



Mermaids make a splash for conservation

On March 1, a group of professional mermaids quite literally swam ashore in Port Melbourne as part of Mermaids Save the Seas - a free, not-for-profit community conservation event aimed at promoting cleaner waterways, including in Port Phillip Bay and the Yarra-Birrarung. More on page 14. Photo: Hanna Komissarova.

PROPERTY, PAGE 03

Purchasers left waiting over stalled STH BNK project

COUNCIL AFFAIRS, PAGE 07

Red Stairs saga ends with refurbishment and more consultation

Southbank unites: we want a school at Victoria Barracks

“Off the back of last month’s coverage looking into what could come next for the Victoria Barracks site, one key idea has emerged that Southbankers are now uniting behind: a school.”

WORDS BY
SEAN CAR



Southbank’s biggest planning failures: the absence of a walkable, non-selective public secondary school, or even a Prep to Year 12 school, for the suburb’s growing family population.

In a compelling letter to *Southbank News*, resident and parent Vicky da Gama made the case clearly.

“As a Southbank parent, I look around our neighbourhood and see cranes, apartments and density everywhere. What I don’t see is the one thing families need most: a walkable, non-selective public secondary school,” she wrote. Her final line is the one that should stick with governments: “We have built the density. Now we must build the community.”

That is the issue in a nutshell.

Southbank’s population has doubled in a decade to more than 22,000 residents. It is now one of the densest parts of Australia. Families are here, and more will come. Yet when children reach secondary school age, there is still no local public option embedded in the daily walking life of the suburb.

On one side of Southbank, students are zoned to Port Melbourne Secondary College in Fishermans Bend. On the other, they are zoned to Prahran High School. Both are excellent new schools, but both are already serving large and fast-growing catchments. And neither is in Southbank.

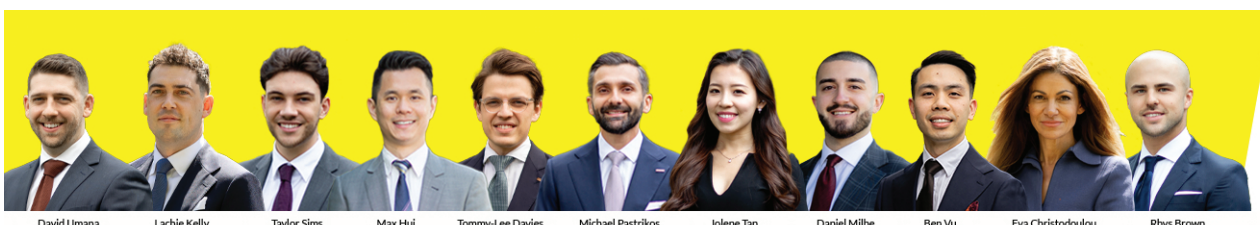
Continued on page 2.



ENVIRONMENT, PAGE 9

How Jac Semmler is reimagining our garden city

On March 14, celebrated garden designer Jac Semmler will present at a free public conversation at Fed Square, unpacking the philosophy behind Southbank’s future Laak Boorndap garden in the transformed Arts Precinct.



David Umana Lachie Kelly Taylor Sims Max Hui Tommy-Lee Davies Michael Pastrikos Jolene Tan Daniel Milhe Ben Vu Eva Christodoulou Rhys Brown

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CONTACT
Suite 208, 198 Harbour Esplanade
Docklands 3008
southbanklocalnews.com.au
Tel: 8689 7980

EDITOR
Sean Car

PUBLISHER
Hyperlocal News Pty Ltd
ABN: 57 623 558 725

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Southbank unites: we want a school at Victoria Barracks

Continued from page 1.

The state government deserves credit for delivering new primary schools in and around the inner city, including South Melbourne Primary School on Ferrars St, South Melbourne Park Primary on Albert Rd, and the newly opened Narrarrang Primary School in Fishermans Bend. But no local secondary education remains as the glaring gap.

That is why the idea now gathering support around Victoria Barracks is so important.

The site already has what so many other inner-city locations lack: land, open space, secure access, parking, substantial buildings that could be adapted, and room for sport and recreation. As Ms da Gama points out, it includes green space suitable for sports fields and playgrounds, tennis courts, larger structures that could become classrooms, a gym or auditorium, on-site cafeteria facilities, safe entry points, staff parking and even a childcare centre next door.

Its location is unmatched. It sits within walking distance of the Royal Botanic Gardens and Tan Track, near the NGV and Arts Precinct, with multiple tram routes and a genuinely walkable catchment.

This is not an argument for demolition. It is the opposite. It is a case for adaptive reuse of one of Melbourne's most significant public sites in a way that serves the modern community while preserving its past.

Ms da Gama has suggested a Prep to Year 12 school and community hub. That is a serious and worthy idea. At the very least, however, there is broad local agreement that a secondary school is critical.

Southbank Residents' Association president Tony Penna put it bluntly.

"Whereas something like a school is a tangible outcome. It's a tangible result, which will have certainly lasting implications to

the community," he said.

That tangibility matters. Southbank has had no shortage of glossy visions and strategic plans. What it has lacked are practical facilities that make life easier for families and help anchor a neighbourhood.

Southbank3006 president David Hamilton said the opportunity was there for government to finally step up.

"The secondary school is definitely needed, and the catchment area is phenomenal," he said.

More importantly, he argued that the City of Melbourne was best placed to lead the push because it can frame the issue not as a niche request from local groups, but as a major civic need backed by a level of government.

"This is an opportunity to make up for the failures of planning by successive governments in Southbank to deliver the social and community infrastructure that has been ignored in the 'Wild West' of planning," he said.

To its credit, the City of Melbourne has already begun laying the groundwork. Lord Mayor Nick Reece's February 17 motion on Defence Estate Audit sites set the scene for a more imaginative public future at Victoria Barracks. The council's draft Community Infrastructure Plan identifies major gaps in family and youth services, recreation spaces and open space.

A school would do more than educate local children. It would help unlock broader community benefits. A well-designed campus could include halls, courts, running tracks, meeting rooms and green spaces that serve the wider public after hours and on weekends.

There may still be room for carefully considered affordable housing on parts of the site, particularly near Coventry St. But the site's core value should not be judged purely in dollars per square metre.

The Commonwealth and state

government now face a choice. They can see Victoria Barracks as just another asset to be monetised. Or they can recognise it as the place to finally give Southbank the school and community infrastructure it has been denied for too long.

Southbank has built the homes. It has absorbed the towers. It has carried the density.

Now it deserves the community.

Albert Park MP Nina Taylor didn't state whether she was willing to advocate for a school in Southbank at this stage, but noted that the Department of Education regularly reviewed demographic data to determine the need for and location of new schools.

"I'm proud to be part of a Labor Government which has delivered a record 121 new public schools including Port Melbourne Secondary College, a world-class school which opened its doors to local students in 2022," Ms Taylor said.

Rachel Westaway, the MP for Prahran – the electorate where Victoria Barracks is located – told Southbank News that with Prahran High already at capacity, she was supportive of the idea for a school and open space at Victoria Barracks.

"Whoever's in power has to have a conversation about whether it necessarily needs to go to developers. It doesn't. It can absolutely be looked at as a high school site and how beautiful to keep that within the public domain," she said.

"From early learning or daycare right through to primary school and then high school, we've got to think about where we can have space and where we can facilitate learning opportunities for kids."

"I think it should be going out to the community for discussion, but I absolutely think it's a responsibility of the state government to have a conversation with the feds and work out whether it's an option for us. I would love to see something like that happen." ●

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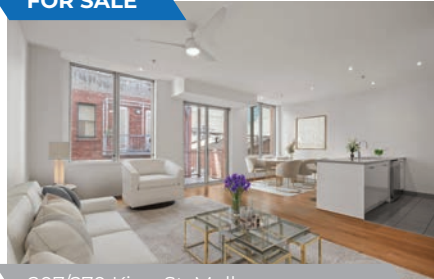


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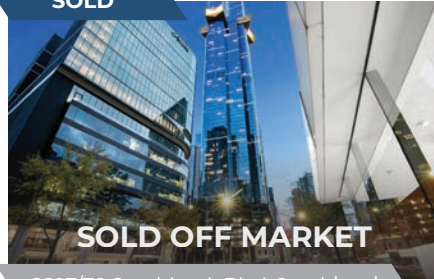


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Purchasers left waiting as questions grow over deposits tied to stalled STH BNK project

“

Concerns are mounting among apartment buyers at the stalled STH BNK by Beulah development in Southbank, with at least one purchaser questioning how long deposits can remain tied up while construction on the landmark project remains uncertain.

”

WORDS BY
SEAN CAR



The \$2.7 billion development, planned for the former BMW site at 118–164 City Rd, was once promoted as Australia's tallest building. Featuring twin towers and the striking “Green Spine” design by UNStudio and Cox Architecture, the project promised apartments, a hotel, offices, retail and public amenities.

But nearly four years after some buyers signed contracts, construction has yet to begin and the future of the project remains unclear following the administration of the development's project management entity in early 2025.

One purchaser, Denise, told *Southbank News* she signed an off-the-plan contract in August 2022 and paid a deposit of around \$297,000 shortly afterwards.

Denise said she had since tried repeatedly to obtain clarity about the project's future and requested the return of her deposit.

“Purchasers like myself are left in limbo,” she told *Southbank News*.

“Our money is tied up indefinitely under a long sunset clause, while there is no visible progress on site and no transparent communication about the project's future.”

She said phone calls, emails and written correspondence seeking information about funding, construction timelines and the project's progression had not resulted in clear answers.

“This is not just about one contract – it is about consumer protection, transparency and accountability in major property developments,” Denise said.

Her contract of sale, reviewed by *Southbank News*, relates to the purchase of

apartments within the STH BNK project and includes provisions typical of off-the-plan developments. Purchasers are warned that a substantial period may elapse between signing the contract and becoming the registered proprietor of the property.

According to the contract and subsequent correspondence, the agreement allows for a registration period of up to 120 months – or 10 years – from the day of sale for the plan of subdivision to be registered.

This effectively functions as the project's sunset timeframe.

In written correspondence to Denise in February this year, Beulah stated that the contract “remains on foot” and that the timeframe for rescission rights had not yet arisen under the agreement.

The developer also confirmed that Denise's deposit remains held in its solicitors Maddocks' trust account and is accruing interest.

Beulah said the contract provided for the 120-month registration period, within which the plan of subdivision is required to be registered.

“For completeness, we confirm that written notice under Section 9AC of the *Sale of Land Act 1962* was served ... in December 2023 together with correspondence outlining amendments to the plan of subdivision,” the company wrote.

Denise disputes receiving that notice and has requested evidence that it was properly served.

She has proposed that the parties mutually rescind the contract and return the deposit, arguing that the prolonged delay

and uncertainty surrounding the project have fundamentally changed the circumstances under which she agreed to purchase the property.

The issue raises broader questions about the protections available to buyers who purchase off-the-plan apartments in developments that face long delays or financial pressure.

STH BNK by Beulah has been one of Melbourne's most high-profile and ambitious developments. Since first unveiling the project in 2018 following an international design competition, the developer has undertaken an extensive marketing campaign promoting the landmark project.

However, the development has struggled to progress amid rising construction costs and a challenging financing environment.

In February 2025 the project's management entity, BSSPV Pty Ltd, was placed into voluntary administration after mounting debt and disputes with project consultants.

At the time, Beulah said the move was intended to allow additional time to pursue alternative strategies to realise the project.

Subsequently, the planning permit for the development was extended until April 2027, providing additional time for construction to commence.

Despite that reprieve, no construction activity has begun on the site.

Industry observers say stalled projects are not uncommon in the current market, where construction costs have escalated sharply and financing large residential towers has become increasingly difficult.

But for individual buyers who committed to off-the-plan purchases years earlier, the uncertainty can create complex financial and legal situations.

Under Victorian law, deposits for off-the-plan sales must be held in trust until settlement occurs. However, the contractual terms of individual developments

– including sunset clauses and registration periods – can significantly affect a purchaser's ability to withdraw from a contract and recover their deposit.

Denise said she believed the situation highlighted the need for greater scrutiny of how off-the-plan developments are regulated.

“Should developers be able to hold purchasers' deposits for up to 10 years without delivering construction?” she asked.

“What protections exist for buyers when large-scale developments stall or face financial pressure?”

“I believe many purchasers may be facing similar uncertainty,” she added.

In response to a series of questions from *Southbank News*, a spokesperson from Beulah said that plans for its STH BNK project continued “to progress” while “navigating broader economic and construction-sector conditions that have affected many major projects”.

It added that it had previously communicated to purchasers this year that it was in discussion with various stakeholders including “a well-established, reputable potential development partner regarding the next phase of the project”.

“For developments of this scale and complexity, contractual timeframes are structured to account for the planning, approvals, pre-construction and construction processes involved in delivering projects of this nature,” the spokesperson said in regards to the 120-month registration period.

“The construction timeline will be confirmed once discussions regarding the next phase of the development are finalised.”

“Purchasers have been kept informed as the project has progressed, including through an update provided in early February outlining the current status of the development and confirming that discussions with a potential development partner are under way.”

While it said the number of purchasers or the aggregate value of deposits were not publicly disclosed, it reiterated that strong buyer demand had resulted in around 80 per cent of apartments being pre-sold during the sales campaign.

In relation to cases where purchasers raised enquiries regarding their contracts, it said “these matters are considered on a case-by-case basis in accordance with the relevant contractual arrangements. Our team continues to respond directly to purchaser enquiries where clarification is required.”

Questions were also put to the Victorian Minister for Consumer Affairs Nick Staikos regarding the consumer protections available to buyers involved in delayed off-the-plan developments. He didn't respond before deadline. ●

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Your Southbank leasing specialists

Ray White Southbank has bolstered its leasing services with the appointment of business development managers Rhys Brown and Eva Christodoulou.

The pair's hands-on, client-focused approach is already helping local investors secure higher rents and better tenants in one of Melbourne's most competitive apartment markets.

Rhys and Eva specialise in bringing new rental properties into the market and guiding landlords through every stage of the leasing process – from preparing a property for rent to securing quality tenants as quickly as possible.

"We take investors through the process of preparing the property for rent – going through what needs to be done to get it listed and online and achieve the highest rental," Rhys said.

Eva added that presentation was crucial in a high-density suburb like Southbank.

"A lot of people think you only need professional advertising when selling, and that rentals can use phone photos – but you'll never get that high return and high-quality tenant unless the ad looks fantastic."

The pair emphasise tailored inspections and flexible viewing times as a key part of

their strategy. "We do a lot of midweek and private inspections. A lot of people prefer a private time ... we find that gets you applications because we've worked around them rather than making them work around us," Rhys said.

Their work extends beyond the public market too.

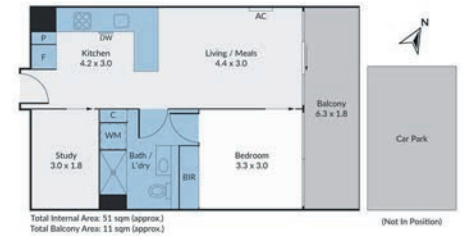
"We also work with relocation agents, doing quite a few off-market leases. There's a lot of behind-the-scenes advertising happening that people don't realise," Eva said.

Southbank's rental demand has surged since COVID, driven by returning international students, skilled migrants and interstate movers.

"The demand has increased post-COVID... we are leasing at a rapid pace," Eva said. "Everyone is returning back to Southbank and the CBD."

Both managers pride themselves on proactive communication. "We're very hands-on ... whether it's a tenant or an owner, we're speaking to everyone. That ensures we're leasing out the property as quickly as possible," Eva said.

Contact Rhys and Eva
 Rhys Brown – 0404 565 050 | rhys.brown@raywhite.com
 Eva Christodoulou – 0489 030 698 | eva.christodoulou@raywhite.com



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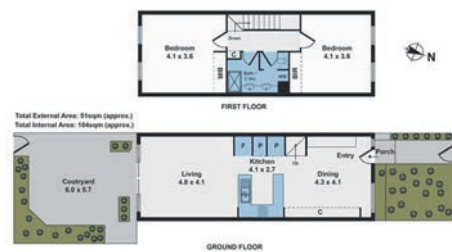
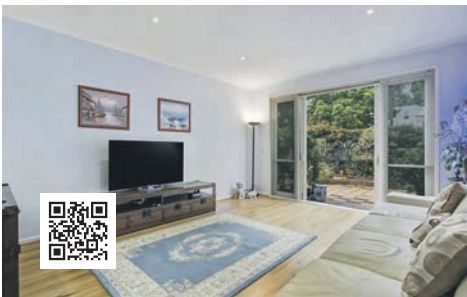
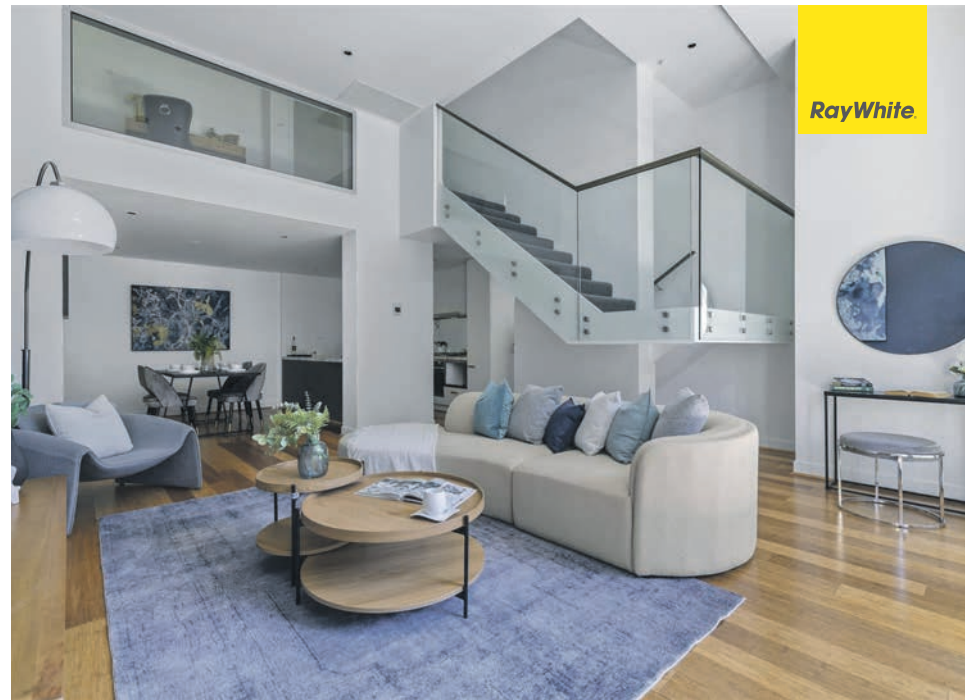
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michael.pastrikos@raywhite.com

Joshua Chong
 0422 806 188
mp.southbank@raywhite.com

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- Level 6 with CBD skyline and Yarra River views
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Lachie Kelly
 0411 446 204
lachie.kelly@raywhite.com

Michael Pastrikos
 0404 282 864
michael.pastrikos@raywhite.com

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Actual View



3 3 4

SALE

- 1203/152 Sturt Street, Southbank
- North-facing balcony with city views
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 - Stone kitchen with stainless-steel appliances
 - Built-in study nook with desk
 - Secure car park on title (not stacker)

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Michael Pastrikos
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michael.pastrikos@raywhite.com

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Michael Pastrikos
0404 282 864
michael.pastrikos@raywhite.com

Alison Tong
0437 810 755
sales.mp@raywhite.com

raywhitesouthbank.com.au



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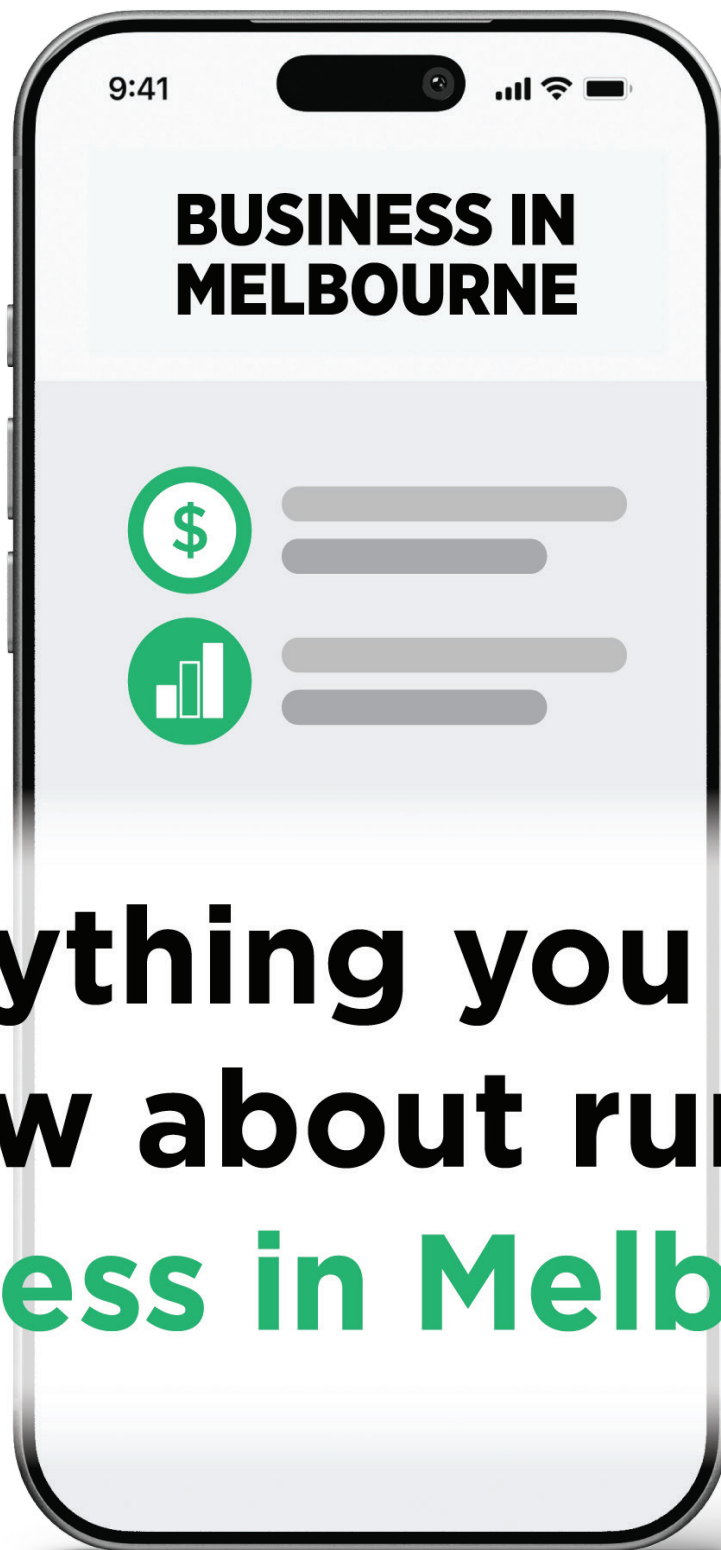
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CITY OF MELBOURNE

Red Stairs saga ends with more consultation

After years of complaints, a shelved design competition and another round of promised consultation, the City of Melbourne has finally resolved to get on with renewing Southbank's much-maligned Red Stairs.

WORDS BY
SEAN CAR



At its March 3 Future Melbourne Committee meeting, councillors voted unanimously to abandon the design competition they had endorsed in August last year and instead pursue an internally delivered renewal of the structure at Queensbridge Square, alongside further targeted consultation with key local stakeholders.

The amended motion commits the council to consult with the Yarra River Business Association, Southbank Residents' Association, Southbank3006 and other key stakeholders during the design development phase.

The decision marks a notable about-face for the council, which only months ago was championing a design competition as the appropriate way to tackle one of Southbank's most visibly tired and contested public spaces.

In the end, the committee agreed with what local stakeholders had been saying for years: the Red Stairs had become an eyesore, a safety concern and an increasingly absurd case study in how long it can take local government to address an obvious problem.

Presenting to councillors, Southbank Residents' Association president Tony Penna said his group had long been sceptical of the proposed design competition, warning it would only delay meaningful action.

"Nearly two years later, those concerns appear justified, with little tangible progress towards resolving what many residents consider a prominent eyesore and safety concern," Mr Penna said.

He questioned why the council was only now citing site constraints such as the Crown car park entrance and surrounding services as reasons not to proceed with the competition, given those constraints had always existed.

"A design competition, by its nature, is intended to explore possibilities and respond to constraints," he said. "Why were these not fully interrogated before resolving to run a competition?"

Mr Penna also challenged the council's

assumption that the stairs should remain at all, saying earlier consultation as part of stage six of the transformation of Southbank Boulevard had shown strong community sentiment that the structure should be removed entirely. He argued the draft concept now being advanced looked "largely cosmetic" and lacked the ambition warranted by such a prominent and culturally significant site near Birrarung and the historic Falls.

"The draft concept appears largely cosmetic," he said. "The removal of the upper room and replacement with the viewing platform raises a simple question: a viewing platform to view what?"

His comments cut to the heart of the matter. For years, the community has been told the Red Stairs would be transformed as part of broader visions for Southbank Boulevard and the public realm. Instead, the site has drifted only to arrive back where it might have started: a practical refurbishment and more stakeholder engagement.

It is hard not to see shades of *Utopia* in the whole saga.

Council officers said the Red Stairs, originally installed in 2005 as a temporary structure, are now in a dilapidated state and require more immediate action than a design competition could reasonably deliver. Constraints include limited load-bearing capacity, significant underground services and the fact the structure sits above the Crown Casino car park entrance.

Crown and Schiavello's former 2017 plans to build what would have become Australia's tallest building at 1 Queensbridge St came with a \$100 million "public benefits package", which included renewal of Queensbridge Square.

While the council can be excused for the years of uncertainty surrounding these funds up to when the project's permit was

cancelled by the state government in 2019, the years since have seen progress stall in renewing the area.

Asked whether the structure could simply be removed, the council's infrastructure boss Rick Kwasek said there were constraints below the stairs that meant "something" would need to remain in place.

The revised concept involves removing the much-criticised "top room", reducing the visual bulk of the structure, recladding it in more durable and visually softer materials, and adding more trees, planting and seating around the square.

Lord Mayor Nick Reece, who moved the amended motion, acknowledged the community's frustration and said residents had made their views clear.

"People want this space improved and quickly," Cr Reece said.

"For several years residents have told us the Red Stairs feel unsafe, unclean, they're rundown, they're not inviting, you bake when you sit on them in summer, you freeze on them in the winter, and the structure has well and truly reached its end of life."

He said the original design may once have looked "trendy and cool" but was "no longer suitable for modern Melbourne".

Yet the urgency now being expressed only underlines how needlessly drawn out the process has been. Stakeholders have been flagging these exact problems for years. The idea that the city needed to publicly flirt with a design competition before rediscovering the obvious is difficult to defend.

Still, the addition of targeted consultation is a welcome concession, and one Mr Penna had explicitly called for.

The council now says it is aiming to develop the design over the next 12 months, move into procurement later this financial year, and begin construction in the second half of next financial year, with completion targeted in calendar year 2027. ●

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EVERLASTING LOVE IN THE GARDEN CITY

Melburnians have cast their vote for their favourite flower

The people have spoken, and Melbourne has a new floral emblem – the endangered swamp everlasting has won our hearts and the popular vote.

Melburnians cast almost 25,000 votes for our floral emblem, making it our most popular community engagement campaign ever. They chose from a field of 9 floral finalists.

After trailing behind billy buttons for most of the vote, the swamp everlasting rose up at the last minute to win by a paper-thin margin of just 200 votes. As it does in nature, the swamp everlasting defied all odds.

“Swamp everlasting is a beautiful flowering endangered species which was once abundant in our swampy wetlands,” our First Nations Garden City Ambassador, Margaret Parisi said.

When picturing a ‘swamp’, your mind may not conjure a field of paper daisies – but this formidable flower is a wonder of the wetlands.

“Seeing a flower which automatically says ‘Melbourne’ is a great way to create an immediate, recognisable identity ... grounded in place, respectful of Country, and distinct from any other city,” Margaret said.

HOW WILL WE USE OUR FLORAL EMBLEM?

With the winner now chosen, we’re rolling up our sleeves to embed the swamp everlasting into Melbourne’s identity. It’s all part of the plan to make sure Melbourne is known as the garden city – a city where nature is never far.

We’ll make sure the swamp everlasting is planted in our parks and gardens, and when in flower it will feature in planter boxes outside Melbourne Town Hall. Community plantings will be timed with the weather to help this local stunner thrive again.

We’ll also honour the swamp everlasting in paint, in print and maybe even on Melbourne merch.

Newly minted Aussies will receive swamp everlastings at our citizenship ceremonies, which according to Royal Botanic Gardens seed ecologist Megan Hirst is a beautiful way to show we care.



Garden city ambassadors Margaret and Paul



Melbourne’s floral emblem: swamp everlasting

“I’m rather fond of the idea that flowers can express our feelings. If someone were to give me a posy of everlastings well that would be saying quite a lot, florally speaking. Don’t you think?”

Megan is a self-confessed swamp everlasting superfan who is committed to finding ways to save the species from extinction.

“It’s likely the swamp everlasting was once common across our wetlands – some of the most biodiverse ecosystems on the planet – and since colonisation it has been pushed into small, scattered pockets.

“And yet, it’s still here, holding on with steady resilience,” Megan said.

Like other Australian flora and fauna, the swamp everlasting responds deftly to unpredictable weather.

The plant will go dormant after flowering in summer in drier conditions, but continue to grow through summer if kept moist.

The swamp everlasting needs full sun and a well-watered garden bed or pot. It’s also the king of cut flowers. If picked when freshly opened, they can hold onto their vibrant colour for many months or even years.

You can find the swamp everlasting and other indigenous seedlings at specialist nurseries such as Bili Nursery in Port Melbourne – which is preparing to move into new digs in the City of Melbourne – and bring the floral emblem into your home.

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How Jac Semmler is reimagining the future of Melbourne's gardens



In the middle of the city, beside concrete, traffic and a car park, a different vision for Melbourne is quietly taking root.



WORDS BY
SEAN CAR



At Fed Square's Test Garden, dense planting, shifting seasonal textures and swarms of insect life are offering a glimpse of what urban gardens in Melbourne could become. It is not just a display bed or a landscape experiment. It is, in many ways, a living prototype for the future of Laak Boordap, the expansive new urban garden being created as part of the \$1.7 billion Melbourne Arts Precinct Transformation.

On Saturday, March 14, celebrated garden designer Jac Semmler of Super Bloom will join author Jaclyn Crupi for a free public conversation at Fed Square, unpacking the philosophy behind this emerging style of planting and what it could mean for the city's future.

For Semmler, the work is about far more than decoration. It is about designing urban landscapes that feel alive, resilient and deeply connected to place.

"Naturalism emulates nature in planting and landscape design," she told *Southbank News*. "It is a purposeful, nature-like experience within the planting. It spans large-scale immersive experience, and the detailed moments of wonder one can have when deeply engaged with a natural happening – a blue-banded bee alighting on a flower."

That approach, often associated internationally with the "new perennial movement", is being rethought here through what Semmler describes as a distinctly local lens: "new Australian naturalism".

"Often, naturalism ... has been reflected in Australian gardens and landscapes with cues and plants from the Northern Hemisphere, where there is a deep winter dormancy," she said. "New Australian naturalism seeks a natural-like experience from public planting in contrast to our built cities, which embraces the dry summer climate of Melbourne or responds to the place and people, especially in high expectations of ever-changing wonder."

That idea of "ever-changing wonder" sits at the heart of Laak Boordap, the 18,000-square-metre urban garden planned for the renewed Melbourne Arts Precinct. The project will sit alongside The Fox: NGV

Contemporary and the transformation of the wider Southbank cultural district, reconnecting the precinct to Birrarung while creating new places for gathering, rest and reflection.

Semmler's studio Super Bloom is part of the design team led by Hassell, working alongside renowned horticulturalists James Hitchmough and Nigel Dunnett. For her, a project of this scale presents a rare opportunity to push the role of planting much further in public life.

"These major realm projects are unique opportunities for our cities to grapple with what is possible when planting is primary," she said. "Through collaboration with researchers, the University of Melbourne and an in-situ Test Garden, lessons of glorious planting will reach far beyond Laak Boordap for use in Australian cities and beyond."

There is also, she says, a strong public appetite for this shift.

"Ambition is key. There is a palpable hunger for nature in cities and to cultivate this vision into fruition, where planting can be central within a creative precinct."

That ambition is being matched by practicality. Climate resilience is now central to all major landscape design, especially in Melbourne, where extreme heat, dry summers and increasingly unpredictable weather patterns are changing the rules for public planting.



Semmler says the answer lies in deep research and collaboration.

"Extensive time researching and exploring natural populations of species, continual practice, enduring relationships with landscapes and gardens and a multi-disciplinary approach," she said. "Collaboration between disciplines and expertise will continue to garner the best understanding



of plant performance in an unpredictable, changing climate."

Her work often sits at the intersection of horticulture, art and design, making a project like Laak Boordap especially fitting.

"That planting can elevate and be equivalent outside to the creative levels and performance within the walls of preminent arts institutions," she said. "It considers a high expectation of planting through time, but a unique dynamic for an ever-changing garden."

The conversation at Fed Square also comes just as Semmler releases her new book, *Flower Power*, which explores how gardeners can compose more expressive, plant-driven landscapes of their own.

"Readers often ask how they can make a garden from heroic plants," she said. "How to compose – yes, design, but also practically cultivate this wonder."

The book, she says, is about helping people understand not just flowers as decorative objects, but gardens as dynamic compositions shaped by form, colour, movement and time. For those visiting the Test Garden or attending the talk, Semmler hopes the takeaway is both simple and hopeful.

"Delight in the wonder that can happen in a city, neighbouring a car park," she said. "Gardens can be plant-driven, dynamic and joyful places that shift with the seasons as plants move through space and time."

And for anyone intimidated by the idea of creating beauty with plants themselves, she offers a reassuring final thought: "There is no such thing as a black thumb."

The free conversation with Jac Semmler and Jaclyn Crupi takes place on March 14 at Fed Square as part of the Test Garden Open Day. Following the talk, artist Beci Orpin will lead a free workshop creating paper flowers inspired by the garden. ●

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ACTION not words.

West Gate tragedy brought to life in new Melbourne Theatre Company production

More than five decades after the collapse of Melbourne's West Gate Bridge shocked the nation, a new stage production is bringing the human stories behind the disaster to life.

WORDS BY
GABRIELLE SHI



On March 10, the Melbourne Theatre Company premiered *West Gate*, a powerful new drama by playwright Dennis McIntosh that examines the devastating 1970 bridge collapse which claimed 35 lives and became a turning point for workplace safety in Australia.

Staged at Southbank Theatre's Sumner Theatre, the production explores how ordinary workers and their families found themselves at the centre of what remains Australia's worst industrial disaster.

While fictionalised, the play draws on years of conversations with survivors and families of those affected, as well as findings from the 1971 royal commission that investigated the collapse.

The production reunites award-winning director Iain Sinclair with the Melbourne Theatre Company, following the success of the company's acclaimed 2019 season of *A View from the Bridge*. Sinclair leads a cast of acclaimed Australian screen and stage performers including Steve Bastoni (*Blue Murder*), Paul English (*Gallipoli*), Peter Houghton (*The Newsreader*), Daniela Farinacci (*Lantana*), Rohan Nichol (*Star Wars: Episode III – Revenge of the Sith*), Darcy Kent (*New Gold Mountain*), Ben Walter (*Harry Potter and the Cursed Child*) and Simon Maiden (*Death of a Salesman*).

Melbourne Theatre Company artistic



director and CEO Anne-Louise Sarks said the combination of McIntosh's writing and Sinclair's direction would create a compelling theatrical experience.

"This is a story made for and about Melbourne," she said. "Dennis McIntosh's writing offers a propulsive narrative, and Iain Sinclair's world-class directing brings an elegance to the story. It's an enticing combination we knew would captivate audiences."

For McIntosh, the subject matter is deeply personal. Growing up in a working-class family beneath the shadow of the emerging West Gate Bridge, the collapse left a lasting impression on him as a child.

"The West Gate Bridge collapse captured me as an 11-year-old boy. I was fascinated by it," McIntosh said.

His father shared the same name as one of the project's resident engineers, and as a result mistakenly received correspondence relating to the construction of the bridge. The engineer's letters of complaint later surfaced during the royal commission into the disaster.

"Having grown up in a working-class

family under the shadow of the emerging bridge, I always knew I could tell this story. I just had to work out how," he said.

West Gate also reunites much of the creative team behind *A View from the Bridge*, including set and costume designer Christina Smith, lighting designer Niklas Pajanti and composer and sound designer Kelly Ryall.

They are joined by assistant set and costume designer Bianca Pardo and voice and dialect coach Anna McCrossin-Owen to help bring the period and characters to life on stage.

With a large ensemble cast and an emotionally charged subject at its core, the production aims to humanise a tragedy that left a deep imprint on Melbourne's history.

More than half a century after the disaster, *West Gate* revisits a moment that reshaped workplace safety laws and changed the lives of countless families across Victoria.

Running from March 10 to April 18 at Southbank Theatre, the production promises a powerful reminder of the people at the centre of one of the city's most significant tragedies. ●

NGV exhibition spotlights next generation of First Nations artists

A new exhibition opening this month at the NGV's Ian Potter Centre at Fed Square will showcase the work of eight emerging First Nations artists from across Australia, each paired with an established mentor as part of a national program designed to support the next generation of creative talent.

Titled *FUTURE COUNTRY: Country Road + NGV First Nations Commissions*, the exhibition opens on March 20 and runs until September 13, presenting ambitious new works developed through the mentorship initiative.

The program pairs early-career First Nations artists or designers with leading industry figures from each Australian state and territory, supporting them to create new works that push the boundaries of their practices and explore new mediums and ideas.

Participants in the 2026 program include Victorian artist Jahkarli Romanis working alongside mentor Brook Andrew, while Western Australia is represented by Katie West and mentor Clothilde Bullen. Other artists featured in the exhibition are Boneta-Marie Mabo (Queensland), Paul Girrawah House (ACT), Charlotte Allingham, also known as Coffinbirth (NSW), Nunami Sculthorpe-Green (Tasmania), Stephanie Ali (Northern Territory), and Carly Tarkari Dodd



(South Australia).

Together, the artists represent a wide range of disciplines, including photography, sculpture, textiles, weaving, installation and video.

The exhibition centres around the theme *Future Country*, inviting artists to reflect on what lies ahead while acknowledging the histories and cultural knowledge that continue to shape First Nations communities.

NGV director Tony Ellwood said the initiative created a vital platform for emerging artists to expand their practices with the guidance of experienced mentors.

"The Country Road + NGV First Nations Commissions offers a vital platform for emerging artists to expand their practices and create ambitious new work under the guidance of an experienced and respected industry mentor," he said.

Dr Jessica Clark, NGV senior curator of

First Nations art, said the exhibition also highlighted the importance of relationships between emerging and established artists.

"*FUTURE COUNTRY* invites artists to look to the future while simultaneously acknowledging the past," she said.

"Bringing together eight emerging creatives with leading industry mentors, the exhibition celebrates the important relationships and creative exchanges that already exist amongst emerging and established First Nations artists."

All works produced through the program will enter the NGV Collection following the exhibition, expanding the gallery's representation of contemporary First Nations art.

The commissions are supported through a partnership between the NGV and Australian fashion brand Country Road, which aims to provide a national platform for First Nations artists to share stories, knowledge and cultural expression.

Country Road managing director Helen Wright said the organisation was proud to continue the collaboration with the gallery.

"We're proud to continue our partnership with the NGV through the Country Road + NGV First Nations Commissions, supporting First Nations artists with a national platform for storytelling, knowledge and cultural expression," she said.

The program builds on the success of its inaugural exhibition in 2024 and forms part of a broader effort to support First Nations artists and designers working today. Entry to *FUTURE COUNTRY: Country Road + NGV First Nations Commissions* is free. ●

The comedy festival is coming to Southbank – right when we need it

“

Southbank's Malthouse Theatre has an incredible program of artists on offer at the up-coming Melbourne International Comedy Festival, which marks its 40th anniversary this year with its biggest-ever event taking in more than 800 shows.

”

WORDS BY
JENNY DENTON



Nude performances of Penguin classics; sharp-edged piano songs exploring success; true stories about life's messy moments of reckoning; dark, climate change-themed absurdism; and the comic musings of an international star are among the many offerings of the Malthouse Theatre when the Melbourne International Comedy Festival (MICF) flings open the doors there on March 25.

According to festival director Susan Provan AO, the Sturt St theatre has “an incredible program of artists, a really big comedy program for people on that side of the city.”

Garry Starr's *Classic Penguins*, Gabbi Bolt's *Small Poppy*, Rob Carlton's *Virgin in a Knife Fight*, Alex Hines and Sarah Stafford's *Birds* and Hannah Gadsby's *The Evening Muse* are just a few of the shows playing there.

Nearby at the Melbourne Theatre Company's Southbank Theatre, Yorkshire-born veteran of the daft and ridiculous Daniel Kitson will present a season of his *Work in Progress*.

While down the road at the Arts Centre “just about every venue” is being taken over by the festival, Provan says, noting that audiences at any of the “big hub venues” around town will be “in safe hands”, given the acts have been curated by festival producers, who have seen them at festivals around the world.

Among the director's highlight recommendations is the American Rich Hall, whose “idle but punchy” *Chin Music* is on at the Fairfax Studio.



Gabbi Bolt.



Garry Starr. Photo: Matt Crocke.

The comic, who hails from Montana, and is reportedly known for his “expertly crafted tirades, quick-fire banter with audiences and hilarious musical creations,” has been described by one reviewer as offering “as close as it gets to a guaranteed good show”.

Hall is “beloved” and is “coming back after many years”, Provan says.

At other venues around town the director recommends international acts: Malaysian “weirdo” Phil Wang, New York “toxic optimist” Zainab Johnson, English animal-lover Jo-sie Long and “delusional queer icon” Sam Nicoresti.

As for locals, there are the well-knowns and up-and-comers, too, including Denise Scott, Geraldine Hickey, Lizzy Hoo, Celia Pacquola, Lano & Woodley, Bron Lewis, Melanie Bracewell, Nazim Hussein, Ray O'Leary, Tom Cashman, Reuben Kaye and

Chris Ryan.

But for all the allure of the big names, there is a lot of joy to be had in taking a chance on someone new, Provan says.

“We always urge people to go and see some acts they haven't heard of,” she says.

“Just take a punt. The tickets are not that expensive compared to big music concerts or big theatre shows – our average ticket price is somewhere around \$35.

“You just never know what you're going to see – comedy is constantly surprising, which is great, and we need it at the moment!”

The festival is marking its 40th anniversary this year with the staging of its biggest-ever event, incorporating nearly 800 shows – an increase from last year of more than 100.

According to Provan, who has directed MICF since 1994, the festival just grows organically each year, and it's the scale that

makes it exciting and “something people want to be a part of”.

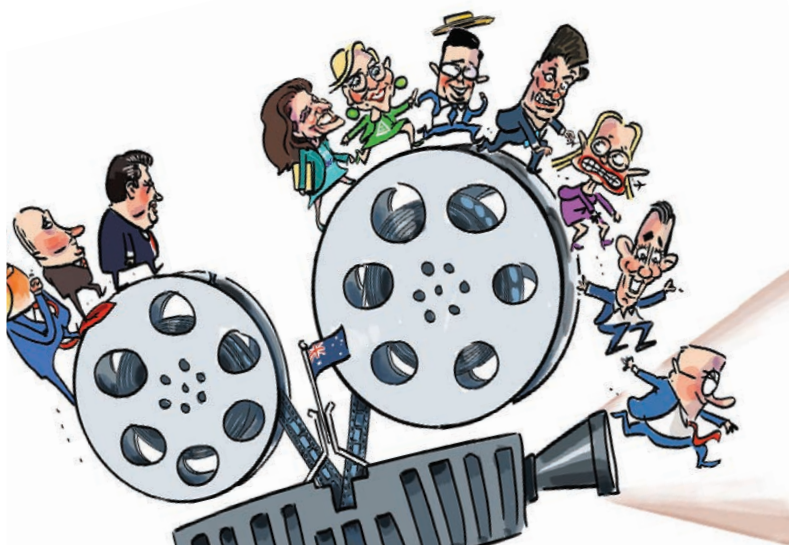
“That's why artists flock from all over because there's a great sense of camaraderie. People want to go and see each other's shows and they wind up striking creative partnerships and things like that,” she says. “And, of course, the audience feed off that.”

“We've got a really enthusiastic, comedy-loving audience who are up for an event.”

While there might be a lot of other entertainment around, “nothing can replace that sense with a live audience that you're sharing a unique experience,” Provan says. “Because that audience will never be the same, that show will never be done exactly the same again.”

“So, every show, is a special one.”

MICF runs from March 25 to April 19. ●



BEHIND THE LINES

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“Need to get our own backyard in order”: SRA’s plea to council on graffiti

An endorsement of the City of Melbourne’s improved graffiti management was tempered by comments from Southbank Residents’ Association president Tony Penna urging attention to persistent problem areas as well as big picture initiatives.

WORDS BY
JENNY DENTON



Southbank Residents’ Association (SRA) president Tony Penna contributed the sole note of discord to discussion of the council’s improved management of graffiti at a Future Melbourne Committee meeting last month.

The committee heard the council’s customer service satisfaction rating had gone up more than 10 per cent to 88 per cent on the issue, and its customer service score was an “excellent” 4.7 out of five.

Lord Mayor Nick Reece put graffiti management “at the top of the list” of things the council had made real progress on in its current term.



“The city is looking cleaner. And that hasn’t happened by chance. It hasn’t happened by magic. It’s because there’s a lot of hard work, effort and focus that is going into lifting standards here at the city,” he said at the February 17 meeting.

Councillors heard that standards had been lifted after a committee resolution on the issue 12 months ago, and success had come largely as the result of the council partnering with other organisations, improving its reporting systems and renewing its focus on cost recovery.

A progress report presented by director of waste and recycling Vince Macolino laid out the council’s negotiations, trials and agreements with organisations including the City of Yarra, VicRoads, Metro Trains, VicTrack and Yarra Trams, and its dealings with Victoria Police, which included providing police information about “top taggers” who the council was monitoring.

Under an agreement with the Department of Justice and Community Safety, graffiti offenders could be directed to do their community corrections order work within the municipality, something that was seen to reflect the council’s “You Spray, You Pay” principle.

Taking civil action against offenders to try to recover property damage costs was an option, according to the report, but legal proceedings could be expensive.

A standout development, the committee heard, was the introduction of the Snap Send Solve reporting app, which had reduced the duplication of requests, freeing up more time for workers to tackle graffiti removal.

While Mr Penna welcomed the council’s work on partnerships and advocacy, he urged it to maintain focus on its on-the-ground performance.

“Many residents or ratepayers continue to experience persistent tagging in high foot-traffic areas, slow response times to non-offensive graffiti, repeated vandalism in the same locations without long-term mitigation strategies, and a perception that some areas of the municipality receive inconsistent levels of attention,” he told the meeting.

“We need to also get our own backyard in order.”

Cr Reece acknowledged more work was needed but said the council was “definitely on the right trajectory,” singling out the one-hour removal policy for racist and hateful material as a “great initiative”.

The committee also heard that new graffiti management FAQs and guidelines for preparing victim impact statements were to be published on the council’s website and voted unanimously to note the report and continue strengthening Melbourne’s graffiti management framework. ●

ST JOHNS SOUTHGATE

Easter is close

As cultural and commercial sentinels our supermarkets have, since shortly after Christmas, heralded this approaching season with buns, chocolate and camping supplies. Irrespective of your religious and cultural preferences, Easter is good.

WORDS BY
PASTOR JAMES WINDERLICH

From a Christian perspective Easter celebrates God’s unflinching commitment to life. In many human settings this is especially significant where life seems to

count for very little. Consider what you see and accept as normal. Accusations of “not-being-enough”, of being difficult, disappointing or inadequate are sufficient to keep our mortality firmly before us and turn us away from life.

These accusations cultivate apprehensions that minimise our value and place in the world and threaten to crush our spirits. The accusations might spotlight our age, gender, non-gender, ethnicity, wealth, opinions, perceived intellect, social position, physical ability, or our physical form. And, sadly, the accusations also find their origins from deep within us, spoken by our own voices. Not all wars are fought in the open.

Hostilities happen among and between us and, like every war, they start with disappointment and a hatred of life. With someone

else’s life. With our own life. Yet God remains unflinchingly committed to our lives (Lamentations 3:22-23) through Jesus Christ (Romans 5:8). It makes Easter good.

My perspective might sound like a ridiculous, grim overstatement but let’s consider lived experiences such as skyrocketing costs of living and declining housing availability through this lens. These realities are often portrayed primarily as policy and economic matters to be solved by better, more improved, harder working and smarter versions of ourselves. But is that how they are experienced? I suspect that for people directly affected these are also matters of dignity and identity. Insufficient income, no matter how hard and smart people work, and housing insecurity diminish people both from the outside in

and the inside out. In the business of life, they are cruelly stigmatised with failure, but that’s not the truth. Economies are seldom equitable. They are skewed, and wealth is barely shared. It is taken, with an opaque hatred for life that is normalised either as cleverness, indifference or entitlement.

God’s unflinching Easter commitment challenges us to not only see our own lives differently, but to also consider the lives of other people with expansive, reckless generosity. To consider a world where condemnation is suspended and life, all life matters.

In the 40 days leading to Easter some Christians observe a season named Lent. People commonly associate this season with fasting or self-denial, but those practices miss their point when they are focused only on virtuously becoming better versions of ourselves.

Such self-improvement projects can fail to adequately deal with our experiences of diminished lives. The lives where we are “never enough” and lives where others, by our judgement, are “not enough” either. In Lent we fast or put the things of life aside to ask God, the giver and meaning maker of our lives for the help that we need to see and value all life with newness and joy.

It might take some time to understand the shape of God’s unflinching commitment to your life, and the lives of those who share your spaces. It will take profoundly unnatural humility, and it is done prayerfully and receptively. It asks us to put the things of life aside and to soften our own disappointment to hear God speak heart to broken heart.

Easter is good. God bless you this season. ●

Easter

Palm Sunday 29 March

9am Worship Service with communion

Maundy Thursday 2 April

7:30pm Worship Service with communion

Good Friday 3 April

10am Worship Service with communion
6:30pm Tenebrae with music, bible readings and poetry

Easter Sunday 5 April

6:30am Way of the Cross Pilgrimage from St Paul’s Cathedral, Flinders Street
7am Dawn Worship Service with communion
9am Worship Service with communion



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Mail room thief arrested in Southbank

Southbank Police officers have charged a woman after executing a search warrant at a unit in Southbank at about 10.50am on Friday, February 13.

Officers attended the Clarendon St residence after receiving numerous reports that parcels were allegedly being stolen from the mail room of an apartment block between January 2 and February 3, 2026.

During a search of the premises officers located and seized an Aladdin's cave of luxury items consisting of Oscar Piastrri official Formula 1 clothing, expensive French champagne, expensive beauty products, clothing and other items believed to have been purchased online.

A 29-year-old Southbank woman was charged with eight counts of theft. It is expected that more victims will come forward and the woman may receive further charges. She was bailed to appear at Melbourne Magistrates' Court on August 24.

This is a timely reminder about safety and security in mail rooms – especially at apartment buildings. Thieves do target mail rooms. Here are some crime prevention tips:

Secure your letterbox

- Choose a design that does not allow access from the front or back
- Install a good quality lock on the access point
- Overlay letterboxes with additional security.
- Install letterboxes in a secure area.



- Ensure CCTV cameras cover letterboxes

- Collect any parcels that have been delivered to a mail room as soon as possible

Divert your deliveries

- Avoid having bank or utility documents sent by post. Instead have them sent by email.

- Send parcels to a parcel locker, PO Box or other collection point. Information on Australia Post options is available here: auspost.com.au/delivery-options

I would also like to inform the Southbank residents and businesses that Senior Sergeant Jay McDonald, the other Station Commander at Southbank, retired in January.

Jay had been stationed at Southbank since July 2021 and was the Municipal Emergency Response Coordinator for the Melbourne Local Government Area. Jay was dedicated to this role and was also passionate about serving the Southbank community.

Jay will be missed by all the staff at Southbank Police Station, and I thank him for his service to the Victorian community for the past 27 years. ●

Snr Sgt Alex O'Toole

COMMANDER
SOUTHBANK POLICE STATION
SOUTHBANK-UNI-OIC@POLICE.VIC.GOV.AU



Southgate Avenue to get new crossing

The City of Melbourne says work to fix a local pedestrian crossing that is unsafe for people with mobility issues will start within months and further streetscape upgrades may be on the horizon.

Southgate Avenue is set to see the redevelopment of a dangerous pedestrian crossing and may also undergo other improvements, according to the council.

Lord Mayor Nick Reece relayed the news in response to a question from Southbank3006 committee member Chris Trueman at a Future of Melbourne Committee meeting on February 17.

Mr Trueman, who had asked the council to investigate the installation of a raised, wombat-style crossing on Southgate Ave behind Hamer Hall, said the current crossing, which is next to a speed hump, dropped into a steep gutter channel and rose sharply to the footpath, which had "a significant cross-slope".

"For wheelchair users, mobility scooters, prams and the elderly, this creates a risk of tipping or losing control," he said.

A wombat-style crossing combined with a reduction in the speed limit to 30km/h would make the crossing much safer for all and especially for those who were less mobile, he said.

Mr Trueman's "follow-on" request was that the council work with his community organisation and nearby residents to develop a masterplan for Southgate Avenue that would address sloping pavements and upgrade the streetscape "to complement works being done at [nearby Arts Precinct garden] Laak Boordnap".

Cr Reece told Mr Trueman the council agreed that the work was a priority. "We agree. Southgate Ave is not up to scratch," he said. "That is why it is one of our priority roadworks in the municipality."

Work on the crossing, which would include the upgrade of the footpath crossfalls, would be starting in the next financial year, he said.

The Lord Mayor noted, however, that a development at the end of the street was influencing the project's timing and development.

As part of the project, public consultation would occur that would determine its scope, Cr Reece added, seemingly leaving the door open to further upgrades. ●

Crown unveils \$200m riverwalk overhaul

Crown Melbourne has announced a sweeping \$200 million redevelopment of its Southbank precinct, including a major revitalisation of its riverwalk, in what it describes as the biggest transformation of the complex in almost 30 years.

WORDS BY
SEAN CAR



The privately funded overhaul will introduce more than 15 new restaurants, bars and casual eateries, alongside upgraded public open space and expanded outdoor terrace dining along the Yarra River. Around 2000 construction jobs are expected to be created over the life of the project.

For Southbank, the announcement lands at a time when the public promenade on the opposite side of Queensbridge St continues to face uncertainty.

As Southbank News has reported, the City of Melbourne has shelved its much-debated Red Stairs design competition at Queensbridge Square and is yet to provide firm timelines for completing long-unfinished sections of the Southbank Promenade between Queensbridge Square and Southgate. Works outside the Southgate foodcourt have stalled for years amid redevelopment uncertainty.

While Crown's Riverwalk investment is not a like-for-like comparison with the council's public-realm responsibilities, it's hoped the momentum generated by Crown can be continued along the rest of the promenade.



Crown Melbourne CEO Ed Domingo said the reinvestment marked "the start of a new era" for the integrated resort.

"This significant investment in new dining, entertainment and the iconic Riverwalk will cement Crown's place as the ultimate destination for food, fun, entertainment and late-night energy," he said.

He added that the precinct's offering needed to evolve with its audience.

"Melburnians and our visitors have changed over the past 30 years – and this reimagining of our precinct ensures we continue to elevate our offering and deliver experiences fit for the next generation".

Among the headline additions is Victor Churchill – described as one of the world's most celebrated butchers – which will open a new venue in mid-2027 overlooking the Yarra. A new riverside gastropub is also planned to open directly onto the waterfront, shifting from daytime dining to night-life in the evening.

Entertainment remains central to the

redevelopment. The Palms venue is being reimagined as Crown Live Theatre, with a 1250-seat capacity when it relaunches in November 2026. Crown Metropolis' 28th floor will become a new private events destination with panoramic city views, while Crown Towers' lobby bar will undergo refurbishment.

Beyond hospitality and events, Crown is also investing in sustainability, with rooftop solar panels, battery storage and energy-saving technology aimed at reducing carbon emissions by 23 per cent by 2027.

Crown's 500,000-square-metre footprint – equivalent to two CBD blocks – positions it as a significant landholder along the Yarra. Construction and detailed design work are already under way, with openings staged from mid-2026 through to 2027.

For Southbank residents and business operators, the investment signals confidence in the precinct's future at a time when parts of the public promenade remain tired and fragmented.



The council has indicated it is developing a draft concept plan for the next stage of promenade works, including the stretch between Evan Walker Bridge and Queensbridge Square, but no firm timeline has been announced. The decision to scrap the Red Stairs competition was framed as an effort to move more quickly, with the council now moving to refurbish the structure.

Crown's Riverwalk renewal could provide fresh impetus for a broader rethink of the entire Southbank river edge. While the casino operator's investment is primarily commercial, it also reshapes the public interface between the precinct and the Yarra.

With the eastern side of Queensbridge St pushing ahead through private capital, attention now turns to whether the City of Melbourne can match that ambition on the public side of the promenade – and finally deliver the cohesive, high-quality waterfront experience that Southbank has long promised but struggled to complete. ●

Welcoming autumn in Southbank: community gardening update

Autumn in Melbourne is just as beautiful as spring, and the sight of leaves turning vibrant shades of red, orange, and yellow is truly breathtaking.

WORDS BY
DR SEEMA MISRA THAKUR



As the weather turns cooler, the beautiful autumn colours lining City Rd and the streets around Southbank really lift everyone's spirits, from the residents in the high-rises to those driving by.

During the Southbank Sustainability Group (SSG) gardening sessions, in addition to preparing beds for new crops, weeding, and pruning, we also take on the task of clearing fallen leaves. The hard work we put in is undoubtedly rewarded by the breathtaking beauty of the nearby trees that we encounter every time we step into the Boyd garden spaces.

After a particularly dry January and February, the welcome rains that fell on the first two days of autumn provided much-needed relief to our volunteers on the watering roster. The weather was hot and humid on both of our Saturday working bees on February 14 and 28. Despite the challenges posed by the warm weather, the dedicated volunteers continued to lovingly tend to the community garden beds and they also welcomed a few new members.



The last working bee of summer was particularly busy preparing the garden beds for autumn. Our leader Faye meticulously prepared a task list, and all our volunteers efficiently accomplished it.

The new vegetables planted were spinach, Chinese cabbage, and lettuce. The existing planter beds were refreshed, and some of the herb produce, such as mints, was used to propagate new plants. As always, harvesting and sharing green beans, radishes, and silver beet was a joyful experience. This activity freed up the beds for the new planting cycle. The garden beds were nourished

with worm juice or Seasol. Mulching was also carried out to help retain moisture and encourage healthy soil microbes.

The community garden spaces require regular cleaning of leaves and litter, especially after windy days. Senior volunteer Rob diligently takes care of the gardens, particularly on weekends when we don't have a working bee.

It has been disheartening to witness a rise in instances of litter being left on our garden beds. This has become a growing concern in the past few months. We kindly request the assistance of our community residents in preserving this unique open community garden space. If you notice any littering or improper waste disposal, please contact the City of Melbourne team. We have already collected soiled paper napkins, food scraps, glass bottles, discarded clothes, and umbrellas from our garden beds.

Our dedicated team of volunteers works tirelessly, dedicating nearly four to six hours every weekend throughout the year, regardless of the season. We kindly request that community residents acknowledge their hard work by reporting any littering in the garden space. Together, we strive to maintain the beauty and inviting atmosphere of this garden for everyone to enjoy.

Inspired by the joys of community gardening witnessed at the SSG community garden, a new community garden space has been recently added at Melbourne Square, adjacent to the basketball courts. Currently, the volunteer team meets every Monday morning. Everyone in the community is

welcome to join. For more details, please email pr@essentialcommunity.com.au.

The community gardens and other green spaces in Southbank foster a vibrant and diverse community of insects and pollinators. The Urban Forest and Ecology team of the City of Melbourne conducted an exciting new event and a Citizen Science initiative called Insect BioBlitz 2026. This initiative, running from March 1 to 7, was hosted by the Melbourne Community Gardens and included a garden walk.

Another exciting campaign we participated in and voted for was "Choosing Melbourne's Floral Emblem: Introducing Melbourne's New Floral Emblem."

Upcoming event by SSG: we'll be featuring a special segment on herbs. Look out for announcement on our social pages.

About the group

Southbank Sustainability Group is a community group of Southbank residents dedicated to bringing positive change in sustainability practices. You can reach us at southbanksustainability@gmail.com, visit our Facebook page at [facebook.com/SouthbankSustainabilityGroup](https://www.facebook.com/SouthbankSustainabilityGroup), or follow us on Instagram at

[@southbanksustainabilitygroup](https://www.instagram.com/southbanksustainabilitygroup).

If you're interested in learning more, join us for our next catch-up in March. It's this Saturday, March 14, at 10am at Boyd. ●



Mermaids make waves for ocean conservation in Port Phillip Bay

Families gathered along the sand at Port Melbourne's Lagoon Pier recently for an unusual sight: two shimmering mermaids emerging from the waters of Port Phillip Bay, delivering a powerful message about protecting the ocean.

The colourful spectacle formed part of a community beach event held to mark Clean Up Australia Day, blending environmental education with creative storytelling and hands-on conservation activities.

Children and parents lined the shoreline as the mermaids surfaced from the bay before making their way onto the beach, where they spoke with young audiences about marine life, ocean pollution and the simple actions people can take to protect the sea.

The event, organised by Mermaid Tarielle from Mertopia Mermaids, was designed to combine imagination with environmental action, using storytelling to spark curiosity and empathy among the next generation.

"Children connect deeply with stories and imagination," Mermaid Tarielle said. "By using mermaids as guardians of the ocean, we can spark curiosity, empathy and a genuine desire to protect marine environments."

Beyond the theatrical arrival of the mermaids, the day focused on real-world conservation efforts.

Volunteers joined a guided beach clean-up led by Conservation Volunteers Australia, collecting litter and debris from the shoreline. The Port Phillip EcoCentre also ran interactive activities and litter audits to help participants better understand the types of waste commonly found along Melbourne's beaches.

A keynote marine conservation presentation and information stall from Sea Shepherd Australia added another layer of



education, offering insights into the challenges facing marine ecosystems and the role local communities can play in addressing them.

Throughout the afternoon, families moved between activities, with children taking part in hands-on learning experiences about coastal habitats and the importance of reducing plastic pollution.

Organisers said the aim was to create an event that balanced fun with meaningful environmental engagement.

The mermaids themselves proved to be a powerful visual hook for the day's message. As they spoke with children on the sand, the performers used storytelling to explain how pollution and human activity can affect

ocean wildlife and habitats.

For many young attendees, it was their first time taking part in a beach clean-up or learning about marine conservation.

By pairing imaginative elements with practical action, organisers hoped to show that protecting the ocean can start with small everyday choices.

The event also highlighted the importance of community involvement in caring for Port Phillip Bay, one of Melbourne's most significant natural assets.

Supported by the City of Port Phillip, the initiative brought together a range of local organisations focused on environmental education and conservation.

As the afternoon drew to a close, bags of

collected litter lined the beach, offering a visible reminder of the impact community-led efforts can make.

For organisers, the success of the day lay not just in the amount of rubbish removed from the shoreline, but in the conversations it sparked among families about protecting marine environments.

And if the excitement among the children watching the mermaids was any indication, the message landed.

The hope, Mermaid Tarielle said, is that moments of wonder like these can inspire lasting change.

"This event is about fun, but it's also about empowering the next generation of ocean stewards," she said. ●

Crafternoon initiative launched in Southbank



A small but enthusiastic turnout at an initial Southbank community craft session shared some colourful work and stories.



WORDS BY
JENNY DENTON



The organiser of a “Crafternoon” at Boyd Community Hub is planning another one after a small group enjoyed a fruitful few hours at the initial gathering on March 1.

Long-term Southbank resident Bridgett Braunwalder, a keen sewer who finds her hobby can be a bit lonely, wanted to create a friendly, welcoming space for Southbank creative types to come together and work on their projects after she had looked around and failed to find any local craft groups.

While the turnout for the first session wasn’t a big one, Bridgett said, “everyone was really positive and wanting to look at what other people were doing and to share thoughts and tips”.

“We were getting to know each other – people were showing photos of previous works they’d done, which were really cool to see.”

“We were getting to know what each person does outside of their hobbies as well.”

The six attendees were all female, but mixed in terms of age and demographics, with some, like Bridgett herself, who had lived in Southbank for a few years and



▲ March 1 “Crafternoon” at Boyd Community Hub. Photo: Alpana.

others “who were relatively new or from overseas.”

Their crafts included embroidery, drawing, painting and sewing, and took in different themes, including international interests.

While Bridgett was working on the pattern for a skirt, attendee Alpana, who spends part of her year in Southbank with her kids and part living back in India, was painting an environmental message for her hometown of Mumbai.

Motivated by a long-standing Sunday campaign for the preservation of Mumbai’s Aarey Forest, she “decided to paint tote bags with a ‘Save Aarey’ message, so that I can gift them to those who are playing a part in the conservation of Aarey forest”.

The 13 square kilometre forest is considered to be “the green lungs” of Mumbai, a city of 22 million people, and is a biodiversity hotspot that is home to both leopards

and indigenous communities but has been threatened by urbanisation and development, Alpana explained.

Another interesting link was to another woman’s experiences in Botswana.

“She was drawing from her memory,” Bridgett said. “From a childhood memory of Botswana [she did] an animal-themed drawing.”

There was also “some very talented embroidery” going on, with pin cushions and lavender bags being created and decorated, according to the organiser.

While only about a third of people who had expressed interest actually showed up to the first session, the weather was “a bit rubbish”, Bridgett said, and “obviously last-minute stuff comes up for people”.

Overall, she felt the activity was worth doing again.

“And it’s a good motivation for me to continue my craft stuff,” she said. ●

LETTERS

Turn Victoria Barracks into a public school – and future-proof Southbank

As a Southbank parent, I look around our neighbourhood and see cranes, apartments and density everywhere. What I don’t see is the one thing families need most: a walkable, non-selective public secondary school.

I believe we need to transform it into a government Prep–Year 12 school and community hub for Southbank.

Southbank’s population has doubled in a decade to more than 22,600 residents. Thousands of families now live in high-density apartments. Yet in a suburb built for growth, families remain underrepresented – not because parents don’t want to live here, but because the infrastructure to support them simply isn’t in place.

When children reach school age, many families face a practical choice: relocate or endure traffic and commutes to access public education.

Some will argue that schools already exist nearby. Technically, that may be true. Practically, they are not embedded in the daily walking life of Southbank families; or they are selective or independent in nature. In dense urban environments, proximity and accessibility are everything. Without them, communities struggle to retain families long term.

If we are serious about planning for the future, we must match residential growth with real social infrastructure. Southbank does not need more high-rises. It needs anchors. And schools are anchors.

Victoria Barracks already has the foundations to make this possible – while preserving heritage rather than erasing it.

Vicky da Gama

Read the full letter online at southbank-localnews.com.au ●



Future Focused
THE CITY SCHOOL WHERE GIRLS EXCEL



ACADEMY
OF MARY IMMACULATE



Bookings are now open for the Southbank Directory 2026

The directory is a guide to, and celebration of businesses throughout Southbank, it is an essential resource for both residents and visitors.

To secure your spot today please contact:
admin@hyperlocalnews.com.au



New faces, energy and initiatives at Southbank3006

While Melbourne has been enjoying sunshine and summer temperatures, a talented group of new committee members, initiatives and advocacy have been heating things up at Southbank3006.

One of our first initiatives of 2026 is being led by Nisha Gull-E-Nishat, the founder of Healing Noor Collective – a community initiative creating culturally safe spaces for women's wellbeing, connection, healing and recovery. Nisha has worked across social impact and community partnerships for more than a decade.

Prior to Australia, she contributed to Sustainable Development Goals aligned work in the Asia-Pacific region. In Australia, she works in the specialist family violence and gender equality sector, and she co-chairs the Multicultural Women's Alliance Against Family Violence. Nisha believes healing is part of prevention: when communities have safe spaces, accurate information, and connection, women are better supported to recover, thrive, and reduce future harm.

The pilot program being developed by Nisha in partnership with Southbank3006, **Paint & Connect Southbank**, is a facilitated creative wellbeing and community connection session for local women, designed to

build belonging through guided painting and gentle conversation. A local artist will lead a beginner-friendly activity (no art experience needed) in a calm, culturally safe environment. The session will be community-connection focused (not a clinical service), offering a supportive space for women who may be experiencing isolation or navigating life transitions. The first program will take place at Boyd Community Hub on Saturday, June 13, 2026 from 12pm to 3pm. Sign up for our newsletter at southbank3006.com to receive updates and registration information.

New members to the committee

Ishaan Ray brings the perspective of Generation Z to our committee. He has been a resident of Southbank since 2019 and takes a strong interest in the area's growth, stability, and sense of community. His professional background spans global security, risk awareness, early childhood education, and business operations, giving him a broad perspective on safety, organisation, and community wellbeing. Through his involvement with Southbank3006, Ishaan aims to apply his experience in security, communication, and problem-solving to help support constructive initiatives, strengthen resident engagement, and contribute to practical improvements that benefit the neighbourhood. He values cooperation, clear dialogue, and forward planning.

Chris Trueman has owned an apartment in Southbank since 1995 and has had a deep involvement in OC management in

Southbank since then. He brings his Active Transport and environmental interests and activism to Southbank3006 and the local community. Out of the gate, Chris is applying his knowledge and passion to pedestrian safety in Southbank; his presentation at the February Future Melbourne Committee meeting was well received with Lord Mayor Nick Reece saying the concept presented was the best solution for the issue that he had seen to date.

Ray Easterbrook has been a Southbanker for nearly five years and is now retired after 20 years in owners' corporation management. He sits on multiple committees in Southbank and was previously the convenor of the Southbank Owners' Corporation Network (SOCN). He is a big believer in educating committee members with the skills and knowledge that they require to operate successfully.

Our advocacy continues

We expressed our support for the resolution put to the council by the Lord Mayor and Deputy Lord Mayor for the development of options for the potential future uses of the Victoria Barracks and Repatriation Clinic at St Kilda Rd. We believe the council's role is pivotal in actively leading the discussion surrounding the proposed sale and redevelopment of these significant assets.

The council resources and planning expertise can be deployed to identify a range of strategic options including the flexible use of the site and the roles of both private and public sectors. These can



maximise the economic benefits to both the local and wider Victorian community especially given the historical significance of the site and the role that it has played in Victorians history for over 100 years.

As has been proven with the council's leadership of the complex process and multiple parties involved in the ACCA forecourt greening, their role is not to acquire the site, but rather to use its resources, experience and diplomacy to frame the site's future. ●

MaryKay Rauma

CO-FOUNDER

COMMUNITY@SOUTHBANK3006.COM



OWNERS' CORPORATION LAW

New and amended legislation for owners' corporations? Not any time soon

It's been three months since the expert panel appointed by the Victorian Labor Government finalised and provided its report to parliament in relation to the effectiveness of the current legislation, and any recommendations for amendments and new laws.

Over the course of the panel's consultation and submissions phase that occurred between August and November last year, plenty of compelling case studies were provided by lawyers, not-for-profits, consumers groups and members of the public in relation to the ineffectiveness of the current legislation, and the great need to update and pass new legislation.

Despite the urgency, it appears this legislative review has now fallen back into the black hole that is Consumer Affairs Victoria.

It is envisaged that right now, policy makers are drafting the new legislation in the form of a Bill that can then be tabled in the lower house of parliament. However, there is absolutely no clarity or certainty over whether that process has even started. Nor is there even an indicative timeline provided either.

A draft Bill might be ready to be submitted to parliament later this year, or later next year, or later the year after that. Who knows?

What we do know is that we have a strata sector worth hundreds of billions of dollars

in Victoria stuck and bogged down, left to navigate regulations and laws that have been around (in some cases) since the 1960s.

On top of that, the much-vaunted rebrand of the Building and Plumbing Commission (the BPC) has been an abject failure. One only needs to read the Google reviews on the internet to know that the same organisational problems remain.

The BPC compliance team just isn't interested in getting tough with plumbers, builders and insurers to make sure that buildings and structures are built properly in accordance with plans and in accordance with the Australian Standards and the National Construction Code.

We only have to look around the skyline to note that large apartment buildings are still being built in droves by developers and builders who know that no-one is watching over their shoulder to require them to do it properly.

These overdue legislative reforms are crucial and critical to the wellbeing of around one million people in Victoria who reside or own in an apartment building. These issues need to be priority number one for the Allen government, and the people of Victoria should demand it be so. ●

Tom Bacon

STRATA TITLE LAWYERS

TOM@STRATATITELAWYERS.COM.AU



STATE MP

Almost 1000 new doctors in Victoria

More than 900 medical interns are beginning their careers as doctors in Victoria's public health system this year.

WORDS BY

NINA TAYLOR – ALBERT PARK MP

We're delivering more doctors in our health system, a pay rise for nurses, and opening nine new and upgraded hospitals this year.

Our 965 new medical interns are getting world-class training across metropolitan, regional and rural health services, all while making a real difference to Victorians who rely on their care.

This year's intake of interns is backed by a \$203 million Allan Labor Government health workforce investment.

Only Labor invests in our health system, and only Labor is making health care easier for families to access.

FREE women's health clinic for The Alfred Hospital in Prahran

The Allan Labor Government is delivering more free women's health clinics because women deserve access to the best specialist care without the burden of cost or excessive travel.

The next round of clinic locations has recently been announced – delivering on our commitment to establish 20 dedicated multidisciplinary clinics across the state, including a location at The Alfred in Prahran.

Women will be able to access specialists like gynaecologists, urologists, specialist GPs, nurses and allied health support closer to home – saving them time and money.

This includes getting care and information for a range of issues and conditions

including endometriosis, pelvic pain, heavy bleeding, prolapse and incontinence, contraception, abortion and menopause.

This builds on the Child and Adolescent Women's Health Clinic operated by Royal Children's Hospital, which was announced in response to the Victorian Inquiry into Women's Pain.

Our response has been shaped by the experiences of 13,000 women and girls who revealed gender health gaps, experiences of medical bias, sexism, misogyny and feelings of being ignored or dismissed by clinicians.

Labor is also rolling out "green whistle" pain relief at our 20 sexual and reproductive health hubs and setting a statewide standard for women's pain care.

The network of 20 women's health clinics is part of Labor's landmark \$153 million women's health package.

The package is already transforming care through a mobile clinic, dedicated Aboriginal-led services, a virtual women's health clinic and the 20 hubs.

Labor is delivering the care Victorian women deserve – making sure it's free, accessible and close to home.

Easier and cheaper care for ADHD

Labor is making healthcare work better for busy families by making ADHD care easier and cheaper to access.

No child or family should be left behind because the system is too complex, too hard or too expensive.

Victorians will no longer need to face lengthy wait times or spend thousands of dollars to get care for ADHD.

The Allan Labor Government will introduce life changing reforms so GPs can diagnose and treat ADHD in both children and adults. We're changing the way Victorians can access an ADHD diagnosis and treatment, because income or location shouldn't stop you from getting the care you need. ●

HISTORY

Designing in Southbank

One of the many stylish blocks of apartments in Southbank is situated on Wells St. Unusually, the four-storey block in a garden setting runs through to Dodds St, at the rear of the Malthouse.

But in a previous life, it contained a factory occupied by one of Australia's emerging designers and manufacturers of a new and exciting range of furniture – Grant Featherston, one of the pioneers of industrial design in Australia.

It was in South Melbourne that he started to make his name. At school in Geelong, his drawing abilities had attracted the attention of the Melbourne glass manufacturer Oliver-Davey Co.

Moving to Melbourne in 1938 he spent a year with Oliver-Davey before joining the lighting firm Newton and Gray Pty Ltd where he had his first introduction to plastics. The firm was located on Wells St in the middle of today's Southbank.

Next door was the factory owned by the Emerson brothers, furniture manufacturers, who had commenced business in 1912 and later manufactured Grant Featherston's "Contour" chair under licence in 1952. Their factory on Wells St was fronted with a showroom for display of furniture.

The streets were busy centres of

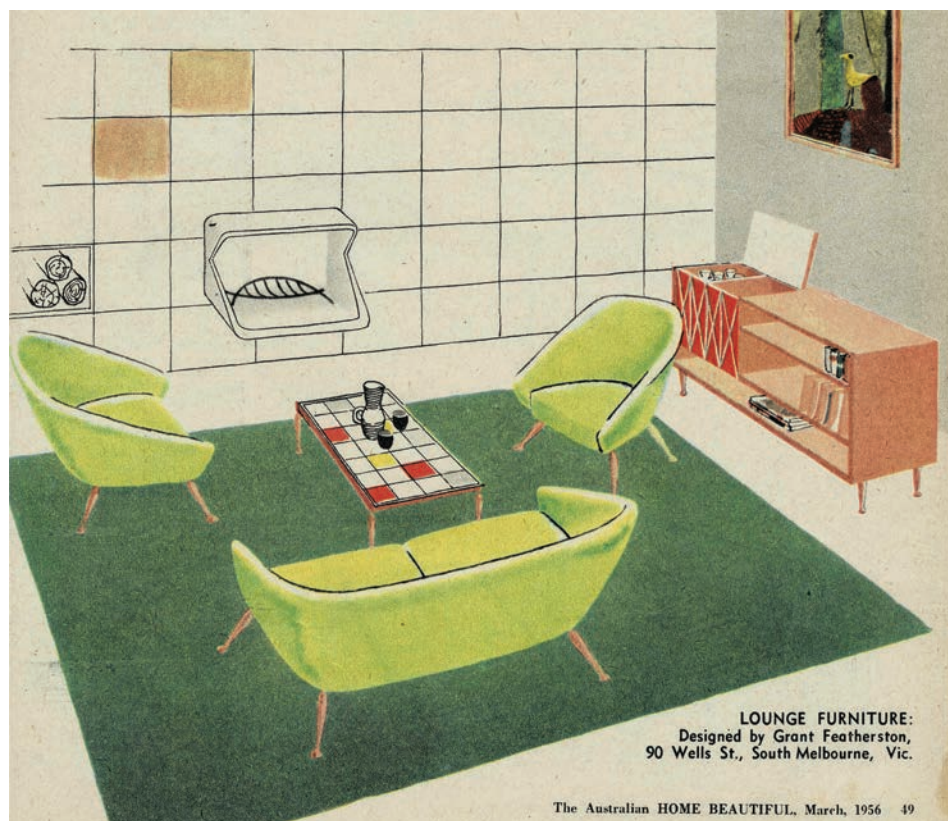
manufacture and design, with small factories, engineering workshops, galvanisers, and government factories and storerooms, including a large MMBW site. But they could also be dangerous places, populated with large timber stacks, sawmills and drying kilns and there were regular reports of fires, robberies (sometimes armed in daylight), and gas and chemical leaks.

Featherston quickly learnt about the process of industrial production. After a period of war service, he launched his practice in 1948 and then began working with Robin Boyd at the Modern Home Exhibition in 1949 and later set up a small factory in Collingwood. In addition, he helped form the Society of Designers for Industry (now the Design Institute of Australia) in Melbourne in 1948.

He also established Melbourne's first modern furniture showroom in Davidson St, off Latrobe St, in 1956. He was a regular advertiser of his products in *Australian Home Beautiful* and still nominated his address as Wells St in 1956.

With his second wife, Mary, he went on to become one of Australia's leading innovative and excellent furniture designers and many of his designs subsequently became regarded as aesthetic masterpieces.

For the smart set in Melbourne, it was a time of celebration of new forms and materials (such as plywood and webbing) and a new way of living. Lightness and strength were the outstanding characteristics of



LOUNGE FURNITURE:
Designed by Grant Featherston,
90 Wells St., South Melbourne, Vic.

The Australian HOME BEAUTIFUL, March, 1956 49

these comfortable modern chairs and customers were encouraged to compare them favourably with the bulky chairs that many had in their lounge room.

But it must be remembered that he got his start in Southbank! ●

Robin Grow

AUTHOR AND HISTORIAN
OF SOUTHBANK

ROBINGROW@OZEMAIL.COM.AU



SOUTHBANK RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

The Red Stairs: nearly a decade of debate

Few structures in Southbank generate as much discussion as the Red Stairs at Queensbridge Square.

Installed in 2005 ahead of the Commonwealth Games, the bright red structure was always intended as a temporary intervention. It helped activate Queensbridge Square while disguising the entrance to Crown's underground car park. Nearly 20 years later, however, the structure has clearly reached the end of its useful life.

Maintenance issues, safety concerns and general deterioration have become increasingly apparent to anyone who regularly walks through the square. What many residents may not realise is that the future of this site has been debated for almost a decade.

During the Transforming Southbank Boulevard project, particularly the consultation around Stage 6 – City Rd to the Yarra River nearly 10 years ago, Queensbridge Square and the Red Stairs featured prominently.

Community feedback at the time was clear – the structure had served its purpose, and many residents believed the site deserved something better.

Two years ago, the City of Melbourne announced plans to run a design competition for the future of the Red Stairs site – the first such competition under council's design competition guidelines. While this sounded promising, the Southbank Residents' Association (SRA) expressed some scepticism at the time. We questioned whether the competition might simply delay addressing what had already become



a deteriorating and unpopular structure.

With the benefit of hindsight, those concerns now appear justified.

Nearly two years later, the design competition has been abandoned, and council has returned with a far more modest proposal – an internally delivered "renewal" of the existing structure.

In our submission to the Future Melbourne Committee on March 3, where this was being considered, SRA also highlighted another concern: the officers' report proposing the renewal made little reference to the significant community consultation undertaken during the Southbank Boulevard project. It

was important to remind the council that residents had already engaged deeply with the future of this site.

To the council's credit, the committee acknowledged these concerns and amended the motion to ensure the SRA will be consulted as part of the rejuvenation process moving forward.

The council now intends to proceed with a renewal of the structure rather than its removal. The concept includes removing the upper "room", improving sightlines, recladding the stairs with more durable materials and introducing some greening elements. The estimated cost of the works

is around \$1.7 million.

Privately, we have also suggested that neighbouring beneficiaries – including Crown and the major 1 Queensbridge development – could reasonably contribute toward improvements to this prominent public space.

From SRA's perspective, the outcome is something of a mixed result. We remain disappointed that the opportunity to fundamentally rethink this important site may have been deferred once again. The council has indicated that the works are effectively temporary until a broader review of Queensbridge Square is undertaken – a process that could still be many years away.

Nevertheless, progress is welcome. After nearly two decades, doing nothing is no longer an option.

If the project delivers a cleaner, safer and more attractive space, it will at least represent an improvement on what currently exists. More importantly, the renewed consultation process gives the Southbank community another opportunity to help shape how this important civic space evolves.

Queensbridge Square sits at one of the most prominent gateways into Southbank, at the edge of the Birrarung. It deserves thoughtful design and genuine community input.

After many years of discussion, we may finally be moving a step closer. ●

Tony Penna

PRESIDENT

 Southbank
Residents Association



Quiz



- Angora wool comes from which type of animal?
- What name is given to the smell produced when rain falls onto dry soil?
- For which film did Irish actor Barry Keoghan (pictured) receive an Academy Award nomination?
- What is the name of the new museum opened inside Hamer Hall at Arts Centre Melbourne in December?
- Which public design competition was quietly shelved by the City of Melbourne?
- Where is Southbank's newest build-to-rent development located?
- A person who draws or produces maps is known as a what?
- Who starred alongside Audrey Hepburn in the 1963 film *Charade*?
- What is the name of Southbank's newest hotel that recently opened on Queensbridge St?
- True or false: Australia is the only continent without any current volcanic activity?
- Which historic Southbank site was identified in the federal Defence Estate Audit for proposed divestment?
- What former building within that site has been the focus of advocacy for a new art gallery?

QUIZ SOLUTIONS

- Rabbit
1. Puddle 2. Petrichor 3. The Banshees
- The Australian Museum of *Inisherin*
- The Red Stairs
- Performing Arts (AMPA)
- The design competition at Queensbridge Square
- Indi Southbank at Boyd Community Hub
- A cartographer
- Cary Grant
- Hannah St Hotel
- True
- False
11. Victoria Barracks 12. Repatriation Clinic at 310 St Kilda Rd

5x5

No. 321

Insert the missing letters to make 10 words – five reading across the grid and five reading down.

S		L		Y
	E		V	
A		G		L
	C		R	
M		L		S

SOLUTIONS

SCARP, MELTS, ANGEL, PEEVE, PLAY

PUZZLES AND PAGINATION
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March, 2026

Sudoku

No. 056

Fill in the blank cells using the numbers from 1 to 9. Each number can only appear once in each row, column and 3x3 block

EASY

		3		9				
					8	4		
	2	5		7	8			6
5			2	4	6	1		
	9		5		1		3	
	7	1	9	6				5
7			3	1		2	5	
	1	2						
			8			1		

HARD

7		3	5			1		
			4	1	3			5
		1		2				6
			2					4
		5				6		
	3				8			
	1			7		4		
9			3	8	1			
		7			2	9		3

SOLUTIONS

EASY

3	5	6	8	9	2	1	7	4
8	1	2	4	5	7	9	6	3
7	4	3	1	8	6	5	2	9
2	7	1	9	6	3	4	8	5
6	9	4	5	8	1	7	3	2
1	8	3	7	2	4	6	1	9
4	2	5	1	7	8	3	9	6
9	6	7	2	3	8	7	5	4
1	8	3	6	4	9	5	2	7

HARD

8	5	7	4	6	3	9	1	2
6	9	3	4	8	1	7	2	5
3	1	2	9	7	5	4	8	6
4	3	6	7	5	8	2	9	1
2	7	1	9	4	6	3	8	5
1	9	8	2	3	6	5	4	7
6	2	4	1	8	2	7	3	9
9	6	7	2	3	8	7	5	4
7	8	3	5	6	9	1	2	4

Wordfind

Theme: Medieval Weapons

The leftover letters will spell out a secret message.

H	A	L	B	E	R	D	S	H	A	W
R	D	B	A	L	L	I	S	T	A	O
D	R	O	W	S	T	R	O	H	S	R
M	O	R	N	I	N	G	S	T	A	R
L	W	P	E	X	A	E	L	O	P	A
O	S	W	O	B	S	S	O	R	C	A
N	G	R	E	M	M	A	H	R	A	W
G	N	C	L	A	Y	M	O	R	E	N
B	O	E	C	A	M	E	C	N	A	L
O	L	F	L	A	I	L	D	P	X	O
W	I	N	S	P	E	A	R	T	E	Y

- | | |
|----------|-------------|
| ARROW | LONGBOW |
| AXE | LONGSWORD |
| BALLISTA | MACE |
| CLAYMORE | MORNINGSTAR |
| CROSSBOW | POLEAXE |
| FLAIL | SHORTSWORD |
| HALBERD | SPEAR |
| LANCE | WARHAMMER |

Secret message: Sharp and pointy

Crossword

No. 056

ACROSS

- Plant cultivated for its grain-like seeds (9)
- Main actor (4)
- Goop (3)
- Anti-Communist era of politics (11)
- Helpfully (8)
- Overseas (6)
- Nerd (4)
- Waitstaff (7)
- Mythical horse-man (7)
- Scheme (4)
- A spice (6)
- Any place (8)
- Extreme conservatism or rightism in politics (11)
- Siesta (3)
- Yin's counterpart (4)
- The world's largest island (9)

DOWN

- Resent someone's pleasure or good fortune (8)
- Schools of a university (8)

1		2		3		4		5		6		7		8
									9					
10				11										
12									13					
14						15			16					
						17							18	19
						20							21	
22													24	
25									26					
									27					
28														29
30									31					

- | | | | |
|---|--------------------------------|----|-------------------------|
| 3 | Native American beads (6) | 16 | Grant (9) |
| 4 | Capital (9) | 17 | Token (7) |
| 5 | Teaching period (4) | 18 | European country (8) |
| 7 | Greek sea-god (6) | 19 | Dauntless (8) |
| 8 | Fix (6) | 22 | Power (6) |
| 9 | Reddish stalk used in pies (7) | 23 | Lineage (6) |
| | | 24 | Coloured wax pencil (6) |
| | | 27 | Shallow bell (4) |

SOLUTION

G	N	V	T	N	E	E	W	O	D	G	N	V	A	L
I	I	O	J	N	O	I	O	I	G					
D	V	N	A	R	V	N	O	I	O	I	O	I	O	I
E	E	V	S	D	N	R	E							
E	A	E	B	E	H	M	E	H	E					
I	O	O	O	W	S	E								
N	V	T	N	E	E	W	O	D	G	N	V	A	L	
I	S	B	O	N	W	S	E							
A	N	V	A	R	V	N	O	I	O	I	O	I	O	I
O	V	O	U	B	B	A	L	T	R	O	S	E	N	
E	I	O	O	W	S	E								
W	S	I	A	H	T	R	O	I	O	I	O	I	O	I
E	R	E	X	V	O	E								
S	I	A	H	T	R	O	I	O	I	O	I	O	I	O

Codeword

No. 056

9		22	23	4	21	12	9	4	23		16	10	W
5			10		16		1		4		4		11
3	1	18	3	23		8	9	10	17	21	3		S
11			11				19		1		23		16
1	21	23	18	24		13	19	S	23	9	4	19	
21				21			9		18		6		
22	9	1	11	3	13		15	9	4	9	14	23	
			21		S		4		1			3	
21	15		S	18	9	1	9		7	21	W	9	4
4			11		W		2			24		1	
15	9	9	24	11	12	9			S	24	10	1	20
11			S		14		18		24		17		9
23	3	23		9	22	23	4	9	13	9	17	19	

SOLUTIONS

W	A	S	H	I	X	K	C	L	P	F	B	J	N
9	22	23	4	21	12	9	4	23		16	10	W	
5			10		16		1		4		4		11
3	1	18	3	23		8	9	10	17	21	3		S
11			11				19		1		23		16
1	21	23	18	24		13	19	S	23	9	4	19	
21				21			9		18		6		
22	9	1	11	3	13		15	9	4	9	14	23	
			21		S		4		1			3	
21	15		S	18	9	1	9		7	21	W	9	4
4			11		W		2			24		1	
15	9	9	24	11	12	9			S	24	10	1	20
11			S		14		18		24		17		9
23	3	23		9	22	23	4	9	13	9	17	19	

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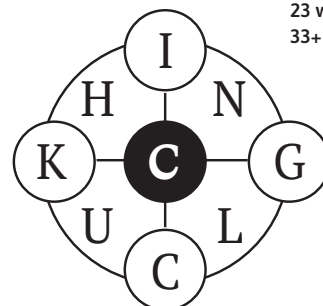
9-Letter

No. 056

Today's Focus:

- 15 words: Good
- 23 words: Very good
- 33+ words: Excellent

Using the nine letters in the grid, how many words of four letters or more can you list? The centre letter must be included and each letter may only be used once. No colloquial or foreign words. No capitalised nouns, apostrophes or plural nouns ending in 's'.



Reference: Macquarie Dictionary

SOLUTIONS

chic, chick, chin, chink, chuck, chucking, chuckling, chug, chunk, cinch, click, cluck, cluck, clunk, clung, clunk, cunch, cunch, culch, culch, culching, guck, guck, hick, huck, inch, kulch, lick, luck, lunch, nick, nuck, unci

WHAT'S ON March



Find out what's on in
postcode 3006 this March.



THE LIFE AND TIMES OF FLINDERS LANE WALKING TOUR

"The Life and Times of Flinders Lane" is a 90-minute walking tour revealing Melbourne's history, laneways, dining, and hidden stories with Paul Daffey.

Flinders Street Station

UNTIL 20 MARCH, 2PM – 3.30PM

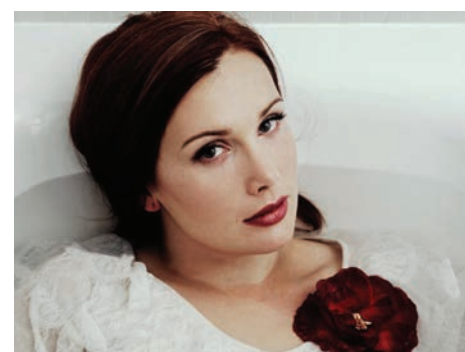


NGV TEENS ART PARTY

NGV Teens Art Party celebrates fashion with music, art activities, performances and exhibition access, inspired by designers Vivienne Westwood and Rei Kawakubo.

National Gallery of Victoria

SATURDAY 29 MARCH, 6PM – 9PM



CLARE BOWDITCH: WHAT WAS LEFT REIMAGINED

What Was Left's 20th anniversary with Clare Bowditch and ensemble performing newly reimagined arrangements highlighting her humanity & musicianship.

Melbourne Recital Centre, 31 Sturt St

FRIDAY 20 MARCH, 7.30PM – 9.30PM



SNAP SEND SOLVE EVENT

Small groups explore Southbank with a guide and map to record hard rubbish and graffiti. Participants learn to use SSS, and collected data helps inform the City of Melbourne's waste management team.

Boyd Community Hub

SUNDAY 29 MARCH, 10AM – 11.30AM



SKYLINE MELBOURNE EASTER EGG HUNT

Join Skyline Precinct Melbourne for a family Easter event: egg hunt, Easter Bunny, crafts, rides, mini golf, and face painting fun!

Skyline Melbourne, 1 Convention Centre Pl

28 – 29 MARCH, 12PM – 5PM



PLAY SCHOOL: COME AND PLAY

Play School: Come and Play! celebrates 60 years with a hands-on exhibition where families explore behind-the-scenes TV magic through role-play, songs, stories, games and creative activities.

ACMI, Flinders St Melbourne

UNTIL 12 JULY, 10AM – 5PM



THE SUNDAY MARKET AT SOUTHGATE

Come and explore, meet the makers and artists face-to-face and learn about their products and what inspires their work. Stallholders are positioned in marquees along the Yarra River.

Ground Level & Promenade, Southbank

UNTIL 26 DECEMBER, 10AM – 4PM

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\$530,000 - \$580,000

Lachie Kelly



171/99 Whiteman Street, Southbank
\$630,000 - \$680,000

David Umana



4/67 Whiteman Street, Southbank
\$455,000 - \$500,000

David Umana



701/58 Clarke Street, Southbank
\$425,000 - \$465,000

David Umana



102/100 Kavanagh Street, Southbank
\$620,000 - \$660,000

Max Hui



1706/57-61 City Road, Southbank
\$300,000 - \$320,000

Max Hui



2903/58 Clarke Street, Southbank
\$305,000 - \$335,000

Max Hui



1714/70 Southbank Boulevard, Southbank
\$350,000 - \$385,000

Jolene Tan



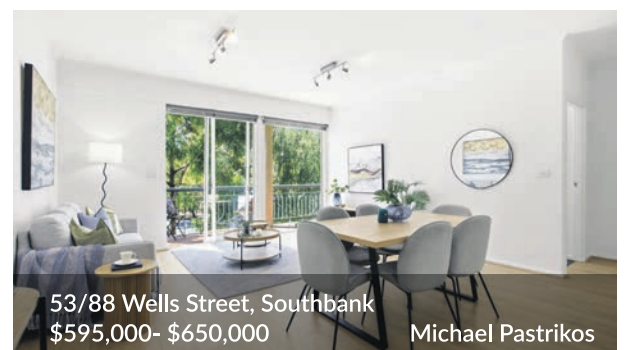
3906/245 City Road, Southbank
\$395,000 - \$430,000

Jolene Tan



1801/109 Clarendon Street, Southbank
\$300,000 - \$330,000

Taylor Sims



53/88 Wells Street, Southbank
\$595,000 - \$650,000

Michael Pastrikos



1508/9 Power Street, Southbank
\$530,000 - \$580,000

Michael Pastrikos



1605w/11 Bale Circuit, Southbank
Contact Agent

Michael Pastrikos

Michael Pastrikos: 0404 282 864
Max Hui: 0430 238 021
Tommy-Lee Davies: 0416 823 173
Taylor Sims: 0403 485 210
David Umana: 0481 222 376
Jolene Tan: 0466 366 041
Lachie Kelly: 0411 446 204
Ben Vu: 0422 284 216
Daniel Milhe: 0422 261 527
Zekria Tawafi: 0411 577 970

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