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## Mayor pushes for the release of Montague plans

*City of Port Phillip Mayor Marcus Pearl has ramped up pressure on the state government to release the long-awaited Montague Precinct plans for community consultation.*

WORDS BY *Sean Car*  
PLANNING

Gateway Ward Cr Pearl told a Fishermans Bend Business Forum (FBBF) event at the Woolworths Centre on March 3 that the release of the plans was crucial for both local government and developers to “get on with analysing and making investments”.

Speaking alongside panellist and Fishermans Bend Taskforce director Tania Quick, Cr Pearl said the delay in the release of the plans meant that planning was now occurring “concurrently” with rapid private development in the precinct.

“We need to ensure we have infrastructure backing those plans, and we need to have make sure we have the funding and finance models, and we need to make sure we have governance,” Cr Pearl said.

Responding to a suggestion that the two local councils governing Fishermans Bend – the City of Port Phillip and the City of Melbourne – seemed disengaged from the urban renewal project, Cr Pearl said, “I can see why some people feel that way.”

“Internally, we’re very far from disengaged, but it’s fair to say there’s a lot of things we’re waiting on,” he said.

“There’s been periods of fits and starts in Fishermans Bend. It’s now nearly a decade since the rezoning.”

“From our point of view, the amount of time that was spent by councillors analysing this issue and advocating for this issue in the last

council was disproportionate to anything else, and we invested heavily in it intentionally.

“That is sustained in this council, but it’s fair to say we’re obviously waiting for some things to happen which we’ve been prepared for for some time, particularly the Montague Precinct Plan, which we would like to see.”

While the development of the other three mixed-use precincts in Fishermans Bend – Lorimer, Sandridge and Wirraway – hinges largely on the delivery of public transport, the Montague precinct continues to move at a much faster pace.

Fishermans Bend Development Board chair Meredith Sussex told *Southbank News* last year that private development in Montague was “booming”, largely off the back of existing tram routes and catalyst infrastructure in Kirrip Park and South Melbourne Primary School.

While former City of Port Phillip Mayor Bernadene Voss called for the release of the plans in June 2020, proclaiming to *Southbank News* that they “are done”, the state government has since held back their release for community engagement due to COVID-19.

Ms Quick reiterated this at the forum on March 3 but said the community could expect to see the plans this year.

“We have had a little thing called COVID,” she said. “But we are expecting that over the course of this year there will be a number of key

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## Plans for community battery in Southbank

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

Federal Member for our local seat of Macnamara Josh Burns has announced that a victorious Labor Government would provide Southbankers with direct access to renewable energy through the installation of a new community battery.

As Australia’s most densely-populated suburb, 98 per cent of Southbank residents live in apartments or flats and the area is home to one of Australia’s largest proportion of renters, meaning most can’t install solar panels at their homes.

The Macnamara MP made the announcement at Melbourne Square on Kavanagh St on March 7 alongside Labor’s Shadow Minister for Climate Change and Energy Chris Bowen, as well as Deputy Lord Mayor of Melbourne Nicholas Reece.

Mr Burns said the initiative, which was his “very first election commitment for Macnamara”, would allow households to draw from excess energy stored in the

battery to “expand the renewables revolution to more people in Southbank”.

Local households who do have solar, but not batteries due to their cost, will be able to feed into the shared battery during the day and draw from it at night, which Mr Burns said would help cut electricity bills, reduce emissions and ease pressure on the grid.

Should Labor win government at the upcoming May election, it would work in partnership with the City of Melbourne as part of its Power Melbourne program to identify an appropriate location for the battery.

While community batteries usually work “like a sponge” to absorb excess renewable energy, Southbank has very low uptake in in solar panels. Implementing a battery would require a variety of appropriate locations to be identified locally for an array of solar to be installed, as well as other forms of remote energy generation.

While other exciting forms of renewable energy technologies such as solar tiles and solar cladding could also provide Southbankers with further options in the future, most currently have little to no means of accessing clean energy at present.

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# “Worst electoral system in the country?” Warnings sent to agents after 2020 election probe

*A City of Melbourne councillor has conceded that it “might just take the prize for the worst electoral system in the country” after 20 real estate agents were warned following an investigation into the 2020 election.*

WORDS BY *David Schout*  
ELECTIONS

In a recurring issue for the council, the Local Government Inspectorate found that the 20 agents admitted illegally completing ballot papers on behalf of landlords whose properties they manage.

Most of the owners lived overseas, “most commonly in China”, and some had “authorised their agent verbally or in writing to vote on their behalf.”

But despite finding evidence of the breach, the agents will escape with a slap on the wrist as fraud was not detected and, instead, they were found to have misunderstood the electoral laws.

“Our investigation did not uncover any systemic or intentional ballot fraud,” chief municipal inspector Michael Stefanovic said.

“The issues mainly arose due to these real estate agents not understanding our electoral laws and communication issues with owners that were exacerbated by pandemic restrictions.”

Many agents were unaware that voters absent from Victoria during the 15 days prior to the close of voting are excused from voting.

The agencies reported that the property owners generally “had limited English”, “were not interested in the election” and “communicated with their agents in Chinese through WeChat”.

Cr Rohan Leppert said the system was in urgent need of reform.

“While no evidence of ballot tampering has ever been brought before the courts, it is clear that City of Melbourne elections are overly reliant on the honesty of a handful of real estate agents,” he told *Southbank News*.

“We might just take the prize for the worst electoral system in the country. Consistent with the clear will of the community and the past positions established by the council, the electoral system simply must be reviewed.”

The investigation looked at 216 ballot papers completed by representatives from 21 real estate agencies, and those ballot papers under investigation were excluded from the ballot count, meaning they did not affect the outcome of the election.

It follows a probe into the 2018 Melbourne Lord Mayoral by-election vote in which five people were also given formal warnings.

In that by-election, 6889 ballots were sent to voters “care of” real estate agents, with large local real estate group MICM receiving 1700 ballot packs alone.

In July 2021 councillors voted for a state government review of the *City of Melbourne Act 2001* which also, controversially, grants one vote to residents in local government elections, while businesses were entitled to two votes.

That means that a business that rents a desk within the municipality is currently entitled to greater participation than local residents, as well as the chance to run in elections.

Councillors urged that the review begin in 2022, in time for the next election in 2024.

The “unique” system has not been properly reviewed for more than 20 years, while the electoral system for the other 78 Victorian councils was reviewed for the *Local Government Act 2020*.

At the March 1 Future Melbourne Committee meeting, Cr Leppert put forward a motion that urged Minister for Local Government Shaun Leane to respond to the request.

“The problems with the City of Melbourne electoral system are overwhelming, and the community has long been frustrated with Melbourne’s unique electoral provisions,” he said.

“The state government seems content to turn a blind eye to the flaws in the *City of Melbourne Act*, and my motion is the latest attempt to bring on a comprehensive review so that it can be completed ahead of the 2024 election.”

“The Minister for Local Government needs to decide if he wants a healthy democratic system for Melbourne that is trusted by the voters, or if he is content to continue letting our democratic systems fall apart.”

Fellow Greens councillors Olivia Ball said electoral integrity had “scarcely been more important than it is now”.

“Democracy cannot be taken for granted,” she said at the March 1 meeting.

“We will be held to account by the public who want a transparent and reliable of government and elections. We ask the minister to defend this patch in the quilt of democracy in Australia and to do so promptly, so we’re adequately prepared for the 2024 election and the public can have confidence in both the process and outcome.”

The motion was unanimously endorsed by councillors ●



David Schout

JOURNALIST

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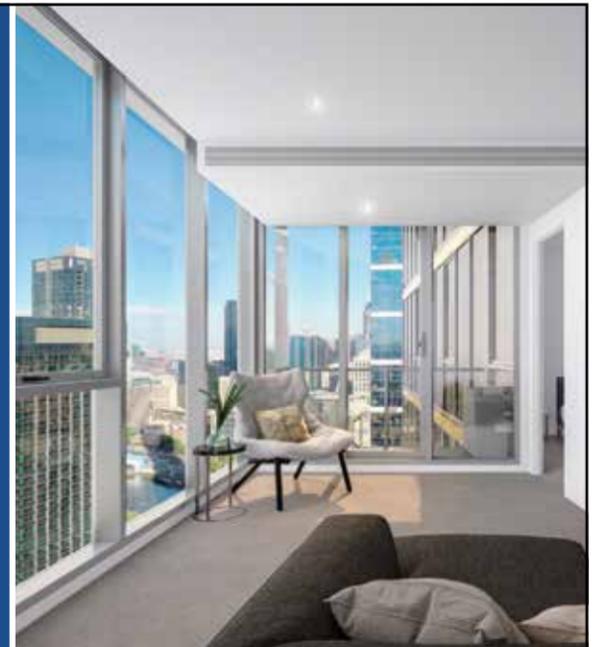
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# New dog park gets tails wagging as teething issues are resolved

WORDS BY *Brendan Rees*  
 PHOTOGRAPHY BY *John Tadigiri*  
 COMMUNITY

Southbank residents have embraced a new off-leash dog park on City Rd after the previously derelict site beneath Kings Way's southern undercroft was transformed into a welcoming area.

The City of Melbourne officially opened the park at the start of March, which includes play equipment, space for dogs to run, and a drinking fountain.

Lord Mayor Sally Capp said it was "fantastic to deliver this carefully curated dog park to Southbank and all its four-legged residents."

"There are obstacle courses for the sporty pooches, and dirt to dig in for those who like to get their paws messy," Cr Capp said.

"We're pleased to utilise this space, previously derelict, and turn it into something that enhances the city living experience."

However, while users of the park had so far enjoyed their experiences, there were some issues raised by the community which prompted the new residents' group Southbank 3006 to meet with representatives of the City of Melbourne.

The group's communications chair Mary Kay Rauma said one of the main concerns discussed was the height of the fence which was causing issues for smaller dogs – however the Lord Mayor confirmed the council would move "swiftly to get this resolved" as "we want to ensure this new park is as safe and pooch-friendly as possible."

When *Southbank News* visited the park, a piece of timber had been installed to cover the gap under the fence.

Other matters discussed was a request from residents to have double gates provided at the two entry points to prevent dogs from running out as well as new latches after dog-owners reported difficulty with their use.

Another drinking fountain [for both people and re-filling dog dishes] and additional rubbish bins were also requested to be installed inside the park's enclosure.

"There's also a gap above on Kings Way that causes rain to pour down into the dog park so they're addressing sealing that," Ms Rauma said.

She also mentioned people were complaining about "why wasn't there grass?" However, Ms Rauma said she understood the council's decision to use gravel as it would be "easier to maintain and doesn't require sunlight."

Overall, Ms Rauma said the meeting was "proactive" with residents being "extremely happy" with the new dog park.

"This is a great example of how we intend to do our advocacy work and that is to be a conduit, a connector between special interest groups [including the Small Dogs of Southbank group] and City of Melbourne ... and give our community members an opportunity to be their own voice when it comes to expressing concerns directly with the City of Melbourne," she said.

The dog park, which forms part of the City of



▲ Locals enjoy the new dog park this month.



▲ Mary Kay Rauma points to improvements made by the council.

Melbourne's City Road Master Plan, covers 400 sqms and is designed specifically to engage dogs' olfactory senses.

The council said the gravel coverage would reduce the risk of creating a breeding ground for internal parasites, which can be common in grassed areas

Southbank Residents' Association president Tony Penna said the dog park had been "received really positively."

"We're looking forward to it being used by the community," he said. "It's not very big but hey, it's Southbank, and we have enough problems with open space for dogs. But it is the first off-lead dog park in Southbank so that's promising."

Meanwhile, a new dog group has been launched on Facebook and Instagram called *Paws of Southbank* for residents to connect and organise play dates.

There are 3498 registered dogs overall in the municipality in 2020. In March 2021 there were 430 dogs registered in Southbank, mainly small dog breeds.

Registrations were up in 2020 which was attributed to residents seeking companionship during the pandemic ●



## Meet a Southbank neighbour ...

WORDS BY *Mary Kay Rauma*  
 COMMUNITY

I met Pollyanna Manlio and her 18-month-old Siberian Husky Jasper at the new dog park beneath Kings Way. The two make a striking pair who exude a sense of joy and positivity.

In fact, when Polly went home to tell her partner, Houston, that she was approached for this story, he had to laugh. Just weeks prior, Channel Nine News anchor Peter Hitchener and his TV crew were driving past and stopped to say 'hello'. "He really loves animals and had all sorts of questions about Jasper," Polly recalled.

Polly and her partner Houston, who works for Melbourne Storm Rugby League, both grew up in Melbourne and have lived in Southbank for the past four years. Polly is recruiter in the construction industry, something she fell into after getting a degree in accounting and finance from La Trobe University. Experiencing her calm, professional demeanor over coffee at A Treat of France on City Rd, I can see why she is successful at her profession. "It's about relationships, building trust and being very thorough," she explained. The two love Southbank for its proximity to the CBD and great food, with the Waterfront Southgate at the top of their list. "The seafood there is so good," she said dreamily.

Not surprisingly, Polly's favourite thing to do outside of work is to spend time with Jasper and the new Kings Way dog park has been a big game changer. "We used to have to make the 35-minute walk to the grassy area in Docklands for Jasper to socialise with other dogs. On some days we wouldn't get home for dinner

until 8pm or wouldn't be able to make it over there at all." Now, she and Jasper visit the dog park, just down the street from her apartment, three times a day. "The dog park is the only enclosed off-leash area within walking distance and having a fresh water bowl is really important—Jasper drinks a lot of water." Polly pointed out that there were no dog drinking stations along the entire stretch of Yarra River east of Docklands. "It's actually really an issue for us."

The dog park has improved her quality of life too. "It's been great to get to know the other dog owners and their dogs and recognise them out and about in the neighbourhood." So much so that she has started Instagram and Facebook communities, Paws of Southbank, for dog owners to connect and celebrate their pets. "I've always wanted to start a Foundation," she shared. She's been inspired by the Dogs of Docklands group that holds social events to fundraise for dog wellness causes. For now, she's focused on enjoying Jasper, the new dog park and making new friends. "I love living in Southbank and feel very safe here." ●

*MaryKay Rauma is a founder and communications chair of Southbank3006 – a not-for-profit community and advocacy group focused on connecting residents and improving the liveability of Southbank. Southbank residents can join for free at southbank3006.com or by scanning the QR code.*



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# Mayor pushes for the release of Montague plans

Continued from page 1.

things coming out for community engagement, including the Montague Precinct Plan, infrastructure funding strategy, precinct plans for the National Employment Innovation Cluster, as well as a number of other policy documents.”

Ms Quick said a major current priority for the taskforce was “about partnerships and working really closely and really carefully with the local councils.”

While Cr Pearl said the council supported current governance arrangements in Fishermans Bend, led by the Development Board and the taskforce, which sits in the Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions (DJPR), he said it was only as good as the “framework it’s operating under.”

He said the success in the early delivery of catalyst infrastructure in Montague was in part due to the fact that “council had some skin in the game.”

“We certainly put in a better partnership approach with that building [the school] and the open space and traffic management components of that project I think was a lot better thought through because council was involved at the start,” Cr Pearl said.

“The governance model is only as good as the framework that it’s operating under so the importance of releasing the precinct plans and ensuring we have certainty around that will determine what the governance framework looks like.”

“We have an official council position that we want local involvement in the governance structure. We think councils are important to that.”

## Push for speed limit reduction on Williamstown Rd

In response to growing concerns surrounding the safety of students travelling to the recently completed Port Melbourne Secondary School, taskforce director Tania Quick told the forum that VicRoads had agreed to reduce the speed limit on Williamstown Rd.

However, the Department of Transport (DoT) confirmed with *Southbank News* that Ms Quick had, in fact, been provided incorrect information and that it had no current plans to reduce the speed limits.

“Keeping all road users safe is our number one priority, and we are always exploring ways to make our roads safer – including Williamstown Rd,” the spokesperson said.

“We will continue to monitor traffic and safety at this location.”

The new secondary school opened to students on Graham St last month across from the new Woolworths Centre on Plummer St which opened in 2021, with both developments causing increased traffic and safety issues in the precinct.

This formed a key topic of discussion at last month’s forum, and while speed limits won’t be reduced along Williamstown Rd at least for now, it has highlighted a desire for change from the local community.



*“The governance model is only as good as the framework that it’s operating under so the importance of releasing the precinct plans and ensuring we have certainty around that will determine what the governance framework looks like.”*



“I’m a local resident, I know what it is like to cross that road with children as well. That’s [reducing the speed limit] a really important component,” Ms Quick said.

In response to a number of concerns raised about near-misses surrounding the school and the Woolworths car park, Mayor Pearl said traffic flow along Plummer St had increased “at a rate that we didn’t predict a few years ago.”

“With the [Port Melbourne Secondary] school here, we don’t have a bus pull-in zone, we don’t have crossings on Williamstown Rd and the council is now retrofitting those pieces of infrastructure, which we will do, but it’s fair to say we should have done that a couple of years ago in partnership with the state,” he said.

“I think it’s a bit of a wake-up call for council to make sure we’re being proactive in that process.”

While Cr Pearl said the council was currently

reviewing its traffic surveys, Ms Quick said pedestrian crossing upgrades, widening of footpaths and installation of safe bike lanes were being looked at “as part of the broader infrastructure planning.”

## Parking “catch 22”

Speaking at the forum, a local business owner captured the frustration of many others currently operating in an “area of transition”, as the issue of paid parking amid a lack of public transport continues to cause headaches in Fishermans Bend.

While Mayor Pearl said the council had sought to “get the balance right” between residents and the needs of people who work in the area, Ms Quick said more apartments would provide “more and more opportunities for people to live and work in this precinct.”

Cr Pearl said, “There’s a lot of focus in Fishermans Bend on the residential component in the future, but what’s important is that we maintain the commerce component and those high-paying jobs in this local area. This is where the conflict happens with parking because these people drive in for work.”

But one local business owner said he believed there was “a bit of misalignment”, stating his tenants were being forced to look elsewhere while he was paying increased rates and land taxes in a capital city zone.

“We have around 600 people coming in. We don’t have enough parking on site, so they’re forced to park on the street and risk getting a fine or having to move their car every few hours,” he said.

“People are saying, ‘there’s no public transport, no car parking, I don’t want to work here.’”

Cr Pearl responded, “We don’t always get it right and the changing balance of those parking spots we’re open to review them periodically and the right time for that is at the end of the year. If there are situations where it’s a huge disincentive for people to come work here that’s something we’d like to rectify.”

Ms Quick said it was about “the balancing of the long-term vision and the challenge of managing now” in what was a 30-year program.

“The precinct doesn’t work without public transport,” she said.

## “Where’s the tram?”

The delivery of public transport in Fishermans Bend remains the key to unlocking the precinct’s full potential, but the community continues to wait patiently for a major announcement from the state government.

In the short to medium term, a tram line over the Yarra River was originally forecast in the Fishermans Bend Framework for completion by 2025, but Ms Quick said the government was now looking beyond 2025.

“What we have seen in the precinct is a shift from the impact of COVID and certainly the levels of development construction confidence, our projections are telling us that there might be a further staggering of that infrastructure,” she said.

“I can’t tell you what the recommendations from the DoT will be once the feasibility work has been done in terms of how it will be delivered, but there is a commitment in the framework.”

Bernadene Voss, now a member of the FBBF that moderated the event, prelude discussion around public transport by saying, “we don’t want another Docklands”, and that the community feared the tram “was not happening”.

Mayor Pearl urged the community to make the topic of a tram bridge a “big political issue” come the next election.

“What we need is help from people like you,” he said. “The big political issue is where that tram crosses the river. So, any conversations you can have with local MPs about where you feel that should cross the [Yarra] river are important.”

Cr Pearl also added that the City of Port Phillip was working in coalition with neighbouring councils, including the Cities of Melbourne and Hobsons Bay, to sell the high-speed Metro 2 connection to state and federal governments as a project of “national importance”.

Metro 2 would see an underground train servicing Fishermans Bend from Newport to Clifton Hill, which Cr Pearl said would have unparalleled economic benefits to the city and Victoria.

“What I’m trying to do in partnership with the surrounding councils particularly Hobsons Bay, etc., is to work in coalition to sell this project of national importance and particularly compare it to other Metro projects that don’t have anything like the economic payback that this does,” he said.

“From a society point of view, it’s amazing, and from an economic point of view, it has a 100-year benefit, which is unbelievable in terms of most economic models.” ●



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# At last! Progress on 310 St Kilda Rd as Morrison Government announces review

WORDS BY *Sean Car*  
VETERANS AFFAIRS

The long-running saga that is the situation surrounding the dormant former Repatriation Clinic at 310 St Kilda Rd could be drawing closer to an end, with the federal government announcing a review into the historic building.

A statement released by the Minister for Defence Industry Melissa Price last month confirmed that the Morrison Government had “started planning for the renovation and ongoing use by Defence of an historic Art Deco building in the Victoria Barracks”.

The Department of Defence, the owner of the building, has engaged Melbourne architects Lovell Chen to conduct a feasibility study into the refurbishment and re-use of the former Repatriation Outpatients Clinic, which has been vacant for more than 20 years.

The feasibility study will identify opportunities for the renovation and ongoing use of the building, while taking into account a planned redevelopment of the wider Victoria Barracks precinct.

Minister Price said this would include accommodation for both Defence and Defence-related community groups, such as veterans’ organisations.

“The Morrison Government is committed to ensuring the future use of 310 St Kilda Rd preserves the building’s heritage and architecture,” Minister Price said.

“We are seeking to balance the growing needs of Defence, while noting the building’s close links to Australia’s military history and our veteran community.”

“This study will guide Defence’s restoration and repurposing of the building, and potential accommodations for Defence-related community groups, including veterans’ organisations.”

The announcement of the review brings



years of uncertainty surrounding the building’s future to an end, with the Department of Defence having attempted to offload the site to both the Victorian Government and the City of Melbourne for a peppercorn sum.

Having declared the property “surplus to requirements”, it had been on the verge of putting the building on the open market after discussions with the state government fell through in 2019.

The Australian National Veterans Arts Museum (ANVAM), a not-for-profit community group dedicated to the rehabilitation of veterans, has long sought to become trustee of the site and establish a gallery, arts studios and mental health support services.

The City of Melbourne threw ANVAM’s dream a lifeline after entering discussions with Defence in 2019. However, negotiations between the two levels of government failed due to the building’s poor condition, with remediation works estimated at around \$21 million.

The state of disrepair was revealed in a Senate Estimates hearing on October 27 last year after Victorian Liberal Senator David Van Grilled Defence’s estate and infrastructure team leaders over its lack of investment in the building’s maintenance.

During the hearing, Defence representatives made the stunning admission that “other than those external areas to ensure that it’s safe”, it hadn’t spent any money on maintaining the building in 26 years, resulting in the City of Melbourne’s decision not to proceed with a sale.

“If it’s going to be used for a public purpose, you’re asking another level of government to take on a liability that they didn’t cause? That your group has let this building go,” Senator Van said at the hearing.

“Both in the precinct and in Melbourne, opposite the Shrine, it was built for veterans, it’s been allowed to fall into disrepair to the point where it can’t be sold to another level of government, which leaves a public sale.”

“

*We are seeking to balance the growing needs of Defence, while noting the building’s close links to Australia’s military history and our veteran community.*

”

“What would the public perception of Defence be if it was allowed to be turned into a block of apartments overlooking Victoria Barracks?”

“I brought them [the City of Melbourne] to that table to help keep it in public ownership and the amount of messing around from your office to Melbourne City Council, has caused them to walk away from this now.”

“I can’t say how upset I am by this news that they voted it down last night because of the disrepair you’ve let it go into, because what you’ve attached to it as conditions.”

The building, which adjoins Victoria Barracks on St Kilda Rd in Southbank, was completed in 1937 and contains heritage elements of Commonwealth significance.

It was constructed to provide outpatient support to World War I veterans and continued providing services to veterans for decades. The site was used by Defence up until 1995.

ANVAM chairman Mark Johnston said the announcement of a review represented an “amazing win we have had to save this place from developers, plus the hope that our efforts over the past nine years have not been in vain.” ●



Yarra River Business Network

## NETWORKING LUNCHEONS

**Yarra River**  
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Find out how to get the most from Southbank’s fantastic community (including services and public facilities) at our free information session.



**FREE** information sessions for new residents

Southbank Residents Association is a not-for-profit community organisation that advocates for residents and aims to bring together and support the interests of everyone who lives or works in Southbank.

To register for the next information session, go to our website:  
[www.southbankresidents.org.au](http://www.southbankresidents.org.au)  
Next Session Date: 6.30pm-7.30pm 16th March  
Location: Boyd Community Hub, 207 City Rd, Southbank VIC 3006



Printed and circulated with the assistance of a City of Melbourne Community Grant

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Your City of Melbourne community update

# REPORT GRAFFITI AND STREET WASTE ONLINE



Our Rapid Response Clean Team helps make the city sparkle

The City of Melbourne is proud to launch the Clean Melbourne Graffiti Blitz on Clean Up Australia Day.

Over a fortnight from 6 March, our Rapid Response Clean Team will move through the CBD and city gateways, removing graffiti tagging.

The graffiti clean-up will then move across the municipality to our neighbourhoods, to ensure Melbourne is clean, inviting and looking its best to support the city's recovery.

### Easy online reporting

City officers are always on the lookout for litterbugs and take a zero-tolerance approach. From cigarette butts to fridges, they'll investigate and issue fines from \$363 to \$9113, depending on the offence.

We remove 6500 square metres of illegal graffiti each month, in response to 2500 reports from the public. This costs ratepayers about \$1.5 million annually.

You can help us keep our beautiful city clean and inviting by using the QR code on this page to report illegal graffiti and street waste in your neighbourhood.

For more information, visit [melbourne.vic.gov.au/graffiti](https://melbourne.vic.gov.au/graffiti)

Scan to report graffiti and street waste



Rapid Response Clean Team



## NEW KEYPASS TO FAMILY FUN



Get discounted entry to attractions like SEA LIFE Melbourne Aquarium

Explore magical underwater worlds, snap a selfie with a giant, optical-illusion mural and cruise along the Yarra River - Birrarung thanks to a City of Melbourne initiative attracting families to the CBD.

The Melbourne Attractions Keypass will unlock a 25 per cent discount for tickets to SEA LIFE Melbourne Aquarium, ArtVo and Melbourne River Cruises when bundled together.

The Keypass initiative is a partnership between the City of Melbourne and online travel agency Klook. Tickets are available to purchase until 31 March.

In addition to the Keypass, you can also snap up 15 per cent discounts for many more popular Melbourne experiences, including foodie tours, ice-skating and boat rental.

Find out more at [whatson.melbourne.vic.gov.au](https://whatson.melbourne.vic.gov.au)

## FOOD AND ORGANIC WASTE COLLECTION EXPANDED

Keep an eye out for new food and garden organics bins being delivered to 14,000 dwellings in buildings of up to five storeys from late March.

The first phase of our food and garden organics collection was rolled out to more than 9000 single unit dwellings from last June.

Since then, we've diverted more than 830 tonnes of organic waste from landfill, making it into compost for parks and gardens. We're now developing tailored approaches for apartment buildings.

### Why organic waste matters

Organic waste in landfill generates methane, a gas which has a climate change impact 25 times greater than carbon dioxide.

That's why it's important to process this waste differently and keep it out of landfill.

By removing organics from the general rubbish collection, we can cut our residential landfill footprint in half, reduce carbon and methane emissions and promote a circular economy.

This project is part of our wider plan to reduce landfill and improve waste and recycling services across the municipality as outlined in our

Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy 2030.

### How to use the new green bin

You can dispose of things like fruit and vegetable scraps, meat, fish, weeds, and grass cuttings in your new bin. Remember, if it grows, it goes in the new green bin with the lime green lid.

We will support residents with information and events as we roll out this service across the municipality.

For more information, visit [melbourne.vic.gov.au/food-garden-waste](https://melbourne.vic.gov.au/food-garden-waste)



We are expanding our organic waste collection to multi-unit dwellings

Information and events in this publication are current at the time of printing. Subsequent changes may occur. All photos taken in line with health and safety guidelines.

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▲ L-R: Yarra Energy Foundation's David Anstee and Tim Shue, Member for Southern Metropolitan Nina Taylor, Southbank Residents' Association's Dan O'Keeffe, Labor's Shadow Minister for Climate Change and Energy Chris Bowen, Yarra Energy Foundation's community battery program manager Chris Wallin, Port Phillip Emergency Climate Action Network's Deborah Sykes, Macnamara MP Josh Burns, City of Port Phillip Deputy Mayor Louise Crawford, Deputy Lord Mayor of Melbourne Nicholas Reece, Southbank Sustainability Group's Artemis Pattichi and Southbank3006 committee member Trisha Avery. Photo: John Tadigiri.



▲ Katrina Sedgwick will lead the corporation set to oversee the \$1.7 billion Arts Precinct transformation. Photo: Phoebe Powell.

## Plans for community battery in Southbank

Continued from page 1.

Representatives from the Yarra Energy Foundation, which is in the process of installing some of Victoria's first community batteries in Tarneit, Phillip Island and North Fitzroy in partnership with the Victorian Government, were also present at the announcement.

Mr Burns said the initiative for a community battery in Southbank formed part of Federal Labor's Powering Australia Plan, which has been backed by a national industry community battery working group.

Mr Bowen said community batteries "responded to local conditions" and were a vital tool in the pursuit of net-zero.

"If we come first [at the federal election], the [Anthony] Albanese Labor Government would install a community battery here in Southbank," he said.

"Almost everybody wants to participate in the renewable energy revolution, so in Australia, we need to, for a range of reasons, massively upgrade our storage of renewable energy to get the maximum benefits of the households."

"Also, [there are benefits] for the country in reducing emissions and to stabilise the grid so that we are storing renewable energy for when we need it most and not overloading the grid when we're not using it but we're saving it for when we do need it in the evening."

Mr Bowen said while one in four Australian households now had solar panels on their roofs, which represented the best figure in the world, only one in 60 had a battery.

"Those families without a battery are missing out on savings and more emissions reductions," he said.

"The community battery would enable those households with solar panels to feed in and feed out, and also, for those households without solar panels to participate. They might find it hard to generate the energy during the day, but they can use some of that energy at night and participate in the renewable energy revolution even in just a small way."

Mr Bowen said the Tesla battery unit, which was "about the size of a car", would be installed in partnership with the City of Melbourne and "genuine community consultation" would take place to determine its most suitable location.



*The community battery would enable those households with solar panels to feed in and feed out, and also, for those households without solar panels to participate.*



Deputy Lord Mayor Nicholas Reece said the council's ambition of achieving zero emissions by 2030 would only be possible through an increase in community distributed power.

"We're standing in Australia's most densely populated suburb and it's a suburb that has a lot of forward-thinking people who live here and I know they will embrace this initiative," he said.

"We know that the future of our energy system is renewable power, and we know that a big part of the rollout of a renewable energy system is community distributed power and that's what batteries deliver."

"Having a battery here in Southbank, we'll be able to help Southbank transition to clean, renewable, reliable and cheaper power than the fossil fuel alternatives that exist."

While the announcement hinges on a successful election result for the Labor Government, it's understood that initial feasibility studies for the installation of a battery in Southbank have been provided in partnership with the City of Melbourne ●

## ACMI director moves roles to lead Arts Precinct renewal

WORDS BY David Schout PLANNING

Director and CEO of the Australian Centre for the Moving Image (ACMI) Katrina Sedgwick has stepped down to oversee the \$1.7 billion transformation of Southbank's Arts Precinct.

After more than seven years at the helm of Australia's national museum for screen culture, Ms Sedgwick will take up the role of director and chief executive of Melbourne Arts Precinct Corporation (MAP Co).

The state government-established entity is set to drive the vision for Australia's largest ever cultural infrastructure project.

MAP Co will also be responsible for running Federation Square and the new 18,000-square-metre elevated public park in Southbank.

"This is a once-in-a-lifetime project and I am honoured – and excited – to have the opportunity to work with colleagues across our arts precinct, our creative sector and beyond to realise this extraordinary vision for all Victorians," she said.

One of Victoria's most respected creative leaders, Ms Sedgwick has an extensive background as a performer, creative producer, commissioner and festival director.

She was the founding director/CEO of the Adelaide Film Festival (2002-2011), before working as the head of arts for ABC TV (2012-14).

In early 2015 Sedgwick was appointed as director and CEO at ACMI, where she led the organisation through a period of expansion and transformation, culminating in a \$40 million capital project.

She navigated ACMI through the impact of COVID-19 and, according to the organisation, there was now "no barriers to where and how ACMI

can be accessed."

Reflecting on her time, Ms Sedgwick said it had been an "extraordinary honour" to lead as director and CEO.

"Together we have positioned ACMI at the forefront of museum culture on a local and global scale not just in terms of our programs but our focus on making ACMI more accessible, welcoming and reflective of our communities," she said.

"I could not be prouder of our achievements. And as I move into this new role, I look forward to collaborating with ACMI and our colleagues across the sector as we seize the extraordinary opportunity of the Melbourne Arts Precinct to enable the cultural capital of Australia to further flourish though the incredible talent that resides in our city and state."

ACMI board president Janet Matton paid tribute to the role Ms Sedgwick played during the past seven years.

"On behalf of the ACMI board, I'd like to thank Katrina Sedgwick for her outstanding leadership of ACMI, which has included rising to the ongoing challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic," Matton said.

"Katrina is a wonderful ambassador for the moving image and leaves a legacy of a newly transformed museum that lies at the heart of Victoria's creative industries. I'm certain that Katrina will continue to be a huge asset to our city through her leadership of Melbourne Arts Precinct Corporation."

In 2020, Ms Sedgwick was awarded an Order of Australia Medal for her services to performing arts, screen industries and visual arts administration.

She will begin her new role on April 4 ●

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Artwork Kat Rae 'Psychedelic Burka Road' (detail) 2020.

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**TIME:** 2pm-8pm  
**VENUE:** Shrine of Remembrance

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is on at ANVAM,  
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Thursdays 12pm-7pm  
& Sundays 12pm-4pm  
[anvam.org.au](http://anvam.org.au)

# M2A: VOICE

13  
MARCH  
- 1 MAY  
2022

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VETERANS ARTS MUSEUM

ANVAM and the veteran community acknowledge the Bunurong Boon Wurrung and Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung peoples, the traditional custodians of the lands where these events will take place

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# Southbank Promenade upgrade gets priority nod from council

WORDS BY *Brendan Rees*  
COUNCIL AFFAIRS

Works to revitalise a section of Southbank Promenade have been brought forward after the disruption of lockdowns prompted a reshuffle of major projects by the City of Melbourne.

Stage one of the \$3.8 million Southbank Promenade project, which stretches 300 metres from Princes Bridge to Evan Walker Bridge, will start at the end of April after being given priority “because of the condition of trees, pavements, and longstanding issues with fast cyclist speeds.”

Due to the pending \$470 million Southgate development, the council said it had decided in April last year to “proceed with an early works package, limited to extension of the upper promenade on the west.”

The council’s latest capital works program summary report said a tender had been awarded with works expected to be completed by December 2022.

The project seeks to provide greater safety and improved amenity for all users including replacing bluestone paving, lighting upgrades, new seating, reconfigured stairs, and ramps between promenade levels, as well as replacing and planting new native trees.

In other projects, construction is currently underway for the final component of the much-delayed Southbank Boulevard project, including a \$5.9 million play space to be built between Kavanagh and Fawkner streets, with an expected completion in the third quarter of this year.

The play space will be a “natural environment”, accessible for children of all ages and include boulders for climbing, swings, slides, ladders, and street furniture.

According to the summary report, the council has also set aside \$6.3 million for a major public art commission in Southbank – which has been “separated out from the broader Southbank Boulevard redevelopment project.”



“While the project has an independent scope and timeline, it will respond to the original stakeholder consultation done for Southbank Boulevard,” the capital works program summary report said.

While few details are known about the public art project, council has so far spent \$1.98 million after proposing to provide an accessible green open space with “meaningful public art” with construction expected to be completed in 2024.

“The major public art commission in Southbank is in development and will respond to community consultation, providing accessible green open space with meaningful public art in one of Melbourne’s most densely populated areas,” the report said.

The report added the impact of lockdowns, worker limitations on projects sites, and construction work shutdowns related to the pandemic had affected council works at the end of 2021.

“As a result, the labour market and supply chain were disrupted, and the award of new contracts was delayed. This put further strain on our delivery goals and resulted in a \$27

million variance from the ‘revised’ capital works budget,” it said.

“Despite these challenges, we continue to deliver the largest and most significant capital works portfolio in the council’s history by accelerating or rescheduling ongoing projects, reprioritising works where possible, on-boarding skilled resources to increase our delivery capabilities and identifying opportunities to bring forward works or add new projects to the portfolio that can be commenced or completed in this financial year.”

Southbank Residents’ Association president Tony Penna welcomed the Southbank Promenade project being prioritised, saying it needed the upgrade as “the business community has been longing for it”.

“The promenade has been earmarked for a while now. Good planning would have these things addressed before it gets critical,” he said, but added “we hope that they continue their consultation with us, the residents’ association, as they have done in the past. The cyclists are still a concern, and we need that addressed.”

In terms of the proposed public art commission in Southbank, Mr Penna said it would also

be a welcome addition as “we need more public art”.

“Southbank Boulevard would be the perfect place for art now that we’ve made it a public space”.

*Southbank News* contacted the City of Melbourne for an update on the \$6.3 million public art project in Southbank with a spokesperson saying the council’s program included temporary and permanent artwork to “drive visitation to Melbourne and reinforce our position as the cultural capital of Australia.”

“Our Southbank public art commission is part of this program and will be completed in the coming years,” the spokesperson said.

The council hired Irish academic Vaari Claffey in 2017 as the “public art strategist” for Southbank, however, when contacted by *Southbank News*, the City of Melbourne didn’t comment on whether she was still involved in the project.

David Hamilton, president of Southbank3006, said given Southbank was the arts precinct of Melbourne, it was an “excellent opportunity” to engage local artists and “stimulate” visual arts in the area.

“Given the struggle and the difficulties that Victorian artists faced over the past two years, this is an excellent opportunity to pivot the project and appoint local artists to run the project and use it to stimulate art,” he said.

Late last year the council announced new public art would be informed by a more Aboriginal rather than Eurocentric view, which was part of several “shifts” in the City of Melbourne’s public art program.

Meanwhile, the council has forecast to have a full year underlying deficit of \$47 million – \$20 million variance to the budget – which Deputy Lord Mayor Nicholas Reece conceded “obviously presents a very challenging set of financial circumstances for us.”

“But I am confident that Melbourne will recover – we have a great team here at the City of Melbourne and look forward to those finances turning the corner,” he said ●

## “Demand is far outstripping supply”: Rental vacancies plummet

WORDS BY *David Schout*  
REAL ESTATE

Renting is about to get a whole lot harder, and potentially more expensive, for prospective tenants in Southbank.

Apartments are being snapped up quickly as a range of factors, including an increased demand, reopening of borders and lack of new properties coming on the market has seen one local agent forecast “rent going up”.

For the first time since the onset of COVID-19, residential vacancy rates in Southbank have dipped below five per cent according to the latest data from SQM research.

At three per cent, vacancies in the local area are at their lowest for three years (since March 2019).

The figures represent a huge bounce-back after almost one in five Southbank apartments (17.2 per cent) were empty less than 18 months ago, in October 2020. Since then, demand has steadily grown as the number of vacant residential apartments have dropped despite the impact of the Omicron variant.

Ray White Southbank principal Andrew Salvo said that after “a tough

few years”, things had sprung back sharply despite a “worst ever quarter” in July to September 2021.

“The rebound has been so strong that we’re now back at pre-COVID levels within just six months,” he told *Southbank News*.

He said agents were seeing “huge numbers through properties” and forecast that vacancies would remain low.

“It’s not only that they’re renting quicker, we’re getting large numbers through open-for-inspections. We’ve had some properties where 40 people have turned up whereas during COVID and in lockdowns, we were lucky to get one. There’s a lot more demand. Demand is far outstripping supply at the moment.”

Mr Salvo said that the huge impact of the pandemic – whereby demand dropped and landlords were forced to reduce rent to ensure their properties could be leased – forced a “reset” of the local market.

“There has been a big reset in pricing to get into a state where we could attract people from other suburbs to come and live in our area,” he said.

“Vacancies were a big issue at the start of COVID, but as rents reset the vacancy rate came down which meant

there was no stock on the market. Now with the borders reopening and the free movement of people, there’s not much [available].”

The return of international students has been a factor in the resurgence of the local rental market.

Prior to COVID-19, more than one in seven Southbank residents were international students.

And while that percentage is not as high as the CBD and nearby Carlton (where more than a third of residents in the area are international students), a sizeable number of those who opt to study within Melbourne choose Southbank as their home.

However, Australia’s strict border policy throughout the pandemic saw that figure decline.

But this had rebounded, too, and Mr Salvo said they had dealt with “a lot” of students in the past month.

Along with students, there was also demand for rentals from those interstate and in regional areas.

“We’ve had a lot of young professionals moving to Melbourne. A lot of people left Melbourne, and left jobs behind here, so there’s a lot of jobs. I’ve done a few open-for-inspections myself and talking to a few people from Sydney, they can get a



*The rebound has been so strong that we’re now back at pre-COVID levels within just six months.*



see. So, there’s going to be a bit of a black spot two years down the track,” he said.

“We might be having completions now, but in the next two years the number of completions will be far diminished. So, I see vacancy really tightening and rents going up even further, well above what it was pre-COVID.”

The pandemic has permanently changed many industries, and real estate is no different.

Once seen as almost trivial, virtual property tours are now an essential service.

“Pre-COVID we were sort of doing it (virtual tours) for the owners who wanted to invest in their campaigns, but generally most of them didn’t see any point,” Mr Salvo said.

“But I think buyer and renter behaviour has changed a lot. Through COVID we did virtual tours and now it’s put us in good stead for the future as well and we’re continuing to do it. People who rent in Southbank and the CBD; not many of them are from the area – we’re a very immature suburb. People are generally coming from somewhere. So, it’s imperative that we do it now as part of the service.” ●



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# Four Seasons to bring a “new standard for luxury in Melbourne” in highly ambitious vertical city

WORDS BY *Brendan Rees*  
PLANNING

A luxury hospitality operator has been chosen to manage a hotel in a \$2.7 billion development in Southbank, which will be home to the tallest skyscraper in Australia.

Four Seasons Hotels and Resorts will oversee 210 rooms of the western tower of the STH BNK by Beulah development at 60 Southbank Boulevard where guests will arrive via a sky lobby on the 63rd floor.

The hotel will be in the top section of the western tower and boast an “ultra-luxurious” sky-high urban resort comprising a “world-class” integrated health and wellness hub and rooftop restaurant.

Designed by UNStudio and Cox Architecture, the development between City Rd and Southbank Boulevard will span across two towers, one rising to 102 storeys – some 366 metres high, which will be the country’s tallest as it surpasses the Q1 tower on the Gold Coast, which stands at 322 metres.

A second 56-storey tower will have a matching twisted geometric glass facade design featuring terracing, pocket parks and green spaces.

Approved by the state government in 2020, construction is expected to kick off in late 2022 and take about five years to complete, with the site also housing a BMW dealership.

Beulah executive director Adelene Teh said Four Seasons was a “perfect partner” for the project, which will set a “a new standard for luxury in Melbourne, offering guests an exceptional Four Seasons experience set within an environment that will be unmatched in this market.”

“Four Seasons will provide an uber-luxurious lifestyle offering to Melbourne’s residents and visitors alike, one that fuses wellness,



sustainability, art and culture, and innovation, providing guests with everything they need within the one destination,” she said.

Four Seasons operates more than 100 hotels and resorts worldwide and holds the greatest number of Forbes Travel Guide Five-Stars ever awarded to a single brand.

Four Seasons Hotels and Resorts spokesman Bart Carnahan said, “We are incredibly proud to partner with Beulah” with the project to “set a new standard for luxury in Melbourne, offering guests an exceptional Four Seasons experience set within an environment that will be unmatched in this market.”

Along with the hotel, the development will feature a 270,000 sqm mixed-use lifestyle precinct, comprising apartments, commercial offices, a conference, an entertainment centre and 7250sqm of public green spaces.

Southbank Residents’ Association president

Tony Penna said his group supported the development which would be “a great space for the community.”

“It’s really exciting, there’s going to be a lot of infrastructure that’s going to be available to the community to access ... and we think that will be a central point for the community to congregate and to meet and play,” he said.

Meanwhile, France’s globally revered art and culture institution, Centre Pompidou, has been announced as the cultural partner for STH BNK By Beulah in which it will create an “innovative cultural centre” for young people.

Centre Pompidou will bring its “world-class expertise” to contribute to exhibitions, workshops, and cultural events via 3000 sqm of dedicated gallery space.

Centre Pompidou executive director Julie Narbey said, “I am very excited at this first step of such an innovative partnership. We are

confident it will help us, together with Beulah’s ambitious and dynamic teams, explore daring new ways of reaching goals that have always been dear to our hearts: enabling young people to discover and enjoy the inspiring intersection of culture, arts, creativity and innovation.”

Recognised as a Paris landmark, Centre Pompidou was designed by Renzo Piano and the late Richard Rogers and is one of the most frequented cultural monuments in the world with more than three million visits a year pre-pandemic.

Lord Mayor Sally Capp said the enlistment of Centre Pompidou was an “enormous coup for our city and demonstrates confidence heading into a post-pandemic world.”

“This will enhance Southbank’s reputation as a world-class arts precinct and will be another attraction to bring more people into the city,” Cr Capp said ●



## Collaborative plan for Yarra River, Birrarung launched

WORDS BY *David Schout*  
ENVIRONMENT

After more than four years of extensive consultation with traditional owners, the community, local councils and a host of government agencies, an overarching plan for the Yarra River, Birrarung has been launched.

The Yarra Strategic Plan – or *Burndap Birrarung burndap umarkoo*, which means “what is good for the Yarra is good for all” – brings together land use planning and waterway management and represents a partnership with traditional owners (the Bunurong and Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung).

The strategy aims to manage, protect and enhance the river and its significant parklands as one living and integrated entity, and better protect the river and its parklands from the impacts of climate change, urbanisation and population growth.

Importantly, it brings together the river’s complex network of stakeholders for the first time.

The iconic river, which runs from the Yarra Ranges to Hobsons Bay, is overseen by up to eight local councils (including the City of Melbourne), state government departments, Melbourne Water, Parks Victoria and others.

This has often led to criticism of excessive bureaucracy, as plans and reforms required various stakeholder approval.

Melbourne Water has led the development of the plan since 2017 and has been appointed as the lead agency to oversee its implementation.



Its role includes facilitating the “collaborative governance model” in the plan, which would “drive action and maintain the accountability of responsible public entities.”

Managing director Dr Nerina Di Lorenzo said the future of the iconic waterway required a comprehensive, collaborative strategy.

“The Yarra River, Birrarung, together with its parklands, is the lifeblood of Melbourne and is facing big challenges that this plan will tackle,” Dr Di Lorenzo said.

“The Yarra Strategic Plan will better protect the river and its parklands from the impacts of climate change, urbanisation, and population growth. This landmark plan brings together land use planning and waterway management for the first time to better protect the natural beauty and health of the Birrarung.”

According to Melbourne Water,

the Yarra River, Birrarung (a nod to the river’s traditional name increasingly adopted by authorities) faced a host of challenges from the effects of climate change and the pressures of population growth.

This included a “dramatic” and long-term decline in rainfall, more frequent extreme weather events in Victoria and less water entering the waterways.

“This plan lays a strong foundation for the Yarra River and its parklands to face these challenges,” Dr Di Lorenzo said.

Water Minister Lisa Neville said the long-awaited strategy – formed by a committee featuring representatives from both the Wurundjeri Woi-wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation and state and local government organisations – was a much-needed collaborative plan.

“This plan is the result of four years of consultation and development and will ensure the Yarra continues to be a place for people to connect with nature and each other for generations to come,” she said.

“The Yarra River has an important place in the hearts of Victorians and *Burndap Birrarung burndap umarkoo* delivers tangible actions that will keep the river and parklands alive for the benefit of everyone.”

According to the state government, the plan would look at increasing access to berthing sites along the inner city reaches for tourism, while enhancing Aboriginal cultural values and heritage values through interpretive signs and education.

Initial “priority projects” included the construction of floating wetlands, a plan flagged by the City of Melbourne in its own Yarra River Birrarung Strategy in 2019.

These floating structures would seek to restore biodiverse habitats along the river despite an urbanised edge that normally limited these opportunities, resembling those seen in Chicago, San Antonio, Paris and New York.

Upon launching the strategy in 2019, Lord Mayor Sally Capp admitted the city had “turned our back on this river for far too long”, something reinforced by Deputy Lord Mayor Nicholas Reece.

“I think we all agree Melbourne has not made enough of the Yarra River, Birrarung, and we’re really drawing a line in the sand,” he said.

“Going forward, we’ve got a plan, we really want to elevate the importance of our river to our town.”

Birrarung is the traditional name of the Yarra River, meaning “river of mists” in the Boon Wurrung and Woiwurrung languages ●

“

*This landmark plan brings together land use planning and waterway management for the first time to better protect the natural beauty and health of the Birrarung.*

”

# Restaurant reopens after waste pipe spillage

WORDS BY *Brendan Rees*  
BUSINESS

Popular Southbank restaurant Pure South is back open after being forced to close for nine weeks when a waste pipe burst from a neighbouring hotel, leaving a \$300,000 clean-up bill.

Owner Philip Kennedy said work crews had been carrying out maintenance work at The Langham Hotel when disaster struck on Boxing Day.

He said contractors had tried to unblock a grease pipe but instead “smashed the pipes”, causing black sludge to leak into the ceiling of their venue.

“It filled wall cavities and because it was sludge, it wasn’t like water pouring out – it oozed out everywhere and moved slowly,” Mr Kennedy said.

“It found penetrations down to the next level,” he said of their two-storey restaurant and “started pouring into the ceiling there and doing the same thing.”

Mr Kennedy said the damage to the building was substantial with three bathrooms, store-rooms, and a staffroom needing to be “completely pulled out and replaced” as well as some appliances in the kitchen preparation areas.

Fortunately, he said the main kitchen and dining rooms avoided the brunt of the incident, but it meant they still had to close during the busiest time of the year.

“It was like lockdown seven came along just for us. It was a bit of a blow and I think it



▲ Philip Kennedy, owner of Pure South, is excited to be back open.

*“It was like lockdown seven came along just for us. It was a bit of a blow and I think it probably was devastating for a very short period of time and then we just sort of got on with it.”*



probably was devastating for a very short period of time and then we just sort of got on with it.”

“You can’t really sit there and suck your thumb anymore because for two years we’ve been avoiding that, trying to stay positive. So, it was just like having to do that again unexpectedly.”

Mr Kennedy said he was going through his insurance company, so it all got “handled appropriately”, adding “it was nothing to do with

our plumbing – we were just collateral damage.”

He said it had been “devastating” for his 60 employees despite having been stood down with pay, saying “it was an interruption to their lives again that nobody enjoyed.”

But since Pure South’s relaunch on February 24, he said the response from customers had been “really positive” – with warm autumn evenings being a welcome addition.

Mr Kennedy thanked the community for its support which had “come straight back in and

who have been good to our staff.”

“The team really love it and enjoy it that people have turned up straight away and smiled at them and recognised them,” he said.

“The first day that we opened the big windows up again and the chefs are in white and fresh produce coming back into the kitchen was really uplifting.”

“It was like the clouds had cleared and the sun came out all at once, so we are really positive and I’m really grateful.” ●



## Buskers hit a high a note as live music scene returns to city streets

WORDS BY *Brendan Rees*  
ARTS & CULTURE

For violinist Tahnaya Wynne, the opportunity to be back on the streets of Southbank and the CBD performing live music is “so good”.

“I love busking. You’re making someone’s day just by adding a little bit of music into their day,” she said.

“You see them just walking about, just going through their day, to suddenly have a smile on their face.”

Tahnaya is among hundreds of local talents who are performing in city streets and laneways over four weeks as part of a new program to support the music industry which has been hit hard by the pandemic.

“It’s nice to be playing with all the hustle and bustle which is slowly coming back,” the 26-year-old said who performed next to the *Ophelia* statue in Southbank.

Tahnaya is a full-time musician by day, performing at weddings, corporate events, parties and more.

“It’s been a bit of a struggle to say the least, that’s why it’s so nice to be back performing. I’m just loving it.”

Another musician Simon Wood, who recently busked along the Yarra River in Southbank with his band-mate Matt Katsis, said it was a “really good feeling”.

“Obviously through a lot of lockdowns, we weren’t actually able to get together to play either to rehearse or to do gigs, particularly when we had tight restrictions,” he said.

“We had a lot of fun ... a bit rusty at the start, but as we got through the songs, they all kind of came back and we fell back into the groove.”

Simon, 30, who forms a two-piece band called Timbakat with Matt, said doing paid gigs was a welcome boost.

“It’s a great little kick-starter to get things going again. I’ve definitely missed it ... not being able to get out there and put on a show.”

“It’s a good feeling. It’s like the good old days.”

Lord Mayor Sally Capp said the busking program, which ends on March 14, would showcase “our city’s spectacular live music scene with surprise gigs by some of our best and brightest performers.”

“Music is central to Melbourne’s identity, and we’ll continue to work with the industry to support and promote performers, producers and venues as they bounce back.” ●

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

## Artist tests the water with bold project

WORDS BY *Brendan Rees*  
ARTS & CULTURE

An artist hoping to raise awareness about water health in the Yarra River has made a powerful statement on a Southbank footbridge.

Standing at two metres high with a capacity of 1300 litres, a water tank filter has been turning heads at Evan Walker Bridge as the artwork’s creator Georgia Nowak sought to cast a light onto the effects of stormwater pollution in river systems.

The tank, which was on public display over 10 days as part of a public art project called *Channel*, contained polluted stormwater from the Yarra – which was treated by microscopic insects, aquatic snails, endemic plants, and charcoal created from timber.

The organic materials helped to purify the water by increasing oxygen levels and neutralising pollutants such as motor vehicle runoff – which all affect river health.

Through her work, Ms Nowak said she hoped that “we can take care of our waterways employing natural systems and methods”.

“I see this tank as a vertical wetland, a way of making visible the often unseen or undervalued ecologies of our cities,” she said.

“The Birrarung [Yarra River] has been legally recognised as a living entity which deserves protection, and this project looks to support this through building public awareness around clean stormwater in urban environments.”

Ms Nowak said her practice focused on uncovering hidden ecologies with the project stemming from the waterway under Elizabeth St, once named William’s Creek.

“Today, it is the city’s main stormwater drain, a critical piece of infrastructure yet invisible to the public. *Channel* is located adjacent to the large stormwater outlet for this main drain, connecting it with the Yarra River.

“The project pumped water from this point in the river where stormwater pollution is at its peak.”

The runoff from the drain is considered one of the largest contributors to pollution in the lower Yarra catchment, disturbing habitats within the river and further downstream into the bay.

Ms Nowak’s artwork, which was exhibited from February 26 to March 6, was born out of an ongoing water study into water health, which was curated by Arie Rain Glorie as part of Test Sites Phase 2.

Mr Glorie, who is the program manager of Testing Grounds at Queen Victoria Market, said Ms Nowak’s piece was a “really good way” to engage the public.

“It is an experiment within itself – we like work that takes risks,” he said. “We can come along the journey to see if the experiment works as well, as opposed to a lot of



public art which is a metal sculpture.”

“I think a livelier, creative city is one that is constantly influxed and you’re getting different temporary public artwork all the time and activating the city in different ways.”

The project was also co-produced by the City of Melbourne with the tank loaned to Ms Nowak by the Science Gallery and lighting sponsored by the Light Project.

“At night the tank becomes a beacon seen from over 100 metres away which helps bring water back into the forefront of people’s minds at all hours of the day,” Ms Nowak said ●

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Your City of Melbourne community update

# HAVE YOUR SAY ON NEW NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANS



Help us make your neighbourhood the best it can be

**Have your say and help build a more inclusive, sustainable and empowered city, made up of many unique neighbourhoods.**

Understanding and responding to our community is central to the way we work at City of Melbourne and – as we strive to make life better than ever post-COVID – your voice has never been more important.

So we’re asking residents, business owners, visitors and students to share their thoughts about the unique strengths, needs and outlooks of each pocket of Melbourne.

**Your neighbourhood**

While we’re all Melburnians at heart, the services and support needed by each neighbourhood naturally differ, based on their unique demographics, opportunities and challenges.

This is why we’re taking an approach that focuses on our neighbourhoods, to capture, connect and respond to the specific needs of the community in a highly localised way.

Our new neighbourhood approach will focus on the following areas:

- . Carlton
- . CBD
- . Docklands
- . East Melbourne
- . Kensington
- . North Melbourne
- . Parkville
- . Southbank
- . South Yarra
- . West Melbourne.

**Localised community engagement**

For the first time, we will develop new and localised neighbourhood plans alongside communities, recording and responding to your ideas in a digital and real-time plan.

Ideas will be considered against Council priorities and presented online alongside relevant resources and project updates to give you a clear understanding of what we are delivering.

**Conversation starters**

1. What makes your neighbourhood unique, and a great place to live?
2. What services, facilities or support would make life better?
3. When you picture your neighbourhood in its ideal state, what does it look like?

TO HAVE YOUR SAY, VISIT  
[participate.melbourne.vic.gov.au/participate-neighbourhoods](https://participate.melbourne.vic.gov.au/participate-neighbourhoods)



Lygon Street, Carlton

## COUNCIL MEETINGS IN THE COMMUNITY

This year, we’re holding the second Future Melbourne Committee meeting of each month in community locations across the municipality, to shine a light on the unique needs of each neighbourhood and make it easier for people to engage with councillors and staff.

The locations will include Carlton, West Melbourne, Parkville, Docklands, North Melbourne, South Yarra, East Melbourne, Fishermans Bend, Kensington and Southbank.

For more information, visit [melbourne.vic.gov.au/aboutcouncil](https://melbourne.vic.gov.au/aboutcouncil)



Kensington



Docklands

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# WHY WE LOVE SOUTHBANK

We know and love Melbourne as the culture capital. The sporting capital. The foodie capital. We know its glorious gardens, its bluestone laneways, its epic events. And Southbank is a world within.

Stroll along the riverfront and find a table with a view at one of your favourite eateries. Make time for a spot of people-watching with the city skyline twinkling across the



Artist's impression, Southbank Boulevard

water, and the vista will pay you back tenfold in positive vibes.

Look for the hidden stairway on Evan Walker Bridge and stop in at the floating bar Ponyfish Island to watch the light play on the 'river of mists', or Birrarung, as the Yarra is known to Traditional Owners.

Did you know there was once a waterfall near Queens Bridge? It was used by Wurundjeri and Bunurong peoples as a river crossing and marked the point where the Birrarung turned from salt to fresh water.

Connect with local history as you cross the Sandridge Bridge, where the epic public art installation The Travellers walks us through the 10 periods of Australian migration, using 3.7 kms of sculpted steel. Or take a Southbank History Walk and see the neighbourhood in a new light.

More open space is on the way too. A playspace will beckon later this year on Southbank Boulevard between Kavanagh and Fawcner streets. This new natural environment will be accessible to children of all ages. It includes boulders for climbing, swings, slides and ladders.



The view from Southbank

Who will you star-spot today? Look for the concert cellist on her way home to her Southbank apartment after performing at the Melbourne Recital Centre. Actors rehearse then linger for a drink at the Malthouse Theatre, while the next generation of dancers, performers and musicians hurry to class at the Victorian College of the Arts on St Kilda Road.

Find a community space to run your next event or creative workshop at the Boyd Community Hub, or laze in the urban oasis that is Boyd Park. You can also borrow glorious stories from the Southbank Library at Boyd Community Hub... something to disappear into next time you find a moment to spend in a patch of sunlight by the river.



Number of people per household (average)

1.9



Age (median)

30.9



Language other than English spoken at home

58%



Residential population

27,800



Number of businesses

940

Sources: SGS Population and Jobs Forecast 2020, CLUE 2020, ABS Census 2016



South Wharf

## MEANWHILE AT SUPER SOUTH WHARF

Gather your best mates and step aboard the historic museum ship Polly Woodside on open days. She's moored conveniently near the Boatbuilders Yard and the Common Man, riverside bistros with dreamy views where you can while away the afternoon.

Shop for bargains at DFO South Wharf then wine and dine on the

promenade. Or go to the nearby Southbank Library at Boyd and find out more about South Wharf's history as the hub of the city's early ship building and repair industry.

Immerse yourself in a dramatic art adventure at The Lume, a digital gallery where every surface becomes an animated canvas, some towering four storeys high.



South Wharf

TO FIND OUT MORE, VISIT [participate.melbourne.vic.gov.au/participate-southbank](https://participate.melbourne.vic.gov.au/participate-southbank)

Information and events in this publication are current at the time of printing. Subsequent changes may occur. All photos taken in line with health and safety guidelines.

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# Arts Precinct

## Artists, designers and publishers come together to celebrate the return of NGV's Melbourne Art Book Fair

*The Great Hall of NGV International is preparing to host the annual Melbourne Art Book Fair in a way that conveniently coincides with, and represents, Melbourne Design Week.*

WORDS BY *Kaylah-Joelle Baker*

"Melbourne is such a great city of literature and it is fantastic when we can bring people together at one time at the NGV," curator of NGV's Melbourne Art Book Fair Megan Patty said.

Taking on a "newly distributed form", the Melbourne Art Book Fair, which has been running since 2015, will take place across the entirety of the design-dedicated week and celebrate creatives seamlessly coming together.

Melbourne Design Week is a collaborative initiative of the Victorian Government and the NGV, and its sixth edition this year will run from March 17 to 27.

Referencing the vision of Melbourne Design Week in a statement, NGV director Tony Ellwood said the 11 day event had a program full of "thought-provoking" events to "challenge and inspire" attendees.

"Melbourne Design Week is a festival of ideas and encourages audiences to look beyond the function and aesthetic, and to reflect on the environmental, social and personal impacts of design," he said.

Considered a program highlight of the event, NGV's Melbourne Art Book Fair's in-person stallholders will be present in the Great Hall during the Fair's first weekend, from March 18 to 20.



Unable to open in-person last year, the NGV turned to satellite programs.

But despite its success, Ms Patty reflected that the in-person aspect of the Book Fair is "super important" for both the creatives and the attending audience.

"There is a real buzz around the stands coming back to the NGV," she said.

"It is an event where the public can meet publishers, authors, graphic designers and writers, and a key aspect of the Fair is that you are buying the book usually from a person that has either made it or been involved in its making."

"It's a really special experience for an audience member as they can really chat about the book and learn more from someone who has been heavily involved in it."

Looking forward to being a part of the stallholder event for the second time is designer of small-press publisher Ornate Gesture, Edward Hubber.

"The Melbourne Art Book Fair is fantastic for emerging designers and book makers because it's a chance to find an audience, network with other makers and feel connected to the Melbourne design scene," Mr Hubber said.

With the last stall he was at being prior to the pandemic, Mr Hubber said he had been working hard on creating two new books that he was keen to share with audiences; *Stained* and *Golden Age*.

"I'm really looking forward to showing off some fabulous new books I've been working on which will both be available for purchase from

my stall," he said.

"I also love seeing mates from across the design sector who pop in to say 'hey'. It's going to be lovely."

The stallholders' weekend of the Fair is expected to have more than 90 national and international publishers in attendance alongside Mr Hubber and more to be highlighted online through other satellite events.

The NGV has also been busily preparing an exhibition called *The Annotator Reader* for its Great Hall which will invite viewers to read, critique and collate their own annotated reader.

A *Performing Poetics* program, where a group of poetry curators will curate and share new works and speak into their process and motivations, will also take place to help audiences explore the relationship between artmaking and poetry.

"It is interesting because it is reading, poetry and performance and it's nodding to the fact that heaps of people have turned to poetry during this time, so it's a way we could celebrate this at the Art Book Fair," Ms Patty said.

"I am very excited by the exhibition piece, the stands being back and by the poetry program."

"I feel the poetry program in particular is going to be somewhat more unexpected but it's a really nice way for visitors to spend time in the stands talking to publishers, and then move through the NGV for a whole other experience in the gallery spaces."

Melbourne Art Book Fair is supported by presenting partner Creative Victoria and design partner RMIT University, and numerous events will also be hosted at locations throughout Melbourne and regional Victoria.

For more details on the Melbourne Art Book Fair events around the city and NGV's weekend of celebrating literature and design visit: [artbook-fair.melbourne](http://artbook-fair.melbourne) ●

### CRITIC



▲ Gallerist Nicholas Thompson shows work by Rhys Lee.



▲ Trendsetters at the art fair.

## An outrageous art fair

WORDS BY *Rhonda Dredge*

It was a pleasure to stride into the airy rooms of the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre (MCEC) at South Wharf during February in search of art.

Trendsetters and critics were on the prowl and platform sandals were big in terms of footwear.

The annual Art Fair is the place to be seen and to catch up with friends.

Even the cynical assistants of jaded gallerists were smiling at visitors instead of acting bored.

"This is the first large gathering of galleries and artists since the beginning of the pandemic," said one.

"We've been very careful," said another.

Some find the annual Art Fair too commercial but this year the aim was to be memorable.

Tolarno Galleries was showing *Bad Biology*, large colourful sculptures by Christopher Langton.

His last exhibition *Colony* was prophetic of the pandemic and bought by collector Charlie Xiao to show in China.

"These are more organic," gallerist Tina Douglas said.

Daine Singer was showing some punky little

ceramic-cum-painting constructions by Kate Tucker that were clever and strong by not being too referential.

And gallerist Nicholas Thompson was enjoying the venue for the Art Fair. The last one two years ago was held in a tent. "The walls were a bit wobbly," he said.

He was showing paintings by Rhys Lee from Birregurra that looked familiar, which was not surprising since the painter takes famous works and uses them as inspiration.

One is based on a Picasso painting and with talent like that to work from, no wonder Lee is confident about his line work.

"He's interested in colour and pulls things out of pop culture," Nicholas said.

So, what was the most memorable thing about the 2022 Art Fair, one in which galleries were told to limit their stands to one artist?

Did this strategy encourage memory to prosper with not too many artists to digest and give a more serious note to the anything-goes fair aesthetic?

The honour of being outrageous, usually bestowed on the New Zealanders who couldn't come this year, goes to the bubbles for costing \$22 a pop ●

## Melbourne International Comedy Festival set to raise the roof of the Malthouse Theatre

WORDS BY *Kaylah-Joelle Baker*

If laughter truly is the best medicine, then Melburnians are in for some good health with the return of the Melbourne International Comedy Festival.

Running from March 30 until April 24, this year's Comedy Festival is gearing up to feature more than 400 shows all around the city and beyond, with tickets already up for grabs.

Quickly distinguishing itself as a venue that knows how to create a buzz during this season, the Malthouse Theatre is back open with a packed schedule.

And executive producer and co-CEO of the venue Sarah Neal said she was "really excited" to share its program with audiences after experiencing "cancellation after cancellation" during the past two years.

"One of the greatest things about living in Melbourne is having festivals of this nature, and we love being a part of it," she said.

"There are a lot of artists we work with who not only work in comedy but also in live performance and theatre more broadly, so there is a bit of crossover for our usual audience and it is great for us to attract new audiences into the space."

With five stages to host performances, 200 shows have already been designated to the Malthouse, including nationally and internationally established performers as well as a host of new emerging artists.

From Reuben Kaye in Malthouse Theatre's Merlyn Theatre to Jason Leong in the Beckett Theatre and Kungari Comedy in the Playbox, Malthouse is getting ready to let the city know live comedy is well and truly back in Southbank.

"Having a hub here at Malthouse, having people back in a venue and having that vibrancy back is something we are all looking forward to and going to absolutely love," Neal said.

As Southbank and the rest of Melbourne waits

for the Comedy Festival to kickstart, Malthouse Theatre is also providing entertainment in the lead-up with its first inside theatre show "since COVID shut down Malthouse."

Currently showcasing *Stay Woke* to audiences in the Beckett Theatre, this political comedy will run until March 13.

Also running over the weekend of March 11 to 13 for audiences who are hesitant to get back inside for performances, the Malthouse Outdoor Stage will be hosting local comedian Dave Hughes.

"The Malthouse Outdoor Stage is becoming a really intrinsic part of what we offer for audiences and a really great asset to have in the neighbourhood here at Southbank," Ms Neal said.

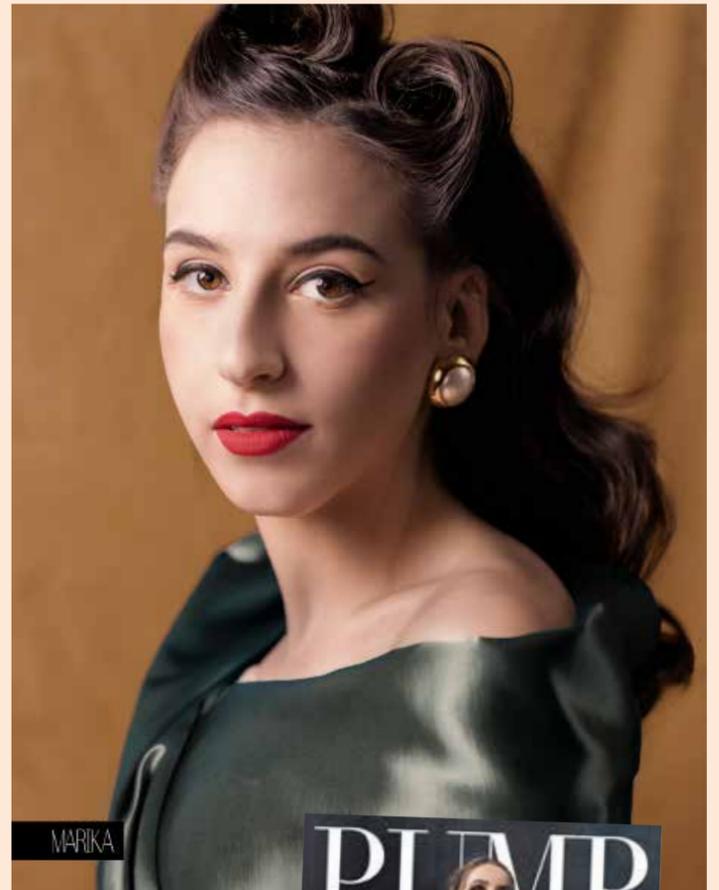
"When the weather is good, people are able to have a drink and be in a beautiful environment. And for people who still don't feel comfortable with being indoors, it's a great way to experience a show."

The Melbourne International Comedy Festival will officially begin on March 30 with the *Opening Night Comedy Allstars Supershow* at the Palais Theatre in St Kilda.

National favourites Carl Barron, Aaron Chen, Becky Lucas and Nazeem Hussain, and international comedian favourites Arj Barker, Stephen K Amos, Melanie Bracewell and Urzila Carlson will also be back on stages around the city throughout the Festival.

The 2022 Comedy Festival will also expand beyond the city with shows hitting the suburbs through "Neighbourhood Sessions" which will see acts performed at Thornbury, Narre Warren, Werribee, Footscray, Moorabbin, Preston and Broadmeadows ●

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



## Kerry lives her dream

*After 30 years in catering, Kerry Herschell has turned her eye to photography – and she’s loving every moment.*

WORDS BY *Brendan Rees*

After establishing her photography business during the first year of her studies at the Photography Studies College (PSC), Ms Herschell admitted it was “a bit daunting” but had not looked back.

“It was a big step ... I enjoy fashion and portraiture more than I enjoy everything else, but it does give me a good skill set to be able to handle different photography jobs, because you never quite know what situation you’re going to be in,” she said.

Now in her third year of an Advanced Diploma in Photography, Ms Herschell said her business called Kerry Herschell Photography, which offers services from portraits to corporate and branding, family, beauty, events and more, had given her the confidence to achieve her career goals.

“All my studies are helping me to take more professional photographs,” she said. “PSC is really good at helping you to find your niche in the industry and expanding on what you love to do.”

As a mature-age student, Ms Herschell said she hoped her studies would take her career to new heights after working in catering for 30 years – an industry she still currently works in to support herself as her business grows.

“I’m used to running events, which has actually helped me with organising shoots and everything,” she said.

“I haven’t been chasing too much work because I’m working full-time in catering, but I’m picking up more and more paid work with portraits, environmental portraits, families, and some fashion.”

Ms Herschell initially completed a short course in portraiture at RMIT some years ago, and while she always carried a camera and attended workshops, it wasn’t until holidaying in Vietnam in 2017 that really inspired her to take photography further.

“It’s so colourful, with lots of people and places,” she said. “I was interested in doing portraits so I thought I would give that a try. It then grew on me, and I wanted to explore it further and study techniques so PSC has been really good.”

Fast-track to 2022, and Ms Herschell’s work has featured on front covers of international fashion magazines including *Glamour* and *Malvie*. Although this was unpaid, she said it was a great way of showcasing her skills and getting her name “out there”.

She has also been recognised for an international portrait competition, and had her work exhibited at a gallery in Fitzroy.

“The network is growing, and I love the people in the industry. I’m really just making more contacts in the industry who will help me get further

into it.”

Looking back at her experiences, Ms Herschell said she wouldn’t be where she was now if it wasn’t for the support of PSC, and highly recommended aspiring students to enrol.

“I love the collaboration with other team members because you never know what you’re going to get between models and makeup artists and designers and photographers, and locations or studios – it’s always a really interesting creative process.” ●

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



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IMAGE BY PSC STUDENT KATHLEEN FOGARTY

## SOUTHBANK RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

## Emerging from COVID



*It seems we are certainly coming out of our COVID restrictions as things are moving with the City of Melbourne. Much is happening in Southbank and the next few months are going to be busy.*



Firstly, I would like to extend a big Welcome to Ash Lee who is the new City of Melbourne Southbank Community Partner. Southbank Residents' Association (SRA) has already spent quite some time with Ash and we can certainly say she has hit the ground running. Ash has some great plans for the Southbank community and she will be reaching out to engage with as many of us as possible. We will certainly let you know. We look forward to working with Ash.

And, how exciting that Southbank has finally got a dedicated off-leash dog park. If you are not aware, the dog park is located opposite the tram stop at the start of the Kings Way undercroft on Moray St. This has been years in the making, and behind schedule, but it's finally here. SRA is so grateful that the lobbying we commenced some five-plus years ago has finally come to fruition. However, I wonder if now that we have an official dog park if it will discourage residents from letting their dogs off the leash in Boyd and Melbourne Square lawned areas. Now there is a dedicated park, I suspect the council will be less tolerant of those who choose not to comply with the off-leash rules for those public spaces. If you have a furry friend, then I would love to hear from you about your experiences with the new dog park.

SRA has a busy couple of months ahead and we would love to meet you at one of our events. On Wednesday, March 16 we are re-establishing our bi-annual "New to Southbank" event, which COVID had unfortunately put a stop to during the past few years. If you are new to Southbank and would like to learn more about your neighbourhood, then we encourage you to come along. Even if you are not new, we are confident there is something you might learn from our event. If not, meet some new neighbours! The event is held in the Assembly Hall at Boyd Community Hub, 207 City Rd, at 6.30pm. It should only go for about an hour.

As we are all aware, a federal election is looming. Since SRA's inception more than 20 years ago, we have been holding "Meet the Candidates" events for all elections affecting our neighbourhood (federal, state and council). This year will be no exception. We anticipate the election will be held in May. Once the election is called, we will contact our local candidates and lock them in for a date and time. We anticipate sometime at the end of April. Certainly watch this space in the April edition for the details. As usual we will make our best effort to source a great moderator.

Finally, it would be remiss of me not to ask that if you are not a member of our not-for-profit, volunteer-driven, community group you might like to consider joining. Without membership our lobbying voice is diminished. You can join up via our website, [southbankresidents.org.au](http://southbankresidents.org.au). If you want to reach out to us, you can do so at [info@southbankresidents.org.au](mailto:info@southbankresidents.org.au).

I am looking forward to meeting some of you at our New to Southbank event on March 16 at 6.30pm ●



**Tony Penna**  
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## SOUTHBANKER

## Wage Against the Machine: A spirited story of one man's journey in the workplace

*Southbank resident Matt Harvey's first paid job was as a pie boy at the MCG when he was 16 years old.*

WORDS BY Carol Saffer

He described it as a loose system of employment. "It was like, this is the time you show up for work, if you are there you get paid cash on the day, and you wander [the terraces] and get paid on commission – more pies sold [means] more money in your hand," he said.

His biography now states he is a comedian, writer, storyteller, and journalist from Melbourne who has toured shows across Australia and New Zealand.

Along the way from pie boy to comedian, his employment history is the nitty-gritty of his latest show, *Wage Against the Machine*, described as "a fast-paced hour of stand-up and storytelling set in the surprisingly angry world of customer service."

Coming to the Melbourne International Comedy Festival (MICF) in March, the show is about minimum wage and maximum grief, where the customer is always wrong.

When asked if there was a degree of bitterness in the show's theme, Mr Harvey questioned was there a huge difference between satire and bitterness?

"I don't think so," he said.

"It's hard not to be a bit bitter when I think back across the various workplaces I have worked and my experience with Robodebt."

"I try to cover the bitterness with a sweet treat of jokes."

He was once accused that a show's notes were just rants.

"They begin as rants, but you sprinkle the jokes in between, and it becomes storytelling, satire and comedy," he said.

Tackling issues like poverty-level jobs, class struggles and corporate versus human rights, this MICF premiere season is a darkly comic and appropriate observation about the day-to-day struggles of the working class.

"I take the audience on this journey with a



story; they have to go up and down with me," he said.

"I start at a place of construction by writing [what is] to take on stage and then build on it on stage."

This aspect of his work creates a tailored style of satire that unfolds reality saying the quiet parts out loud and sharing the ridiculous with people.

The show's finale is the tale of when he saved the lives of 18 people, which he won't divulge or even give a hint about, so get along to Heroes Bar and hear for yourself.

*Wage Against the Machine* runs from Thursday, March 31 to Saturday, April 23 at Heroes Bar, 188 Bourke St, Melbourne.

For tickets, call 9245 3788 or online at [comedyfestival.com.au/2022/shows/wage-against-the-machine](http://comedyfestival.com.au/2022/shows/wage-against-the-machine) ●

## OWNERS' CORPORATION LAW

## Another thing to consider before buying an apartment "off the plan" – check the builder too

*With news hitting the public in late February regarding the construction juggernaut Probuild going into administration, many in the construction industry are now bracing for a ripple effect of smaller contractors and sub-contractors to also pull the plug.*

The COVID-19 pandemic has not just created construction delays for the industry, but it has also led to shortages of required building materials, as well as trucking and shipping logistic delays and price increases as well. All of this has created a perfect storm.

With construction contracts, it is usual for developers to engage builders for a fixed price following a tender process. There are penalties in the contract if the builder does not complete the construction project on time as well.

Prior to the pandemic starting, the precedents for these construction contracts did not contemplate a worldwide pandemic affecting a construction project, so the "force majeure" or "act of god" exclusion clauses did not include a provision to cover this situation.

This means that building companies may well be facing the prospect of not only being forced to complete a building contract in circumstances where the price of materials might have increased by 20 to 30 per cent, but also where the developer is enforcing delay damages for failing to complete it on time. No wonder building companies are feeling the pressure.

In the meantime, there is no denying that Melburnians are fascinated by high-rise

strata living, as evidenced by the large number of multi-storey high-rise developments that continue to be marketed, built and sold "off the plan" in and around the city.

However, before signing the contract, some of the most important things for prospective purchasers to consider are:

1. The profile and track record of the builder and developer. For instance, do they have a history of doing good work in Australia and around the world? Do they stand behind their developments? Do they return to their developments to fix any defects? Are they financially secure? These matters can be checked via online enquiries. If the developer or builder runs into trouble during the intervening period between the sales contract being entered into and settlement, then there is the risk of the deposit being lost, or the project being cancelled or at least substantially delayed.
2. Has the developer provided sufficient information to understand what is being purchased? For instance, are the architectural plans of the building and common areas no more than generic images? Have the internal furnishings

been specified?

3. Have the running costs of the building been properly specified? Some owners' corporations (OCs) have had nasty surprises after settlement when it has been discovered that the budget and levies had been overwhelmingly under-estimated.
4. Will the building be completed in stages and which stage will the unit be completed within? There can be instances of disruption and loss of amenity for owners that settle early, as they move in while the upper levels of the towers are still being built, with workmen and construction noise continuing for several months after settlement.
5. Will the building be independently managed by reputable OC management company and caretaker or does the sales contract provide the developer with the discretion to appoint whomever they like and "lock the OC" into a lengthy long-term contract?
6. Do the proposed rules suit your needs in terms of your personal attitude towards subject matters such as pets, smoking, and the ability to carry out your own

renovations?

7. Will an area of the building be occupied by a serviced apartment operator or hotel?
8. Do you know whether the apartment will have an obstructed or unobstructed view when completed?

There are always risks implicit with any investment, but with a large choice of apartments currently on the market, potential purchasers can afford to shop around and be "picky" about whom they choose to invest their money with. Reputable developers with a good track record will do well out of the Melbourne market, while those developers who do not have a good reputation or are new to the market may struggle to get their developments sold quickly, unless they market the building overseas and sell to overseas owners ●



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# Off The Wall: New exhibition by indigenous artists blows audiences away

WORDS BY *Spencer Fowler Steen*

A stunning new exhibition at the Koorie Heritage Trust (KHT) brings together the work of three Indigenous artists and their individual experiences of loss and reclamation, as well as stories of their families, culture, and country in Naarm.

*Off The Wall* showcases a diverse range of works produced by Woiwurrung and Yorta Yorta artist Simone Thomson, Yorta Yorta artist Mandi Barton, and Kanolu artist Charlie Miller.

Pierra Van Sparkes, a Kulin Country based Pibbulman Noongar artist and assistant curator at the KHT, said the materials used in the exhibition and the unique installation encouraged audiences to think about the multiplicity of First Nations' People and their stories.

"I'm so blown away with what the artists have produced," Pierra said.

"We've provided each artist with a 1.5- by 10-metre roll of Stonehenge paper and there's a mixture of works to be extended from the ceiling and on the gallery floor."

One of the pieces on display by Mandi Barton, *Burnt Words*, depicts a charred roll of paper with Indigenous words written in ink.

Pierra said the piece spoke about the history of Indigenous languages and storytelling being erased by colonisation.

"In yarning with Mandi about it the burning quality of it, it speaks to this act of quite literally destroying cultural knowledge and family ties," they said.

"It also speaks to the long history of documenting our people on paper. The Stolen



▲ *Burnt Words* by Mandi Barton. Photo: Christian Capurro.

Generation was documented on paper and burnt to cover up the uncomfortable past."

While the piece represents loss, Pierra said the burnt paper also captured the potential for regrowth after initial destruction.

"I think each artist talks about their dual experience of loss and reclamation," Pierra said.

"Each artist in their own way reflects this idea of Aboriginality and puts their stories of families, cultures, community in one place."

Having now come full circle, Pierra's artwork was featured in the Koorie Art Show back in 2016.

But having only been in the new role as assistant curator for six months, Pierra said *Off The Wall* had been in the works longer than they had been at KHT.

"The show itself is such a celebration of black excellence and the many forms it takes," Pierra said.

"It really speaks to the multiplicity of the ways we tackle ways of life in spaces that



▲ *Darrang Marrup, Tree Spirit* by Simone Thomson. Photo: Christian Capurro.

weren't made for us. It's always such a welcome reminder of how manifold we are and our unique voices that come from that. And sharing space with mob is always great!"

Working with photography, videography and digital media, Pierra said a big influence for them was paying homage to the creative practice they had inherited from their family.

"I projected a video recently that was my own version of a blanket," Pierra said.

"The idea of that is carrying on my nanna's practice of making patchwork blankets."

In their spare time, Pierra said they enjoyed taking a stroll down the Merri Creek, taking



▲ *Emu* by Charlie Miller. Photo: Christian Capurro.

photos, and spending time with queer and Aboriginal communities.

"I've also been trying my hand at sewing; hopefully Nan's looking down at me and saying, 'call that a cross stitch?'" Pierra said.

*Off The Wall* is showing from March 5 until May 15, 2022 at the KHT ●

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

## WE LIVE HERE

# Fighting an unfair committee

*Nerida Pohl has provided an update on the committee scandal at her inner-city building ...*

"In our building, three out of the five committee members – all supportive of the manager/developer – have been controlling affairs unfairly for the past 10 years – and it needs to stop."

"It is now 10 years since our managers locked residents out of common property assets that we purchased. This makes our building look decidedly second-rate. Residents are forced to move in and out via the busy street into our elegant lobby instead of via our private, safe and undercover goods lift to the level 2 storage cages. The committee even usurped our residential lounge for their real estate business."

"All visitors are told the building has no visitor car park and must use the commercial carpark. The car park operator and our owners' corporation manager share common ownership."

"The local council has been on the case for five years telling the manager that they must give us back the 50 visitors car spaces and our residential meeting room, and to get large furniture trucks from disrupting the amenity of the street at our front door."

"Trying to legitimise misuse of our property and without consulting the 500 apartment owners, the stacked committee has spent several hundred thousand dollars of the fees we pay them by engaging lawyers and town planners in appeals to the Planning Tribunal and our local council." "The managers are interminably dragging out the process to keep us locked out of our property, so all these third parties can continue profiting from using it instead."

"Last September I thought we had a win; the Planning Tribunal addressed an application by

the manager to annexe our undercover goods lift for the retail area. The Tribunal agreed our undercover loading dock was well built for our use and that the busy commercial street outside our single glass entry door was not suitable for residents' removal trucks to use. Sadly, the Tribunal finding has not resulted in any remediation."

"I would like to ensure the owners know what is going on, but the committee is unfairly and actively preventing me from being able to communicate with the owners."

"Legally, if I ask for the contact details of all owners, the manager must forward the register immediately. In this building, the committee won't let them. That is why I have had to letter-drop all residents instead of posting 500 letters to them."

We Live Here believes it is outrageous that a committee and a manager can prevent an owner from viewing the owners' corporation members' roll. Committee members should be aware of how their behaviour will be viewed by the courts.

Under the *Owners' Corporation Act 2006*, members of committees must

- Act honestly and in good faith
- Exercise due care and diligence
- Act in the interests of the owners' corporation
- Not make improper use of their position to gain a direct or indirect advantage for themselves or anyone else.

If the committee members cannot prove that they acted in good faith, they can potentially lose their immunity under section 118 of the

Act. Then the members would face significant personal liability.

We hope the owners are galvanised by Nerida's appeal.

If you are having problems with an owners' corporation controlled by a developer or any vested interests, please let us know.

### Latest version of the Owners' Corporations Act 2006

The *Owners' Corporations Amendment Act 2021* was the result of the long, drawn-out review of the *Owners' Corporations Act 2006* that began in 2015 and meandered through issues papers, options papers, exposure drafts and several revisions.

With these amendments incorporated, the *Owners' Corporations Act 2006*, Authorised Version 19 is now available.

The release of version 19 of the Act underlines a notable failure of the government. Since 2018, this Act has had embedded within it the amendments of the *Short-stay Accommodation Act 2018*. The short-stay amendments have yet to go under the public review which was promised for February 2020.

Some of the most significant features of the newly amended act include:

### Five tiers of owners' corporations

There are different rules according to the number of occupiable lots, divided into tiers: Tier One, more than 100 individual lots; Tier Two, 51 to 100 lots; Tier Three, 10 to 50 lots; Tier Four, 3 to 9 lots and Tier Five, a 2-lot or services-only subdivision.

### Levies and insurance

Other changes introduced under the amended Act may reduce insurance and other inequities between lot owners. While ordinary fees levied must still be based on lot entitlement, OCs may separately levy lot owners for:

- an excess amount, or increased premium, attributable to an insurance claim if the

claim was caused by the actions of a lot owner or occupier or guest;

- damage caused to the common property by a lot owner or occupier, if it is not covered by insurance, or if the cost is less than the excess amount.

VCAT has also been empowered to make an order requiring a lot owner to pay the owners' corporation's costs incurred for recovering an unpaid amount from the lot owner.

### Proxies – five per cent limit

Section 89D of the Act states that a person must not vote as a proxy on a resolution at a meeting of the owners' corporation on behalf of more than five per of the lot owners, or more than one lot owner if there are 20 or less occupiable lots.

### There's more to unpack

We shall look at other aspects of the amended Act, including the *Short-stay Accommodation Act* amendments embedded within it in next month's column.

You can download the *Owners' Corporations Act* and amendments from our website at [welivehere.net/acts](http://welivehere.net/acts)

### 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](http://welivehere.net). We Live Here does not accept donations from commercial tourism interests ●



Barbara Francis & Rus Littleton

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



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



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



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

## Gyms and fitness facilities

Southbank is home to so many gyms and fitness facilities right on your doorstep! **F45 Training** has been running for many years now and is located on Power St. It is essentially a 45-minute dynamic and functional form of group fitness training. More tailored for the 20-40 age group, this may be your style. **Body Fit Training** has largely followed on the heels of F45 but offers 50-minute classes "that use science and technology to drive positive outcomes". You have the option of **SNAP Fitness**, which is a 24-hour, seven days a week gym located on Queensbridge St. There are also so many Pilates and yoga options locally too! All of these options are available and will have staff available to guide you through their options and many offer free trial sessions, so why not give them a go and see if it works for you!



## Residential apartment gyms

As a mobile personal trainer who frequents many residential apartment gyms in and around Southbank, it is clear to see that so many of you have access to a FREE resource (albeit included in body corporate fees). The quality of residential gyms provided is continually improving too, so why not use and incorporate them into your exercise routine. I know first-hand that many residents balk at the cost of a weekly gym membership and instead have a personal trainer specifically devise a suitable exercise program for their particular needs and goals utilising their apartment gym, or have a personal trainer visit them weekly or fortnightly to keep them on track.

## The Boyd Community Hub

Have you ever visited the Boyd Community Hub? Located at 207 City Rd, this hub of activity offers way more than just a library, creative space, maternal and child health services and a fantastic café (House of Cards). It is home to many free and/or inexpensive fitness options. Some of these include our very own FREE Just In Time Personal Training "more than just a walking group" held every Wednesday morning from 9.30am to 10.30am, which has now been going strong for more than seven years! There are also other offerings such as yoga and, with COVID easing, we hope to see many more offerings returning in the coming months – so get down there and check it out for yourself!



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

For more information, exercise guidance or if you have any questions, feel free to contact me by heading to [justintimept.com](http://justintimept.com) ●



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## METRO TUNNEL

# Building legacies, from Southern Cross to the Metro Tunnel

*To mark International Women's Day this March, the Metro Tunnel Project is celebrating the brilliant women leaders working on our city-shaping project.*



Meet Linda Cantan, package director tunnels and stations for the Metro Tunnel Project.

Born in Dublin, Ms Cantan's entry into the infrastructure industry turned her from a chartered accountant to a construction all-rounder. She arrived in Australia from Ireland to work at KPMG, but quickly got involved in the world of infrastructure.

"I've worked on projects including Southern Cross Station, the Convention Centre, EastLink, schools and hospitals," she said.

Ms Cantan is looking forward to the Metro Tunnel's five new stations becoming legacy landmarks, each with its own character and reference to its surroundings.

The scale, look, feel and finish of the stations would impress Victorians for generations to

come, she said.

"At Arden Station, we have a nod to the area's industrial history; at Anzac Station, there'll be a big timber canopy as a nod to the boulevard and the Botanic Gardens. At each location, we've tried to capture the essence of that part of the city."

The infrastructure industry in Australia looks a lot different now to in years past, when many engineers found themselves having to travel overseas to maintain a career.

"If they want to, engineers starting today can spend their whole career in Melbourne," she said.

"We have a lot of construction projects, especially in rail, and they'll keep going for the next 10, 20, 30 years.



▲ A view from inside the Metro Tunnel as construction continues underground at Anzac Station.

"Instead of having to follow projects around the world, you now have the opportunity for a career in Melbourne that can be varied and give a wide range of experience."

While there was a time when construction was strictly the domain of men, the number of women entering the industry grows each year.

Ms Cantan said it was still rare to see women in senior construction management positions, but Rail Projects Victoria – the government agency delivering the Metro Tunnel – was playing a role in tackling the gender imbalance.

"I think at RPV we do a good job," she said.

"Some of it is getting the candidates. Sometimes you don't get a huge number of female candidates applying, so it goes back to basics – you need to get women into

universities and get them out with practical work experience."

"You also have to be flexible and acknowledge that often women will have children and take extended leave."

Ms Cantan has one important piece of advice for her friends with daughters: "I tell them, if their girls are interested in maths, get them into engineering!" ●

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

# When the MCG was in Southbank!

*Many residents of Southbank have a good view of the Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG) from their windows and balconies.*

The massive ground, surrounded by light towers, sits in Yarra Park, on the eastern fringe of the city. It anchors a huge sporting complex of venues for cricket, Australian football, soccer, rugby league, and tennis, and is the home of the Melbourne Cricket Club, formed around 1838.

They played on various grounds but soon occupied a piece of land in what is now known as Southbank. It was just to the south of the Yarra, believed to be on the site occupied today by Crown Casino and was part of the land traditionally inhabited by the Wurundjeri tribe.

The Southbank area was low-lying and notoriously swampy and the new cricket ground next to the river flooded regularly, making it difficult to establish and maintain wicket areas and facilities. It was reported as having flooded six times over a decade and in 1849 the flood waters reached to the top of their bell-shaped tents!

Nevertheless, the club had a busy program at the Southbank venue (even if matches were advertised as due to take place when the flood waters have receded) as new clubs were being formed across Melbourne and the club played



an intercolonial match against Tasmania in 1852. By 1853 the club had expended some £300 on grading, turfing and fencing the ground. In a portent of the future, a number of liquor

licences were granted to publicans for matches on Wednesdays and Saturdays. But there was no security of tenure, as it was on Crown land and was regarded as occupying the space “under

sufferance”.

A major blow came in 1853 when a new railway line, from the city to Sandridge (Port Melbourne) was proposed, which would cut straight through the cricket ground. Melbourne was undergoing massive transformation due to the Gold Rush and new transport systems were to be an essential part of the infrastructure of the booming city.

The club was forced to relocate, but where to go? The Lieutenant Governor, La Trobe, was sympathetic to its plight and the government offered two sites. The club selected the site of the current ground in Jolimont, used by the Police to graze their horses, and the club was able to commence the long process of developing wickets, securing water supply, developing changing sheds for players, building fences and constructing rudimentary grandstands for spectators – all with little fear of flooding.

Today the original site of the MCG is fully built up and occupied. But we can only wonder what it would have meant if the MCG had stayed in Southbank ... ●



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## ST JOHNS SOUTHGATE

# Ashes to ashes, dust to dust

*Ukraine. Enough said. You know what I'm talking about. Even at extreme distance from the conflict, Melburnians have been horrified by recent events.*

There seems to be a heaviness even in pleasant conversations due to the peripheral presence of a global tragedy unfolding. But for those with close personal ties to the region it has been particularly difficult.

On the first Sunday after the invasion had begun, St Johns welcomed visitors, both Ukrainian and Russian, who simply felt the need to come to church, to stop and think and pray amid the swirl of emotions.

After the pause of Sunday, though, life goes on. Those Ukrainian and Russian visitors, along with the rest of us, go back to the busyness of our lives. That's not to say that having to soldier on, marching along on the treadmill of life in the face of indescribable suffering isn't troubling. It is! It can be very difficult to come to terms with, psychologically and spiritually. But there are things that can help us on the journey.

Wednesday, March 2 was Ash Wednesday, which begins the liturgical season of Lent. This season is rather solemn in its character, in that it encourages the Christian to journey with Christ on the way of suffering and death – the way of the cross. It is generally commenced with what's called the “Imposition of Ashes” – worshippers being marked on the forehead with an ashen cross. During this rite, the individual coming forward will have just heard the words, “Ashes to ashes, dust to dust” which recalls those familiar funeral utterances. But taking it further then, the minister says to the worshipper being marked, “Remember that you are dust, and to dust you will return.” It's rather counter-cultural, you'd have to admit, to make a ritual out of something that, on the face (or forehead) of it seems anything but life affirming. Why would anyone want to be a part of something that's such a downer?

I would argue that looking at it that way is to consider it from a position of privilege. The fact is, as we are seeing in Ukraine, life is full of mortal hardships, some of which are no fault of our own and which we are powerless to avoid. But the good news of the ashen cross is that

God has been there, and that the risen Jesus is proof that life can go on, even in hopeful ways.

On the first weekend of the war in Ukraine, Andrey and Nadya, having been displaced from their home in Kyiv due to the barrage of missile fire, exchanged wedding vows at a church in the regional city of Svitlovods'k. Did their wedding take place with heads hung in mourning? No! It was a great celebration in spite of the horrors of war. We may all be headed to the final destination of dust and ash, but that's just reality. Life and love go on, and these things are just as real.

At another church in regional Ukraine, the congregation worshipped together on the Sunday – having their spiritual wounds bound in Christian communion – and then for the rest of the day they were trained in administering first aid so that they might help others with the physical wounds that may come. The ash of war and the dust of death were on their doorstep. They still gathered together, though. They made sure not to get lost in a downward spiral of heavy-heartedness, but rather set their compass by the cross. They chose the path, hard and dark as it may be, of joyful service and self-sacrifice. The people of that congregation trust, ultimately, that the Light of the World will shine through any dust and ash that may envelope their nation, their city, their town or their families. They, quite obviously, don't need an Ash Wednesday forehead cross to signify that.

May your Lenten season be one that brings to mind the truth that while hard and tragic circumstances abound, from dust and ash green shoots can rise, and they most certainly will ●



Tom Hoffmann

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## MONTAGUE COMMUNITY ALLIANCE

# Here is a chance to have your voice heard

*Do you live in Montague Precinct (Fishermans Bend) of South Melbourne? Would you like to have your voice heard?*

Dear readers, the time will be coming soon for me to pass on the joy of writing this column. I continue to be honoured that I am trusted to represent the extraordinary Montague Precinct of Fishermans Bend, and to work with the community, the City of Port Phillip and the Fishermans Bend Taskforce and Development Board.

Early last year I moved my residence to Southbank but was lucky enough, most days, to still be in the Montague Precinct and remained closely connected to the community and local businesses. However, in 2022 my circumstances have changed, and I will not be in the precinct on a regular basis.

I am a great believer that to represent a community, you need to be an active member of that community and not be an observer who lives elsewhere. Therefore, if you live or work within the Montague boundaries, and would like to have this opportunity we would welcome you getting in touch. You don't need direct writing experience, but it is important that you have passion, interest, ability to connect with the Montague community, local businesses and government and local council.

When I started almost six years ago, I had never written a column. Sean Car, the editor of *Southbank News* (and owner of Hyperlocal News, which publishes many fantastic local papers), took a risk and asked me to contribute and the *Southbank News* grew to cover the Montague Precinct.

I am sure the first few columns were quite clunky, but it has become a joy to write and work with *Southbank News*. So, even if you have no experience please don't let that get in the way of contributing.

Sean and his team are great mentors and I



will be around for a while to support whomever it is that is fortunate to get this opportunity.

On another matter, in my new role as co-founder and committee member of Southbank3006, I spoke at a Future Melbourne Committee meeting of the City of Melbourne (CoM). It was interesting to hear the perspective of how CoM is working on its Fishermans Bend precinct – Lorimer – and to hear the news of the new massive development about to appear close to the Montague Precinct. I have put in a request to speak to the Deputy Lord Mayor Nicholas Reece, who is the lead councillor of the council's planning portfolio, to ask him about how he sees the Lorimer Precinct interacting with the Montague Precinct and I look forward to reporting on that in my next column.

So, once again, dear readers, please get in touch at [trishavery@me.com](mailto:trishavery@me.com) or directly to [sean@southbanklocalnews.com.au](mailto:sean@southbanklocalnews.com.au)

Stay safe, be kind and remember how lucky we are here in Melbourne ●



Trisha Avery

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SOUTHBANK SUSTAINABILITY GROUP

# Community building in Southbank

As we are nearing Neighbour Day with a theme of community, and with opportunities to provide vital input to our council's next Neighbourhood Plan for Southbank, this month's focus for our group will be Southbank's community – both right now and how we can build it up more in the long run.

Firstly, we are delighted to welcome two new champions to our leadership team! Kelly and Fredricia will be our new composting and events management champions, respectively. We would still welcome a composting co-champion for any of you who are still interested in volunteering and steering the delivery of Southbank's first community composting hub.

As we are forging ahead with the composting hub, which we expect to roll out in April, connecting with similar groups and organisations, while keeping Southbank's community garden healthy and thriving, we are delighted to start delivering even more educational events that build a sense of community again in Southbank. That is one of our superpowers, anyway, building an active and supportive community that can connect and have fun while taking climate action at the same time.

Our next event will be aligned with Australia's Neighbour Day, the national annual celebration of community, which will celebrate its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year, taking place on the last weekend of March. This year's Neighbour Day has a theme of coming out of isolation and building the communities you want to live in. There is nothing more challenging that humanity had to face in its history, than the catastrophic effects of climate change. Not to mention a once-in-a-generation long, global pandemic. We need community now more than ever so we can overcome these challenges head on and even enjoy ourselves in the process. One small action, one small decision, one small interaction at a time.

As part of Neighbourhood Day, we will be

hosting one of the most social, community building activities we've had lately, a sustainable wine tasting event with ReWine. It will be on Saturday, March 26, with more details on time, duration, etc. coming up on our Facebook page soon. Many of you told us how you would've loved to join the first event we hosted with ReWine and to let you know if we're reorganising one. The ones of you who joined on the day told us how much you enjoyed it and the wonderful sense of community this event built, getting to chat with neighbours with a glass in hand, while learning how we can significantly reduce our wine's carbon footprint by at least 80 per cent (just by opting to buy wine in a reusable wine bottle), one purchasing decision at a time. Not to mention, how convenient it can be to choose a more sustainable wine solution, with a delivery service to Southbank now.

Apart from the sustainable wine tasting social element on the day, we are likely to also have our new City of Melbourne community development partner for Southbank, giving Southbankers an opportunity to give meaningful input on their favourite and least favourite parts of living in postcode 3006. This input will inform Southbank's next neighbourhood strategic plan that will guide our council's investment and development of our neighbourhood in the next few years, based on the needs and opportunities identified through this consultation process. There will also be an opportunity to sign up for community development workshops, where you'll get to share your local knowledge, meet more neighbours, and learn about community building.

### Participate Southbank

In the meantime, you can add your input that will inform and influence Southbank's very own Neighbourhood Plan by following this link: [participate.melbourne.vic.gov.au/participate-southbank](https://participate.melbourne.vic.gov.au/participate-southbank). It is important to voice



our needs and aspirations for Southbank, in forums where what we say is taken into account in decisions that help deliver the solutions and spaces we all need. Submissions are open from now until April 30 and participants can even enter a draw to win a \$60 voucher for a local restaurant.

### Next SSG meetups

Our next meetups will be Saturdays, March 12 and 26, 10am to 12pm, at Boyd's front yard. As always, we invite everyone to join regardless of gardening or climate action interest or experience. Please email us or go on our Facebook page for the Eventbrite registration link of upcoming meetups and educational events or to volunteer for an event, watering, or an ongoing role.

### 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. Free to join. 2019 Environment Melbourne Award and KVB 2020 Sustainable Cities Environment Award winner. Reach us at [southbanksustainability@gmail.com](mailto:southbanksustainability@gmail.com) or [facebook.com/SouthbankSustainabilityGroup](https://facebook.com/SouthbankSustainabilityGroup) •



Artemis Pattichi  
SOUTHBANK SUSTAINABILITY GROUP  
SOUTHBANKSUSTAINABILITY@GMAIL.COM

YARRA RIVER BUSINESS ASSOCIATION

## Life is returning to our precinct

*It's encouraging to see the steadily increasing foot traffic on Southbank and Crown Promenades, and while it may not mean commensurate increases in sales for our businesses, at least it shows growing public confidence to get out and about.*

The return of events to MCEC is also significantly boosting foot traffic in the western end of the precinct, which usually has a direct flow-on to South Wharf businesses. The rebuilding trade and a shortage of staff means that some of your favourite eating places may still be on limited opening days and hours. Those people who now staff many venues are younger and lacking experience, so please show patience.

Overnight stays in our hotels have the greatest trickle-down economic effect, so we have been directing a \$100 cash-back offer to our wide social media following since November. They can choose to stay at The Langham, Clarion Suites, Quest Southbank, Pan Pacific or Crowne Plaza. The feedback we've been getting about how much they enjoyed their stay in our precinct is encouraging that it will not be long before substantial trade returns.

Autumn is an ideal time to holiday in Southbank and our cash-back offers, especially when combined with the renewed Melbourne Money scheme, could make it significantly cheaper than heading into the country or interstate for a well-deserved break. Why not encourage friends and relatives to experience your Southbank lifestyle?

By now I hope you have received your 2022 edition of the *Southbank Directory*. If you've glanced inside you will see that it contains 13 special offers from our businesses to residents of postcode 3006. We hope over the past two years our work through *Southbank News* has revealed most of our business community to be flesh and blood, small operations and, in some

cases, family run affairs.

We also hope that the past two years have shown our businesses that the 18,000 residents of Southbank and South Wharf should be a fundamental part of their business strategy. Even when the tourist tap starts to flow again, we want you – the residents – to underpin their operations. In many cases this may require them to re-think a little about what they sell or produce, and at what price point.

After 30 years of being Melbourne's leading tourist and recreation node, Southbank will be undergoing some major changes in the next few years. Residents are invited to join with the business community on Thursday, April 7 on Eureka 89 to be part of an information-packed session entitled "The Changing Face of Southbank". It's an excellent \$77 worth of fine food, beverages and information, not to mention outstanding views over Melbourne •

**To book your ticket:**  
[yarrariver.melbourne/lunch](https://yarrariver.melbourne/lunch)



Jeremy Vincent  
PRESIDENT  
YARRA RIVER BUSINESS ASSOCIATION

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# Friday lunches are back at Melba Restaurant



*There are few things more quintessentially Melbourne than enjoying a lunch at The Langham, Melbourne's acclaimed Melba Restaurant.*



Standing the test of the most turbulent times, Melba has become a staple of Melbourne's hospitality scene, showcasing finest locally sourced produce and innovative dishes from around the globe.

From their ever-popular sushi station to Chinese dumplings, Italian pastas, Australian seafood or their Indian station where naan is made to order and the tandoor oven is used to make succulent tandoori chicken, Melba has something for everyone.

Melba's buffet dining experience of over 40 different dishes offers the perfect landscape for diners and multigenerational families; while you're off sifting through the choice of house-cured salmon or butter poached lobster, your kids will be off enjoying the famous chocolate fountain.

According to The Langham, Melbourne's Tara Bishop, executive chef Thomas Rappel is "almost fanatical" with his pride in sourcing locally grown and harvested produce.

"Over 80 per cent of our menu is sourced within 350km of hotel," Ms Bishop said.

"Our menu is designed to cater for even the pickiest eaters and buffet lets you get eating straight away, but whatever you do, save room for dessert."

"A feature of our menu has to be our Indian station, it's non-negotiable. Fresh naan to order with recipes handed down from generation to generation.

With a literal smorgasbord of dishes, it would be easy to become overwhelmed by the choice, but with friendly staff on hand, all you need to worry about is how to fit it all in.

Melba's famous Friday buffet lunches are back at the special price of \$95 per person. Kids under three eat free, while children between four and 12 can dine from the buffet for half price or from the children's À La Carte menu ●

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



*Jack Hayes*  
BUSINESS EDITOR  
[JACK@HYPERLOCALNEWS.COM.AU](mailto:JACK@HYPERLOCALNEWS.COM.AU)

# Southbank apartment tower nearing completion

*Construction on FOCUS Apartments is progressing well and approaching completion with residents set to move in later this year.*

FOCUS is the latest luxury apartment project by notable Melbourne property developer Central Equity, which is widely regarded as the pioneer of Southbank living and is now celebrating its 35<sup>th</sup> year in operation. FOCUS will be Central Equity's 84<sup>th</sup> completed project.

Located at 75 City Rd – adjacent to the National Gallery of Victoria, Arts Centre, State Theatre, Botanical Gardens and famous Southbank Promenade – FOCUS is strategically positioned to enjoy the absolute best of Melbourne. And the best is set to get even better.

Southbank has long played a leading role in Melbourne's cosmopolitan lifestyle – as home to its finest arts, entertainment, parks, gardens and cultural institutions. Key upgrades to Southbank's cultural infrastructure are now gaining further momentum, with plans lodged by Development Victoria for a number of exciting additions including the new NGV Contemporary Art Gallery and 18,000 sqm of public space (featuring gardens, sculptures, food and beverage, and performance spaces). Just a stone's throw from FOCUS, the \$470 million commercial and retail redevelopment of Southgate will further add to the excitement with a vast array of new restaurants, bars, retail spaces and offices.

Other locational benefits at FOCUS include easy access to the CBD via Princes Bridge and close proximity to Flinders Street Station. From there, take the City Loop to anywhere in the CBD or further afield by Melbourne's vast train and tram network.

As exciting as Southbank can be, sometimes apartment residents want to take it easy. At FOCUS, exclusive resident facilities provide a variety of relaxation, health, fitness and entertainment options, including an indoor heated lap pool, gym with strength and cardio options and sauna. There is also a resident cinema, an expansive and luxurious resident lounge, an outdoor garden terrace with barbecue and seating areas and indoor and outdoor dining areas with kitchen facilities.



Central Equity has made additional efforts at FOCUS to ensure resident comfort and wellness are paramount. Each apartment includes its own dedicated air conditioning system (heating and cooling), with plentiful natural ventilation via openable windows, sliding doors and private balconies and terraces. Ventilation is managed in communal spaces via a combination of filtered ventilation systems, air purifiers, or outside air changeovers.



The projected mid- to late-2022 completion for FOCUS could not come at a better time with the inner-city showing strong signs of a quick return to normal life. Vacancy rates in the Central Equity Group's management company in the Melbourne CBD and Southbank have tightened as students, retirees and young professionals return to the city. Low vacancy rates like this have not been seen since before 2019, signalling an excellent time for investors

to consider purchasing at FOCUS. The combination of increased international migration, the return of city workers and an influx of new city residents looking to enjoy the city life, will likely create strong demand for brand new towers like FOCUS.

Apartments at FOCUS qualify for the huge stamp duty concession that is currently available until June 30, 2022. This is a unique opportunity to save many thousands of dollars in government stamp duty charges.

Central Equity is holding an Open House event from March 10 to 20 at its display at 151 City Rd, Southbank (corner Power St). The event will showcase a new range of Southbank apartments and provide the opportunity to inspect fully furnished display apartments and fabulous resident amenity in a newly completed apartment project. To find out more about the Open House or living at FOCUS – head to [focusmelb.com.au](http://focusmelb.com.au) or call 03 9278 8888 ●

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

# Pet's Corner

## Coco embraces the Southbank lifestyle

“

*Coco, the Toy Poodle, may be small in size but she's a burst of energy.*

”



WORDS BY *Brendan Rees*

“She runs around so fast and is constantly on the move. We often call her ‘Psycho Coco,’ she is hilarious,” said her owner, Dianne.

“She steals socks, shoes, and anything else at her reach. She loves it when we dress her up, however her favourite thing to put on is her harness as she loves to go outdoors.”

Melbourne Square is among her favourite places to visit and gets “so excited” over the sight of grass while socialising with other dogs – a fear she has slowly overcome.

But she did get a little scared of children and didn't want strangers to pick her up, Dianne said.

Coco, who was named after the designer brand, has been a bundle of joy to Dianne and her husband after they sadly said goodbye to their beautiful Bailey, a 17-year-old Lhasa Apso, in November 2020.

“Having Coco encourages us to get out and about

and has given us the opportunity to meet other dog owners,” Dianne said.

“One restaurant we love to eat at not only because of the amazing food is BearBrass in Southgate. The staff are wonderful and welcome Coco every time we go. They bring her fresh water and although Coco can't have any, they bring out a jar of doggy treats.”

While Coco loves park areas, Dianne said she and other dog owners would like to see the council consider making a fenced grass area for small breeds only.

“It's very hard to take small dog breeds to dog parks as the larger breeds seem to intimidate the small breeds,” she said.

“This is not at fault of the larger breeds, as they just want to play, however the smaller breeds seem to accidentally get knocked over. I love that Coco interacts with dogs of all sizes; however, it would be nice to let her run free without a lead in a safe environment.” ●

10 YEARS ON

## Looking back at Southbank News - 10 Years On

MARCH 2012 | ISSUE 06 |

SOUTHBANK LOCAL NEWS

### Politicians meet residents

*Legislative Council members Angela Coote and Georgie Crozier met with furious Freshwater Place residents this month, to discuss their angst towards the proposed Queensbridge tower.*



As reported in last month's Southbank Local News, the residents have been campaigning to have the proposal rejected, as they believe the tower is not appropriate for the planned location.

Ms Coote said they had organised a lengthy chat with the residents, as she knew the current had particularly riled many of them.

She said of the proposed tower: “I've probably had more representation in letters from your group than any other,” and added that planning was: “The single issue that gets more anger and comment than any other.”

The meeting was attended by about 20 residents, and included a formal presentation from Freshwater Place owners' corporate chair Peter Renner, to which Ms Coote and Ms Crozier responded, before taking questions.

The residents were vocal and passionate in getting their points across to the MLCs, and Ms Coote told them she sympathised with their situation.

“I have no doubt the issues you have raised are true and valid,” she told them, adding: “I think it's important to take up this issue – your presentation is very good.”

Ms Crozier concurred, saying: “Certainly there are some concerns that we are very appreciative to hear about in a presentation like this.”

Throughout his presentation, Mr Renner was adamant that this sort of planning had to be stopped before more of it is seen in the area, saying: “If this is built now it will be open slather for Southbank.”

“We think Southbank should be mid-rise with a smattering of high-rise. We think that would be fantastic,” Mr Renner added.

He also had some strong words for the City of Melbourne, saying: “We are not very happy with the Melbourne City Council, we believe they have betrayed us and, completely abandoned us.”

The two parliamentarians said they would pass on the concerns they had heard to the Minister for Planning Matthew Guy, but Ms Coote said it was important that proper process be respected at all times.

“It is important to remember that there is a planning process. The process is there for a reason,” Ms Coote said ●

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## 南岸长廊升级改造项目优先进行

墨尔本市政对在疫情封锁期间中断的一些主要项目进行重新优先考虑，让重振南岸长廊(Southbank Promenade)的一部分工程提前进行。

**Brendan Rees**

耗资380万澳元的南岸长廊项目第一阶段将于4月底开始，该项目从Princes桥延伸至Evan Walker桥，优先考虑解决“树木、人行道的状况以及自行车速度快的长期问题”。

考虑到耗资4.7亿澳元的Southgate开发项目还未进行，市政表示，去年4月就决定“进行早期的一揽子工程，但仅限于扩建西部上游的南岸长廊。”

市政最新的基本建设工程计划摘要称，此项目完成招标，预计将于2022年12月完成。



该项目旨在为所有使用者提供更大的安全性和更好的舒适性，包括更换青石路面、照明升级、新座椅、重新配置楼梯和长廊层之间的坡道，以及更换和种植新的原生树木。

目前正在进行的其他项目还有，拖延已久的Southbank Boulevard项目的最后一个部分，该项目将在Kavanagh街和Fawkner街之间建造一个590万澳元的娱乐空间，预计在今年第三季度完工。

这个娱乐空间将是一个“自然环境”，可供所有年龄段的儿童使用，包括用于攀爬的巨石、秋千、滑梯、梯子和街面装饰。

根据摘要，市政还为南岸的一个大型公共艺术项目预留了630万澳元，该项目已“从更广阔的南岸大道升级开发项目中划分出来了”。

基本建设工程计划摘要指出：“虽然该项目有其独立的范围和时间表，但它将回利益相关者最初为南岸大道进行的咨询。”

## 租房“供不应求”

对于南岸(Southbank)的潜在租户来说，租房将变得更加困难，而且租金可能更加昂贵。

**David Schout**

由于租房需求增加、边境重新开放以及新房源缺乏，南岸的公寓正在迅速被抢租一空，一位当地中介预测“租金将上涨”。

根据SQM研究的最新数据显示，自疫情爆发以来，南岸的住宅空置率首次降至5%以下。

当地的空置率为3%，这是自2019年3月以来的最低水平。

这些数据表明，在不到18个月前，即2020年10月，南岸公寓的空置率接近五分之一(17.2%)，现在出现了巨大的反弹。尽管后来受到Omicron疫情的影响，但随着住宅公寓空置数量的下降，需求稳步增长。

南岸的房产中介公司Ray White负责人Andrew Salvo表示，经过了“艰难的几年”，尤其是2021年7月至9月是“有史以来最糟糕的一个季度”，但是目前情况已经大幅反弹。

他告诉本报：“反弹如此强劲，我们在短短六个月内就回到了COVID疫情之前的水平。”

他表示，房产中介看到“有大量租客看房”，并预测空置率将保持低位。

“现在不仅仅是房子出租得更快，而且每次开放看房时有大量的看房者。有些房子开放看房时竟然有40人出现，而在COVID疫情和封锁期间，我们很幸运也只有一个人来看房。目前这个租房需求远远超过了能提供的。”

Salvo先生表示，当时在疫情的巨大影响下，需求下降，房东被迫降低租金，以确保他们的房子可以出租，现在这个当地的租房市场要“重新调整”了。

## 全国最差选举制度地区？

一位墨尔本市议员坦承认，在对2020年选举进行调查后，20家房地产中介受到警告，本市“可能会获得全国最糟糕的选举制度奖”。

**David Schout**

在该市议会选举中反复出现问题的调查中，地方政府监察机构发现，20家房产中介承认他们代表他们所管理的房产物主非法填写选票。

这些物主大多数居住在海外，“最常见的是在中国”，有些物主“以口头或书面形式授权他们的房产中介代表他们投票”。

但是，尽管找到了中介违规的证据，可这些中介还是逃脱了惩罚，因为没有发现欺诈行为，他们只算是误解了选举法。

首席市政监察员Michael Stefanovic说：“我们的调查没有发现任何系统性或故意的选举舞弊”。

“这些问题主要是由于这些房地产中介不了解我们的选举法，以及与物主的沟通问题，而疫情的限制加剧了这些问题的发生。”

许多中介不知道，在投票结束前15天内，不在维州的选民可以免于投票。

这些中介表示，物主普遍“英语能力有限”，“对选举不感兴趣”，“通过微信用中文与他们的中介沟通”。

市议员Rohan Leppert表示，这个选举系统急需改革。

他告知本报：“虽然没有证据表明选票被篡改，但很明显，墨尔本市议会的选举过度依赖少数房地产中介的诚实度。”

“我们可能因此获全国最糟糕的选举制度奖。根据社区的明确意愿以及市议会过去确立的立场，我们必须重新审查这个选举制度。”

## 狗狗公园开放皆大欢喜

在Kings Way南部下面的废弃场地新建了一个众人喜欢的狗狗公园，南岸居民可以带着无需牵拉的狗狗在这个位于City路的新公园里玩。

**Brendan Rees**

墨尔本市政在三月初正式开放了这个公园，其中包括游戏设备、供狗奔跑的空间和一个饮水机。

市长Sally Capp表示，“这个精心打造的狗狗公园对南岸居民及其所有的狗狗来说真是太好了。”

她说：“这里有障碍跑道可以让喜欢运动的狗狗奔跑，有泥地可以让喜欢刨爪的狗狗来刨挖。”

“我们很高兴能利用这个以前被遗弃的空间，把它变成一个提升城市生活体验的地方。”

虽然公园的使用者到目前为止都很享受这种体验，但是当地社区还是提出了一些问题，因此新的居民团体Southbank 3006与墨尔本市政代表开会讨论了这些问题。

该团体的对外交流主管Mary Kay Rauma表示，讨论的主要问题之一是围栏的高度会给较小的狗狗带来问题。市长表示，市政将“迅速采取行动解决这个问题”，因为“我们希望确保这个新公园尽可能让狗狗安全并让它们喜欢。”

讨论的其他事项还有，居民要求在两个入口处设置双门，为防止狗跑出去，以及有些狗主人报告公园新门使用困难的问题。

还有要求在公园的围栏内安装另一个(供人饮用和给狗补充食物)的饮水器和额外的垃圾箱。

Rauma女士说：“在公园上方的Kings Way大道有一个缺口，导致雨水涌入狗狗公园，他们正在解决密封问题。”

她还提到人们抱怨“为什么没有草？”不



过她表示，理解市政使用砾石的决定，因为这“更容易维护，也不需要阳光。”

她说，总的来说，这次见面会是“积极的”，居民对新的狗狗公园“非常满意”。

# What's On: March

## Community Calendar



FRIDAYS: UNTIL APRIL 22  
**NGV Friday Nights**

Celebrating the joy of being outside and free, the NGV Friday Nights series is returning in time for summer. A mix of eating, drinking and dancing, the event will focus around music and art.

[ngvvic.gov.au](http://ngvvic.gov.au)



UNTIL JUNE 30

**Aboriginal Heritage Walk**

Gain insight into the rich history and thriving culture of the First Peoples of Australia through a journey of identifying significant native plants within the Gardens.

[rbg.vic.gov.au](http://rbg.vic.gov.au)

**MPavilion**

MPavilion is a temporary pavilion located in the Queen Victoria Gardens (opposite Arts Centre Melbourne) presenting daily free performances, talks, workshops and more until April 24.

[mpavilion.org](http://mpavilion.org)



**Melbourne Street Eatz**

Located alongside the Yarra at South Wharf featuring weekly rotating trucks, bars, live music and events, it's the ultimate day and night out open from Thursday to Sundays until April 25.

[melbournestreeteatz.com](http://melbournestreeteatz.com)



**Bearbrass Probus**

Bearbrass Probus caters to retirees in Southbank, Docklands and the CBD and hosts regular events for locals to connect. To see what events are on offer online during lockdowns, visit the website:

[bearbrassprobus.org](http://bearbrassprobus.org)



**Southbank Sustainability Group**

A growing group of green and sustainability enthusiasts who meet up at Boyd on the first and third Saturday of each month. Connect via Facebook for more information and educational tips!

Facebook: [SouthbankSustainabilityGroup](https://www.facebook.com/SouthbankSustainabilityGroup)

# Business Directory

### Church

**St Johns**  
Southgate

20 City Road Southbank  
Telephone 9682 4995  
[www.stjohnssouthgate.com.au](http://www.stjohnssouthgate.com.au)

### Gym

**JUSTINTIME**  
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Justin Moran  
0411 798 934 [justintimept.com](http://justintimept.com)

### Real Estate

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Trent Bonnici



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\$420,000 - \$440,000  
Max Hui



3/2A Mollison Street, Abbotsford  
Auction March 26 at 10am  
Georgina Zeneldin



1308/50 Albert Road, South Melbourne  
\$330,000 - \$360,000  
Tommy-lee Davies



803/450 St Kilda Road, Melbourne  
\$450,000 - \$475,000  
Tommy-lee Davies



305/610 St Kilda Road, Melbourne  
\$400,000 - \$444,000  
Max Hui



303/133 Jolimont Road, East Melbourne  
For Sale Via Private Negotiation  
Trent Bonnici



508/30 Wreckyn Street, North Melbourne  
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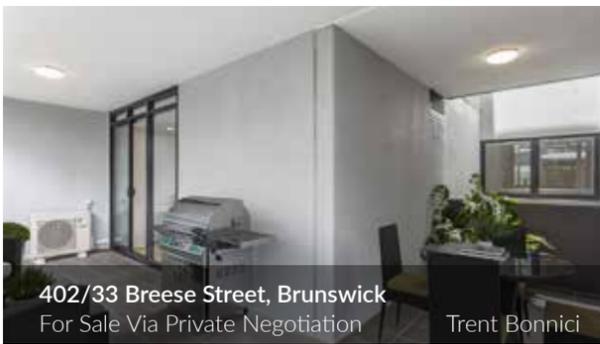
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