally Capp said that lockdowns have had a major impact on our business community – particularly the hospitality industry – so Council is doing everything it can to provide certainty for businesses.

‘The outdoor dining program has helped bring back the buzz by attracting patrons from across Melbourne and the regions,’ the Lord Mayor said.

‘The extended outdoor dining program has helped to provide hospitality businesses with extra capacity to seat more customers and get more revenue.

‘Businesses can have confidence that outdoor dining will continue in the City of Melbourne until winter. We’re looking into additional features to support outdoor dining during the cooler months such as weather protection.

‘We want to reduce the administrative burden on businesses so will be directly contacting each business and have a simplified process to extend permits for those who wish to continue their outdoor dining space.

‘All City of Melbourne councillors are committed to ensuring our organisation is focused on assisting local businesses that have been battling some of the toughest trading conditions in living memory.’

For more information, visit melbourne.vic.gov.au/outdoordining



SUPPORT FOR BUSINESSES

Local businesses, services and organisations are the lifeblood of Melbourne, and our support for them is multi-layered and ongoing.

Visit melbourne.vic.gov.au/business to subscribe to the Business in Melbourne newsletter and explore the help on offer, including grants, rate relief, marketing support and free outdoor dining permits.

For one-on-one advice, call our dedicated Business Concierge Service on 9658 9658 (press 1 for business), or enquire online at the above website.

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Your City of Melbourne community update

SEEKING CREATIVES FOR ARTPLAY NEW IDEAS LAB

Do you have an idea for a brand new creative project that could be co-designed with children or families? Submit your proposal to the ArtPlay New Ideas Lab by Friday 26 March.

If you need inspiration, look no further than the current New Ideas Lab project Imagination Gamespaces, which has seen local kids creating interactive 'escape rooms' with fantastical storylines and riddles.

ABOUT ARTPLAY

ArtPlay brings together children, families and artists to explore and create innovative arts experiences at its premises at Birrarung Marr and online.

Led by Brendan Ternus, Alia Syed Rose and Shaun Wykes from Radical Attic, Imagination Gamespaces included immersive game design, creative writing, visual art and performance-based activities.

'One of the things I've learned from this project is how powerful kids and their ideas can be,' Brendan said.

'We gave kids the agency and space to create whole new worlds, and it was clear what is on their minds: the environment, wealth, equality, conflict, peace, and heroes trying to make an impact in their communities.'

'Reflecting these values and concerns is so important, particularly in this topsy-turvy world we are living in. Art can help communities reinvent themselves. It is also a real antidote to disconnection.'

Brendan moved to Melbourne three and a half years ago after working on education projects in China, France, Japan and the United States. Melbourne's thriving youth arts scene has enriched his creative career.

'ArtPlay is one of the most supportive environments I've encountered all over the world,' Brendan said.

'The New Ideas Lab supports your process from the inception of an idea all the way through to execution and, if you aren't an established artist, the team can connect you with a mentor to help grow your ideas.'

'All the New Ideas Lab projects are very different but everyone is on the same page about the value of collaboration with kids and bringing their voices to the fore.'

'ArtPlay also helps New Ideas Lab projects find new audiences after the program is over through a showcase that connects you with industry leaders. So it's the gift that keeps on giving.'

The final showings of Imagination Gamespaces will take place in the April school holidays.

How to apply

The 2021 ArtPlay New Ideas Lab will support four proposals for brand new work to be co-created with children or families, with each project valued from \$10,000 to \$20,000.

People working in the creative sector and artists from all disciplines and cultural backgrounds are encouraged to apply. Applicants do not necessarily need experience in working with children, but a passion and enthusiasm for involving children in the creative process is essential.

Expressions of interest are now open and close at 5pm on Friday 26 March.

For more information, visit melbourne.vic.gov.au/artplay

Information and events in this publication are current at the time of printing. Subsequent changes may occur.

'YEARS OF OUR LIVES' PROJECT

Radical Attic also worked with older Melburnians during 2020's reimagined Seniors Festival to create a community timeline celebrating their unique life experiences and diversity. Explore the participants' reflections, treasured memories and adventures at melbourne.vic.gov.au/olderpeople



Local kids designed their own 'escape rooms' through Imagination Gamespaces

KEEP IN TOUCH

To stay connected with all the latest news from the City of Melbourne, follow us on social media and subscribe to *Melbourne* magazine online at magazine.melbourne.vic.gov.au

You can also join conversations to influence plans for your neighbourhood through Participate Melbourne at participate.melbourne.vic.gov.au

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SOUTHBANKER

Young achieving Southbankers

Two young Southbankers - Anita Miller and Tina Kuek – were recently nominated for the 2021 7News Young Achiever Awards Victoria, which recognise and encourage young people’s positive achievements in the state.

WORDS BY Ellen Blake

A 24-year-old software engineer who was announced as a semi-finalist in the awards, Anita Miller said she was “pretty excited” about her nomination.

“I wasn’t expecting it, but my friend put me up for it without telling me,” she said.

Ms Miller was nominated for the oadigital Online Achievement Award after creating the online platform EverEvolving.Me which encourages women to join the tech industry as well as providing female-centric financial advice.

The oadigital Online Achievement Award recognises creativity and innovation in the online landscape.

Ms Miller said she developed the platform to address the gender imbalance in the tech and financial industries after noticing a severe lack of information and online resources that were targeted towards women.

“The industry is so male-dominated and I felt like I was being ignored. They were not even listening to me or keeping me in the conversation,” Ms Miller said.

“So, I said, ‘I’m just going to do my own thing’, and it just worked.”

Ms Miller said if she went on to win the award, she would use it to encourage other people from similar backgrounds to take meaningful action in their local community.



“I’m a brown, immigrant, 20-something-girl who did it. Maybe someone can look at it and say I can do it too,” Ms Miller said.



“They were quite over qualified and quite ambitious. But they were stuck doing survival jobs,” Ms Kuek said.

“I know there are systemic issues to do with that. But I started thinking of practical ways to address this and I saw that there was space to actually help.”

Fellow nominee 26-year-old Tina Kuek received a nomination for the Bridge Create Change award after starting Kazi Victoria, providing employment workshops for people from a migrant and refugee background.

The Bridge Create Change Award recognises young people driving activities, programs and initiatives that promote or create change.

Ms Kuek, who ran on Lord Mayor Sally Capp’s City of Melbourne council election ticket last year, said she was motivated to start Kazi Victoria after conversations with members of the African-Australia community who struggled to find employment that matched their qualification levels.

“Through Kazi Victoria, Ms Kuek teamed up with recruitment agencies and specialists in human resources to design free workshops which assist in resume writing and preparing for interviews.”

Ms Kuek said a few quick success stories in the program’s initial stages motivated her to continue with her work.

“For as long as I’m able to keep doing that and keep helping people, I’m happy to do it”.

The winners of the 7News Young Achiever Awards Victoria will be announced later this month ●

METRO TUNNEL

Emma Coulter’s colourful creation a symbol of city’s resilience

Next time you’re in the CBD, keep an eye out for the latest colourful artwork adorning the Metro Tunnel Project’s City Square work site.

Emma Coulter’s kaleidoscopic creation, *spatial deconstruction #23 (resilience)*, has transformed the top half of the 90-metre-long acoustic shed on Swanston St.

Fitzroy-based street-art studio Juddy Roller worked with Emma to engage artists to paint the work on the shed during the past five weeks.

The project is helping the creative industry to recover from the challenges of coronavirus (COVID-19) by using art to brighten hoardings at its worksites, plus creative wayfinding to support nearby businesses.

Emma’s previous installations include commissions in the US, Germany and Sydney, but this is her first large-scale public artwork in Melbourne, where she is based.

These artworks help to maintain Melbourne’s vibrancy while work continues on this transformational project, which will bring more trains to and from suburbs across Melbourne.

Minister for Creative Industries Danny Pearson said, “This artwork shows it’s possible to continue work on a huge, city-shaping project such as the Metro Tunnel in the middle of the CBD while also helping to support our creative industries and businesses in the city centre.”



Spotlight on trailblazing women of the Metro Tunnel Project

With International Women’s Day being celebrated this month, the Metro Tunnel Project is using the whole of March to highlight the female staff whose skills and experience are so valuable.

These include Nadia Punselie, who is part of the safety team. She inspects sites daily to ensure the project is adhering to strict safety standards, and making the welfare of workers of paramount importance, because – as she puts it – “prevention is better than cure”.

Nadia is truly a citizen of the world, having grown up in the Netherlands, Brunei, Oman,



Venezuela and Perth. She holds Dutch and Australian citizenship and can speak English and Dutch fluently, and – as she modestly puts – can understand Japanese and Spanish.

To discover more about Nadia and other women of Rail Projects Victoria – which is delivering the Metro Tunnel Project for the Victorian Government – follow the Rail Projects Victoria page on LinkedIn or like the Metro Tunnel Project on Facebook ●

For more information:
metrotunnel.vic.gov.au



How do we solve a problem like rough sleeping?

“Welcome to the seventh of our 12-part series which will attempt to explore the role that housing can and should play within Australian society and why it is important to our economy that we house all Australians, rich or poor.”

This series intends to draw on a range of perspectives centred around housing and homelessness. We will hear a range of views from business, the not-for-profit sector and hopefully government, as to why they believe housing is an important social and economic building block for Australia's future prosperity.

This month we have asked Jenny Begent, Head of Social Mission for The Salvation Army, to share her thoughts on why the objective around housing all Australians, and in particular investing in social housing in the era of working from home, should be considered an economic imperative...

I am fortunate enough to live in what is considered by the Economic Intelligence Unit (EIU), as the most liveable city in the world. Due, in no small part I suspect, to its great coffee and café culture, but also to its healthcare, education, stability, culture, environment and infrastructure. On the Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU), it scored an incredible 97.5 out of 100. As a resident myself, I can attest to it being a fine place to live.

Yet, from my vantage point at The Salvation Army in the centre of the city, I am all too aware that Melbourne isn't a great place for all its residents. One of our significant challenges is the increase in the number of people sleeping rough. According to the City of Melbourne, rough sleeping has increased by 74 per cent compared to two years ago. This represents 247 individuals, most aged between 26 and 60. Most are there due to housing affordability, mental health or an addiction.

Melbourne is not unique in Victoria for its rough sleepers; rough sleepers are present in all our suburbs and in our major towns. It is unique, however, in the level of infrastructure that exists as a draw for people seeking housing and support. So, like Dick Whittington, searching for streets paved with gold, the homeless, the ill, the abused come looking for support, propelled by a spectrum of problems which includes having nowhere else to go.

This increased presence has meant increased government and media attention, which has, in some instances quite frankly, not been at all helpful when agencies such as ours have been trying to support and assist this most vulnerable group. Along with increased attention, has been a call for solutions, some excellent, others not helpful. The call for the criminalisation of rough sleepers is extremely counter-productive, leading to vulnerable people being

driven underground rather than remaining visible where support can be offered. A great majority of rough sleepers are victims of crime themselves and the calls to criminalise, further stigmatise homeless street people, and penalise them for simply being poor.

The plethora of support agencies, and council and government responses have both helped and hindered this cohort. Differing agendas, targets and attitudes have meant that many rough sleepers have failed to obtain the housing and medical support they need to help them make a sustainable return to mainstream society. Until recently there has been a lack of political appetite and bureaucratic capacity for a co-ordinated approach to tackling rough sleeping. However, the creation of the Rough Sleeping Taskforce has finally been translated into a practical approach that will work towards a state-wide solution, rather than a Melbourne city-specific approach.

Rough sleepers are one of the most disadvantaged groups in society. They deserve better than to be treated as a nuisance – they may have suffered a relationship breakdown, a bereavement or domestic abuse. Instead, people need long-term, dedicated support to move away from the streets for good. Those who sleep on the streets are extremely vulnerable and often do not know where to turn for help. These individuals need additional support to leave homelessness behind, and any move to criminalise sleeping rough could simply create additional problems to be overcome. If we are to tackle the current housing and health inequalities then we need to assess and meet their needs in new and imaginative ways. It requires a broad overarching response that considers their health needs as well as housing needs. The response needs to be undertaken with main stream providers ensuring effective partnerships across a many

and varied service response.

It also requires a response from individuals, a reminder that each one of us is just one step away from homelessness. In the literal sense, as we walk around our own towns and cities and pass rough sleepers, and in the theoretical sense, we could suffer a job loss, an illness, a financial setback or a combination of the three. We could end up sleeping rough; anyone who is on the street is certainly a lot worse off than me. I look them in the eye, I say hello. When I acknowledge them, they are no longer invisible.

I hope you found the above perspective by Jenny interesting and insightful. While what was said may not align with our view of the world, we all need to listen and digest what is said by others in order to find common ground. This is why we are focusing on the fact that the provision of shelter is a fundamental human need (not human right) and without that need being met, we have unintended social and economic consequences that will span generations. As I said in my first article, doing nothing is NOT AN OPTION! We need to act and we need to act now. All of us need to be part of the solution so please feel free to write to me with your thoughts: info@housingallaustralians.com.au ●



Rob Pradolin
FORMER GENERAL MANAGER AT FRASERS PROPERTY AUSTRALIA AND FOUNDER OF HOUSING ALL AUSTRALIANS (HAA)
[INFO@HOUSINGALLAUSTRALIANS.COM.AU](mailto:info@housingallaustralians.com.au)

COUNCILLOR PROFILE

New councillor is a “unionist at heart”

WORDS BY *Sean Car*

Having snuck into the final councillor position at last year's local government elections, CFMEU member and new councillor Elizabeth Doidge said she was looking forward to helping shape and reactivate the city that she loves.

A proud “unionist at heart”, the 31-year-old was elected to the City of Melbourne council on Lord Mayoral candidate Jennifer Yang's union-backed ticket, with the CFMEU alone providing more than \$195,000 for the campaign.

Working in policy and stakeholder engagement with the CFMEU, Ms Doidge told *Southbank News* that the union's desire was just to have a place on council so it “could influence policy” and “play a part in the city that we built”.

And in what will come as music to the ears of many local residents, she said part of her ambition as a councillor and chair of the council's sustainable building portfolio was to help improve dialogue between the council, the building industry and residents.

It was a relationship tested in the CBD during the height of the pandemic when out of hours construction permits were granted by the council last year and Ms Doidge said there was a lot her union could do to help residents.

“There's never been a dialogue between the building industry and local residents, I suppose we're at loggerheads and that's something the CFMEU can do,” she said.

“It's not just because we have a lot of resident members but there can be a lot of issues resolved through collaboration – you just need those channels and I would love to be a part of that.”

In addition to her roles with the CFMEU and now as a councillor, Ms Doidge is, remarkably, also currently completing a master's degree in communications at RMIT University, where



she has been previously studying politics, international relations and media during the past 14 years.

She said the city was a “huge part” of both her own and her family's lives. Her grandfather once served as the manager of Flinders Street Station, while her grandmother was a regular shopper at Queen Victoria Market and visitor to St Patrick's Cathedral.

Having lived and worked in Melbourne her entire life, she said it was that affinity with her city that led her to the union movement, and she was looking forward to using her role as a councillor to change perceptions about the CFMEU.

She said all CFMEU members, including its controversial secretary John Setka, were far more progressive than many gave them credit

for, and had many overlapping ambitions with the council such as greening the city, sustainable development and community outreach.

“When John Setka and I were sitting down and talking about the relationships we have with council and things like that he said, ‘we need more trees, we need more green in the city ... it's getting ugly,’” she said.

“There's a lot of perceptions that the unions and the employers in our industry are always fighting with each other which is not true at all. We have fantastic relationships with builders and bosses of constructions companies, and we all work together to make sure the construction industry is healthy and safe.”

“There are jobs for our members so it's not in our interest to make building difficult it's quite the opposite – we want it to continue as much as

possible and we want jobs for our members. But we want to make sure they're good jobs, they're safe jobs and we want to see the products we're building are quality.”

With the impacts of COVID-19 sure to play out across the city for many years to come, the current council term marks as one of the most critical periods in City of Melbourne's history as it recovers from the pandemic.

In addition to the Environment and Creative Melbourne portfolios, Ms Doidge has taken on the role as deputy lead of the all-important City Activation portfolio, which is being led by fellow first-time Cr Roshena Campbell.

While she is still wrapping her head around local government processes, she said her councillor colleagues and others at the City of Melbourne had provided great support in helping her settle into the role.

It's been wonderful,” she said. “Especially now that I've been there for a while and I'm really starting to understand the role that councils play in actually shaping the city and having a really positive impact on the future of our city.”

“I pay very close attention to everything everyone says! I'm never going to walk into that room and think I'm the smartest person there or think I'm the best politician or the best councillor but that's why I love it. There's a great group of people who have very diverse political views and political backgrounds and I think we can all come together and make a big difference.” ●



Sean Car
SEAN@HYPERLOCALNEWS.COM.AU

ABORIGINAL MELBOURNE

.....



Cultural competency on the rise

Where the COVID-19 pandemic and the shift online upended many organisations last year, Koorie Heritage Trust (KHT) manager of education and visitor experience Rob Hyatt said the trust’s Building Aboriginal Cultural Competency workshops had soared in popularity.

WORDS BY *Ellen Blake*

“There’s been a massive return from moving online. We now do about 25 to 30 sessions a month,” Mr Hyatt told *Southbank News*.

Through the workshops, the KHT works with various companies, including state governments and corporate and community organisations, to provide education on working with Aboriginal communities.

“The main thing we hear from organisations is a desire to learn more and provide workplace support,” Mr Hyatt said.

“Many of the organisations we work with have implemented reconciliation strategies but need more education on certain issues.”

The Building Aboriginal Cultural Competency workshop focuses on four key education blocks: concentration of Aboriginality and identity, history, understanding Aboriginal communities today, and hints and tips for effectively engaging with Aboriginal people.

“The workshop supports people to work with Aboriginal people but also stresses the social benefit of broader education about Aboriginality,” Mr Hyatt said

The workshop includes discussions on both traditional and contemporary elements of Aboriginality, an understanding of the history of what has happened to Aboriginal people and its impacts on areas such as education, justice and employment.

Mr Hyatt said the workshop also impressed the resilience of Aboriginal culture and Aboriginal people.

“One of the main points of the workshop is to underscore the continued survival of Aboriginal culture and its strengths,” Mr Hyatt said.

Mr Hyatt said the workshops were based on experiential and participatory learning and encouraged discussion.

He added that workshop participants were increasingly interested in discussing “Change the Date” and “Black Lives Matter” after highly publicised social movements over the past few years.

“This is just not a lecture, we encourage participants to self-explore their own experiences, values, beliefs and behaviour,” he said.

The KHT is holding the Building Aboriginal Cultural Competency workshops for organisations, and individuals and small groups throughout the year online ●



For more on the workshops:
koorieheritagetrust.com.au/visit-us/education/#cultural-competency

SOUTHBANK SUSTAINABILITY GROUP

.....

If you missed community interaction, this is for you

A successful seed planting day is now behind us and many more community events are ahead.

As you may have already read in last month’s column, we decided to include the wider community in our effort to grow seeds into the next round of winter vegies for the community garden at Boyd. Turning this into an inclusive community event as much as possible, we invited all Southbankers to come learn how to grow plants from seeds in a small space like an apartment, while caring for newly planted seeds at home until they become resilient seedlings and are ready for their permanent home in Southbank’s community garden.

The February 20 seed planting event was a bigger success than we anticipated! Southbank showed up, with close to 45 Southbankers of all ages, life stages and backgrounds coming together on the day. We loved seeing the sense of community forming, participants leaving with their repurposed egg cartons now housing new plants, wide smiles on faces and excitement in people’s eyes, and many hanging around to meet and chat with neighbours. We even managed to keep it a 100 per cent zero waste event. Of course, this event wouldn’t have been possible if it wasn’t for our amazing members and volunteers, who worked collaboratively and seamlessly behind the scenes and on the day to make it a successful community day. A big thank you goes out to all of them! Go to our Facebook page to see photos of the day and a lovely care instructions video our new educational events champion, Sarah Horner, created.

Southbank Seedling Planting Day

Saturday, March 20 at 10.30am will be time to replant the winter vegie seedlings into the community garden. We want to include the Southbank community as much as possible and make this a learning opportunity again, so we invite all Southbankers to come join us on the day. Whether you came to the seed planting event or not, you can come help plant the next round of communal vegies and herbs, while learning home growing tips. Please register at: southbankplantingday.eventbrite.com.

The garden in March

With our group’s new champions leadership team, more people sharing the workload and the wonderful new skills they bring, we’re

now working on long-term planning for the community garden and applying companion planting principles a bit better. We’ll soon be redoing a lot of the existing garden beds to make sure vegies growing together are good for each other, the soil’s health and also work well as natural pesticides. As per the amazing plans Maria and Faye, Southbank Sustainability Group’s (SSG’s) gardening champions have put together. You will see a lot of garden beds going empty for a while before they are replanted, so don’t be alarmed. We encourage you to harvest as much as possible in the next few days before plants are either cleared or replanted in a different part of the garden, always following the harvesting instructions you’ll see in the garden and noticeboard.

DIY green cleaning workshop

We’re working on delivering a “DIY Green Cleaning” workshop next, on Saturday, April 17 at 10.30am. Using common household ingredients, participants will learn how to make their own eco-safe, zero waste home cleaning supplies that are better for our health, waterways, the environment and wallets. We’re organising details, but the facilitator and date are confirmed, and seats will be limited. We’ll include more details in our next column. In the meantime, watch our Facebook page or email us for the registration link as soon as it’s live so you don’t miss out.

Next meetups

SSG’s next meetups will be March 20 (planting day event), then Saturday, April 10 due to the Easter break. We might add a gardening working bee day in between, so watch our Facebook page or email us if you’d like to participate. As always, everyone is welcome regardless of gardening skills or experience.

About the group: A solutions-focused group of Southbankers working to bring positive change in sustainability practices and education to our neighbourhood, while building a wonderful community of like-minded people. Free to join. 2019 Environment Melbourne Award & KVB 2020 Sustainable Cities Environment Award winner ●



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



Artemis Pattichi
SOUTHBANK SUSTAINABILITY GROUP
SOUTHBANKSUSTAINABILITY@GMAIL.COM

YARRA RIVER BUSINESS ASSOCIATION

.....

Testing our resolve

WORDS BY *Jeremy Vincent - President*

Life is slowly but steadily returning to the Yarra River precinct, though for many businesses I dare say it could be too little too late.

We will not see the full effect of COVID-19 on our business community until the cessation of JobKeeper and the end of rent waivers or rent deferrals by landlords. The post-Easter period will be the real test of our business resilience.

The return of Southbank’s corporate workforce will be a big help, although it’s yet to be seen how many will actually return, as opposed to completing at least part of their working week from home. The arts industry is cautiously reopening and the success of the *Live at the Bowl* summer program has been outstanding. Likewise, NGV is having great success with *Triennial* and Hamer Hall has seen the return of the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra.

However, international business events and tourism is still a long way off. With it accounting

for 30 to 40 per cent of trade in the precinct, it will leave a hole in the hospitality industry for some time yet.

On a brighter note, the changed circumstances has enabled Southbankers to better explore their neighbourhood and enjoy those facilities that have reopened. Our “I’m a Southbanker” series each month in this paper is designed to introduce you to the people behind many of our businesses – real “flesh and blood” operators who have spent years building up their livelihood. They might operate out of big complexes, but they are still small business people, with mouths to feed and constant bills to pay. Please continue to support them as much as you can.

This month sees the start of two campaigns that should help to persuade Greater Melburnians to leave their suburban enclaves and re-experience the city centre again, especially Southbank. The City of Melbourne’s FOMO television campaign features imagery of the precinct very strongly. This month the Yarra River Business Association (YRBA) continues its weekly vlogging campaign to highlight outdoor eating venues, as well as starting a major campaign “The Ultimate Yarra River Staycation”, which features an amazing prize pool and will be supported through various

social media outlets.

It came out of the blue, but I must congratulate Victoria Police for their support to enforce cycling speed restrictions during February and March. We have had years of inaction regarding the speed demons of Southbank and Crown Promenades, including some fairly ineffectual public awareness and education campaigns. We want to see the promenades used for slow, meandering cycling that doesn’t endanger people, especially as they begin to return to the precinct. Getting the balance right between a total ban on cycling and controlling the speeding commuters is very difficult. The finish of Southbank Boulevard will at least provide them with an alternative route. It’s to be hoped that the re-landscaping of Southbank Promenade will include many cycle-slowing mechanisms in its design.

Finally, I would like to remind the many businesses operating in the precinct that for 2021 membership of the Yarra River Business Association is only \$50 plus GST. This is a reduction of 75 per cent and enables everyone to get involved in the busiest marketing year we have had in our 22-year existence. Contact the executive officer on exoff@yarrariver.melbourne for membership details ●

Montague, a precinct like no other ...

Well, dear readers. We are already in March 2021 and it doesn't seem that long ago that we were in March 2020 with the new and stark reality of COVID-19.

The challenges we were about to encounter were beginning to filter into our psyches and then directly into our lives. Today, it is as if we have all gone through a collective trauma and some of us have done very well and come out stronger and others sadly have had more significant damage to their businesses and lives.

In saying that, however, life is pretty much back to normal in Montague. The construction in every major street is overwhelming and street traffic, pedestrians, bikes, scooters, skateboards and any other form of mobility are back at full pace. Some businesses have never been busier as attested by the amount of people around, particularly getting coffees in our great local cafes.

We are very sad to report that one of the businesses that did not survive 2020, although they gave it a red hot go, is the Golden Fleece on Montague St. This wasn't just our local pub, it was the place where the Montague Community Alliance held its public meetings, some of which were sponsored by this stellar publication *Southbank News*. We are very sorry to see Sam and his team leave Montague and we wish them all good fortune in the future.

And talking of this publication, the Montague Alliance would like to congratulate Sean Car and his team on the launch of two new local papers, *Inner City News* covering East Melbourne, Carlton and Parkville and *North West City News*, covering North and West Melbourne, Kensington and Parkville Gardens. It is clear that community communication is not just popular and desired, but crucial in informing us as collectives, neighbourhoods and suburbs. Thanks, team!

As we are able to get out and about again it is time to bring back our "Meet a Montaguean questions". We are delighted to introduce one of our neighbours Helen Robertson. If you see her say hi ... we are after all a precinct like no other!

Who are you? Tell us a little about yourself ...

My name is Helen Robertson and I am an IT program manager. I am a passionate foodie who loves to cook and entertain, particularly Thai and Vietnamese. My other hobbies include travel and photography. I live with my partner, Ivan, in an apartment in South Melbourne above National Storage (which used to be the Dunlop Pneumatic Tyre Factory).

What brought you to live or work in the Montague Precinct?

We moved into Beacon Cove back in 2017 after returning from Sydney and New Zealand where we had both been working for the past four years. Prior to leaving for work in NZ, I lived in Box Hill. After two years of renting in Beacon Cove, I decided to sell my townhouse in Box Hill and buy something inner-city. Our apartment is quite quirky and currently undergoing renovations. We love being walking distance to the CBD, Southbank and wonderful South Melbourne Market.

What are the best or most interesting things about living/working in Montague?

We love being walking distance to the CBD, Southbank and wonderful South Melbourne Market. As I go out on my walk every morning, I try to find new things to photograph and a great

coffee shop to enjoy. My favourites are Jimmy the Saint on Gladstone St and The Relief Unit in Park St, which also serves delicious bacon butties. I love the diversity of buildings in the area, old and new; modern and traditional and the many restaurants and wine bars that are on our ever-growing list to try.

What are the challenges about living/working in Montague?

The greatest challenge living in this area has to be the unprecedented construction going on that doesn't appear to be well-governed and thought through in relation to impact on existing residents. The early morning starts, tradesmen's vehicles taking up all parking spaces in local streets and construction vehicles blocking driveways means we struggle six days a week to lead a normal life that residents in the suburbs take for granted. We also live in an area where rubbish dumping in Woodgate St means we are constantly calling Port Phillip Council to come and clear away the rubbish. The lack of street lighting in this area is an ongoing cause of concern to our residents.

How does living or working in Montague affect your quality of life?

If there is one positive that I can take out of COVID, it is the opportunity to get out for a walk every morning and find new gems in the area, whether it be a cafe, photo opportunity, new wine bar (for the evening), or a new person to meet and say hello to. This wouldn't have been possible if I was driving to work in Mt Waverley every day. The health aspects of walking every day cannot be overstated.



If you could change something about Montague, what would it be?

If there was something in Montague I could change, it would be easily the volume of construction. The 109 tramline is already struggling with the number of passengers, especially when cruise ships are in Port between October and May and when these new 40-plus storey buildings are finished, how will our infrastructure support all of these additional residents? Are there plans for more supermarkets, parking, public transport, parks and gardens in our area, or are we just extending the CBD concrete jungle? ●



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ST JOHNS SOUTHGATE

A cross to bear?

Jesus of Nazareth once said to his followers, "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me."

Those words were uttered, daringly, in the face of a brutal Roman regime that used crucifixion as a means of silencing people like Jesus who might rock the boat. As such, the call of Jesus to bear the cross had a rather specific meaning. It was a call to suffering, even potential martyrdom, in the hope of promoting a way of life that built true community through radical

love of God, neighbour, and self. And so, in the Christian tradition over millennia, the call to the believer to "take up your cross" for such noble purposes has been ever present. Sadly, though, in Christian churches, communities and families, the language of cross bearing has also been misused and abused.

Women have far too often been coerced into staying in abusive relationships in Christian households with the words, "Maybe it's your cross to bear..." Marriage, for Christians, has tended to be seen as virtually inviolable, to the point that even the disclosure of abuse which might come with the question, "Should I leave?" has been considered a moral dilemma. If it is not being done already, it is time for the Christian churches to make it abundantly clear

that to even implicitly urge someone to stay in an abusive relationship is to conduct spiritual abuse. It must be made clear that there is no godly cross to bear that is built of domestic and family violence. The words of Jesus must never be used to protect perpetrators and enslave survivors. Simply put, leaving an abusive marriage need not be a dilemma of Christian morality. An abusive partner has already abandoned their marriage vows. Survivors need to know they can go in peace and in good conscience.

Taking up your cross, in the way that Jesus spoke of it, might mean dying for your faith – people are still martyred, even today, in some parts of the world. But taking up your cross never means taking a beating from your husband or wife. Bearing the cross is not about

suffering for the sake of the suffering itself. There are burdens in this life that are not crosses we are called to carry. We do not have to bear the unbearable sins of abusers. We can leave that to Jesus.

If you, or someone you know, needs help, experts in the field are available on 1800 RESPECT 24 hours a day ●



Tom Hoffmann
TOM HOFFMANN IS THE PASTOR AT ST JOHNS SOUTHGATE CHURCH.
STJOHNSSOUTHGATE.COM.AU







In-person worship 10am
see website for booking details
Video sermons available on
St Johns Southgate YouTube channel

20 City Road Southbank Telephone 9682 4995 www.stjohnssouthgate.com.au

Pet’s Corner

Turtle’s coming out of his shell

“

Turtle the rat terrier was making the most of his time out with owner Nicholas Irving at Boyd Park in March.

”



WORDS BY *Micaela Togher*

At 11 years old, there has been one constant between Turtle and Nick over the time they have been together.

“Definitely walks. He loves his walks. It’s our favourite thing to do each day,” Nick said.

Nick and his partner welcomed a son 18 months ago, giving Turtle a new playmate.

“Turtle enjoyed lockdown because of the new baby. The little one gets up every morning and loves

to feed Turtle treats. He just loves it,” Nick said. But things were not always easy for Nick and his partner during the worst of the COVID-19 crisis. “The lockdown was tough with the baby. He was pretty premi and, it was scary,” Nick said. With the vaccine being rollout across the country, Nick is optimistic about life with Turtle returning to normal. “Turtle loves playing with our son. It’s great. And sitting on clothes – any time I take off a jumper or anything goes on the floor, Turtle sits on it!” ●

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Nature Therapy

“You can’t see the building for the tree.”

Riverside Quay

Government hypocrisy on the record

Hansard can be decidedly inconvenient for pivoting politicians.

The state government managed to tie itself in syllogistic knots defending the indefensible this month, at the second reading of the *Owners’ Corporations and Other Acts Amendment Bill 2019*. Its stunning self-contradictions are now recorded in *Hansard* for posterity.

They had a chance to get it right and they stubbornly refused to listen to the needs of apartment-dwellers.

From the time the Bill was drafted, We Live Here made submissions and lobbied for amendments, including one to protect apartment owners from the inequity of long-term service contracts gifted to developers’ mates. As described in previous columns, some of the contracts are 25 years and we have had an example of 99 years reported to us.

Commendably, Greens MLC Dr Samantha Ratnam introduced an amendment to the Bill, precisely along these lines, limiting to three years any service contracts signed by a developer. While the Bill laudably limits owners’ corporation (OC) management contracts, it’s silent on sweetheart deals for other huge commitments like building management and cleaning.

The argument mounted by the government was exasperatingly risible. Labor MLC Shaun Leane, craftily narrowed his focus to utilities ...

“The consequence could be severe, particularly for utility providers, who require certainty beyond three years for the viability of their businesses. It could result in owners’ corporations struggling to find businesses willing to provide the most basic services – that is, water and electricity – given that the contracts would be for a maximum of three years,” Mr Leane said.

So here we have the Victorian Government

zealously espousing the right of developers to lock apartment owners into onerous long-term contracts.

How did this government work itself into such a distastefully invidious argument that abrogates both social responsibility principles and free market policies – risking affront to the entire political spectrum?

Our proposal for a three-year limit would still be an excellent outcome for providers in a market dominated by shorter deals. And if a provider does a good job, they will likely retain the contract after the three years is up. That’s the appeal of competition isn’t it?

The Honorable Member’s specious utilities example conspicuously contradicts government policies that actively promote competition in the electricity market.

Do you recall the Victorian Government offering everyone \$50 each just to have a look at its energy comparison website? That was part of a suite of competitive reforms associated with its *Energy Legislation Amendment Bill 2019*, passed on October 17, 2019.

This is where *Hansard* becomes inconvenient, recording unanimous government support for that pro-competition energy Bill.

Fast forward scarcely more than a year and *Hansard* now records the same government capriciously condemning apartment dwellers – 25 per cent of Victorians – to suffer anticompetitive gouging at the hands of building services providers.

Why the about-turn, indulging the cupidity of developers and their cronies?

What’s going on here, is it a case of incompetence, ignorance or undue influence?

Greens and independent support

After almost two years of lobbying, We Live Here had the support of the Greens and several crossbenchers for a range of amendments to the OC Bill:

- Andy Meddick, Animal Justice Party

- Clifford Hayes, Sustainable Australia Party
- Rod Barton, Transport Matters Party
- Catherine Cumming, Independent Government hypocrisy on the record
- Fiona Patten, Reason Party – although perplexingly, Ms Patten voted against our amendment about reasonable limits on contracts that developers dish out.

Dr Ratnam proposed three amendments, which were all rejected by the government. Nevertheless, she used the opportunity to press for other urgent reforms:

“The short-stay industry has largely been left to set its own rules, with the government only intervening to implement a complaints process and avoiding implementing any real regulation of the industry,” Dr Ratnam said.

“Now we are facing the need to reinvent our cities in light of the havoc wreaked by COVID, this is a perfect time to be looking at how we make our cities more liveable.”

Hear, hear!

“Oops, thanks for the reminder”

Dr Ratnam also raised the issue of the review of the *Short-stay (Accommodation) Act 2018*, promised for 2020 and seemingly forgotten.

Labor MLC Mr Leane sought some whispered advice before confirming that, err, yes, there will be a review “which will start this year”.

Asked for more specificity about timing and terms of reference, Mr Leane dodged with, “I cannot be more descriptive.”

Maybe *Hansard* needs the “shrug” emoji.

Pressed on the issue Mr Leane then went on to repeat the party line, “there is a provision in this [short-stay] Bill that gives owners’ corps the ability to penalise certain owners if they are breaching the short-stay rules.”

This is shamefully deceptive. In its two years of operation, the number of cases where owners have successfully taken action in the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal

(VCAT) under this provision is ZERO.

The short-stay Act is a toothless, useless law and Mr Leane knows it.

We need dedicated regulations for apartments

The reading of the *OC Amendments Bill* highlighted the convolutions required to draft a single piece of legislation covering everything from caravan parks to skyscraper apartment towers. Navigating the new law will be a huge challenge, perhaps one relished by our learned friends in the legal profession.


A review of the short-stay Act is quasi-scheduled, with the task of establishing terms of reference apparently not in anyone’s in-tray quite yet.

Now the government has a chance to set terms to review several issues in concert: specific provisions for short-stays, general improvements to regulatory framework, and the role of planning regulations.

Perhaps the new Minister for Consumer Affairs Melissa Horne can jump out of the ministerial revolving door to take charge.

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 **welivehere.net**. **We Live Here** does not accept donations from commercial tourism interests ●



Barbara Francis &
Rus Littleton

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The Wild West of OC elections

Owners’ corporations (OCs) are often referred to as a fourth tier of government – and our elections are just as political!

Upon purchasing your apartment, as a lot owner, you automatically become part of your OC. But to join the committee, the key decision-making group for your building, you must be elected by your fellow owners (or their proxies) at your Annual General Meeting (AGM).

Sounds democratic – and seems like a great instance of hyperlocal democracy in action. That is, our vertical villages are managed by an annually elected group, drawn from fellow owners, and it is they who make decisions about how our building is managed, including how our levies are spent and what actions are taken to address problems.

Regrettably, this committee, most especially how it is elected, also typically involves hyperlocal politics. And in many buildings, the intensity of competition rivals that of other levels of government.

It is all too common to hear of buildings run as fiefdoms, where long-standing committee chairs have developed a sense of entitlement to the role. Woe betide any whippersnappers who dare challenge this status quo!

In other tiers of government, such as local council, procedures have been developed to ensure that our electoral systems are fair, transparent and promote effective participation. While you might initially think that the last thing our vertical villages need is more procedures, the calibre of our OC committee daily affects the quality and fabric of our home life – this committee is the maker of by-laws, the

procurer of contracts and the setter of fees and levies.

And this is why the way each OC exercises its choice over who will represent them has never been more important.

So, what are these issues impacting the transparency of our elections – here are three: dummy nominees; proxy farming; and robust electoral processes.

Dummy nominees

In local government, this refers to a candidate who stands for election with no intention or realistic chance of winning. Their purpose may be to direct preferences to other candidates or split the vote or simply to block other candidates. In the case of OCs, someone can be asked to nominate (perhaps by the entrenched chair!) for the purpose of blocking others from securing a position on the committee. The way this works is that each owner can vote for up to 12 people. Proxies are collected (proxy farming) by the serious candidate, who then directs these votes towards their preferred 12. So, if someone collects 60 or 70 proxies, these can be used for their preferred 12 nominees, thereby blocking others from being elected. This can result in nominees being elected who have little interest in serving on the committee. One recent instance I have heard about involves a nominee who is currently selling their apartment and who has twice been previously elected and then resigned soon after.

Proxy farming

Proxies are part of an important mechanism which allows owners to appoint someone (a proxy) to represent them if they are unavailable. The proxy can use this assigned power to vote in committee elections and on resolutions, and/or otherwise represent the lot owner. It is often the case, however, that owners do not direct the proxy as regards their wishes, with the result that the proxy has free rein and can direct these votes to whoever and however they choose. Proxy farming occurs when large numbers of proxies are actively sought for the purpose of concentrating voting power so as to determine outcomes (e.g. who is elected, which resolutions pass). If there is no direction given, this means that a small number of owners (maybe even one owner) can determine the outcome of meetings, elections and resolutions. At its heart, proxy farming is all about the balance of power – who has it, who wants it and what they want to do with it. It is deeply undemocratic and other Australian states (such as NSW) have strict limitations on proxy farming. Not so Victoria – yet.

Electoral process

While the current system has been in operation for many years, there remains a great deal of confusion regarding nomination and voting procedures, starting with the submission of documents. For example, proxy forms require all owners to be listed and to sign. However, this seemingly straight forward issue repeatedly

proves problematic, especially for people from non-English speaking backgrounds. There is an array of other procedural issues, such as the practice of nominating “from the floor” which gives little time for strata managers to confirm nominee eligibility and little scope for owners to consider such nominations. Many of these issues could be resolved through a combination of clearer instructions from Consumer Affairs Victoria, regulatory improvements, and the introduction of tailored online strata registration systems, which could assist in checking submissions while they are being completed.

The way our community, the OC, is able exercise choice over who will represent us is fundamental to our wellbeing. These three issues – dummy nominees, proxy farming and electoral process – are just the tip of the OC electoral iceberg. Failure to improve robustness and transparency promotes undesirable and undemocratic practices, leading to the concentration of power in the hands of those most adept at working this inadequate system. Now is the time to begin a genuine dialogue about how hyperlocal democracy can best work in our vertical villages ●



Dr Janette Corcoran

APARTMENT LIVING EXPERT

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Faces of Southbank

How do you feel about the vaccine rollout?



FRANCYS
“I know a lot of people think it shouldn’t be ready for a couple of years but a lot of people have died so if we have something to try and be healthy we should try it.”



REKA
“Hopefully the whole COVID situation will change quickly now and we can travel again!”



MARK
“It’s gotta go faster. Simple. It’s a no-brainer. My business is overseas so the faster I can travel again the better.”



DANIEL
“It’s positive, I’m in hospitality so it’s affected our industry pretty badly. A lot of people lost their jobs so hopefully it comes out quick and fast and we can move past what’s happened.”

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Southbank Sudoku

Last month’s Sudoku solution

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

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 HARD, good luck!

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

OWNERS' CORPORATION LAW

New OC legislation substantially amends the legal position in water ingress cases

A lot has been written and said about the new amendments to the owners' corporation (OC) legislation, set to begin at the end of 2021.

I'd like to focus this article on an area which hasn't got much traction and attention as yet, but which represents a big change to how an OC must respond to complaints about water ingress from lot owners and occupiers.

Firstly, the law. The new Act sets to introduce a new Section 17A into the Act, to clarify that any rainwater or other water that falls, occurs or flows on the common property (otherwise than in a waterway or a bore) is taken to be part of the common property.

Subsection (2) further provides that, for the purposes of section 8(4)(c) of the *Water Act 1989*, an OC is the occupier of land to the extent that the land is common property, meaning that it will have the right to take and/or use water referenced in subsection (1).

The above wording might seem innocuous, and certainly the passage of water is not a very sexy subject, and it didn't really attract many comments and objections at the public consultation stage, but consider the following ...

Under this new legislation, if there is a burst pipe that causes water to escape onto the common property, then that water is considered to be common property water, and if that water causes damage to anyone else's property, then the OC will be responsible.

Hypothetically speaking, if a pipe were to burst from within an individual unit (say from a dishwasher, shower drains, bathroom sinks etc.) and if that were to cause damage to multiple units below, then the OC is prima facie, the responsible party to account for all of the loss and damage.

True enough, the OC might well be able to claim back from the lot owner or occupier a portion of the costs if it could be proven that the cause of the burst pipe was from lack of maintenance or some other form of mischief as a contributory act. However, the responsibility and the costs of chasing the lot owner or occupier for that contribution might well be economically impractical or unfeasible to do so.

I am not sure that the insurers of OCs will be thrilled by this legislative change. I would say that the insurers are changing the terms of their policies as we speak. Therefore, all OCs should be aware upon the renewal date of their policies to check the policy wording to see whether they are still covered for these types of claims.

In addition, if an OC has the ability to pass special resolutions without too much expense, then my advice would be to pass updated additional rules to pass responsibility to lot owners for any acts where water is permitted to escape their own internal services and cause damage to other lots and the common property, and to provide a mechanism for the debts to be paid upon demand. It may also be of benefit to consider passing a rule to ensure that owners and occupiers are responsible for any insurance excess in the event that an insurance claim needs to be made.

OCs need to be careful to protect themselves, because left unchecked, this updated legislation put the OC squarely "in the gun" for future water ingress claims ●



Tom Bacon

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HISTORY



Sid Myer

Few citizens in Melbourne had the effect on their adopted city as Sid Myer.

He had migrated from Russia in 1896 and set up business in Bendigo before moving to Melbourne.

He built a retail empire, centred on his Bourke St store, but tragically died from a heart attack in 1934, the same year as the remodelling of his flagship store was completed. But he was more than a retailer – as a lover of music and the arts, he had a vision to provide a free, large venue for outdoor music for the people of Melbourne.

After his death, his family (via the philanthropic Sidney Myer Charity Trust) made it a

reality and fulfilled his vision with the creation of the Myer Music Bowl. It was a modernist masterpiece and was the culmination of a dream of one of its most illustrious citizens. It was first announced in April 1956, to be located between two high mounds in Melbourne's King's Domain on the edge of Southbank, on land provided by the City of Melbourne. The massive canopy of the Bowl would be an architectural and engineering triumph for Melbourne and was supported by a main cable that stretched from 21 metres under the ground, high across the top of steel and fibreglass masts and down into the ground again. The result was described as a structure that leapt bat-like from its hole and achieved a startling sense of weightlessness. Since it opened in 1959, it has been the venue for countless entertainment events for Melbourne.

The gardens near the Bowl include many high-quality pieces of sculpture, including one that celebrates the life of Sid Myer. Fittingly,

it sits near the entrance to the Bowl and looks down on the central stage. Commissioned by the Myer family, the large (220cm x 300cm) bronze work was cast by Michael Meszaros, an acclaimed medallion designer and sculptor and responsible for a number of attention-grabbing sculptures located in the streets and gardens of Melbourne and other Victorian cities. It was installed in 2001 as part of an upgrade to the Bowl and has been described as depicting Myer as a whirlwind of energy, emerging from four horizontal streams of jagged bronze. If you are near the Bowl, stop and have a look at the sculpture and say hello to Sid ●



Robin Grow

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HEALTH & WELLBEING

Posture and exercise programming

Okay I will admit it, I am not your average 20 to 30-year-old crop-top, bum-bag wearing and cap back to front wearing personal trainer!

Our clients are typically aged 35 to 75. As such I see so many people come to us to help either repair damage done through previous exercise modalities or we get many people wanting to improve their posture and function. The problem is that when we are 20, 30 and even sometimes 40, we think we are invincible. We can jump, skip, deadlift, do copious amounts of burpees and basically thrash our bodies any way we can in the pursuit of that elusive "perfect body". The problem is that our bones, ligaments, joints, tendons and muscles do a great job, but they can't withstand poor form, excessive weight and often un-controlled rapid movement.

Sure, we can get away with it for a number of years, but rest assured it catches up with you and I see this with the vast majority of our clients.

While group exercise is great for motivation and is vastly cheaper than personal training, please beware of its limitations. The reality is that three of the most popular forms of group exercise (in no particular order) – F45, CrossFit and boot camps – do not in any way factor in your posture and all exercises are of a generic

nature with little or no attention given to the curvature of your spine and your resulting posture. So be warned!

Our spine is made up of four of curves, namely:

- Cervical
- Thoracic
- Lumbar
- Sacral

It is important to maintain good posture and as much as I wish we could "just stand up straight", it is not that simple and requires concerted effort to have a balance of strength and flexibility. One simple test is to stand up straight and notice if your hands are closed over and your palms facing your outer thigh (a sign of a tight chest and weak upper back muscles) or are your palms facing the same way you are (a sign of a great balance between chest flexibility and good upper back strength).

You see, we need to maintain our flexibility and mobility while also strengthening to keep our natural spine curvature and in doing so reducing the risk of injury and reducing strain on our muscles, ligaments and tendons.

Have you ever had a posture assessment? Most people that I ask that to answer "no" and interestingly enough, for every client that I have ever trained in my 25 years and provided a posture assessment and accompanying education around improving it are fascinated with the insight and then buy in to the need to improve it.

If you would like me to email you some simple postural exercises and accompanying "how to" exercise videos, please send an email to – justin@justintimept.com. Let me know that you read this article and I will only be too happy to send you some helpful exercises that you can do for as little as 7-8 minutes a day and they are exactly what we prescribe to all new clients in their first session!

For more information, exercise guidance or if you have any questions feel free to contact me ●



Justin Moran

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SOUTHBANK RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

Here we are into March already, and what a big month it will be!

Firstly, I am excited to announce the Southbank Residents' Association (SRA) 20-year history, researched and compiled by former committee member Lynne Lumsden, has finally being published.

The history book will be launched at our Southbank Community Forum at 6.30pm on Tuesday, March 23 (more about that later).

We have printed a full-colour A5 book with almost 100 pages. It's a real credit to Lynne's efforts in compiling this history. SRA was incorporated in April 1998, so our 20th anniversary was in 2018. Yes, it has taken us two years to finally get it to this stage, but I am so proud of this piece of work. It is an important record of all the wonderful achievements SRA has achieved for our community.

There are several full-colour pictures which highlight our past heritage, certainly worth the nostalgia. I think that anyone who reads this will be pleasantly surprised at just how active SRA is in our community and our achievements. Lynne, this work should also do you proud, and thank you on behalf of the whole Southbank community. The book will be available for purchase via our website or on the evening of March 23 at the book launch. A few copies will also be provided to Southbank Library at Boyd.

As mentioned last month, following the

approval of a 42-storey tower at the Boyd Park site and an uproar from the community, we received a commitment from the council for dialogue with our residents about the future of Southbank and the opportunities to be exploited and developed.

We received a personal commitment from the Lord Mayor for this dialogue and Sally has certainly done everything that she could to make this happen. Our committee has decided to call this event "Southbank Community Forum – Southbank: What's next?" and will be held on Tuesday, March 23 at Metropolis function venue, on the top level (level 4) of Southgate. We can comfortably fit 200-plus people in this venue in a COVID-safe environment. The event will start at 6.30pm with our SRA History Book launch and then into the forum.

The forum will allow the community to hear directly from the City of Melbourne about where we have come from and the future opportunities in Southbank. Representing the City of Melbourne (CoM) will be the council's deputy CEO Alison Leighton, general manager of strategy and planning Roger Teale and manager of

major capital works, infrastructure and assets Jonathan Kambouris. We have invited two guest speakers to also join the panel: esteemed planning commentator from RMIT university Professor Michael Buxton and Leanne Hodyl – managing director of Hodyl & Co, who previously worked as the CoM's manager of urban strategy and city plans and policy. Leanne is also a Churchill Fellow and the founder and editor of *Cities People Love*. We will of course also be joined by the Lord Mayor Sally Capp, Deputy Lord Mayor and the council's chair of planning Nicholas Reece and Southbank's favourite councillor, whom we all thoroughly admire for his attention to Southbank over the past two council terms, Cr Rohan Leppert, who also serves as the council's heritage portfolio chair and deputy of planning.

As you can see, we have a great line-up for the night, and I am expecting some great discussion and insights into what the future of Southbank may look like. I will be moderating the event and taking my lead from the 2010 – Southbank Structure Plan. This is a 30-year vision for Southbank and being 10 years in, we feel it is a good opportunity to ask if we are on schedule, explore other opportunities and what might need to change. I anticipated this will be the biggest event SRA has ever held. We are anticipating there will be an opportunity for questions from the audience but will be tightly controlled by myself. This is a visionary event, and we don't want to hear from the audience about the problems with rubbish collection on your street, graffiti, parking or any other small, localised issues. I will keep the focus on the bigger overarching issues. I mentioned it in my previous column and want to reiterate here, this will not be an opportunity to beat up the council about its project failures and/or delays, and I won't be allowing that to occur. I am sure the council is aware, and we will probably hear

it from them directly with where they could have done better.

Entry to the event will be free, but to assist with our COVID-safe monitoring and planning we will require those who are wishing to attend to register via our QR link below, in our full-page ad on page 6 or via our website, southbankresidents.org.au. You can still arrive on the night without having registered, but priority entry will be given to those who have registered.

Why not make it a night and book yourself into one of the many dining establishments within Southgate for dinner before or after this event.

This is really going to be a special night and one not to be missed. I am looking forward to seeing you there ●

Register - Southbank Community Forum:



Tony Penna
PRESIDENT
PRESIDENT@SOUTHBANKRESIDENTS.ORG.AU



BUSINESS

Locals rally around hidden-gem brewery

WORDS BY *Katie Johnson*

Tucked away down an industrial side street in the Montague Precinct of South Melbourne is a cosy, warmly-lit warehouse-style brewery that makes anyone who walks in feel right at home.

Since 2016 Westside Ale Works has provided home-brewed craft beer to bars and shops throughout Melbourne, but more recently it's become a local haunt for residents in Montague.

Owner Casey Wagner said that after a long and tough lockdown, locals came out to support the bar in droves.

"November last year was our best month we've ever had and December and January were also very strong," Mr Wagner said.

"Even during COVID people were supporting local and exploring their area like they never had before which was really nice to see."

Westside stayed open during lockdown, turning to takeaway beers and pizzas and selling wholesale to bottle shops.

But since re-opening, Mr Wagner said they had tried to engage the community as much as possible.

"After we opened back up council was good to us and let us put tables outside since we're in a dead-end alley way with no traffic," Mr Wagner said.

"So, people can bring their dogs and sit outside now."

Some of the activities Westside hosts include a puppy pub crawl at the end of each month where people can bring their dogs to catch up over a pint, and Wednesday trivia nights.

"Our Wednesday nights for locals vary from bingo, to trivia, to painting, and even beer yoga classes where we have an instructor come in and people can come in and do yoga while having a pint," Mr Wagner said.

"We're always looking for new ideas on activities to host."

As an American expat himself, Mr Wagner was inspired by the punchy flavours and relaxed lifestyle of the US West Coast and decided to re-create it here in Melbourne when he moved eight years ago.



The bar is filled with beer hall tables, an extensive list of craft beers brewed on site and internationally, plus hand-made American style pizza.

Mr Wagner said Westside was currently offering wilder and fermented sour beers which customers really enjoy, but that his favourite beer was a classic.

"My all-time favourite beer we make is Red Roo, it has a great balance of maltiness and American hops which have a citrus flavour," Mr Wagner said.

"I recommend it to those getting familiar with IPAs for the first time."

Westside is located at 36 Alfred St, South Melbourne ●

For more information:
westsidealeworks.com.au

Agency experiences and insights: Southbank Residential

REAL ESTATE

Southbank Residential director Mel McClellan has spent the past 20 years in Southbank developing a wealth of local knowledge and 18 years' experience in owners' corporation management, finance, and building management in Clarendon Towers.

Southbank Residential is a boutique agency expressly dealing with residential apartment sales throughout postcode 3006.

As a specialist agent who sells apartments exclusively, Mr McClellan has used his extensive background to achieve high prices for his clients – nothing is left to chance when preparing an apartment for sale.

Every aspect of the building is checked whether it be owner's corporation management, maintenance plans, resident owner's occupancy rates as a percentage versus investors or short-stay operators.

"Other established agents do not necessarily get better results; all agents use the same property websites, RealEstate.com and Domain.com to attract and generate buyers," Mr McClellan said.

"Selling properties in Albert Park or South Yarra is certainly no guarantee of a higher price for your apartment in Southbank."

"As a specialist, we only have prospective apartment buyers on our books and market your property through this network exclusively before we request any advertising commitment from our vendors."

According to Mr McClellan, the market had changed and buyers were far savvier today than they had ever been before.

"Buyers have also worked out that older residential buildings that have been well managed and maintained offer far better value, they feature apartments that are larger in area, generally with higher ceilings and more storage space, strong maintenance plans and more resident owners, which is a good sign," he said.

"There is strong interest from first home buyers under \$600,000 where stamp duty savings are significant, while apartments from \$600,000 to \$1 million plus are always of interest to empty nesters, professionals or those downsizing."

Mr McClellan said for those seeking to finance an apartment purchase, there had been a noticeable reluctance from traditional lenders in Southbank and Docklands who required more equity through larger deposits, possibly due to over exposure.

"Insurance companies rate your motor vehicle insurance policy by your postcode and the banks are applying a similar system to their lending policies. If you are intending to purchase an apartment it would be wise to have several options for finance rather than rely solely on one of the four big banks," Mr McClellan said.

"My associate, David Gay, has developed a special sales role for our clients where he assists families selling the family home for elderly parents where he takes all the stress away by appointing a top local agent to sell and market the property, dealing with the agent throughout the process to a successful sale."

"We are senior in terms of age but are very traditional in offering a style of service and understanding that is now difficult to find. We certainly do not have a young sales team or make promises we can't keep, we just keep it simple, offering a personal service that is focused on achieving the highest selling price for our client's apartment."

Southbank Residential work solely through private appointment inspections, further highlighting its tailored approach to sales and building relationships with buyers ●

For more information:
southbankresidential.com.au

社区论坛 塑造南岸

如果你对未来的3006邮政编码感兴趣的话，那么请记住3月23日星期二下午6点在Metropolis Southgate的南岸社区论坛。

为了应对许多当地问题，包括出售博伊德公园（Boyd Park）的土地以及推迟南岸大道（Southbank Boulevard）和城市路（City Rd）的主要项目，南岸居民协会（SRA）将举办南岸社区论坛，以便当地居民可以向墨尔本市政高级管理人员发表自己的意见。

出席该论坛将有市长Sally Capp、副市长兼规划主管Nicholas Reece、规划副主管Rohan Leppert、市政厅的副首席执行官

Alison Leighton、以及市政厅基本工程和基础设施的经理。

该论坛的主题是“南岸如何发展？”，专家小组由规划专家Leanne Hodyl和Michael Buxton教授组成，将探索《2010年南岸架构规划》中提出的愿景，了解和跟进南岸重大项目的进展。

当天下午6点至6.30点之间，在市长Sally Capp的支持下，将发行SRA历史书籍，以庆祝该协会成立20周年。由长期居



民Lynne Lumsden撰写，并由Albert Park成员Martin Foley撰写序言。该书涵盖了SRA代表Southbank社区的整个历史，并将在当

晚出售。然后，社区论坛将从下午6.30开始，持续到晚上9点。

重罚超速骑车

警方将于三月份处罚在南岸长廊(Southbank Promenade)超速的骑车者，以改善这个繁忙街道的安全。

David Schout

2月24日，维州警方发起了一项为期三周的行动，针对那些在有争议的路段上时速超过10公里的骑车者。

超速的骑车者可能面临高达\$1652.20的罚款。

南岸代理警司Brett Sidebottom表示，“沿河巡警行动”（Operation River Run）是为了保护步行者。

他说：“行人是我们道路使用者中最脆弱的群体之一，如果发生碰撞，几乎没有什么可以保护他们免受碰撞伤害。”



“对于所有的道路使用者来说，让骑车人以极快的速度从行人身边飞驰而过是非常危险的，特别现在有更多的人回到市中心，

走访南岸长廊沿途的美食和娱乐区。”此次行动还将检查电动自行车和踏板车，这是一段时间以来的争论焦点。

根据州法律，踏板车在人行道上的行驶速度不能超过10公里/小时，其输出功率不能超过200瓦。

Brett Sidebottom警官说：“我们 know 越来越多的人选择电动自行车和踏板车等穿行在市中心，我们希望确保他们的骑车设备符合标准并符合现行法规。”

但是“自行车网络”(Bicycle Network)首席执行官Craig Richards表示，\$1652的罚款“非同寻常”，他质疑为什么现在采取这样的行动。

他说：“这是酒后驾车罚款的三倍之多。”

“在南岸长廊，很少发生骑车者和行人相撞的事件。很难理解这次闪电式的行动时间，因为那里仍然非常安静。”

Richards先生建议那些骑车者在行人跑步的极限速度内骑行。市长Sally Capp表示，虽然南岸长廊仍将保持其共享空间，但墨尔本市政将鼓励骑车者利用即将完工的替代路线骑行。

换地交易确认 拟建公共公园

墨尔本市政与一家开发商交换了一小块土地，以换取南岸长廊上一个大于两个篮球场大小的新公共公园。

David Schout

在这项被称为“了不起的交易”中，将Riverside Quay上的Esso House一小块土地批给了开发商，计划将ExxonMobil的旧居变成一幢30层的商业建筑。

作为交换，市政可获得1000平方米的公共空间，计划将其改造成滨江公共绿地。

副市长兼规划主管Nicholas Reece表示，市政的这块166平方米的土地“没有任

何用途”，而这笔交易对南岸居民来说极为有益。

在2月23日的一次市政会议上Reece说：“我可以理解为什么有些人，尤其是南岸的居民，可能会奇怪为什么市政要把Riverside Quay上166平方米的一小块土地转让给一家私人公司。”

“当然，在政策上有一个非常好的理由。”

“这是一个人口超过500万的城市——在市中心，就在南岸，你不会得到比河滨更优质的房地产。根据这项交易协议，我们将看到所有墨尔本人都能享受的1000平方米新的公共开放空间。我认为对这座城市来说将是一件非常美好的事情。我非常很期待接下来的计划。”



南岸缺乏开放空间一直是个问题。该区域是澳大利亚人口最稠密的地区，附近公共空间的缺乏一直是当地居民所焦虑的。

绿党议员Rohan Leppert表示，此举非常必要。

“从环境投资组合的角度来看，在墨尔本人口最密集的地区创建新的公共开放空间非常受欢迎，这也正是我们的政策所及。”

然而，附近的居民已经对计划中的开发项目表示担忧，该开发项目将使Riverside Quay12号现有的15层建筑翻高一倍。



加速开发新住宅区

鱼人湾(Fishermans Bend)的Montague区域已经成为开发中心，多座高层建筑正在该区域建造。

Katie Johnson

州政府预计，作为澳大利亚最大的城市改造区域，到2050年将有8万名新居民，为此更多的发展项目正在酝酿中。

鱼人湾开发董事局主席Meredith Sussex说：“一旦所有的开发建筑完工，Montague将提升为城中新的住宅区之一了。

Sussex女士说：“目前，Montague正在建设10个开发项目，价值约6.5亿澳元。”

“它将包含约2000套新住宅和8000平方米的就业空间，也就是说，人们可以在此地居住以及工作。”

去年年底，州规划部长Richard Wynne批准了多个新开发项目，总计约有713个新住宅。

其中一个被批准的项目包括由美国房地产公司Greystar承担的Gladstone街85号的新建租赁开发项目。

Greystar计划今年就开始建造两个项目，为Montague区域提供数百套新的出租房屋。

Sussex女士说，董事会对Greystar表现出的兴趣感到高兴，并且认为建造租赁建筑项目的开发将是“高质量的开发项目”。

Sussex女士说：“这很令人兴奋，因为人们正在考虑在城市环境里以不同的方式生活，即使并不一定需要在城市里买房。”

她还表示，已经与其他一些开发商进行了商谈，这些开发商正在考虑申请在Montague新的商业和住宅许可。

What's On: March 2021

Community Calendar



Digital Literacy Pop-Up

At Boyd Park, we will be joined by experienced helpers who can assist you in learning new skills and solving problems you've had using technology. Bring your own phone, computer or tablet or use one of ours. Running Thursdays until April 1.
healthyageing@melbourne.vic.gov.au



SATURDAY, APRIL 10 @ 12PM Lo Fi lounge music feat. Nathan Slater

For this session, join us in Boyd Park to hear beautiful sounds from Melbourne-based performer and composer Nathan Slater.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3OiWaoE5qQg>

TUESDAYS - THURSDAYS & SATURDAYS
Chunky Move Dance Classes
Mondays to Thursdays and Saturdays at 111 Sturt St. Chunky Move dance classes are the perfect way to unwind, get fit and improve flexibility and strength.
chunkymove.com



MARCH @ 84-90 QUEENSBIDGE ST Underpark

Underpark is a bold vision brought to life by Melbourne developers Time & Place X Hickory. For a limited time Underpark will be available for the public to book court time and shoot hoops. FREE.
Eventbrite: Underpark Southbank



FIRST AND THIRD SATURDAY EACH MONTH
Southbank Sustainability Group
A growing group of green and sustainability enthusiasts who live in Southbank looking to bring positive change.
More info: facebook.com/SouthbankSustainabilityGroup



MARCH @ MALTHOUSE COURTYARD
Malthouse Outdoor Stage
Southbank has scored a major new outdoor performance space, playing host to theatre, comedy, live music and just about everything in between. To see what's on visit:
malthousetheatre.com.au/tickets/

MARCH 23 @ METROPOLIS
Southbank Community Forum
Hear from Lord Mayor Sally Capp, councillors and members of the City of Melbourne's senior management as the SRA hosts a forum to discuss the future of postcode 3006.
southbankresidents.org.au



BOYD IS BACK!
Boyd Community Hub has reopened its doors and welcomes you to visit. Complete with a cafe, bookable spaces, library and family services, maternal child health and its very own urban oasis, Boyd Park, the team at Boyd looks forward to seeing you soon!
melbourne.vic.gov.au/community



ONLINE STORYTIMES - YOUTUBE
Programs for families
Did you know City of Melbourne Libraries has a YouTube channel? If you are missing the Storytime programs at Boyd, there are Storytime, Songbird and craft videos to watch at home.
Subscribe to "City of Melbourne"



SUNDAYS
Arts Centre Market
Meet more than 80 of Victoria's finest artisans first hand. Discover how these unique artworks are made, chat directly about the products, inspirations and techniques.
artscentremelbourne.com.au

WEDNESDAYS @ BOYD
Free Walking Group
Join local fitness experts Just In Time as they lead a "not just walking group" for Boyd walkers. The program runs on Wednesdays from 9.30am to 10.30am.
justintimept.com



BY APPOINTMENT @ BOYD
Family support
Family support workers can assist you to connect with services, read letters and complete forms such as bills, school letters and other documents.
supportandcounselling@melbourne.vic.gov.au




TUESDAYS
Rotary Club of Southbank
Rotary Club of Southbank meets weekly for dinner on most Tuesday evenings throughout the year at Belgian Beer Cafe at Riverside Quay. Visitors welcome.
southbank.org.au



MONDAYS @ BOYD
Justice Of The Peace
Southbanker JP Atilla Akguner offers two hour sessions every Monday morning from 11am until 1pm at the Principal's Office at Boyd. To book in a time contact:
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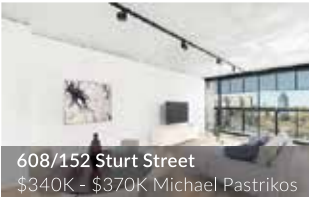
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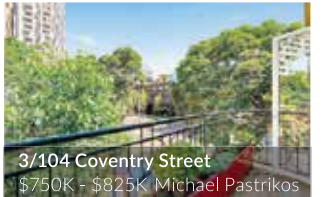
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