

CBD NEWS

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Forever Free

Puzzles & Trivia P21



Making more room
Photo by Hanna Komissarova

The transformation of a disused CBD building into 50 apartments for those experiencing homelessness has begun, in what Lord Mayor Sally Capp has termed “life-changing” works. *Full story on page 8.*

Local groups recognised in the Melbourne Awards

CBD-based homelessness service The Living Room and mental health arts event the Mojo Festival were among the winners at this year’s Melbourne Awards on November 11.

WORDS BY *Georgie Atkins*
LOCAL NEWS

The annual ceremony, which awards the coveted Melburnian of the Year honour, and, for the first time this year, the Young Melburnian of the Year, identifies eight key areas that are central to helping Melbourne thrive, including:

- Aboriginal Melbourne (ganbu guljin)
- Access and Inclusion
- City Design
- Arts and Events
- Community
- Knowledge and Innovation
- LGBTIQ+
- Sustainability.

Based at Ross House on Flinders Lane, Schizy Inc. – an organisation making space in the arts for people with diverse and complex mental health – was recognised for its “Mojo Festival”, which is an arts event held in May celebrating World Schizophrenia Day.

Featuring some of the city’s best new stand-up comedy, music, dance, visual art and literature, Mojo Festival shines the spotlight on artists with complex mental health, encouraging them to “come together and just have fun”.

Continued on page 9.

How liveable is Melbourne *really*? Three-year study lifts lid

An event at the State Library of Victoria has showcased insights from a three-year, cross-sector study into the city’s current state and future potential.

WORDS BY *David Schout*
PLANNING

Melbourne’s liveability is not evenly distributed and Victoria’s capital is “living beyond our means”, according to the first-ever data-informed “portrait” of the city.

Revealed in November at a State Library event by Regen Melbourne, researchers argued the new insights were a “reality check” for the city.

The alliance group brought together dozens of industry and government experts and researchers across six universities, to examine quantitative data that measured Melbourne’s current state and its future potential.

It concluded that Melbourne’s “liveability” – measured by a global index of which it has ranked inside the top 10 and as high as number one in recent years, and is often used as a selling point for the city – did not give a full picture.

Among six key insights from “The Greater Melbourne City Portrait”, it was argued that the city’s liveability was not evenly distributed.

“Over 13 per cent of Melbourne’s households live in poverty after housing costs are accounted for. Many Melburnians also face severe food insecurity and barriers to quality healthcare and education,” the study revealed.

It also showed that Greater Mel-



▲ *Regen Melbourne CEO Kaj Lofgren.*

bourne was “exceeding its ‘ecological ceiling’ as a result of its current liveability” by emitting 32.91m tonnes of CO2 equivalent per year.

“We are pushing the limits of what the planet can sustain by consuming too many resources, converting too much land for human use and producing too much waste.”

However, the insights weren’t all bleak reading.

The research also indicated the “many strengths that we have as a city”, including expertise from global leaders in urban resilience and the future of cities.

It argued that Melbourne has the financial, technical, and natural resources “we need to meet our human needs within the ecological ceiling.”

Regen Melbourne research lead Alison Whitten said the useful findings should be used by those in power to make informed decisions.

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City of Melbourne elections: who’s staying, who’s going?

WORDS BY *Sean Car*
COUNCIL AFFAIRS

It sounds a bit cliché to proclaim, “the next term of council could be the most important ever for the City of Melbourne”. After all, every new term of local government is as important as the last.

But it’s not every council term during which one can say a once-in-a-generation pandemic occurred, causing Melbourne to be the victim of the world’s longest lockdowns.

Remember the last council elections in 2020? Seems like a lifetime ago now, doesn’t it? It was an election campaign dominated by virtual-only campaigning and “Meet the Candidates” events.

As we head into 2024, and find ourselves in what is already the final year of the current term at the City of Melbourne, councillor hopefuls will be relieved that we won’t be seeing a mass return to Zoom.

While three years doesn’t sound like a particularly long time, it is in politics when one considers the impacts the prolonged lockdowns have had on the city, with cost-of-living and housing crises hot on the pandemic’s heels.

“*The word one could most aptly use to describe the current council term is “recovery”. All the focus has been placed on getting Melbourne back on its feet and helping it rediscover its mojo.*”

Given these immense challenges, compounded by consecutive budget deficits and a high-inflationary environment, it’s hard to give the current group of councillors, led by the city’s champion flag-bearer Lord Mayor Sally Capp, anything less than a safe pass mark.

Considering the widespread devastation and what appear to be generational changes to working patterns in the CBD, the fact the city has emerged as well as it has so quickly is a testament to the council’s efforts.

But while some pre-pandemic trends have returned, and in some cases, increased, across the city, there are still so many areas of concern. One only has to look at the many pockets of the CBD during the week, Docklands generally and a disparately patronised Lygon St, to see that we still have a long way to go to “getting the buzz back”.

That’s why one could reasonably argue that the next council term is, in fact, THE most important in ensuring the thriving Melbourne we all once knew not only returns but continues to find new ways of reinventing itself.

So, what could a new council look like?

It’s hard to see Lord Mayor Sally Capp not running for a second term and she’ll be tough to beat. While in the past she’s hinted at being a one-term councillor following her initial by-election win in the wake of Robert Doyle’s sudden departure, there is plenty of unfinished business.

Namely, her signature Greenline project will be central to her motivations for running again. The project, which seeks to revitalise the entire stretch of the north bank of the Yarra/Birrarung, still has a long way to go in terms of securing the necessary funding from Commonwealth and state governments. The council is even considering selling Citywide to help tip in some cash, so her leadership will be required to help see it through.

There’s always the question of who will run against her for Lord Mayor, but whether anyone will present a serious challenge is another.

Many are expecting former Deputy Lord Mayor Arron Wood to put his hat in the ring again, while *CBD News* understands a prominent group of Melbourne business identities are already preparing to mount a challenge to overthrow Sally ... more on this in the new year!

Assuming Sally goes again, one expects Nick Reece will run alongside her as Deputy Lord Mayor once more. Whether Kevin Louey, the silent but influential councillor, will run in the number one spot on her council ticket again remains to be seen. It would be a remarkable fifth term serving on council if he did.

But it’s fair to say Liberal Party member Roshena Campbell won’t take the number two spot on the Team Capp ticket as she did in 2020. There’s been a clear divide between Capp and Campbell during this council term on a number of issues including transport, climate policy and a safe injecting room in the CBD. The philosophical misalignment appears to be too great to reconcile.

After a failed byelection in the federal seat of Aston this year, and an earlier nomination for the seat of Casey in 2021, it’s clear Roshena still has aspirations for Canberra with the Libs.

It’s likely she could head up an unofficial Liberal Party ticket of her own at the next council election as a way of providing her with a platform for whatever her next federal tilt might be. Only time will tell!

The big change will come in the form of Greens councillor Rohan Leppert, who is understood not to be contesting for what would be a fourth term. This is a significant and irreplaceable loss for the council – his incredible knowledge and expertise will be missed.

This will likely see Olivia Ball moved up to the first spot on a Greens ticket, presenting an opportunity for a new Greens councillor to join her at Town Hall.

As for the rest of the current council, one would think the return of Davydd Griffiths will be nothing short of a formality on another Labor Party-endorsed ticket, while Elizabeth

Doidge will likely seek re-election again with the strong support of a union-backed ticket.

Docklands resident Jamal Hakim will also run again as an independent and is in a good position for re-election having built a positive profile and strengthening his electoral hand since last squeezing onto council in 2020.

Phillip Le Liu is also expected to run again, but having since resigned his Liberal Party membership, it’s difficult to see a clear path to re-election for what would be a third council term. Who he decides to align himself with will be key, but one can never count him out.

That leaves Jason Chang, the councillor elected through Arron Wood’s ticket. As proprietor of the business Calia, as seen at Emporium, his personal mandate was always to be a voice for small business.

But running a business alongside being a councillor seems to have weighed heavily on his ability to make a significant impact, so it’s a question of whether the fire’s still burning for a tilt in 2024. And, of course, who he runs with.

So, apart from the exit of Cr Leppert and uncertainty surrounding a handful of other positions, it’s hard to see too much changing in 2024. But all councillors and other hopefuls will already be busy making their moves and mapping out pathways towards election, with plenty to contemplate over the Christmas break.

On that note, *CBD News* wishes all our readers, advertisers, and supporters a wonderful and safe Christmas and New Year. As always, we look forward to bringing you more local news from the City of Melbourne in 2024. ●



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How liveable is Melbourne really? Three-year study lifts lid

Continued from page 1.

“The City Portrait is a reality check for our city, but the good news is that this picture isn’t set in stone,” she said.

“Now, policymakers and stakeholders can use [it] to identify the threats to the liveability of Greater Melbourne and think about the changes we need to make to build a robust and resilient city”.

Regen Melbourne CEO Kaj Lofgren added: “While Melbourne consistently ranks as one of the most liveable cities in the world, that title conceals an uncomfortable truth: our liveability isn’t equally distributed, and we are currently living beyond our means.”

“The City Portrait presents a new way for us to effectively measure the social and ecological progress of Melbourne and build practical pathways to a resilient and regenerative future.”

Formed in 2020 shortly after the onset of COVID-19 and a summer of bushfires in Victoria, Regen Melbourne soon created the “Melbourne doughnut” — inspired by the concept of “doughnut economics” established by English economist Kate Raworth.

The visual framework proposes that humanity lives within the bounds of a doughnut itself, leaving no-one behind inside the inner

ring (which represents a shortfall of basic human needs like food and healthcare) while not overshooting the outer ring (which represents planetary boundaries like pollution and biodiversity loss).

Raworth attended the November 13 event at the State Library’s Conversation Quarter via video link, and praised the “bold” work of Regen Melbourne, including the group’s vision for a Swimmable Birrarung (Yarra) River.

A senior associate at Oxford University’s Environmental Change Institute, Raworth expanded on her inspiration for the concept.

She believed in “thriving in balance” and “living within planetary boundaries” as part of her vision and criticised the “absurd and impossible” notion of continual growth espoused by governments around the world.

“This is not a new idea. Indigenous cultures from around the world have for millennia known and articulated and visualised wellbeing and health as thriving in dynamic balance. But I think it’s a rediscovery and a return to that wisdom for the Western mindset, certainly the one I was raised in as an economist.” ●

For more information:
regen.melbourne



New-look food hall opens at QVM

“*A newly revamped Queen’s Food Hall at the iconic Queen Victoria Market (QVM) has officially opened its doors, promising to bring a “fresh vibe” to the historic marketplace.*”

WORDS BY *Brendan Rees*
PHOTOGRAPHY BY *Marcela Lehocka*
BUSINESS

Located at the corner of Victoria and Queen streets, the new \$5.5 million space replaces the outdated 1980s food court, with eight operators now presenting a diverse range of cuisines that are sure to delight food enthusiasts.

Visitors can look forward to offerings including El Rincon, a Spanish tapas bar dishing up popular share plates, such as cured meats, Spanish meatballs and paella; and Le Consulat, a Parisian-inspired patisserie and café, serving a selection of savoury and sweet French delights.

There’s also Bellboy Coffee Bar, a chic city offering with coffee, beer, wine and cocktails, as well as light bites; and Canton Malay, a beloved eatery known for its mouth-watering curry laksa and other traditional delicacies.

Drums, a Sri Lankan café is returning with a fresh new

look, serving traditional favourites, while Rubens Grill, an American-themed café, will serve mouth-watering meats and sides; and a sushi and oyster bar called Saltwater will celebrate the market’s quality seafood with a fresh, theatrical menu.

“The new Food Hall will bring a fresh vibe to the market and boost business for traders,” Lord Mayor Sally Capp said following the Food Hall’s celebratory opening on November 17.

“We’ve made the largest investment in the council’s history to ensure we preserve the heritage of this site while also adding modern attractions that will drive visitation,” she said.

“Our spectacular new food hall brings together the market’s fresh produce and some of the city’s most exciting eateries – promoting the precinct’s reputation as a world-class dining destination.”

QVM CEO Matt Elliot said the market, which was home to 500 traders and seven million visitors a year, had been an icon of Melbourne’s fresh food and culinary scene, “and we’re excited to introduce the Queen’s Food Hall to further enhance the options for foodies at the market”.

“The Queen’s Food Hall is a vital piece of the renewed Queen Victoria Market which we hope will become a favourite place for visitors to grab a meal, meet friends or just sit back and enjoy the unique market ambience,” he said.

Bellboy Coffee Bar owner Emilio Rogliano said his team was thrilled to be a part of the relaunch and welcoming people to the “amazing new space”.

“We’d encourage everyone to pay us a visit and make the most of the great food and drink on offer at the market.”

The council said remaining operators were expected to open in the coming weeks, with the final operator to be announced soon. ●

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QVM.COM.AU/CHRISTMAS

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QUEEN VICTORIA MARKET

Spike in heroin deaths but CBD injecting room still in limbo

The new mental health minister has conceded there is “significant drug harm going on in the CBD” but the government had to consider “amenity for both residents and business owners”.

WORDS BY *David Schout*
HEALTH

Heroin-involved overdose deaths rose to decade-high levels in the City of Melbourne in 2022, according to a report from the Coroner’s Court.

The new data, which sees Melbourne overtake Brimbank and Yarra as the local government area with the highest rate of deaths involving the drug, has renewed calls for the Victorian Government to open a CBD safe injecting room in the CBD, first mooted in June 2020.

However the state’s new Minister for Mental Health Ingrid Stitt would not confirm if a CBD facility will go ahead, as the government continues to sit on an undisclosed report by former police commissioner Ken Lay recommending a suitable site.

The Coroner’s Court report revealed that there had been 24 heroin-involved overdose deaths within Melbourne in 2022, rising from nine in 2021.

The figure is the City of Melbourne’s highest annual rate of deaths involving the drug in the past 10 years, with the previous highest being 16 in 2014.

A rise in deaths was not confined to Melbourne, with a state-wide 33 per cent increase in heroin-involved overdoses (from 173 to 230).

Ms Stitt acknowledged the levels of drug



▲ Another vigil was held at the steps of parliament for overdose victims on November 15. Photo: Supplied.

harm in the CBD were “significant”. However she remained tight-lipped on the government’s plans for a medically supervised injecting facility within the Hoddle Grid, which is now almost three years behind schedule.

The government continues to sit on a report by Mr Lay, completed in May, which includes key recommendations for a CBD injecting room.

In October the Mental Health portfolio changed hands from Gabrielle Williams to Ms Stitt, however the new minister denied the changeover had delayed the release of Mr Lay’s report and a decision on the injecting room.

“No, I wouldn’t say that. But what I would say is that as the incoming minister, I think it’s important I give it the proper consideration that it deserves,” Ms Stitt said at a November press conference.

“It’s a really significant piece of work and I wanted to get myself across the detail of that,

and the government will be responding in due course.”

Ms Stitt said she was in just her fifth week as mental health minister and wanted to take time to read and understand Mr Lay’s report.

Notably, she confirmed the report would eventually be released to the public.

“There are a lot of complex issues contained within that report that the government needs to consider. I think that it’s reasonable for me to be able to take a little bit of time to make sure that the government response is considered when you think about some of the very complex issues that we have, particularly around the CBD and some of the stakeholder views on all sides about this issue.”

In response to the latest Coroner’s Court figures, cohealth chief executive Nicole Bartholomeusz reiterated the call for the “immediate establishment” of a CBD overdose prevention service.

“Every one of these deaths is tragic and could have been prevented if we had the right policy settings and health systems in place,” Ms Bartholomeusz said.

“It is critical for us as a community to recognise that addiction is a health issue that needs a health response.”

The government’s timeline on a potential CBD injecting room remained unclear.

Former Premier Dan Andrews and new Premier Jacinta Allan have reiterated, since 2021, that a decision on the issue would be made “soon”. The government cancelling the entire project remained a live possibility, with Ms Stitt noncommittal when asked if it was still committed to a CBD injecting facility.

“We’ve made no decisions at this point in time,” she said in an ABC Radio interview, arguing the government had to navigate a vexed topic with both strong opposition and support.

“What I do know is that there is significant drug harm going on in the CBD. We need to look carefully at what the best approach is to minimise that harm, but we also need to

consider the city in terms of amenity for both residents and business owners.”

“These are complex issues, and I didn’t want to rush into a decision about them, I wanted to take the time to properly consider Ken Lay’s report, which I think is the right thing to do in the circumstances. But the government will be responding in due course, and at that point we will also release Ken Lay’s report.”

In July it emerged the Salvation Army hub on Bourke St was the latest CBD location being considered by the Victorian Government to house the injecting room.

This was quickly condemned by some local traders and residents while Lord Mayor Sally Capp, a supporter of the injecting room, criticised the government for fuelling “angst and anxiety” by continued delays to a decision.

A frustrated Cr Capp said that the council should have seen Mr Lay’s report by now, and argued the government’s inaction was having real world impacts.

“This is becoming highly damaging. I’ve already had a trader on the phone earlier this morning. The angst and the anxiety that comes from all of the rumours and the rumour mill, is overwhelming for so many traders ... this is just another sense of uncertainty and anxiety that traders don’t need when they’re still trying to recover from the enormous disruption and devastation of COVID.”

Australia has just two supervised injecting facilities; in Sydney’s Kings Cross (opened in 2001) and in North Richmond (in 2018).

The government’s impetus for a CBD injecting room first came in 2020, when an independent report found that the North Richmond facility required help dealing with demand, and that the next location should be within the City of Melbourne.

On November 15 the “Keep Our City Alive” group held another candlelight vigil on the steps of Parliament House to “remember those who have died to overdose in the CBD and call for government action to prevent further deaths”. ●

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WHY WE LOVE A FESTIVE CBD

With an abundance of laneways, precincts and communities making up our CBD there's so much to see and do this festive season.

- City of Melbourne's new library at Queen Victoria Market - *narrm ngarrgu* - is opening on 25 November. Come to the community day from 10am-4pm.
- Explore Melbourne's laneways and arcades, meet the small retailers and get Christmas gift ideas with a free walking tour. Held on 5, 12, 14 and 21 December at 10.30am. Book at cityprecinct.com.au/tours/
- Drop into Laneway Learning for a free native Australian flora and fauna craft workshop for beginners, with a focus on Christmas-themed printmaking. From 11am-3pm on 10 December on the third floor of the Nicholas Building. Book at lanewaylearning.com/melbourne/classes
- Find unique Christmas gifts at the Queen Victoria Women's Centre shop on Lonsdale Street and support women entrepreneurs.
- The busy festive period means a busier CBD. Tired delivery riders and rideshare drivers can head to Micro-Labs at 227 Bourke Street to connect with other gig workers for practical advice, access basic amenities such as clean toilets, a kitchen with free food and drink, and charging points. For Hub opening hours visit gigworkers.org.au
- Did you know St Michael's Uniting Church on Collins Street has a quiet space called Mingary where people of all religions and cultures are welcome to visit to escape from the hustle and bustle of the city?
- Want to connect with your neighbourhood? Contact your CBD neighbourhood partner, Rei Chin, at participate.melbourne.vic.gov.au/CBD

A LOOK AT OUR NEIGHBOURHOOD



Laneway Learning's General Manager Maria Yebra and Melbourne Manager Maddy Macfarlane in the Nicholas Building venue.

Affordable learning in the heart of the city

Laneway Learning has been finding hobbies for people on a budget since 2012 – with no plans to stop anytime soon.

General Manager Maria Yebra has been with the not-for-profit organisation for most of its existence and is as passionate about it as the day she started.

"When we started Laneway Learning in 2012 there was nothing like it and I believe there's still nothing like it," Maria said.

"Our main point of difference is that people come to us to teach anything and everything. We encourage members of the community to apply to teach a class on something they're interested in."

Having run classes out of the historic Nicholas Building on Swanston Street since 2017, Laneway Learning has had many homes including cafes and even a hotel suite.

"I like to say Laneway is a Melbourne institution and we belong here," Maria said.

The Spanish-native believes Laneway Learning offers participants the chance to connect with their community while doing something fun.

"One of things that surprises me most about Laneway Learning is how cross-generational our classes are. Being from Spain, I'm used to mixing with all ages but people in Australia tend to stay in their age group. Our classes are so mixed though," Maria said.

"We once ran a class on how to apply makeup and we had young boys as well as 60-year-old women attending. At the beginning the older women were asking the younger boys why they wanted to learn, and by the end they were helping each other apply eyeliner."

The learning centre's ethos is firmly centred around the benefits of continual learning, self-growth and community connection. Maria describes Laneway as "like a gym for your brain".

"Our classes are not designed to upskill or start a side hustle, but to embrace the dying art of finding a hobby. It's not about making the most amazing thing you can – in fact we openly promote you making something bad if you're having fun," Maria said.

A normal week on Laneway Learning's calendar could include classes on how

to make someone's grandma's beloved recipe, personal stories of the Burma Railway Line, macramé, succulent terrariums, acrylic painting, sewing, mindful doodling, spoon carving, finances – the list is endless.

"When I've looked to study things in the past I've found they are really expensive. Our classes cost around \$18 plus materials," Maria said.

"For a 75-minute class where you get to make friends, meet new people and learn something, that's great value."

A non-drinker, Maria believes it's important to offer people options for activities and communities that aren't alcohol-based.

"We offer something to do during the week, that is low cost, and not a bar or trip to the movies," Maria said.

"For anyone interested in learning something new and having a chat with interesting people, come along and see for yourself."

Quickly pivoting to online learning during the 2020 lockdowns, Laneway Learning now offers a mix of in-person and digital classes.

"One of my proudest moments at Laneway was how quickly we adapted at the beginning of the pandemic. Since lockdowns have ended, we've kept some classes online because we realised there was a demand," Maria said.

Laneway Learning received the Community Award in the City of Melbourne's 2018 Melbourne Awards for its work to support people to become lifelong learners. Find out more about Laneway Learning and classes on offer at lanewaylearning.com

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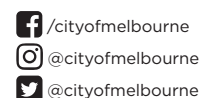


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Explore City of Melbourne's 10 Neighbourhood Portals to contact your partner and find events and information in your area at participate.melbourne.vic.gov.au/CBD



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The good, bad, and delayed: Council releases “honest account” of how key projects are tracking

“*The City of Melbourne has released an appraisal on where it’s falling behind, and what it’s doing well.*”

WORDS BY *David Schout*
COUNCIL AFFAIRS

The City of Melbourne has conceded key projects like Greenline and the Queen Victoria Market renewal were behind schedule as part of an “honest account” of key initiatives.

The appraisal, as part of the council’s annual report released in late October, featured concessions it had not met some goals set out for the 2022-23 financial year.

Other indicators within the municipality were positive, in particular, slashing the number of shopfront vacancies, which had become a feature of the COVID-19 pandemic.

However, the council acknowledged that key milestones for big-investment projects had not been met.

As part of a warts-and-all report of happenings throughout the municipality, the City’s two key projects in Greenline and the QVM precinct renewal were marked as “behind schedule at 30 June 2023”.

A pledge to establish a funding plan for Greenline – crucial for the full project going ahead – and beginning stage one works at Birrarung Marr were not met.

CBD News revealed in September however that works on site one (at Birrarung Marr) would begin in April 2024.

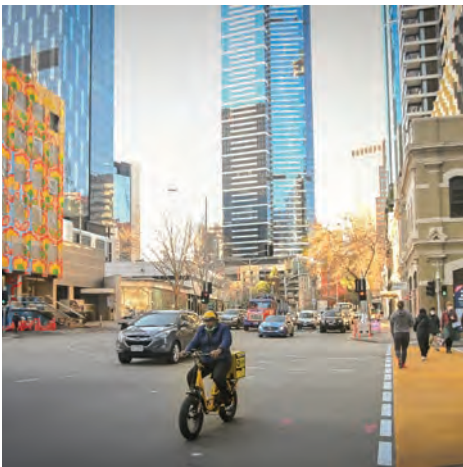
Key 2022-23 milestones for the Queen Victoria Market precinct renewal (the council’s largest ever investment) such as completing the sheds’ restoration and the Food Hall, and starting works on the new Trader Shed, weren’t met either.

However, the latter two weren’t far behind schedule; the Food Hall was set to open in November and works began on the seven-storey Trader Shed in October.

Some delays, the council said, were out of its hands.

“There’s no doubt supply chain issues, experienced by others in our economy, have affected our capital works,” City of Melbourne CEO Alison Leighton noted in the report.

Deputy Lord Mayor Nicholas Reece said the report was designed to identify where the council had “fallen short”, and to “hold ourselves to account”.



▲ The City Road Master Plan and Greenline (right) are among projects identified by the council as being behind schedule in its latest Annual Report.

He argued they had even gone further than required.

“We’ve been fully up-front about activities that have been delayed or deferred and where we’re behind or ahead of schedule,” Cr Reece said at the October 31 council meeting.

“This report goes way above and beyond what’s required under our statutory reporting obligations. Way beyond.”

Long-time Greens Cr Rohan Leppert said the reporting was “best in the [local government] sector”.

“This sets the standard now,” he said.

“This is a level of disclosure on not just how each major initiative is being progressed over the course of the financial year but each individual activity beneath that, and it’s an honest account as to whether we’ve been able to complete those activities or not.”

The council said one of its successes in 2022-23 was around retail recovery.

In the two years to June 2023, it had more than halved the number of empty retail spaces, from over 31 per cent to 14.4 per cent.

The “Shopfront Activation program”, which concluded in March, transformed 67 vacant shops into new retail spaces and enterprises in the CBD, Lygon St and Docklands.

Its business concierge team provided 14,081 businesses with support and mentoring.

The council’s city activation chair Cr Roshena Campbell said the program was “the most tangible example” of the city’s economic recovery.

“Anyone who walked the streets of Melbourne after COVID, towards the end of 2021, the fact that more than 30 per cent of our shops were vacant was one of the most stark realities about the impact of the pandemic on our city,” Cr Campbell said.

“The fact that we have halved that rate, that we are now down to 14.4 per cent, says a lot about how strong our city is, about the green shoots and the fact that we’re coming back. But it didn’t happen on its own.”



She said there was still a way to go.

“The reality is 14.4 per cent isn’t good enough, we know that we’ve still got to go further, but it does say that we have come very far along this journey and anyone walking our streets today can see the difference.”

Lord Mayor Sally Capp said while they were formally required to release an annual report each year, this year’s went above the minimum requirements and urged locals to read it online.

“Really what is the point of this document if it’s not a document that welcomes and encourages people to read it, and to gather that information and to hold us accountable and to be involved in that measurement of our progress,” Cr Capp said.

“We can also see from the Annual Report that nothing is ever really over, really. And it does really set us up for the ongoing work at council.”

- Major projects behind schedule

 - Greenline
 - Queen Victoria Market precinct renewal
 - Munro library and community hub
 - Increase of public open space
 - City Road Master Plan
 - Increase/upgrade women’s sport facilities
- Major initiatives on track

 - Power Melbourne
 - Homes Melbourne
 - New neighbourhood model
 - Public art program
 - Heritage reviews/new planning scheme amendments
 - Delivery of new design panel/committees
 - Rapid response cleaning team

- What’s going well?

 - Gross local product: \$114 billion (up from \$107.4 billion in 2021-22)
 - Number of jobs: 480,600 (up from 465,600)
 - Number of visitors: 12.4 million (up from 6.3 million)
 - Vacancy rate of retail premises: 14.4 per cent (down from 19 per cent)
 - Number of start-ups in the municipality: 1251 (up from 1180)
- What’s not?

 - Municipal greenhouse gas emissions: 4.55 million CO₂e (up from 4.23 million CO₂e)
 - Number of businesses in the municipality: 13,829 (down from 14,513)
 - Proportion of dwellings within 300m of public open space: 94.7 per cent (down from 96.3 per cent)
 - Proportion of people reporting food insecurity (no change)
- Other positives:

 - Average score out of 100 for resident wellbeing: 73 (up from 72 in 2021-22)
 - Proportion of people who regularly visit a park in the municipality: 88 per cent (up from 85 per cent)
 - Proportion of people who participated in arts and cultural activities in the municipality: 24 per cent (up from 19 per cent)
- Other negatives:

 - Number of people supported through a range of accommodation: 91 (down from 118)
 - Number of trees planted in the municipality: 2554 (down from 3041)
 - Melburnians’ self-reported sense of belonging to community: 63.1 per cent (down from 64.8 per cent)
 - Number of people sleeping rough who have not been offered accommodation: 73 (up from from 38) ●





David Schout
JOURNALIST
DAVID@HYPERLOCALNEWS.COM.AU



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Works begin on 50 new apartments for rough sleepers

The renewal of a vacant Little Bourke St building as part of the “Make Room” project has begun.

WORDS BY *David Schout*
PHOTOGRAPHY BY *Hanna Komissarova*
HOUSING

The transformation of a disused CBD building into 50 apartments for those experiencing homelessness has begun, in what Lord Mayor Sally Capp has termed “life-changing” works.

Builders have stripped back ceilings and partitions inside the vacant six-storey building at 602 Little Bourke St and have started work on fitting each studio apartment with a bedroom, kitchenette and ensuite bathroom.

With 10 units per floor across five levels, the “Make Room” project will also feature a new rooftop garden, communal areas and Indigenous plants and artwork.

A dedicated floor will also provide safe and secure accommodation for women experiencing or at risk of homelessness, and support services for health and housing will be located on-site.

The current six-storey rendered brick building, constructed in 1952, has been previously described by the council as being “in need of some much-needed TLC (tender loving care)”.

Its new design has been informed through people with lived experience of temporary accommodation, and has sought to create a “safe, welcoming environment for everyone”.

It was estimated that the project – an initiative between the City of Melbourne, Victorian Government, Unison Housing, and corporate and philanthropic sectors – would be completed by mid-2024.

Located on the CBD’s western fringe, residents will stay for up to 12 months or until they are connected with long-term housing.



▲ *Helen Matthews (centre), who has experienced homelessness, is among the many people who’ve worked on the project.*



“Every Melburnian deserves to have a safe and secure place to call home, and that’s what we’re delivering with our life-changing Make Room project,” Cr Capp said.

“We’re setting a new standard for transitional supported accommodation in Victoria and showing how safe spaces with integrated support services can be created.”

“Everyone benefits when we work together to help people out of homelessness. We’ve seen how people can take back control of their lives when they get the housing and support they need.”

“Research shows that for every dollar invested in affordable housing, there is a \$3 benefit to the community due to job security, better education, health cost savings, and lower rates

of crime and family violence.”

Approved works, set to cost \$1.1 million, will see the building be re-rendered, all external windows replaced, construction of a new pedestrian entrance and the landscaping of the rooftop garden.

At an August Future Melbourne Committee meeting, it was revealed 38 people had objected to the plans on the basis it would decrease security and personal safety of surrounding residents, increasing crime rates and litter, and negatively impact nearby commercial interests and property prices.

However most of the objections were deemed irrelevant, as they focused on the “use” of the land as a supported residential facility, which did not require planning permission.

Councillors unanimously supported the project.

Housing Minister Harriet Shing said homelessness was a “complex issue” and backed the initiative was “an important opportunity to make change that matters for people who need it most.”

“Wraparound services [also] play a hugely important role in addressing the causes of homelessness, and getting people into secure and dignified accommodation that meets their needs.”

Creative hoardings have been installed while works at the Little Bourke St site take place, featuring artwork by John Patton including images of Traditional Owners involved in the early civil rights movement in Australia. ●



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Local groups recognised in the Melbourne Awards

Continued from page 1.

“Many people with schizophrenia and other complex mental health are naturally creative, it’s often our preferred language and the way we process the world,” CEO and founder of Schizy Inc., Heidi Everett said.

“Mojo Festival gives people the opportunity and right to dig into their talents and take their arts practice as far as they desire.”

Ms Everett described being in “absolute shock” when the festival was announced as this year’s winner of the Arts and Inclusion award, noting that the organisation “rarely gets acknowledged in the mental health system”, despite the influential and innovative work they do.

“We are proud to be seen as pioneers of the social model of mental health and disability access, leading the way for people with complex mental health to be invested and engaged in contributing to contemporary society,” she told CBD News.

The Living Room took home the Community Award, acknowledging the health service initiative from Youth Projects that supports the wellbeing of people experiencing, or at risk of, homelessness.

“It’s so much more than a medical practice – it includes showers, laundry facilities, food, clothing, internet, luggage storing, and phone charging,” Youth Projects chairperson, Melanie Raymond OAM said.

“We recognise the chaos of the streets and the need for somewhere calm and peaceful where you’re treated with respect.”

Despite working in “incredibly challenging circumstances every day”, The Living Room team never expected to receive such praise.

“I can honestly say that I’ve never seen a team so ecstatic,” Ms Raymond said.

“It was so important for them to be recognised in this way and to have that independent affirmation that comes from an expert judging panel – having other people examine us and say that what we’re doing is really above and beyond, is amazing.”



▲ The Living Room team with Lord Mayor Sally Capp (left).



▲ The Schizy Inc. team win for Mojo Festival.

With the rise in rough sleeping across the state due to the lack of vacancies in the usual emergency and transitional services, as well as the government’s social housing investment “not moving fast enough” and there “not being enough of it”, Ms Raymond urges any organisation or workplace that may want to donate to a charity before the end of the year, “to think of us”.

“All of the money goes directly back out to people in need – we’re expecting a very hot summer and need to plan for extreme heat and how we give people protection from that, we would be very pleased to receive any donations.”

The Melbourne Awards also recognised Kon Karapanagiotidis OAM as the Melburnian of

the Year for his work in developing the Asylum Seeker Resource Centre, Australia’s largest independent refugee organisation.

Additionally, the Young Melburnian of the Year was awarded to Georgie Stone OAM for the first time since the category was introduced this year, celebrating her advocacy for trans and gender diverse children and youth. ●

For more information:
schizy.org
youthprojects.org.au/the-living-room



▲ Stephen Scott at trader Deniz Alterations after raising concerns about the safety of an escalator.

Businesses running as normal after temporary setback

WORDS BY *Brendan Rees*
SAFETY & SECURITY

Two CBD businesses are operating as normal after their main entrance was closed due to a faulty escalator believed to be out of action for six years.

Customers visiting Yoga Corner and Deniz Alterations have been redirected to use 422 Collins St as a temporary entry while the safety issues relating to the escalator at 477 Little Collins St are resolved.

Resident Stephen Scott said he noticed the escalator not working earlier this year and was worried that a vulnerable or elderly resident may injure themselves.

He began investigating and sought the help of the City of Melbourne, after discovering the escalator hadn’t been in operation for up to six years.

Yoga Corner’s owner Amy Leonard-King said it was business as usual and reaffirmed her commitment to serving their members and guests whom she thanked for understanding and patience regarding the new adjustment.

The council said it was working with the landlord to resolve safety issues with the escalator.

“A temporary entry via Collins St is available during business hours. Tenants are provided with a fob key to let clients into the building after hours,” it said.

“Council is working with a range of stakeholders to ensure peoples safety and enable temporary access to and from the building via exit doors and corridors leading from the basement retail tenancies to Collins St while the building is occupied”. ●



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Design panel praised as new hotel approved following “robust” feedback

A new 207-room CBD hotel has been approved by the City of Melbourne after it told the applicant to go back to the drawing board.

WORDS BY *David Schout*
PLANNING

A 25-level hotel on Little Bourke St has been approved by the City of Melbourne after significant changes were made following “robust” feedback from the council’s design panel.

The reworked design, which is said to have ensured an improved outcome for heritage and the public realm, was evidence of a successful planning system according to the council.

In June 2022 plans for the site, at 620-632 Little Bourke St at the western edge of the CBD, were considered by the Melbourne Design Review Panel (MDRP) — a panel of independent architecture, landscape architecture and urban design experts formed in late-2021 to improve the quality of new developments.

The panel’s advice urged the applicant to be more sympathetic to both the streetscape and heritage context, with the site home to a heritage-listed red brick building originally constructed as a workshop within a former power station.

It also urged architects to reconsider vehicle access arrangements, increase activation and improve the public realm response at ground level.

The “robust” feedback was taken on board and implemented in the latest application, approved by councillors at an October 24 Future Melbourne Committee meeting.

Town planning consultant Paul Little, from Planning & Property Partners representing applicant Yarra Hotel Group, said they had been on “quite a journey, but a really positive one”.

“A proposal was put forward [and] it’s fair to say we received some robust but constructive feedback through the MDRP process,” he said.

The council’s acting director of planning Marjorie Kennedy said it had worked “very collaboratively” with the permit applicant, and through the MDRP process had seen key changes.

These included the removal of cantilevering over the heritage buildings and also of vehicle access through Little Bourke St which was against urban design principles.

Other changes included a greater setback from the heritage building and significant amendments to the tower design.

She argued a “much improved design outcome has been a result of that process”.

Mr Little said while his client has existing hotels to the east of the CBD, a new offering within the Hoddle Grid had been a “focus of theirs for some time”.

Works on the development, which Yarra Hotel Group hope to begin next year, are set to cost \$33.2 million.

The council’s planning chair Cr Nicholas Reece said the result was an “absolutely brilliant example” of the MDRP process in action.

“There were some challenges with this application when it was first submitted but it went through the MDRP [which] was a very constructive, robust, and positive



process for everyone involved. We have seen some important changes made to the design of the building,” the Deputy Lord Mayor said.

“[These changes] really leave this as an absolutely stunning building which works beautifully in the heritage context of the old warehouse there on Little Bourke St.”

“It’s going to be a fabulous addition to the collection of standout buildings we have in Melbourne. It’s not often I get to sit here and say I wholeheartedly welcome this application and can’t wait to see it being delivered, but that is absolutely the case here.”

Deputy planning chair Cr Rohan Leppert added: “[It’s] an exemplary process leading to an exemplary outcome ... it wasn’t a rushed decision, but it is a lasting decision because we know that good design leads to really good outcomes.”

Cr Reece said the application was also a positive from a wider economic perspective.

“We’re a city in which entertainment, hospitality and tourism is going to be a bigger and more important part of our economy going forward. So, seeing a proposal for a new hotel, particularly such a well-designed one as this, is just fantastic to see and great for Melbourne.” ●



▲ Cr Jamal Hakim at the City Library.

Photo: Hanna Komissarova.

City Library set for makeover, with new spaces for the whole community

WORDS BY *Brendan Rees*
COUNCIL AFFAIRS

The CBD’s much-loved City Library is set to undergo a major revamp, creating a more inviting and modern space.

The Flinders Lane library, which saw more than 255,000 visits from city workers, students, and residents last year, will be revitalised to better cater for the needs of the community while enhancing the overall library experience.

As part of the makeover, the state-of-the-art facility will feature a three-level library, a dedicated children’s library, family services, a creative makers’ space, podcast and audio recording studios, and spaces for communal study, meetings and events.

The ground floor will also be overhauled making it quicker to browse books while the first floor will be fitted out to provide spaces for the community to come together for meetings, study and co-working.

Once complete, visitors will be able to explore and borrow from the curated collection, access computers as well as Wi-Fi, and enjoy the areas for reading, relaxation and learning, and to reserve spaces for teamwork.

Renovations are expected to begin in January, with the facility to be

closed for about four weeks.

The council will work closely with library users and community members to reduce disruption and ensure continued access to services.

City Library will continue to be accessible for all including vulnerable and marginalised people, those at risk of or experiencing homelessness or family violence, and anyone looking for respite.

“Through revamping the much-loved City Library, we’re responding directly to the needs of library users, who tell us they want more spaces available for community meetings, study and co-working,” Lord Mayor Sally Capp said.

“This refreshed offering will still support the many city workers and students who love to pop in on their lunch break or as part of their commute to browse the diverse collection or speak with our fantastic library staff.”

The council’s Creative Melbourne portfolio lead Cr Jamal Hakim also expressed his excitement saying libraries were an “important community asset and the most accessible safe space for every member of Melbourne’s diverse community, including students, residents, office workers and visitors.”

He said City Library would continue to deliver for the community as the council built for the future. ●

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Authorised by Evan Mulholland MP, Member for Northern Metropolitan Region, Unit 10, 2 Graystone Court, Epping Vic 3076, Funded from Parliamentary Budget.

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Traffic “mayhem” at Queen Vic Market causes angst as council seeks extension to permit

WORDS BY *Brendan Rees*
COUNCIL AFFAIRS

Road traffic woes stemming from renewal works to Queen Victoria Market may drag out further after the City of Melbourne requested to extend a five-year Heritage Victoria permit for various projects.

Construction activities in recent months have led to a “traffic maze” of detours around the market, creating chaos and frustration for traders, shoppers, and residents who fear there may be no end in sight to the council’s \$267 million redevelopment of the market.

But current disruptions may show no signs of abating after the City of Melbourne lodged an application with Heritage Victoria in November requesting to extend renewal works that have yet to begin, with the council having previously blamed pandemic-related issues for delays.

The permit, which relates to the installation of services within Sheds A, B, C, D, H and I, construction of a new centralised waste and recycling facility including installation of operable landscaping and public realm works within Queen St, was initially approved on December 3, 2020, with construction to be completed within five years of the permit being issued.

Heritage Victoria, in a statement, confirmed the amendment to the permit was being considered, which “only allows for an extension of time in which the works are to be completed,” and there would be “no change to the scope of works”.

However, if approved, the permit would allow for up to six years for works to be completed which could drag out disruptions to December 2026.

This has prompted concerns that the iconic market may be overshadowed by ongoing construction activities with the potential to further impact traffic conditions described as “extremely unpredictable and off-putting” with one resident saying they had twice seen cars driving the wrong way on Franklin St.

Residents and traders have also expressed disquiet that the potential approval of a \$1.7 billion development at the market’s southern site, which proposes to build three towers up to 49 levels high and turning the existing open-air carpark into a public green square (called Market Square) after the council announced it would partner with developer Lendlease, would exacerbate the challenges already faced by the community.

Construction of this new precinct, to be known as Gurrova Place, has been proposed to start next year and be completed in 2028.

“It is ridiculous. They’re not controlling the traffic flows into the place to make it work for the customers,” a market trader said, speaking on the condition of anonymity.

“Regular customers will just go ‘this is too hard’. You can’t get in and out of the place. The tourists won’t be too perturbed but anyone who has to come in by car will be tearing their hair out at the moment.”



▲ Residents are at their wits’ end over the traffic “chaos” around Queen Victoria Market. Photo: Hanna Komissarova.

“You can build this wonderful infrastructure, but they won’t have anyone to use it because customers would have all gone out to the ‘burbs and traders moved out to places that are cheaper to rent.”

Another trader said it took one customer about an hour to navigate traffic detours, including the closure of the Franklin St-Queen St roundabout.

“How often do you do that before you say, ‘this is a waste of time, I’m not bothering again?’”

They said customers who travelled from as far as Colac, were coming to the market every two or three months “instead of every two to three weeks because the parking is just horrendous”.

According to the council’s annual report, published in October, the market’s renewal was delayed but it assured, “Officers continue to consult with market management to best facilitate market operations during construction to ensure disruption is kept to a minimum whilst maintaining safety and project delivery”.

“To this end an extensive program of trader engagement sessions has been undertaken. A way finding specialist is assisting.”

Lord Mayor Sally Capp conceded construction “can be disruptive”, “which is why we’re working hard to attract as many customers as possible to the precinct to shop and dine”.

“We’re working closely with Queen Victoria Market management to minimise disruption for traders – including access to temporary storage and delivery options – while encouraging more people to visit the market precinct,” she said.

In a statement, the council said some traffic detours were occurring as CitiPower relocated underground cables on Franklin St (including the Franklin St roundabout), Queen St, William St and Flagstaff Gardens to “enable the construction of Gurrova Place”.

“Works are being staged, and include trenching sections of the road, parking bays and the footpath to install new cables. Works are scheduled for completion in mid-December 2023,” it said, adding access was being maintained with additional traffic management measures in place, including traffic controllers and digital

signage to safely guide vehicles, cyclists, and pedestrians around the work area.

The southern site development is currently subject to heritage and planning approvals with public consultation on the proposed Market Square having just finished in October.

CBD News spoke to many community members and residents who say the “current mayhem shemuzzle” of traffic conditions had been unrelenting for months and called for it to stop or “at least finish the job”.

“Speaking with some stall holders on the weekend, they are saying that their midweek sales numbers have fallen off a cliff. It appears that unsuspecting drivers coming to the market are so frustrated that they are avoiding the market in droves,” resident Sean Kelly said.

Another resident Richard Grace said, “Depressingly, it is a taste of what is to come with the idiotic Southern Site proposal, a crass monstrous development that will build on/replace Franklin St north, that is a major road thoroughfare access to the market”.

Friends of Queen Victoria Market lobby group president Mary-Lou Howie said construction in and around the market was having a “detrimental effect on the QVM brand” since the renewal began in 2013.

“QVM’s heritage integrity is being blurred, diminished and subsumed into a broader precinct narrative,” she said.

“Unfortunately, state and federal legislation is weak in protecting our places of national significance such as QVM.”

The City of Melbourne said “three major milestones” had been completed this year including shed restorations, the opening of the Queen’s Food Hall and upgrade of the Therry St streetscape.

A new library and family services facility will open in November as part of the Munro development with market infrastructure upgrades along with the construction of the new Trader Shed soon starting.

“This program of works is expected to be completed at the end of 2025. Design works are also under way for the new Market Square and Queen’s Corner Building.” ●

Lord Mayor off to Dubai for climate change conference

WORDS BY *Brendan Rees*
COUNCIL AFFAIRS

Lord Mayor Sally Capp is set to jet off to Dubai to meet with companies that can “progress commercial opportunities” in support of climate resilience back home.

Cr Capp was given the thumbs up by her fellow councillors at the council’s November 14 Future Melbourne Committee meeting to participate and present at the 2023 United Nations Climate Change Conference from November 30 to December 6, which brings together hundreds of national and subnational climate leaders.

According to a council report, Cr Capp’s attendance is “aligned to achieving Council Plan 2021-2025 and major initiatives in Council’s Climate and Biodiversity Emergency Declaration”.

The council will jointly fund the trip with Bloomberg Philanthropies, leaving ratepayers to pick up the remaining estimated \$3450 cost.

“The carbon emission resulting from air travel to Dubai will be offset with the purchase of credits,” the council report stated.

Cr Capp said she was interested in the opportunities to be working with other organisations “that have the capacity to fund some of the brilliant projects that we have under way here as part of our strategies”.

This included the “Urban Forest Fund so we can green more of our city; Power Melbourne, to be able to deliver more on battery storage, ultimately benefiting our residents and traders; and the retrofit of buildings which is, of course, a major focus in reducing emissions and the list goes on – I’m excited about those prospects for Melbourne,” she said.

“It gives us an opportunity to be in an environment that maximises outcomes for us across those many projects, initiatives and ultimately, our aims to create a more sustainable future.”

The Lord Mayor’s trip to Dubai follows close on the heels of a trip she took to Singapore in July 2022 to attend the World Cities Summit to study the council’s approach to graffiti management, costing a total of \$30,550 in airfares, hotels, and other expenses, including the charges for two accompanying council officers.

The council has also approved Cr Le Liu to fly to China to participate in the Australian China Youth Dialogue (ACYD) and other meetings with officials, including a visit to Thailand from November 11 to 28, costing ratepayers \$6000. Other costs will be jointly covered by the ACYD and personally by Cr Le Liu.

Cr Kevin Louey flew to the Philippines in March 2023 to attend the Business Partner Cities Network Roundtable, which, together with a council officer, cost \$17,477.

In April, Deputy Lord Mayor Nicholas Reece flew to China to rebuild and strengthen business and cultural ties, while advocating for Melbourne as a “leading city for international students”, at a cost of \$15,900.

Since June 2022, councillors and staff have billed ratepayers more than \$75,000 for seven international trips. ●

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Your City of Melbourne community update

CITY SET TO ‘SLEIGH’ THIS CHRISTMAS

Enjoy free festivities as part of the City of Melbourne’s Christmas Festival



Christmas is the most magical time of the year and the city is the place to discover all the fun and festivities.

And the best part – most of the fun is free.

It’s because we want everyone to be able to have an affordable day out in the city and enjoy the Christmas activities on offer.

This year’s Christmas Festival is set to be our best yet with a spectacular new laser show on the Yarra River – Birrarung and a brand-new home for Santa’s Workshop in Howey Place, transforming the laneway into

a Christmas wonderland perfect for a jolly good photo moment.

The inaugural Christmas River Show will illuminate Southbank each night of the Christmas Festival - dazzling Melburnians with water fountains, lasers, lights and projections to a soundtrack of festive favourites.

An array of Christmas decorations will also adorn the city, including showstopping projections, laneway theming, giant presents, and nutcrackers.

And if that’s not enough, wrap up your Christmas list at the city’s iconic strips, malls and arcades. Shop little laneways and markets to find the perfect present for everyone in your life.

Catch up with loved ones in the city this Christmas to feast under festive lights or celebrate the sparkle season from rooftops.

Highlights of the festival include:

- Mesmerising Christmas projections – illuminating Melbourne Town Hall and State Library Victoria.

- A pop-up Christmas-themed roller rink – keeping the free festive fun rolling into Carlton’s Argyle Square. Entry is free, with optional \$10 skate hire.
- The new-look Christmas Cinema – screening iconic festive films at the stunning Capitol Theatre.
- A festival maze in Docklands – inviting Melburnians to win their way through a full-sized labyrinth of giant presents and interactive games.
- Festive thrills and classic carnival treats - as the Christmas Carnival returns to the banks of the Yarra.
- The Listies Ruin Xmas – the acclaimed comedic duo returns to put the slay into sleighbells with an uproarious take on the holiday pantomime.
- The return of the Christmas Quest and Treasure Hunt – the ultimate Christmas-themed scavenger hunts with plenty of prizes to be won.

All attractions are free, except the Listies Ruin Christmas and the

Christmas Cinema. Proceeds from these events will go to the Good Giving appeal for Make Room – a City of Melbourne project creating new pathways out of homelessness.

The Christmas Festival is supported by major partners including the Victorian Government, Fed Square and World Vision.

For more information, visit whatson.melbourne.vic.gov.au and search for Christmas.



Our Make Room project will provide supported accommodation and pathways to long-term housing for rough sleepers. We thank people like Helen Matthews, pictured with Lord Mayor Sally Capp, who has experienced the hardships of homelessness, for helping us deliver this important service.

PAY IT FORWARD THIS FESTIVE SEASON

Make a difference to Melburnians in need this Christmas by donating to our Good Giving program.

Homelessness is a complex and confronting issue that can affect anyone at any point in their lives.

We believe all Melburnians deserve access to safe and affordable housing.

That’s why the City of Melbourne is working to reduce homelessness in the city through our housing project, Make Room.

By donating to our Good Giving campaign this festive season, you will support Make Room and help those who need it most.

The Make Room development will deliver 50 studio apartments, housing and homelessness services and other wraparound support. Residents will stay for up to 12 months, or until they can find long-term secure housing.

The design and service model have been informed through people with lived experience and support the needs of residents from different backgrounds. It will offer care and support services, with specialist health, housing and support staff located on-site.

HOW YOUR DONATION WILL HELP
This is a project that will change people’s lives. By giving to Make Room, you are helping to give our most vulnerable community members a safe and secure roof over their head.
Donate at lmcf.org.au/makeroom

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Your City of Melbourne community update

SIX WAYS TO CELEBRATE NEW YEAR'S EVE

Melbourne is rolling out the sparkling red carpet for a New Year's Eve celebration like no other.



Get ready to don your sequins and glitter as the city sparkles for the annual New Year's Eve spectacular.

The City of Melbourne will host a massive city-wide midnight celebration with a special 'all that sparkles' theme.

If you're planning to head into the city, the best place to see the fireworks is from one of our four Celebration Zones. But you can see them from anywhere you can see the city skyline, or even watch on TV.

For the first time, Melbourne's iconic buildings and streets will be drenched in sparkles for the occasion – with trees across the city lit up, glittery projections across Town Hall and the State Library, late-night busking performances

and free sparkly New Year's Eve hats available at Celebration Zones.

Here six ways to celebrate New Year's Eve in Melbourne:

1. Be dazzled by a fireworks and laser extravaganza that will light up the city across 27 CBD rooftops. You can watch the fireworks from anywhere you can see the city skyline.
2. Head to our family-friendly Celebration Zones at Docklands, Flagstaff Gardens, Treasury Gardens and Kings Domain for live music, dance workshops, light installations, food trucks and a 9.30pm localised fireworks display.
3. Revellers can also savor the celebrations at renowned city

hospitality venues, with special events taking place at Arbory Bar & Eatery, Afloat, HER, Marvel Stadium, Blossom Rooftop and many more.

4. See superstars Marina Prior and John Foreman host the Aussie Pops Orchestra's New Year's Eve Gala extravaganza at Arts Centre Melbourne.
5. Settle in at Sidney Myer Music Bowl to watch some of the world's best live acts, brought to you by the Heaps Good live music festival.

Stay home and tune in to the official New Year's Eve live broadcast on Channel 9 from 11pm.

With half a million people expected to attend, safety remains our number

one priority. A detailed safety plan will be in place to ensure the wellbeing of everyone celebrating in the city, in partnership with Victoria Police and emergency service providers.

Plan early, book into one of the city's world-class hospitality venues or attend a Celebration Zone, as large crowds are expected to close a number of roads.

New Year's Eve celebrations in the city are supported by the \$200 million Melbourne City Revitalisation Fund – a partnership between the City of Melbourne and the State Government.

For more information, visit nye.melbourne.vic.gov.au

Keep your cool this summer

Melburnians are urged to prepare for a hot and dry El Nino summer and reminded of the dangers posed by heatwaves in our city.

By 2050, Melbourne will experience an average of 16 days a year over 35 degrees.

The City of Melbourne is working to reduce the threat of extreme urban heat for vulnerable people.

Our goal is that Melbourne provides places of respite for residents,

workers and visitors during extreme heat events.

We have already started acting to:

- Cool the city through urban greening
- Invest in projects like Greenline to provide a cool green corridor through the city
- Help keep cool, through our Cool Routes online map and providing practical support during heatwaves.

All our efforts combined aim to cool Melbourne by four degrees, to improve liveability, resilience, and community health.

Keep an eye out for heat health alerts on City of Melbourne's social media channels and from the Department of Health, or be aware of upcoming weather.

For tips on how to stay safe during the heat visit melbourne.vic.gov.au/heatwave



KEEP IN TOUCH

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news.melbourne.vic.gov.au

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A state of colonial confusion

A new thought-provoking and powerful art exhibition recently launched at Town Hall's City Gallery invites visitors to confront the complexities and legacies of Australia's colonial past.

WORDS BY *Brendan Rees*

Titled *Colonial Confusion*, the display is curated by artist *megan evans* (name in lower case being her preference) who aims to “unsettle” the viewer through a mix of art and historical objects from the City of Melbourne’s Art and Heritage Collection, which are broken into several categories including chairs, cutlery, glassware, and books – as she poses the questions of “What is

this history that we are preserving?” and “Who are we as Australians?”
“You might wonder if I have painted on these historical documents from the collection, or bolted together, embroidered upon, cut, and beaded these precious mementoes of our history,” she said.
“I have, but don’t despair. By confusing the viewer, I am asking them to consider what we hold sacred. Consider the precious cultural belongings and sacred sites of First Nations people that have been desecrated and destroyed. What is this history that we are preserving?”
megan, whose work is informed by social issues, examining the nature of belonging and the impact of colonisation on identity, both self and nation, is a multidisciplinary artist, working in video, photography, sculpture, and installation.
Colonial Confusion reflects her personal history and takes the audience on a journey, re-evaluating the colonial era and the deconstruction of a “White Australia”.



Among her powerful collection of objects in the exhibition is a striking work titled *White House*, an old Georgian-style dolls house, filled with ruby glass and antique sugar shakers.
The sugar shakers comment on the history of the Kanak people of New Caledonia, brought to Australia as slaves to cut sugarcane – with the art piece representing “the excess of Victoriana

and the blood split as a result of the excess”.
Speaking to *CBD News*, *megan* said she hoped the exhibition would be accessible to a lot of people in the heart of the city – and “particularly since the referendum, I felt even more determined for this conversation to be engaged with”.
“Sometimes people have been shocked and horrified that I’ve actually destroyed the original historical documents, which is sort of the point,” she said.
“*Colonial Confusion* places the visitor in the frame – of the past – in the present.”
The exhibition is also inspired by *megan*’s relationship with her late husband, Gunditjmarra artist and activist Les Griggs. She conceded she was faced with the impact of Australia’s cultural policies and practices on his life and the lives of his people.
The exhibition is free to all visitors at City Gallery, 110 Swanston St, until February 26, 2024. ●

A Christmas Carol’s second Melbourne season set to “thrill audiences” at Comedy Theatre

WORDS BY *Georgie Atkins*

Charles Dickens’ classic, *A Christmas Carol*, has returned to Melbourne’s Comedy Theatre for a second season following its hit run in 2022, with the show’s new season extended to January 7, 2024 ahead of opening night on November 23.
The original production, conceived and directed by Matthew Warchus, has captivated audiences world-wide, winning five Tony Awards and featuring on the West End for more than seven seasons since first coming to the stage in 2017.
The Old Vic interpretation by Jack Thorne will see some of the best artists that Australian theatre has to offer come together alongside international star, Owen Teale (*Game of Thrones*), playing the lead role of Ebenezer Scrooge.
“He’s one of the finest actors I’ve ever seen, he’s remarkable – he’s as good an actor as anyone will ever see,” Grant Piro said, who plays the character of Fezziwig.
“Watching him rehearse is mesmerising and I feel very fortunate to be able to act on the stage with him, he’s a really masterful actor and the audiences we’ve had so far (in preview) adore him.”
Dickens’ 1843 novella tells the tale of a miserable, old man who hates everything about Christmas.
He is visited by three spirits throughout the performance, “Christmas Past”, “Christmas Present” and “Yet to Come”, to help encourage Scrooge to change his life for the better.
While there are “dark and scary moments” to the story, Mr Piro insists it is a “family show” that will inspire compassion, kindness, and most importantly, Christmas spirit.
“It’s not really like coming to see a play and it’s not a musical, it’s a very immersive night of entertainment,” Mr Piro said. “I think the most astounding thing is how moving it is – one moment you could be laughing like a dragon and the next minute you’re bawling your eyes out, not through sadness, but through Christmas joy.”



Mr Piro said he was “desperate” to be a part of the cast for Melbourne’s second season, as he was busy performing in *Girl from the North Country* during the show’s first run.
“My family is very much a Christmas family,” he said, describing his wife, Marina Prior, as the “queen of Christmas”.
“Christmas time is really special in our family, and it’s going to be even more special this year with *A Christmas Carol*.
Much like the “charitable” Dickens, *A Christmas Carol* is unique in the sense that each season, the show helps raise funds for a charity partner, with Scrooge himself collecting donations from the audience at the end of every performance.
“This year, we’ve chosen FareShare – a charity organisation that collects food, grows food, and makes meals for underprivileged and homeless people,” Mr Piro told *CBD News*. “That’s kind of the whole spirit of the show, it’s a very giving night – when you come and see the show, you know that you’re contributing to something.”
A Christmas Carol will run until January 7. ●



For more information:
christmascarolaustralia.com.au
fareshare.net.au



Melbourne’s first floating music festival

A floating music festival along the Yarra River with popular cover bands and emerging artists is set to take centre stage in a first-time event.
The City of Melbourne will host River Riffs at Batman Park from November 23 to 25, with the park’s floating helipad providing a one-of-a-kind setting.
Over the three days, lovers of classic Australian rock music will enjoy shows from INXSIVE, a band established in the late ‘90s with their performances consistently selling out and earning critical acclaim.
The group replicate not just INXS’s sound, one of the greatest bands of all time, but also their legendary live shows with hits including *New Sensation*, *Need You Tonight*, and more.
Also at the festival is tribute band *Tusk* who will celebrate 10 years of hits from *Fleetwood Mac*, while *Fever’s Candlelight Concerts* – A

tribute to *Coldplay* will also perform, with the orchestra having provided one-of-a-kind experiences in a candlelit setting across spectacular shows worldwide.
The event will also have a bar and food trucks with offerings from Kimu Korean Japanese eatery, Grillz on Wheelz and St Gerry’s Greek Donuts.
In addition to the tribute focussed headliners, River Riffs will celebrate the emerging artists of Melbourne, with the City of Melbourne putting artists from their busking program in the park from 4pm to 6pm each night.
The festival will run from 4pm to 10pm each evening. The event is free with no bookings required. ●



For more information:
uniquelymelbourne.com.au

More delays on bike lane projects, as Flinders St pushed back

“A key CBD bike lane project has been further delayed without explanation.”

WORDS BY *David Schout*
TRANSPORT

Bike lane projects in Melbourne continue to languish, after it emerged consultation on the crucial Flinders St lanes have been delayed.

A promised June 2024 completion date for the works, dubbed “the biggest and most complicated road reconfiguration” this council term, now appears highly unlikely.

One of the city’s most important bike lane projects, the City of Melbourne had promised to deliver four kilometres of separated bike lanes along Flinders St – starting in Docklands and finishing at Spring St – within the current financial year.

Once complete it will provide safe passage for cyclists along the busy CBD street, and connect to existing lanes in Southbank and Docklands.

However, *CBD News* understands key consultation work for the project, flagged to take place between July and September, had been pushed back.

The news is another blow to the city’s wider bike lane rollout.

In June it was revealed the City of Melbourne delivered just 700 metres of new protected bike lanes in the prior 12 months.

It has now conceded that the vow to install



44km of infrastructure by June 2024 – a pledge made in February 2020 after declaring a “climate and biodiversity emergency” – would not be reached.

The council has delivered around half (20km) of that goal to date.

The City of Melbourne did not address a series of questions put to it by *CBD News* regarding the Flinders St works.

“We’re taking the time needed to ensure all bike lane projects are implemented properly,” a spokesperson said.

“We must consider community feedback on designs and understand how major changes to transport infrastructure and further disruption in the city will impact the way people move around.”

The City of Melbourne is not solely

responsible for delays to expanding the protected bike lane network.

After designs for each project are completed, a decision rests with the Victorian Government which at times has taken a number of months to sign off approvals.

However, the Flinders St project is currently in council hands, and a first quarter (July to September) pledge to undertake consultation on all 2023-24 cycle infrastructure projects had not been reached.

Cr Rohan Leppert said delays “need to be addressed”.

“Council won’t meet our target for 44km of separated bike lanes by June 2024. That’s not for lack of political will or budget, both of which are clearly established,” he explained.

“Most uncertainty stems from the state government approvals stage, though the council does control timing over consultation, design, tender and construction.”

“There is obviously a mismatch between what council unanimously adopted in our Annual Plan and Budget and the reality of delivery, and that needs to be addressed.”

The four-kilometre Flinders St bike lane project is one of the longest in the council’s entire rollout.

Cr Leppert has previously termed it the “biggest and most complicated road reconfiguration we will see in this term of council”.

However, with the next local government elections in less than 12 months, there is now a serious question of whether this term of councillors will see the project come to fruition.

In the past three years the delivery of cycling infrastructure in inner-Melbourne has been a case of diminishing returns, with 11.7km of lanes delivered in 2020-21, 4.9kms delivered in 2021-22 and just 700 metres in 2022-23.

Positively for cyclists, however, unspent funds allocated to bike lanes in 2022-23 would be carried over, meaning the allocation to install protected lanes would rise to more than \$7 million in 2023-24, rather than \$4 million initially designated in the budget. ●

Koorie Heritage Trust to reopen

ARTS & CULTURE

The Koorie Heritage Trust (KHT) will reopen on December 9 across all three floors of the newly renovated Birrarung Building (formerly Yarra Building) at Federation Square.

Following extensive renovations, the re-freshed KHT offers new exhibition galleries, more space to showcase its permanent collection, plus more accessible community engagement and education spaces across 1740 square metres.

The renovated shopKHT will be permanently located in the Crossbar Building, while the stand-alone First Peoples Arts and Cultural Centre – a first of its kind in an Australian capital city – is a significant addition to KHT and for First Peoples of South-East Australia.

The new-look institution will reopen on December 9 with its 11th Koorie Art Show – its biggest community event which brings together more than 100 First Peoples artists in a celebration of “culture, Country and community” with a beautiful presentation of works on paper, photography, sculpture, multi-media, fibre art and more.

“Occupying all three levels of the Birrarung Building is such an important step for us, as we can now offer a seamless whole of building experience that is reflective of First Peoples connection to Country and culture,” KHT CEO Tom Mosby said.

“The additional space means that we are able to present more of our permanent collection, provide more opportunities for Koorie artists to exhibit their work and offer more public programs. It is a beautiful space that I am immensely proud of, and I welcome everyone.” ●

For more information:
korieheritagetrust.com.au

New openings to enjoy this summer

With the warmer months now upon us, enjoy some new local offerings as recommended by *CBD News*.

WORDS BY *Jack Hayes*
BUSINESS

With Gusto Regional Store

Located on the ground floor of the Sheraton Hotel on Little Collins St, With Gusto is an intimate wine bar and bottle-shop stocking a Victorian-only line-up of wine and artisanal products.

You’ll find its windows and walls lined with some of Victoria’s best-known producers, along with those so small, With Gusto is now their off-site cellar door.

With Gusto provides the perfect pit-stop for commuters looking for a new favourite as they head home for the day, for thoughtful gift-givers, and for those looking for a wine to take to one of Melbourne’s BYO restaurants or a picnic in the local park.

withgustostore.com



Homm Desserts

After opening its first store on La Trobe St this year, Homm is expanding its CBD presence with a new venue in Melbourne Central, and with it, more of its famous Thai-style desserts.

The husband-and-wife hospitality veteran duo behind Homm are Bass Sakdatorn and Proud Saithai; a couple determined to put their own stamp on Melbourne’s growing wave of Thai eateries.

In celebration of the expansion, Homm has launched a new homemade Mochi Gelato menu exclusive to the Melbourne Central store, featuring mochi gelato flavours like Thai tea, salted kaya caramel, pineapple, Kati (authentic Thai coconut cream) and strawberry cheese pie.

hommdessert.com.au

Monopoly Dreams

A new \$20 million Monopoly theme park has opened at Melbourne Central.

Monopoly Dreams is a new multi-sensory experience featuring augmented reality, 4D technology, physical challenges and more.

A delayed launched set demand high, and with the opening weekend a sell-out, it’s easy to see how the third-highest selling board game of all time (behind 1. Chess and 2. Checkers) has Melburnians flocking.

Across two areas you’ll find 15 attractions, a 4D cinema and, of course, a chance wheel.

monopolydreams.com.au ●

LAW

Tough times ahead: how to protect your assets

WORDS BY *Peter Neville*
NEVILLE.COM.AU

Bah humbug! Isn’t Christmas meant to be a time of peace, goodwill, and joy to all people?

A “Merry Christmas” to all and I trust we all have a safe and healthy New Year. However, looking at the current state of the world, I fear we may be in for some tough times.

I think it is appropriate to spend a few minutes speaking about how to protect your assets before we start on the drinks.

They say it’s easy to make a small fortune if you start with a big one. However, wealth is generally not easy to acquire, but very easy to lose. So, in this edition, I will discuss several ways to minimise the risks.

The following information does not constitute and cannot be relied upon as legal advice. If any of the issues resonate with you, we would be delighted to discuss them with you on a formal basis.

The first one is ownership of the matrimonial home; it is often sensible to quarantine that asset by placing it in your partner’s name. Ensure that they do not sign any documents, guarantees or anything that might expose them to potential risk.

Lawyer’s generally say that guarantors are a fool with a pen, and while they cannot be avoided in some

circumstances, they ought to be limited. Never consider signing a joint and several guarantee.

In business, the golden rule is to separate your assets from your trading or where there are risks. It is generally unwise to be a sole trader where all your personal assets are at risk, and it’s certainly unwise to enter a partnership where there is joint and several liability.

You can be responsible in many circumstances for the debts of your partner. Generally, you need to consider corporate structures, or the use of the variety of trusts, appropriate to your needs.

Licencing is an underutilised asset protection measure. The general theory is that you hold your assets, and certainly any hard assets you have, in the name of one entity and licence it to the trading entity. That licence does make negotiations with a trustee in bankruptcy, or a potential liquidator much easier, when they do not have the capacity to continue to run the business.

Finally, if you’re leading a complicated life, simplify your death with a Will, and in many cases, a testamentary trust. When creating a Will, I would strongly recommend Enduring Power’s of Attorney, both medical and financial. You need someone who is capable of acting in your best interests if you lose legal capacity. Let us guide you. ●

BUSINESS



Australia’s first social enterprise precinct opens at QVM

WORDS BY *Georgie Atkins*

Queen Victoria Market (QVM) has officially opened its Purpose Precinct, now located permanently in the F Shed Laneway following the initial stages of development last November.

Moving from its temporary home along Stringbean Alley to the new space, the project’s completion now features 100 local social enterprises selling a range of homewares, clothing, food, and gifts.

Introduced in collaboration with STREAT and Good Cycles and supported by the Social Enterprise Network of Victoria, the Purpose Precinct provides a “vibrant new shopping destination” within QVM.

“Social enterprises harness the power of business for good and make a real difference for Victorians,” Minister for Small Business Natalie Suleyman said.

“The Purpose Precinct will be a fantastic showcase of small businesses that are giving back to the community.”

In the lead-up to the holiday period, shoppers will have the opportunity to buy from various “socially conscious and purpose-led businesses” such as Clothing the Gaps, Mildura Chocolate Company, Green Collect and Free to Feed.

“We value being a part of the Purpose Precinct at QVM as it aligns with our mission for purpose and impact on people, place and planet,” a spokesperson for the Mildura Chocolate Company said.

“As a social enterprise located in the far north-west region of Victoria, our inclusion in the precinct provides not only the exposure, but the retail outlet opportunity within the metropolitan area.”

The initiative has been funded as

part of the Victorian Government’s national Social Enterprise Strategy 2021 to 2025 and the Melbourne City Revitalisation Fund.

It will also provide 75 local jobs within the precinct for disadvantaged Victorians who have faced challenges finding employment.

“The impact of this grant will help every one of the social enterprises that are a part of the Purpose Precinct to grow the incredible impact they deliver for people and the planet and create even more meaningful employment opportunities for some of our most vulnerable people,” STREAT CEO, Rebecca Scott said.

To be considered a social enterprise, businesses must channel at least 50 per cent of their profits into their chosen mission, which can include a variety of social issues, from improving communities and providing people with access to employment and training, to helping the environment.

Among the 3500 social enterprises currently trading across Victoria, there are an estimated 60,000 people employed through these businesses, which together contribute \$5.2 billion annually to the state’s economy.

“Victoria has the largest social enterprise sector in the nation,” Minister for Employment, Vicki Ward said.

“We value the employment and economic opportunities these businesses create, and importantly, the causes they supported.”

QVM’s Purpose Precinct is located in the F Shed Laneway and is open Tuesday, Thursday and Friday from 9am to 3pm, and Saturday and Sunday from 9am to 4pm. ●

For more information:
purposeprecinct.org



The changing state of Melbourne’s rental market

“*With the New Year comes a time of reflection for rental providers (landlords). Should they hold on to their asset? Should they sell it? Should they change agencies?*”

WORDS BY *Jack Hayes*

When you are talking about property values in the hundreds of thousands or even millions of dollars, these can be life-changing decisions to make.

Reports from Domain and REA have confirmed Melbourne is in a rental crisis fuelled by a lack of residential stock coupled with an ever-growing Melbourne population.

With 1172 properties for lease, ranging from studio to five-bedroom apartments, postcode 3000 presents a rare aberration in Melbourne’s inner-city rental market.

According to Kim Davey, director at Donazzan Boutique Property, the opportunity of surplus leases in the CBD compared to tightly held neighbouring suburbs like North Melbourne (117 rental properties on market) or Carlton (232), sees a great chance to ease Melbourne’s rental strain.

“Imagine if we had 50 per cent more people living in the city, or even if we were able to fill those existing vacancies. How incredible would that be for our city’s businesses. We just need to change the narrative a little bit,” he said.

“There is a lot of talk about supply and demand, but we have more than 1000 properties sitting on our doorstep, we just need people to re-frame their thinking about the kind of property people want to live in.”

As a principal looking after property management and sales, Mr Davey’s conversations continually circle around

whether his clients should lease, sell or hold on to their properties.

However, there is a conversation that isn’t being had, he says, that is just as important ... one that can have huge implications for a rental provider’s properties value.

“The most overlooked and the most important relationship is the relationship that your property manager has with your investment property,” he said.

“Property managers warehouse a property. They put in the warehouse and look after it, then when the owners want to sell it, the salesperson puts it on the shopfront to sell it. It’s the behind-the-scenes warehouse work that is costing owners the most.”

“Rental providers need to ask themselves these simple questions; How many property managers have you had in 2023? Has the new property manager seen your property? How is this constant turnover impacting the renter? How detrimental is this on your property? What is this costing you in the long term?”

Mr Davey told *CBD News*, that while not all cases of property management turnover end with issues, he was seeing growing instability within an industry in a constant state of flux.

“Property managers are now protecting and caring for an asset. When you deal with a property manager with a large rent roll of around 180 properties with a valuer, let’s say, on average \$650,000 each, they aren’t just looking after your property, they are looking after \$120 million worth of assets. That’s an incredible responsibility to have,” he said.

“In this volatile housing landscape, the key is relationship building. I like to work closely with the rental provider. You deal with me, I’ll deal with the VCAT case and the trades people and the renter relationships.”

“We are here if you need someone that has experience and consistency, someone that will be there at the beginning and end of the lease and someone that knows the ins and outs of your property.” ●

For more information, email:
kim@donazzanboutiqueproperty.com.au

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QVM Trader Profile

Celebrating quality goods at La Deli this Christmas

With the festive season approaching, La Deli is Queen Victoria Market’s (QVM) one-stop shop for Christmas goods; from cheeses and antipasto, to dips and cold cuts.

WORDS BY Georgie Atkins

The family-owned and operated business has been a part of the QVM community for 15 years, offering a range of Eastern European and Australian produce, much of which is manufactured in La Deli’s own facility in West Melbourne.

“Before owning the current shop, I worked at Dianne’s Delight for 10 years, which was my parents’ business that they operated for close to 30 years,” owner Luke Louca said.

“I’d go there during school holidays and help out, then I bought La Deli with my wife in 2008 and have been operating it ever since.”

Mr Louca describes La Deli as a business that does “a little bit of everything”, focusing on manufacturing raw ingredients at their facility into the finished products that are brought into the shop every week.

“We’re pretty big on our prosciutto range and the different types that we offer, that’s our biggest seller,” he said.

“It’s been something that I’ve built up over the past 15 years as the local palettes have changed and people have appreciated better quality small goods.”

Jamón ibérico, prosciutto di San Daniele, pork belly and grandma ham are just some of the high-quality meats on offer at La Deli, with around 80 per cent of their meat products from local butchers around Melbourne.

Shoppers can also find an extensive range of Christmas table favourites at La Deli, including smoked salmon, pickled octopus and calamari, and their much-loved dolmades.



“That’s the difference between us and other delis around Melbourne, we offer different types of produce that a lot of places don’t have,” Mr Louca told *CBD News*.

Being involved at QVM for most of his life, Mr Louca admits that the early market mornings can be difficult at times, but the “great community” around him makes the job worthwhile.

“We’re always looking out and helping each other if we need something, which is very uncommon in similar businesses to have such an understanding – I think that’s what makes QVM so special.”

For Mr Louca and his family, La Deli is more than just a business, “it’s a part of me”.

“I sort of give my life to it – I’m very grateful for everything that I’ve accomplished through this place, it’s given me good values and work ethic, and that’s something that I want to pass onto my children,” he said.

“When Mum and Dad began in 1982, they were new migrants in Australia – we’ve established ourselves in this state and in this country because of what QVM has given us.”

La Deli is located in the Dairy Produce Hall at Shop 21 to 24, and is open Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from 6am to 3pm, Saturday from 6am to 4pm, and Sunday from 7.30am to 3.30pm. For more information: qvm.com.au/store/la-deli ●

HISTORY

Read all about it! The *Argus* office makes news

Seventy people arrested in Lisbon for taking part in anti-English protests. The attempted poisoning of the Russian Tsar proves to be untrue. Australian and New Zealand mail believed to have been destroyed when a train caught fire in Nebraska is found and rescued.



worked there for decades spoke of the associations that clung to the walls and the vanished faces whose memory had not passed away (*Australasian*, March 8, 1890).

Reporters and editors were housed on the first floor, compositors and machines used for printing on the ground floor, so the clatter of machinery must have been quite deafening as a new edition went to print, initially on hand machines.

Mornings were hectic at the *Argus*, which was located on the south side of Collins St between Russell and Swanston streets, where the Regent Theatre is today. Newsboys spilled from the doors eager to tout the latest news headlines around the city. People flocked to the building to read the broadsheets. During wartime they found the latest war news and casualty lists. Election results were posted here. And in a later age, students anxiously awaited their exam results.

Old gave way to new. A grander building was built in this one’s place. Thirty-six years later the site was sold, and the *Argus* moved to a new site in Elizabeth St near La Trobe St.

Back on the Collins St site a glamorous new theatre – the Regent – went up in its place. ●



Dr. Cheryl Griffin
ROYAL HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF VICTORIA

STATE MP (UPPER HOUSE)

Renters getting a rough go under Labor

If you’ve had the misfortune of attending a rental inspection in Melbourne, you’re not alone.

It’s more likely than not that you’ve lined up in an anxious queue spilling into the street just to have the privilege of looking at a mouldy, pre-war cottage on the precipice of losing its long fight against the termites.

Too many renters – predominately younger Melburnians – are forced to live with this reality. I remember being one of 20 applicants to a tiny apartment. I was on a stable income, had no pets, and had a great rental record. But I didn’t even get a look-in.

We know that housing affordability is at the forefront of so many Victorians’ minds. If you’re lucky enough to own your own home outright, you’re largely insulated from the pain.

But most younger Victorians and new migrants are not. Despite their spin, the state government has to wear some of this blame.

According to SQM Research, when Labor was first elected in 2014, Melbourne had 12,713 homes available to rent. Despite our state losing population during the pandemic and a flood of government press releases about homebuilding, there are now only 6449 homes available to rent. All this as our state’s population is set to grow to 10 million by 2050.

Labor’s Housing Statement should be read as an admission that what they’ve been doing for the past nine years isn’t working. The former Premier said of the statement that “the status quo is not an option”. I wonder who oversaw the status quo for the past decade?

What the Housing Statement doesn’t fully grasp is this central fact: the overwhelming majority of renters are in private, market-rate housing. If you build more of this housing, it becomes cheaper and higher quality. This is the view of every economist with half a brain and is consistently borne out in the data, both overseas and here at home.

The answer is to allow the market to deliver more housing. But in true fashion, Labor simply can’t let market forces take credit for something it believes the government can do.

So, what’s their answer? If the past nine years are anything to go by: taxes. This government

has never found a problem they can’t tax their way out of. Increases to stamp duty, land tax, taxes on Airbnbs and vacant land – you name it. And still the government acts surprised when these taxes flow through to renters and homeowners, increasing prices further.

All economists know that when you want less of something, you tax it. Investors are listening – the Property Investment Professionals of Australia found that one in four investors have sold their Victorian properties during the past year and labelled us the worst to invest in.

National investment firm Propertyology is now advising clients to boycott the state altogether in response to onerous taxes and regulation. This means even less rentals on the market. Labor appears to have forgotten that property investors make up 100 per cent of the private rental market.

I suppose it’s inevitable, then, that the Greens have come forward to beat the Cold War-era rent control drum. Notwithstanding the mountain of economic evidence that rent control not only doesn’t work, but, in fact, reduces the quantity and quality of rental stock. As the Grattan Institute has said, “... it’ll end up doing more harm than good.”

Melbourne isn’t alone in this – rents are skyrocketing in major cities across the world as housing stock has struggled to keep pace with population growth. We can look to what other cities are doing to bring down rents, such as Auckland and Minneapolis; both cities have reformed planning regulations to allow more homebuilding and as a result, rents are easing.

More housing and lower taxes on investment doesn’t just mean cheaper rents – it means more choice. It means you can live near work or uni, or maybe even live within walking distance to your parents’ house. It means moving out sooner and building your independence in your 20s, instead of staying stuck at home.

So, Labor wants to tax you, and the Greens want to send you behind the Iron Curtain. Victorians are smart enough to see these failed approaches for what they are – band-aids to our state’s rental crisis. We should reject them both.

Evan Mulholland is the Deputy Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Council and Shadow Minister for Home Ownership and Housing Affordability. ●

WE LIVE HERE

From housing crisis to hope?

Now that Victoria has both a new Premier and a new Minister for Consumer Affairs, can we dare to hope or dream there will be some meaningful changes during the first term of this new government?

When the previous Premier Daniel Andrews took office in December 2014, the focus was on boosting tourism; the rights and liveability of residents were ignored.

The rise of short-stay accommodation over the past eight years has reduced the availability of long-term rental properties, particularly in sought-after urban and tourist-centric regions.

A short-stay property levy of 7.5 per cent announced in the Victorian Government's Housing Statement and released just days before Mr Andrews resigned, is scheduled to come into effect only in January 2025!

The micro-levy is so small that it will do nothing to address the housing crisis. The Housing Statement states explicitly that the short-stay levy is purely a fund-raising device without any aspirations whatsoever for behavioural change. Collecting only \$70 million per year, it will take decades for the program to deliver any meaningful volume of housing stock.

Let's learn from a decade of global experience. For example, New York has provided a model for managing the short-stay industry to balance competing interests. Like most major tourist destinations, New York's regulations include mandatory registration of short-stay operators.

We Live Here looks forward to dialogue with the incoming Minister for Consumer Affairs, Ms Gabrielle Williams, about these issues and the plethora of established solutions.

The 2024 agenda

We want the government to review the legislative framework – with full community consultation in Victoria (anyone could be forgiven for thinking that the current legislation was drafted over a couple of caramel macchiatos at the Airbnb headquarters in San Francisco).

Below are two Acts affecting owners' corporations need urgent attention:

The Owners' Corporation (Short Stay Accommodation) Act 2018

The government promised a review by February 2021 – that promise was broken. About 50 cases have been to VCAT, costing OCs thousands in legal fees, without a single case being successful. The threshold is just far too high. Currently this worthless Bill is incorporated into the main *Owners' Corporations Act*.

Owners' Corporations and Other Acts Amendment Act 2021

This patchwork act incorporates the unrevised *Short Stay Accommodation Act 2018* and the amendments to the OC Act dated December 1, 2021. It's a hot mess.

The legislation is passed its use-by date and even the state government has promised to repeal the Act "between 2023 and 2027". At the going ratio of promises to action, that could mean sometime after 2035.

Short-stay accommodation was excluded from a 2018 review of the *Owners Corporation Act* because of planning issues. This time, everything needs to be examined. There must be a level playing field. Let's hope that with a new team some action will at last be taken. ●



Barbara Francis &
Rus Littleton

CAMPAIGN@
WELIVEHERE.NET



A living testimony

When the civil war broke out in South Sudan, the only solution was to escape for David Delfin.

WORDS BY Afraa Kori

Trying to find somewhere to start a new life, Mr Delfin relocated multiple times before finding refuge in Australia.

"I was born in South Sudan then migrated to Uganda as a toddler with my grandmother and grandfather due to the civil war that was happening in South Sudan between 1983 and 2005, where I spent my young years, and in my early teens, I migrated to Australia."

Today, the CBD resident has discovered himself and is striving in three career pathways in Australia.

"My grandmother and grandfather were the reason I came to Australia, and [they're] whom I owe all my success to, it was out of a desire to give me and my siblings a better life," he said.

"The goal is to inspire young people to understand that where they come from does not define who they are, and that the world is their oyster."

"Melbourne is one of the best cities to live in with a lot of opportunities around".

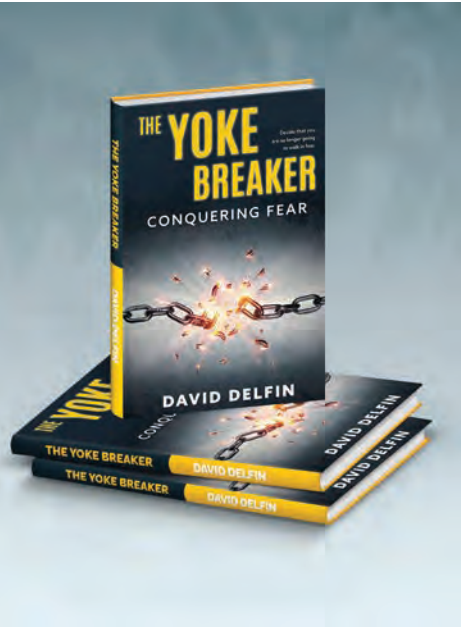
"Being a fashion consultant at Fallasi Australia, I have had the opportunity to dress-up some of the best professionals in the city. From real estate agents, lawyers, office suits, weddings suits and so on. I also work for MCM (Melbourne City Mission) which focuses on homelessness, justice and family services."



He continued to build momentum after launching his book titled, *The Yoke Breaker: Conquering Fear*, which is "about how one can break free from fear in order to live to their full potential".

He said his Christian and ethnic communities, including non-religious people, located both in Melbourne and interstate, had benefited from *The Yoke Breaker*.

"I have been invited to schools, community events, churches, interstate (Brisbane and Perth), "Unlocking Your Purpose and Destiny" events in Perth," he said.



"From the places that I have been to, I have received enormous support from the communities and able to spark a conversation about people's stories about how they conquer their fear and how the book has awakened them."

Delfin is determined to maintain the strong connections he built with his ethnic, fashion and spiritual community.

"By nature, I am a very curious person and one who has an interest in different things, as such, it's much easier to connect with different forms whether spirituality, fashion or community engagement." ●

METRO TUNNEL

Your chance to be part of Melbourne's train transformation

Metro Trains is hiring more than 100 station staff to work at the Metro Tunnel's five new state-of-the-art stations, opening in 2025.

Applications are now open for station masters, senior station officers, station officers and station assistants to work at Arden, Parkville, State Library, Town Hall and Anzac stations – tasked with giving passengers an exceptional and safe experience.

These new staff members will be among the first to work at the new stations helping thousands of passengers get where they need to go quickly and safely.

Test trains are now running at line speed through the project's twin nine-kilometre tunnels, and enormous progress is being made on the stations, with architectural features, lights and seating being installed.

The project is now in a complex testing phase, with everything from the new, cutting-edge signalling to lifts, escalators, security systems, passenger information and the Victorian-first platform screen doors all being progressively tested to ensure all systems are working together with Melbourne's new fleet of bigger, better trains.

The testing phase will continue into 2024, before the project moves into trialling train services using the new signalling system with station staff and drivers – the "dress rehearsal" before opening the Metro Tunnel to passengers.

The five Metro Tunnel stations will be new landmarks for the city, featuring striking architecture, world-class public art and 21st century



▲ Metro Trains passenger service resourcing lead Geoff Jacks, who worked at City Loop stations when they opened 40 years ago, at the Anzac Station construction site on St Kilda Rd.



technology and amenities.

If you are interested in working in a Metro Tunnel station visit metrotrains.com.au/metro-tunnel-careers.

While station staff recruitment and training kicks off, construction is continuing at the new stations.

At Town Hall Station, crews have installed eight concrete columns beneath City Square – a feature of the concourse level.

Work is progressing well on the pedestrian underpass connecting Town Hall and Flinders Street stations, with lifts soon to be installed on all 10 platforms at Flinders Street Station.

At State Library Station, the six massive beams forming the entrance structure near the corner of La Trobe and Swanston streets are now in place, while work is continuing on the pedestrian underpass connecting State Library Station with Melbourne Central Station.

The Metro Tunnel will create a new end-to-end rail line from Sunbury in the north-west to Cranbourne and Pakenham in the south-east – via a new tunnel under the city – and include train access to Parkville and St Kilda Rd. ●

Live longer, healthier

Residents 3000's "Forum 3000" in October was about health and wellbeing – a popular topic in our online media. The theme of the recent event was to discuss the difference between "lifespan" and "health-span".

Demographics show that people are living longer. Compared to a hundred years ago, in developed countries, life expectancy has increased from roughly age 50 to 80. Great strides in medicine, food supply and quality of living have contributed to the trend. Longer life spans are hailed as a public health success.

If you are going to live longer, then how will that be? Will the last 15 years of life be miserable, in poor health? Is modern medicine keeping you alive?

Ageing is the biggest risk factor for the big four diseases: heart disease, cancer, type 2 diabetes, and dementia.

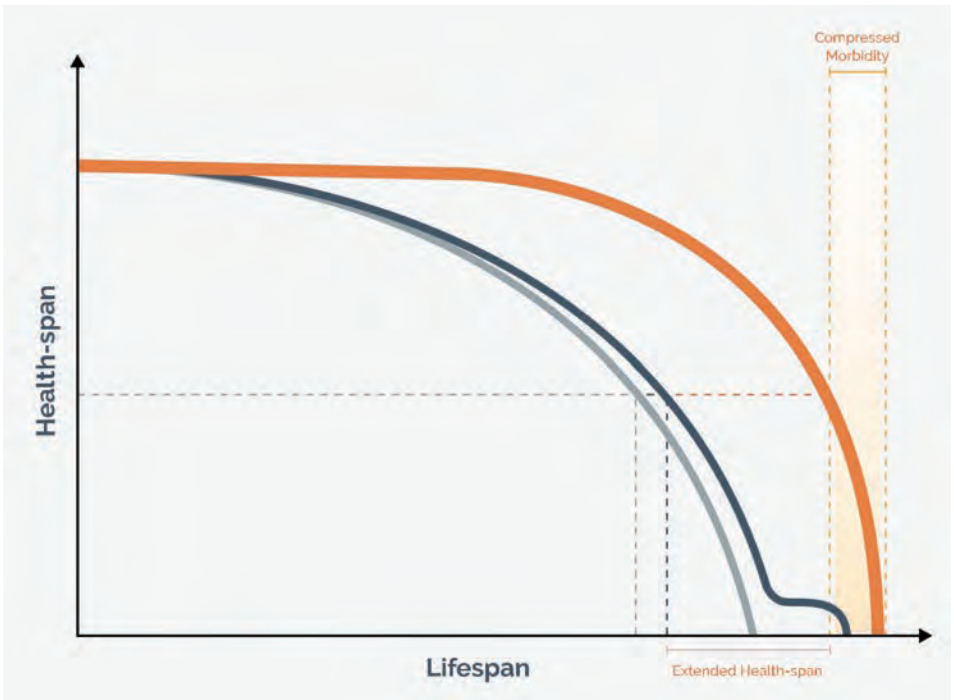
Of course, that is not what you want. You want to live a long life in good health, right to the end if possible. Ideally you would want your health span to equal your life span. As a result of many studies and enhanced medical knowledge, current thinking stresses five main factors that contribute to maintaining your health span as long as possible. These are (in order of importance):

Exercise

Top of the list. A sedentary existence is not good for the human body. Some vigorous exercise every day is recommended. In fact, one could say "exercise is the ultimate elixir". The reason is that your body needs to have the heart pumping fast and the blood moving around the body, providing nourishment and repair and maintenance. Vigorous exercise such as running, fast walking, bike riding, tennis and many other activities that get the heart pumping, keep the lungs in top condition so they can efficiently supply life supporting oxygen to all parts of the body. This is known as aerobic exercise.

Strength

A strong body can lift heavy objects, bend easily, jump, balance, climb and do all the things that small children do so easily. Strength training keeps muscles in tip top condition to support the skeleton and to make everyday life easy. Muscles are designed to work. Without use



they atrophy and make life difficult. Working muscles hard is what they want and need.

Diet

Medical science is starting to understand and promote healthier eating practices. Fresh, unprocessed food, minimal sugar and salt, rich in high quality protein, all in moderation, is apparently the best solution. The media is full of diets and recipes to achieve the best result to keep your gut microbiome happy.

Sleep

Most human beings need at least seven to eight hours of good quality sleep a night. This is when the body works on repairs and maintenance. Your computer brain runs through all the stimulus that it has received during the day and carefully stores those experiences ready to help you navigate your world in the days, months, and years ahead. Rest allows the body to repair and rebuild. Remember that your body is a complicated machine that needs attention every day, while you are asleep.

Mental health

What a complex topic! How does one find a path to mental health when confronted by societal norms, traditions, history, influences from other humans, economic realities and then on top of all that, there is your own complex self?

What about the voice in your head that says "I cannot do that. I am too old, too tired, too unimportant, too stupid, etc.". There is a constant

battle against negativity and external influences. Somehow you need to find your true self and follow your dream. Debate with the negative voice in your head and make sure that you win.

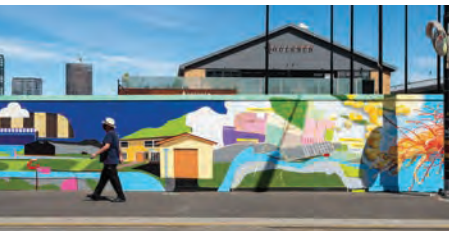
There needs to be time allocated for self and for reflection. Some people swear by meditation. Others find joy in community. Developing good habits and being clear about what is important to you, helps a lot with mental health. When your world overwhelms and you start to worry, my advice is to break down your problems into little bits and tackle one at a time. Keeping in mind that you need to be yourself. Be compassionate to others but do not lose sight of your own mental wellbeing.

Health span matters

Gradually, as more is understood about the biology of ageing, health practitioners are wanting to focus on the science of prevention rather than waiting until a disease emerges before beginning treatment. The new medicine starts with concentrating on good health practices and body monitoring throughout life, not just when a problem emerges. ●



Dr Sue Saunders
COMMITTEE MEMBER OF
RESIDENTS 3000 MELBOURNE



Has the urban art movement finished?

There is a variety of complexities involved in any attempt to define street art.

Normally, a movement, or a period in art and history, is defined by historians, academics, writers, and social theorists *after* a movement has come to some sort of a conclusion.

It could be argued this retrospective distance between the movement and the historians' documentation of its ideas allow for a beginning, for philosophical changes and a climax, which also allows for future theories and projected predictions.

Academics and writers place a movement within a cultural or contemporary context, making casual links to broader notions of sociology and contemporary history.

As the movement of street art is still active and changing – still very current – its fluidity can make it difficult to adequately capture its influences and contributions to fine art, design, and culture.

It is, however, undisputedly an expression of the young, and it has certainly caused a disruption to the cultural fabric of Melbourne.

It is hard to define the contribution that the early street art movement has had in Melbourne, yet there is no denying that it has made Melbourne a cultural capital and changed how the rest of the world views Melbourne.

The urban art movement has had enormous benefits for Melbourne, culturally and economically. It has helped in the modernisation and, sadly, to the gentrification of the city. The true benefits of the urban art movement like the genre itself, will only be understood in time. ●



Dr Adrian Doyle
ARTIST
DOYLESART@HOTMAIL.COM

CONNECT WITH YOUR LOCAL COMMUNITY

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

CBD NEWS



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

CBD News in 2023: a year in review

“
Take a step back in time as we feature some of the image highlights from every edition of CBD News over the course of 2023...
”



▲ February: Basement Discs farewells the CBD.



▲ June: A sculpture honouring First Nations women is unveiled at the Queen Victoria Women's Centre on Lonsdale St.



▲ November: CBD News meets newly-appointed Queen Victoria Market CEO Matt Elliott.



▲ April: Owners fight for control of Aurora Tower.



▲ September: MiiLK Cake Studio opens on Swanston St.



▲ October: the CBD mourns in the wake of the Bourke St tragedy.



▲ August 2023: Our 100th edition of CBD News.



▲ May: City Gallery's working collection moves to Town Hall.



▲ March: The City of Melbourne's Gary Lee receives an Australia Day honour for his work with international students.



▲ July: The Spring Street Grocer is highlighted as part of our Hidden Secrets feature, which launched in 2023.

Quiz



- How many polling booths for the 2023 Voice Referendum were located in the CBD?
- Scott Cawthon created which horror video game series?
- Which TV series starred Kiefer Sutherland as Jack Bauer?
- According to the 2021 ABS census, what percentage of City of Melbourne residents were born overseas?
- Herman Melville wrote which famous maritime book?
- James Earl Jones (pictured) voiced which famous Star Wars character?
- Which two CBD venues were listed in the World's 100 Best Bars?
- How many times faster does sound travel through water than air?
- Katsudon is a dish from which country?
- There was big news at Queen Victoria Market this month: what have they just unveiled?
- According to John Holland's CEO, when will the Metro Tunnel first take passengers?
- Built in 1958, what building is considered Melbourne's first skyscraper?

QUIZ SOLUTIONS
1. Zero 2. Five Nights At Freddy's 3. 24 4. 55 per cent 5. *Moby-Dick* 6. Darth Vader 7. Caretaker's Cottage (23) and Byrdi (61) 8. Four times faster 9. Japan 10. A food court 11. September 2024 12. Imperial Chemical Industries House (now known as Orica House)

5x5

No. 031

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

B		D		Y
	E		I	
A		O		A
	I		E	
S		E		S

SOLUTIONS

BADLY, EERIE, AROMA, RIVER, SEEDS

PUZZLES AND PAGINATION
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PAGEMASTERS.COM December, 2023

Sudoku

No. 030

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

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

HARD

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

SOLUTIONS

EASY

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

HARD

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

Wordfind

Theme: Travel

The leftover letters will spell out a secret message.

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

AEROPLANE
BICYCLE
BOAT
CAR
DRIVE
FLY
FUEL
HIGHWAY
JOURNEY
LUGGAGE
MOTORCYCLE

PASSENGER
PASSPORT
PILOT
ROAD
SHIP
SUITCASES
TAXI
TICKET
TRAIN
TRUCK
VOYAGE

Secret message: Roam around

Crossword

No. 030

ACROSS

- Parisian lady (11)
- Male sheep (3)
- Wielding (11)
- Rule (3)
- Happening in a way not expected (6)
- Flower merchants (8)
- Indifference (6)
- Implicate (8)
- Individuality (8)
- Look at (6)
- Basic understanding of maths (8)
- Swiss city (6)
- Weapon (3)
- Meeting (11)
- Indian state (3)
- Infamously (11)

DOWN

- Lie (11)
- Dry up (9)
- Water creature (7)
- Wimp (4)
- Greater part of a country (8)
- African country (7)
- Actor's parts (5)
- Cat noise (3)
- Persistently (11)
- Inelegant (9)
- Slow cooking vessel (8)
- Region (7)
- Modern music genre (7)
- Japanese cartoon style (5)
- Row (4)
- Concert (3)

1		2		3		4		5		6		7		8
9												10		
11								12						13
14								15				16		
								17						
18				19						20	21			
22		23								24				
								25						
26				27										
28				29										

SOLUTION

A	T	S	N	O	I	H	O	L	O	N				
1	S	U	E	O	I	O								
I	N	E	W	I	N	T	O	D	J	Y				
S	T	O	D	J	Y									
V	A	E	N	E	O	A	C	V	H	E	W	N		
F	O	T			O	E								
G	H	V	O	B	E									
Y	H													
E	T	O	N	I	N	E								
S	I	S	T	O	D	J	Y							
E														
M	V	T												
E	O	I												
R	M													

Codeword

No. 030

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

SOLUTIONS

Q	O	I	H	W	Z	V	G	M	H	F	O	T
16	15	14	13	12	11	10	9	8	7	6	5	4
30	29	28	27	26	25	24	23	22	21	20	19	18
31	30	29	28	27	26	25	24	23	22	21	20	19

9-Letter

No. 030

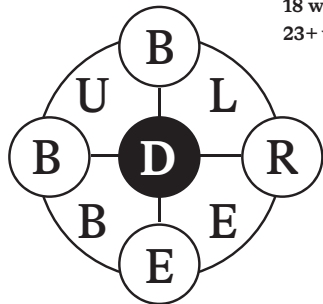
Today's Focus:

13 words: Good

18 words: Very good

23+ 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 words ending in "s".



SOLUTIONS

Reference:
Collins Concise
English Dictionary

bled, bleed, blubbed, BLUBBERED, blued, bred, breed, bubbled, burbled, buried, deer, dele, drub, duel, ebbled, elder, elude, eluder, lured, reed, rubbed, rude, rued, ruled



海洛因死亡人数激增 安全注射室迟迟未决

新任维州心理健康部长承认“中央商务区（CBD）存在严重的毒品危害”，但政府不得不考虑“市民和业主的利益”。

David Schout

根据法医法庭的一份报告，2022年墨尔本的海洛因过量死亡人数上升至十年来的最高水平。

报告新数据显示，墨尔本市超过Brimbank和Yarra，成为毒品死亡率最高的地方政府区域，报告再次呼吁维州政府在CBD开设安全注射室，此提议是在2020年6月首次提出。

然而，新任心理健康部长Ingrid Stitt并不愿证实CBD的注射设施是否将实施，因为政府对未曾披露的前警察厅长Ken Lay推荐的合适地点报告仍未作出决定。

法医法庭的报告显示，2022年墨尔本有24例海洛因过量死亡，比2021年多9例。这个数字是墨尔本市在过去10年中涉及该毒品的最高年死亡率，之前的最高纪录是2014年的16人。

死亡人数的上升并不局限于墨尔本，全州范围内海洛因过量增加了33%(从173人增加到230人)。

Stitt女士承认，在墨尔本CBD存在严重的毒品危害。

然而，她对政府在市区范围内建立安全注射设施计划守口如瓶，该计划现已搁置了近三年。

州政府继续搁置Lay先生5月份完成的报告，该报告建议在CBD建立安全注射室。

今年10月，维州心理健康部长的职位由Gabrielle Williams转手至Ingrid Stitt，然而，这位新部长否认这一职位的变动推迟了Lay的报告发布，也推迟了对安全注射室的决定。



女王市场新美食大厅开业

一个新装修的美食大厅在维多利亚女王市场(QVM)正式开业，给这个历史悠久的市场带来“新鲜的氛围”。

Brendan Rees

美食大厅位于Victoria街和Queen街的拐角处，这个新的550万澳元的新美食大厅取代了过时的20世纪80年代美食广场，新美食大厅有八家运营商提供各种美食，美食爱好者一定能大饱口福了。

游客可以品尝包括El Rincon在内的食品，这是一家西班牙小吃店，提供受欢迎的共享餐盘，如腌肉、西班牙肉丸和西班牙肉菜饭；Le Consulat是一家巴黎风格的法式蛋糕店和咖啡馆，供应各种美味的法式甜点。

还有一个别致的Bellboy Coffee咖啡酒吧，提供咖啡、啤酒、葡萄酒和鸡尾酒，以及小吃；还有一个受人喜爱的餐馆Canton

Malay，以令人垂涎的咖喱叻沙和其他传统美食而闻名。

Drums是一家斯里兰卡咖啡馆，以全新的面貌回归，提供传统的美食，而Rubens Grill是一家美国主题咖啡馆，将提供令人垂涎的肉类和配菜；一家名为“Saltwater”的寿司和生蚝酒吧将以新鲜的戏剧菜单庆祝女王市场的优质海鲜。

市长Sally Capp在11月17日美食大厅庆祝开业后说：“新的美食大厅将为女王市场带来全新的氛围，促进商家的生意。”

她说：“我们已经做出了市政历史上最大的投资，以确保我们在保护这一遗址遗产的同时，还增加了现代景点，以吸引游客。”

“我们壮观的新美食大厅汇集了女王市场上的新鲜农产品，以及本市一些最令人兴奋的餐馆，提升了该区域作为世界级餐饮目的地的声誉。”

女王市场首席执行官Matt Elliot表示，这个市场每年有500名商人和700万游客，一直是墨尔本新鲜食品和美食界的标志，“我们很高兴推出女王市场美食大厅，以进一步增强顾客选择我们市场的美食”。

市区图书馆更新改造

在CBD备受喜爱的市区图书馆(City Library)将进行重大更新改造，打造一个更具吸引力和现代化的空间。

Brendan Rees

在Flinders巷的市区图书馆去年接待了超过255000名市区工作人员、学生和市民的访问，改造后的图书馆将重新焕发活力，以满足社区的需求，同时增强图书馆的整体体验。

作为改造项目的一部分，这座先进的设施将设有一个三层楼的图书馆、有专用儿童图书馆、家庭服务、创意空间、播客和录音工作室，以及用于公共学习、会议和活动的空间。

图书馆底层也将彻底改造，便于读者更快地浏览书籍，而一楼将装修为社区提供聚会、学习和合作的空间。

更新改造一旦完成，来访者将能够探索和借用精选的图书收藏，使用计算机以及Wi-Fi，并享受阅读、放松和学习空间，以及进行团队活动。

更新改造预计明年1月开始，图书馆将关闭大约四周。

市政将与图书馆用户和社区成员密切合



作，以减少施工带来的影响，并确保持续获得服务。

市区图书馆将继续向所有人开放，包括弱势群体和边缘群体、面临或正在遭受无家可归或家庭暴力的人，以及任何寻求暂缓休息的人。

市长Sally Capp表示：“通过改造备受喜爱的市区图书馆，我们直接回应了图书馆用户的需求，他们希望有更多空间用于社区会议、学习和合作。”

“这座焕然一新的服务设施将持续为许多市区工作人员和学生提供帮助，他们喜欢在午休时间或通勤途中浏览多样化的图书收藏，或者与我们优秀的图书馆工作人员交谈。”

《圣诞颂歌》隆重上演

查尔斯·狄更斯(Charles Dickens)的经典作品《圣诞颂歌》(A Christmas Carol)继2022年热演后，将重返墨尔本喜剧剧院推出第二季的演出，演出时间为11月23日至明年1月7日。

这部由Matthew Warchus构思和导演的原创作品吸引了世界各地的观众，赢得了五项Tony奖，自2017年首次登台上演以来，已经在伦敦西区上演了七季以上。

在由Jack Thorne演绎的《Old Vic》中，澳大利亚戏剧界的一些顶尖艺术家将与国际巨星Owen Teale《权力的游戏》一起出演主角Ebenezer Scrooge。

饰演Fezziwig的Grant Piro说：“他是我见过的最好的演员之一，他很出色，他是任何人都见过的最好演员。”

“观看他的排练是令人着迷的，我感到非常幸运能够和他一起在舞台上表演，他是一个真正的大师级演员，在我们的预演中，观众都很喜欢他。”

狄更斯1843年的中篇小说讲述了一个痛苦老人的故事，他憎恨圣诞节的一切。



在整个演出中，三个鬼魂“过去的圣诞节”、“现在的圣诞节”和“未来的圣诞节”都去拜访了他，以帮助鼓励Scrooge让自己的生活变得更好。

虽然这个故事有“黑暗和可怕的时刻”，但Piro先生坚持认为这是一部“家庭剧”，激发同情和善良之心，最重要的是圣诞精神。

《圣诞颂歌》在墨尔本的演出日期：2023年11月23日至2024年1月7日。

christmascarolaustralia.com.au

What's on: December 2023 / January 2024



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Navigate your way through the CBD and visit participating local businesses for your chance to win awesome prizes.
cityprecinct.com.au/events/microadventures

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 11
CHINESE LUNAR NEW YEAR DRAGON FESTIVAL
Chinatown celebrates the Year of the Dragon, symbolising longevity, prosperity, wealth and happiness.
0431 475 588 or melbournechinatown@gmail.com



NOVEMBER 25 - DECEMBER 31
FESTIVE SQUARE @ FED SQUARE
Explore larger-than-life decorations and twinkling lights, including the iconic 16.5-metre LED Christmas tree with a festive soundscape and nightly light show.
fedsquare.com/events



WEDNESDAYS, 12PM - 3PM
CLASSIC FILM CLUB
Gold Coin donation (optional) all our films on the big Screen in CINEMASCOPE. This club is ran by volunteers. All welcome.

Contact: 0456 960 321 or 0482 511 698
The Hub, 506 Elizabeth St



DECEMBER 2 10AM - 3PM
A Very Koorie Krismas @ FED SQUARE
Experience Christmas, Koorie style, with free workshops for kids, First Nations performances, and even a visit from Koorie Klaus.
fedsquare.com/events/koorie-krismas

SUNDAYS UNTIL DECEMBER 24, 11.30AM - 3.30PM
FESTIVE SUNDAY SESSIONS
It's time to get festive at Victoria by Farmer's Daughters! We are once again teaming up with local gin icons Four Pillars to bring you a special season of Sunday Sessions on our Terrace: victoriarestaurant.com.au/whats-on/-fourpillarsxmasgin



NOVEMBER 24 - DECEMBER 25
MELBOURNE CHRISTMAS WALK
Discover dazzling Christmas decorations with a self-guided walk throughout the city. Choose a day walk for a fun family activity or explore at night to really see the city sparkle. Pick up a map from the Melbourne Visitor Hub at Town Hall or the Melbourne Visitor Booth on Bourke St.



FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 24, 7PM
CLAIRE PATTI TRIO WITH TONY GOULD - DREAMS & IMAGININGS

A special musical collaboration that channels joy, optimism, dreams and imagination.

Primrose Potter Salon, Melbourne Recital Centre - melbournerecital.com.au

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