



A comedy of talent!

The nominees for most outstanding show and best newcomer gathered on the steps of Melbourne Town Hall on April 17 to celebrate this year's record-breaking Melbourne International Comedy Festival, which saw more than 800 performers over 650 shows in 133 venues. Find out who won: cbdnews.com.au Photo: Nick Robertson.

State Government scraps plans for safe injecting room in CBD

“

The state government has rejected a proposal for a supervised injecting room in the CBD, instead announcing plans for a new community health hub in Flinders St.

”

WORDS BY
BRENDAN REES



In a statement released on April 23, the government cited an inability to find a suitable site that balanced the needs of both drug users and the community.

The decision comes after the government released a long-delayed report by former police commissioner Ken Lay, which had been kept confidential until now.

It was handed to the government in May last year with the recommendation that a small safe injecting room

with a booth for four to six people be set up in an area of high use in the city – but the government has not accepted this proposal.

“The government has been unable to identify a suitable site that balances the needs of people who use drugs with the needs of the broader CBD community, so a second supervised injecting service won't proceed,” the statement said.

Mr Lay noted in his report that “an injecting service trial that focuses on being a good neighbour – working with the community it serves and surrounds – will have the greatest chance of achieving its core objectives”.

However, Mental Health Minister Ingrid Stitt instead announced a \$95.11 million “statewide action plan” which will respond to “all the recommendations” of the Lay report, “delivering on all but one of them and providing more support for services in the suburbs and regions”.

This included setting up a new \$36.4 million community health service at the former Yooralla building at 244 Flinders St, which was initially floated to house a safe injecting room.

The government said the hub would be a “gateway for wraparound health and social support services” and include a trial of a Victorian-first hydromorphone treatment trial.

Continued on page 9.

HIDDEN SECRETS, PAGE 03

Hidden Secrets Tours celebrates 20 years

PLANNING, PAGE 05

Council queries office project's car park demolition

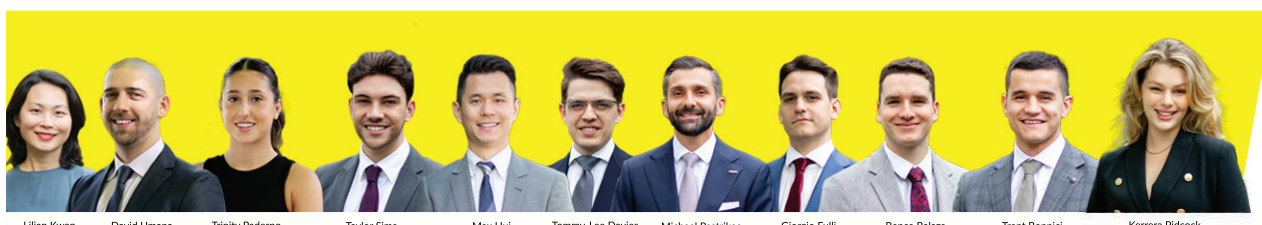
COUNCIL AFFAIRS, PAGE 09

"Swanston Triangle" to undergo green renewal



Hopetoun Tea Rooms relaunch is a sweet success

After gracing the Block Arcade for more than a century, the iconic Hopetoun Tea Rooms, renowned for its enchanting cake displays, is captivating Melburnians once again at its new CBD home.



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Could the Metro Tunnel help Melbourne rediscover its mojo?

Since Melbourne earned the unwanted moniker of the world's most locked-down city during the COVID pandemic, the mission to "bring the buzz back" to the CBD continues. But could the new Metro Tunnel be opening at the perfect time?

WORDS BY
SEAN CAR



It may sound like a far cry to suggest that a new train tunnel will provide the answer to Melbourne's post-COVID identity crisis, particularly among many of its office workers who have made working from home a permanent part of their lives.

As Lord Mayor Sally Capp has regularly put it, "the rhythm of the city has changed", and while the weekend and night-time economies are humming again off the back of a packed events calendar, the Monday to Friday story is more complicated.

In recent years, Melbourne has suffered what some analysts have branded as a problem with "TWaTs" – those who preference bookending their weeks by working from home on Mondays and Fridays, while only commuting to the office on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays.

Whatever the work pattern, Melbourne still tracks well behind other major Australian cities for office occupancy. According to JLL Research, CBD office vacancy rates measured at a record 18.2 per cent at the end of 2023 – 3.7 percentage points above the national average of 14.5 per cent.

But while office vacancy trends in the wrong direction, there are some exciting green shoots in the city's economy that might suggest this trajectory could soon start turning around fast.

The latest *Walk the CBD* report released by Fitzroys on April 17 proclaimed that Melbourne was undergoing a "post-pandemic transformation", with retail vacancies continuing to trend down largely because of a resurgence in international students.

The market report showed that CBD retail vacancies have come down from 15.5 per cent to 8.7 per cent during the past year across its key retail precincts, driven by a take-up of space by hospitality, food and beverage and entertainment operators.

Within these sectors, Fitzroys reported that CBD tenancies had jumped from 34.1 per cent to 40.9 per cent of all surveyed spaces. While speciality operators receded slightly, service retail also lifted modestly.

These numbers are supported by the City of Melbourne's own latest data, which has shown the first few months of 2024 recorded the highest CBD foot traffic levels since

2015, with average weekday activity measuring the highest it's been since February 2020.

Council data also shows that more than half of spending by domestic visitors, workers and residents in February (\$472 million) occurred during work hours (8am to 6pm), which is six per cent higher than in February 2023.

But perhaps one of the most telling trends in the Fitzroys real estate report was Swanston St being the "biggest improver" in terms of retail vacancies, as tenants take up space "around the future Metro Tunnel station entrances".

With international students having "changed the face of Melbourne CBD retail in the city's post-pandemic recovery", the report suggested that the spike in retail on Swanston St was the result of an anticipation of "key pockets of the city reawakening in 2025 on completion of the long-term [Metro Tunnel] construction efforts".

Fitzroys division director – agency James Lockwood pointed out that the Metro Tunnel station works along Swanston St had taken chunks out from Federation Square up to Collins St, and further north around the State Library, for several years now.

"There's been a lot of scaffolding and a lot of construction going on," Mr Lockwood said.

"The city's really looking forward to the Metro Tunnel works being completed. That's taken some key pockets of the city out of action for a long time, but these major construction sites are set to become hives of activity nearly overnight [in ways] that retailers and hospitality operators will really be able to thrive off."

During Melbourne's post-COVID era conversations around the future of the CBD, the fact that a new multi-billion-dollar train tunnel is being built beneath it has often been overlooked.

This is perhaps, in part, because many Melburnians still don't fully understand or appreciate the significance of how the major project stands to benefit our transport network, and ultimately our CBD.

At a Residents 3000 forum with members of the Metro Tunnel's project team in February, one local resident raised a question that has become a consistent theme since the project was first announced. And, that is, why the new CBD stations were being built so close to existing ones, suggesting that this seemed illogical.

Melbourne's entire train network has been based around the City Loop since its opening in 1981. By providing a line that dissects the CBD, the Metro Tunnel will help to unclog the City Loop by taking congestion away from some of the network's busiest lines.

Underground pedestrian connections will be made available between Flinders Street and Town Hall Stations, as well as Melbourne Central and State Library Stations, allowing for easy connections between services.

But the biggest change that unclogging the network will bring is something

Melburnians often complain about – more frequent train services. And this in itself, could be the catalyst for helping stem the negative trend in office vacancy rates. Here's why ...

Department of Transport data shows that while public transport patronage across Melbourne is slowly increasing since the end of the pandemic, numbers are still well down from pre-COVID levels as more workers preference their cars.

The Public Transport Users' Association says that the main barrier to more people catching public transport is "the service quality, not the fares", and so, many are opting to work from home due to convenience.

"PT needs to be affordable, but it also has to be more convenient: frequent, reliable, fast, and well-connected," it said.

By easing capacity across the rest of the network, the Metro Tunnel is expected to be running more reliable services every three minutes on new modern trains, with testing of its "turn-up-and-go services" already taking place since March.

This spells good news for the CBD, which could see more workers choose to head into the office more regularly. And, like with anything new, the novelty of trialling the tunnel for the first time could very well lead to more workers changing their behaviour and throwing an extra office day or two into their mix.

If the increase in retail activity is any indicator, Mr Lockwood said operators were witnessing the shift in balance of the CBD towards a lifestyle playground and were confident in its viability.

"These [investments] are great votes of confidence in the CBD from quality operators who have witnessed first-hand the city's post-pandemic recovery and want to be a part of it going forward," he said.

Together with the huge numbers of students and visitors we're now seeing in the CBD, it could only be a matter of time before workers, as well as new residents, add to what the outgoing Lord Mayor described last month as an undeniable "upward trajectory".

"The Metro Tunnel's opening is a game-changer for the city – and we expect it will encourage many more Melburnians to use public transport," Cr Capp said.

"Pedestrian and commuter activity in the city continues to grow each year, which will rise further with greater train capacity."

"The addition of five new stations will cater for the increase of jobs in the city – attracting more customers for our businesses and entertainment precincts."

On March 19, councillors also endorsed 11 recommendations from the City Economy Summit held in November and December 2023 to "support businesses and entice more workers to the city". These included advocating to the state government for variable public transport pricing, with an emphasis on city workers; sharing regular data to help traders plan; more daytime events; and making it easier to grant permits for busking, outdoor dining and street trading. ●



▲ New "turn-up-and-go" Metro Tunnel services began testing underneath the CBD in March.

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A milestone for the mysterious

Ask any Melburnian what makes their city famous, and inevitably, laneways, art and culture will dominate their responses.

WORDS BY
JACK HAYES



We love a hole-in-the-wall café, an enigmatic piece of public art or a cocktail bar so secret you'll be cursing Google Maps.

Unlike our northern neighbours, with their big-ticket tourist icons, Melbourne is a city that has built a brand on hiding its secrets.

As Roald Dahl said, "Above all, watch with glittering eyes the whole world around you because the greatest secrets are always hidden in the most unlikely places. Those who don't believe in magic will never find it."

A believer in Melbourne's magic and lover of all things mysterious is Fiona Sweetman, owner and director of Hidden Secrets Tours which celebrates 20 years this May.

Melbourne in 2004, Ms Sweetman will tell you, looked unquestionably different to the city we know today.

"At the time, Melbourne wasn't popular, the laneways weren't where people went. There was a certain dirtiness or grittiness to it. We called it the fine grain," Ms Sweetman said.

"Only then, Lord Mayor John So started to talk of Melbourne as a brand, rather than just a city. There was no street art on Hozier Lane, MoVida had only just opened, and Andrew McConnell hadn't opened a CBD venue yet."



Ms Sweetman had returned from France and admittedly didn't like Melbourne very much.

Melbourne's corporate jungle, which architectural commentator Norman Day described in 1978 as "an empty useless city centre", was an unfriendly place for an artsy dressmaker with dyslexia who struggled at school.

But the small laneways and the businesses that called them home were places where she could find a community, one that would eventually underpin two decades of work and life in Melbourne's CBD.

"The storytelling of entrepreneurship is one I love. This is a city where you can start something and make it happen if you really believe in it," she said.

"Hidden Secrets came to be when a friend

of mine, who was a publisher produced the *Deck of Secrets*, a small deck of cards that were all about the bars of Melbourne. She received a grant to turn this into something physical and promote tourism ahead of the Commonwealth Games."

"I ran into her, and she asked me if I was working. I said no, I'm not making another wedding dress in my life, and she said 'I have a job for you'."

"I didn't have a mortgage, I didn't have much desire for money, I was 31 and life was easy. I wasn't dealing with crazy brides, and I was hungry for learning. I think that was probably half the excitement."

Fast forward 20 years, Ms Sweetman now has 15 staff who run four main tours: the famous Melbourne Lanes and Arcades, Café Culture Walk, Progressive Degustation Walk

and the Golden Mile Heritage Walk.

"We call them free and independent traveller tours ... they are the tours we list with a regular departure. The laneways and arcades are our most popular tour, we run that twice a day, six days a week. We only take eight people, the guides love it and means you don't need microphones, you can talk to people face-to-face, eye-to-eye."

"We've started outside Time Out café for 20 years, we've had coffee at Koko Black at Royal Arcade for 20 years, there's a lovely loyalty around the city."

"I think it's great we've created a commercially viable business, and those around us are as well. Across all of the walking tours in Melbourne, there is probably 50 people employed. That's pretty awesome."

These days, Ms Sweetman juggles her time between running Hidden Secrets Tours at her office in the Nicholas Building and her work with the Victorian Tourism Industry Council (VTIC).

While she may not be the one walking and talking, but her love and passion for Melbourne tourism and all things hidden remains, even if some of them are in plain sight.

"You don't know what you don't know. That's the beauty of Hidden Secrets. Most of the places we take people to aren't that hidden," Ms Sweetman said.

"My story is much like many others in the city. I fell in love with the idea that small people could make it big, and Melbourne is the perfect story for that." ●



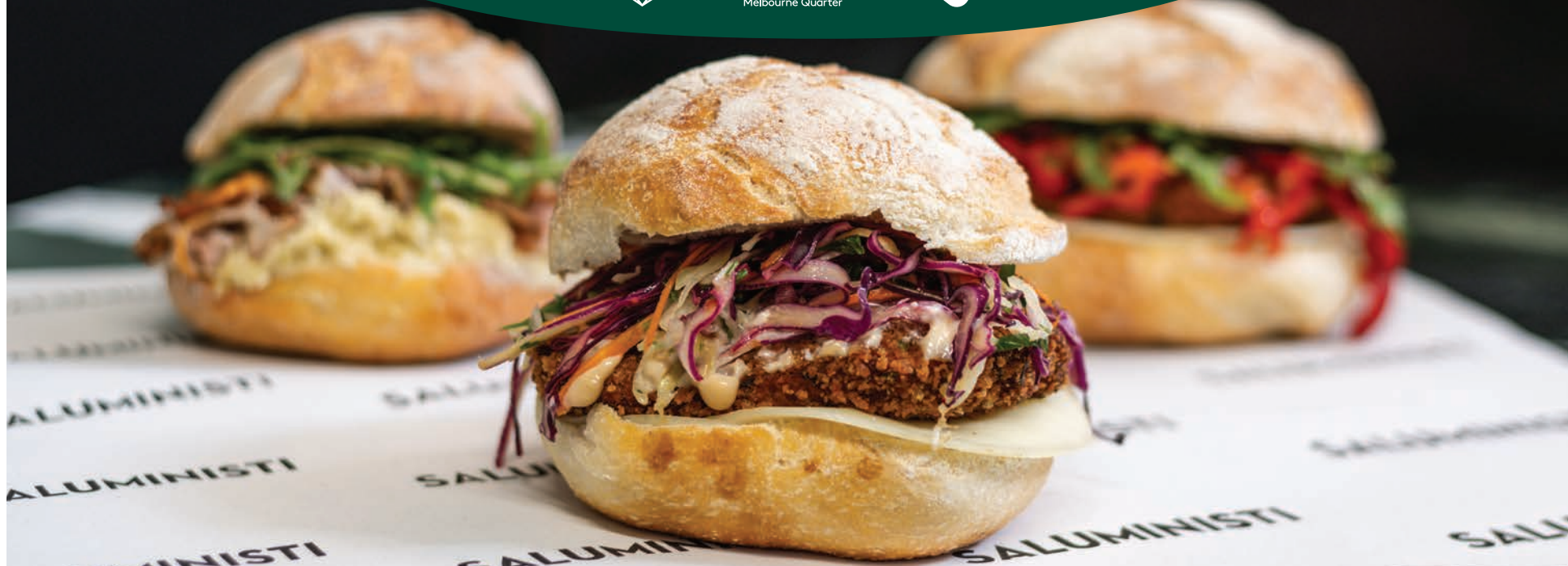
This feature is proudly supported by Hidden Secrets Tours. To find out more:

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The Council Plan 2021-25 reflects the community's long-term vision for Melbourne and how Council will achieve it.

You told us that a greater sense of safety in your streets, connection to the community, and more support for small businesses are important priorities for you in the CBD.

Now we're in the third year of the plan, there's much to celebrate about what we've delivered in your neighbourhood from 2021 to now.

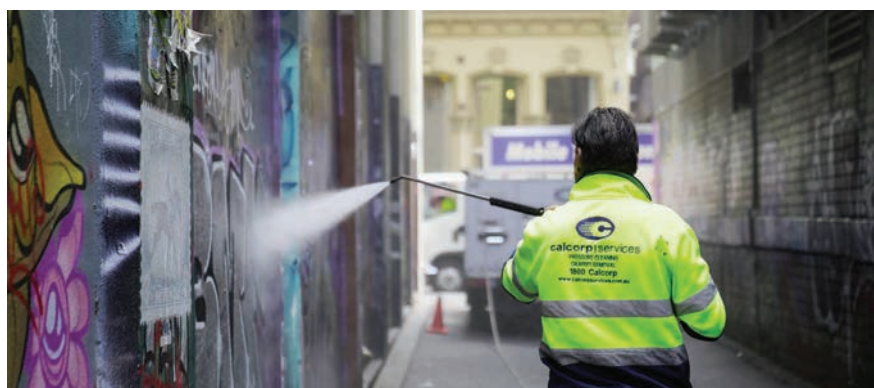
Safety and community wellbeing

- Launched a new 24/7 cleaning and graffiti removal service to ensure the city always looks its best.
- Expanded the Safe City Cameras program.
- Administered immunisations to more than 12,000 people at sites across the municipality.



Boosting our economy

- Continued to support businesses through our Business Concierge team, with more than 13,000 contacts with businesses last financial year.
- Invested more than \$4 million in grant funding to support local business owners and activation.
- Attracted 67 major projects to the city through Invest Melbourne, creating more than 1,650 jobs and \$430 million in capital expenditure.
- In 2023, we enticed more than 4.6 million people to the city to enjoy 64 Council-run or supported events – pumping \$152 million into the economy.



Sustainability and city greening

- Progressed our Power Melbourne initiative to improve access to affordable renewable electricity, with a CBD battery scheduled for installation mid-2024.
- Maintained eight public parks and spaces and two playgrounds in the CBD including Birrarung Marr and Enterprize Park.

Culture

- Provided creative opportunities for the next generation of creatives at ArtPlay and Signal.
- Welcomed almost 320,000 people to City Library each year, as well as offered education programs, makerspaces, access to computers and more at the new narm ngarrgu.

Recreation

- Hosted more than 430,000 visits to Melbourne City Baths for gym, group fitness, swimming lessons, squash and more.
- Launched the Swimm(h)er Program to prioritise privacy and inclusivity for women and girls learning to swim.

Get ready to share your thoughts

The draft Budget 2024-25, which will deliver the final year of the current Council Plan, will be available for community feedback from 14 May.

To read more about what we've delivered in the CBD visit news.melbourne.vic.gov.au/doing-what-counts



Capital works and city infrastructure

- Opened the new narm ngarrgu Library and Family Services in the Queen Victoria Market Precinct.
- Continued to enhance the authentic Queen Victoria Market experience, with new facilities for traders and visitors – including opening the new Queen's Food Hall.
- Installed floating wetlands and began the first stage of works on the Greenline Project to transform the banks of the Yarra River – Birrarung.
- Across the municipality, renewed more than 59,000m² of roads and 26,000m² of footpaths.



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Council endorses office tower at Flinders Lane despite querying car park demolition

The City of Melbourne has given its approval of a 28-storey high-rise at the western end of Flinders Lane, but not without interrogating the developer's decision to demolish an existing multi-level carpark at the site.

WORDS BY
SEAN CAR



The \$332 million project at 522-552 Flinders Lane received unanimous endorsement from councillors at their Future Melbourne Committee meeting on April 9 and will now go before Minister for Planning Sonja Kilkenny for final approval.

If given the green light, the new development by ICPF Nominees Pty Ltd and Hassell Architects would add 40,000sqm of new office space to the CBD, with retail tenancies, 402 bicycle parking spaces and two levels of basement car parking.

In its presentation to councillors, the applicant said the building had been designed to negate any shadow impacts to the Yarra-Birrarung River and nearby Batman Park, with a "highly activated" ground floor with "strong engagement to Flinders Lane".

Hassell's Andy Lowe said it had engaged with Indigenous elders as part of the building's design process, and that the two conjoined towers paid homage to the waterfall that once existed in the river near the site prior to European settlement.

"It [engagement with elders] was a really lovely process," Mr Lowe said. "At the end of the day where we got to was having a conversation around the fact that adjacent to this site, the river did at one point actually have a separation of salt water and fresh water that was separated by a waterfall that was removed as part of the colonisation of the city."

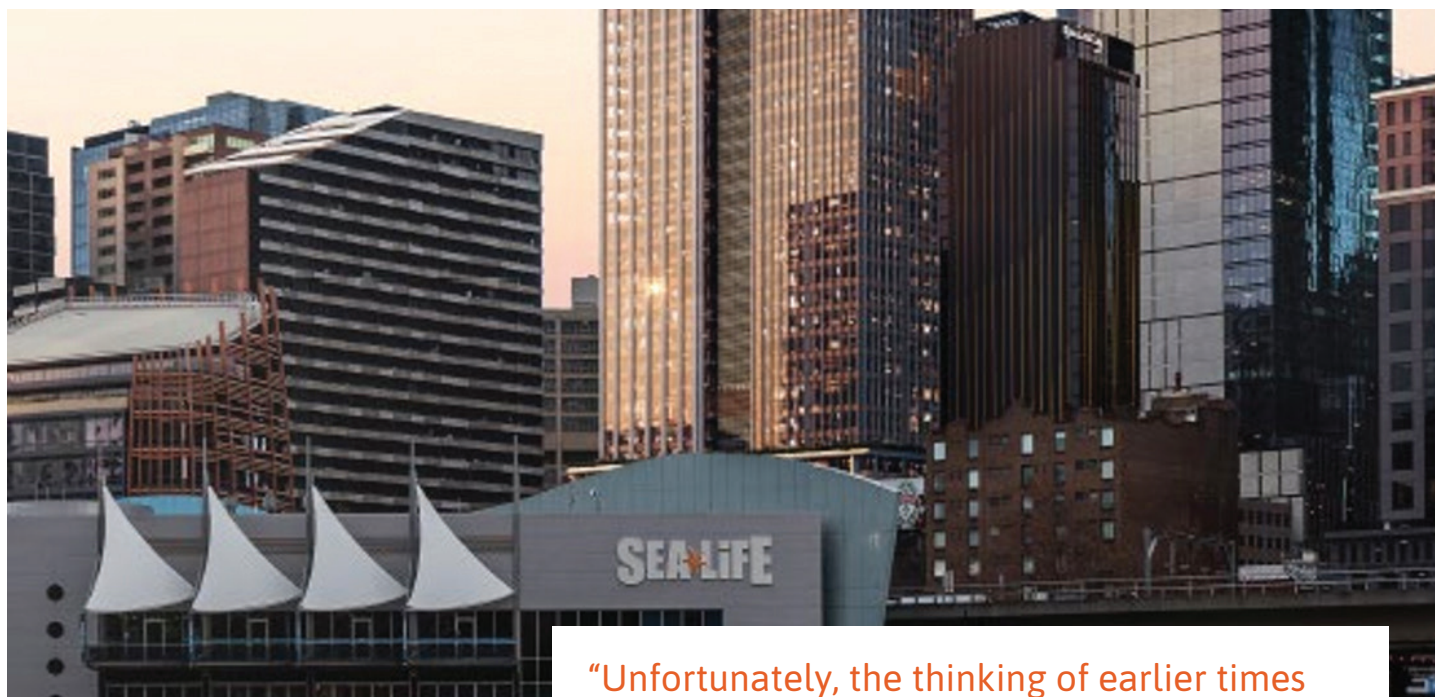
"[It was about] making sure that that warm element around the street was complemented by the fact that we have twin towers; two towers representing the two waters that we've been talking about."

While the council's chair of planning Deputy Lord Mayor Nicholas Reece applauded the applicant for a "high-quality design", he did query its decision to demolish, rather than retain, the existing multi-storey carpark which currently occupies the site.

Presenting on behalf of the developer, Billy Rakis from Urbis said while it had considered retaining elements of the building, the nature of the floor plates and ramps meant retrofitting was "effectively impossible".

However, Mr Lowe said the new building had been designed in a way where floorplates could be adjusted if necessary for a future transition from commercial to residential use.

"I don't believe you're going to be able to pull this down in the future," Mr Lowe said.



"Unfortunately, the thinking of earlier times was not as forward thinking as it needed to be ... in this case we see the car park with the roof heights and with the ramps through it meaning that it just hasn't been built for conversion. And so, we have this very, very unsatisfactory situation where a very large building built two to three decades ago is going to be demolished and see all that waste."

Demolition of city buildings has become a pressing issue for the council in recent years, with more than 60 per cent of the city's emissions alone coming from older commercial buildings.

Last year, a project in North Melbourne received approval to demolish a student accommodation tower that was completed just five years ago and construct a larger student tower and two build-to-rent towers in its place.

Cr Reece issued a sharp warning at the time that the "era of disposable buildings in Melbourne is well and truly over".

"For us as a city, the way forward is to ensure disposable buildings don't go up in the first place and that we push other alternatives to demolition, such as retrofitting and adaptive reuse," Cr Reece said in December.

In September last year, the council also adopted its Retrofit Melbourne plan, which seeks to accelerate the upgrading of existing commercial buildings to reduce local emissions and reach its "net zero by 2040" goal.

During his closing remarks about the Flinders Lane project on April 9, the Deputy Lord Mayor said he was pleased it had been designed with future flexibility in mind.

"Unfortunately, the thinking of earlier times was not as forward thinking as it needed to be," he said.

"In this case we see the car park with the roof heights and with the ramps through it meaning that it just hasn't been built for conversion. And so, we have this very, very unsatisfactory situation where a very large building built two to three decades ago is going to be demolished and see all that waste."

"Fortunately, the proposal being put forward by the investor and Hassell has some much smarter thinking in it. I was particularly pleased to hear that the floor plates will be designed so they've got that flexibility."

Commercial "uplift" up for review

Cr Reece also took the opportunity on April 9 to flag a review of the right currently afforded to central city developers under Victoria's planning laws to unlock "wider and taller" buildings by providing commercial office space.

With the Flinders Lane development able to "exceed the mandatory floor area ratio for the central city" due to the fact it is providing office space as part of its project, Cr Reece raised concerns as to whether uplift provisions were "still fit-for-purpose".

When Planning Scheme Amendment C270 was introduced in December 2016, it contained a floor area uplift (FAU) mechanism whereby developers would be rewarded with extra floors in return for contributing to the community.

The architects of the scheme, SGS Economics and Planning, in early 2016, recommended the benefits of the scheme and nominated a number of inclusions to the list: "Libraries, aquatic centres, art galleries, performance spaces, meeting rooms, kindergartens, social housing, open space, etc."

However, by the time the amendment became law, the term "community benefit" had been replaced with "public benefit" and the list of benefits controversially contained the provision of commercial office space.

Cr Reece said despite the provisions having been established with a requirement that they to be reviewed every year, he highlighted that they, in fact, "haven't been reviewed once in the last eight years".

"Melbourne has changed a lot over the last eight years," Cr Reece said. "We've gone through a lot and the rhythm of the city has changed, and the way people are using the city has changed."

"And so, the list of criteria that we give development bonuses for on buildings, I think it is time for it to be reviewed."

"We talk about the need for more affordable housing in the city; we talk about the need for more open space. To my mind, they're the sort of things that we should really focusing on when we talk about development bonuses in new buildings – again, reflecting those new challenges that we face as a city." ●

Sean Car

EDITOR

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Works are now complete at Scott Alley to prepare a pedestrian entrance to the new Town Hall Station.

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Residents unhappy about “unsightly” palm trees proposed for Exhibition St

CBD locals have expressed concern about a palm tree variety that has been chosen for planting along Exhibition St within the theatre precinct, saying it was inappropriate and out of place for the area.

WORDS BY
BRENDAN REES



As part of the City of Melbourne’s Exhibition streetscape upgrades, nine *Livistona* palm trees are proposed for planting in new extended footpath areas, which takes in Her Majesty’s Theatre and The Comedy Theatre.

Additionally, eight *Liquidambar styraciflua* trees, also known as sweet gums, would also be planted.

Livistona australis, also known as cabbage tree palms, are native to Victoria and grow up to 25 metres, with dark, glossy green leaves. They also have a fruit that grows to about 1.5cm.

According to the council, the tree performs well in Melbourne, and “have been chosen to reduce the impact on the footpath and building façades”.

But residents feel the choice of tree species doesn’t fit with the character of the street and would look “unsightly”, with concerns the fruit would also drop onto the footpath and create a mess.

Dr Stan Capp, president of residents group EastEnders told *CBD News*, said they had asked the council to identify alternative

species that “accord more clearly with policy and are more consistent in maintaining the amenity of Exhibition St – one of the great streets of Melbourne”.

“The wind tunnel that Exhibition St has become is a key consideration, as is the need for the trees to cool our environment,” he said.

“We are now again discussing with council officers about our concerns albeit 39 months since our first and only discussion. This is because we have made it our business to be heard – despite what some might think, we are key stakeholders,” he said.

Dr Capp said consultation with key stakeholders occurred in 2019 with Her Majesty’s Theatre, The Comedy Theatre, Rydges Hotel, Marriott Hotel and The Elephant and Wheelbarrow, but this did not include residents.

It was not until a meeting in early 2021, which engaged with the EastEnders that Dr Capp said “we strongly advised against the use of palm trees but this was obviously of no consequence”.

“We are residents, and this is our home albeit shared with our broader community. We love Melbourne and want to see it flourish but not with what we regard as sub-optimal decisions being taken arbitrarily,” he said.

“We look forward to our next meeting of EastEnders where City of Melbourne officers

will be attending to further a discussion that although belated is welcomed.”

Concerned resident Jenny Eltham said she was disappointed with the decision of the palm, saying “aesthetically, I do not see that they complement the existing tree planting in Exhibition St”.

“All I can say is, what were they thinking?” she said.

In a statement, the council said trees on Exhibition St were inspected and maintained every year, and dead palm fronds would be removed as part of this work.

“Dropped fruit and seeds will be collected during the council’s daily sweeping of Exhibition St footpaths,” it said.

Thami Croeser, urban planner at the RMIT University, said he was impressed with “how seriously City of Melbourne’s arborists take tree selection”.

“Both because of the diversity of things they’re planting (making our urban forest more resilient against pests and diseases) and also the way that they’re aiming to select species from warmer climates so that they will continue to thrive as our climate gets hotter,” he said.

The Exhibition streetscape project includes upgraded footpaths, new trees, a safer bike lane and bigger pedestrian spaces from Little Lonsdale St to Bourke St. Works are expected to be completed by the middle of this year. ●

Council extends MPavilion 10 until 2025

City of Melbourne councillors have unanimously supported extending MPavilion 10’s life in Queen Victoria Gardens until June 2025 following a request from the Naomi Milgrom Foundation (NMF).



WORDS BY
GEORGIE ATKINS



The extension means the current MPavilion 10 by Japanese architect Tadao Ando will now stay in the gardens for more than a year, despite being due for closure and removal on March 28 and June 9, respectively.

It marks the first time an MPavilion structure will remain in place longer than the usual five-month program during the initiative’s 10-year history, with event organiser NMF arguing it “deserved a longer presence” for “Melburnians and visitors alike to enjoy”.

Tadao Ando is a globally revered figure in contemporary architecture who is recognised for his bold, geometric designs that seamlessly integrate into natural landscapes and his masterful utilisation of concrete.

MPavilion 10 is Mr Ando’s only project in Australia and the Southern Hemisphere and as part of its retention, it’s proposed to remain free and open to the public, 10am to 3pm daily on non-event days, with programming to run from November to March.

Speaking at the Future Melbourne Committee (FMC) meeting on April 9, Lord Mayor Sally Capp said that MPavilion had become a highlight of Melbourne’s event calendar for 10 years, and a “significant element” of the city.

“Architecture is intertwined into the fabric of our city, and

MPavilion does an incredible job of reminding us of that,” Cr Capp said. “Being able to admire the work of world-renowned architect Tadao Ando is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity – it seems only natural Melburnians enjoy the incredible space for one more year.”

The council has previously supported MPavilion with \$300,000 in funding and \$50,000 of in-kind support annually, however its financial assistance will cease in June as the NMF takes on responsibility for the venue’s operation throughout the extension period.

The report tabled at the April 9 FMC noted that the design community was “divided about the opportunity” to extend, with concerns ranging from waste and sustainability to ongoing safety, presentation, and maintenance of the pavilion.

However, as part of the extension, the NMF has committed to fund and cover all costs associated with security and maintenance and will work with the council to run potential activations within and around MPavilion 10 during off-season (April to October).

At the end of each season, the NMF has made a tradition of gifting structures to the community resulting in seven previous editions relocated as permanent venues across Melbourne.

The NMF has committed to re-using and repurposing MPavilion 10 at the end of the extension period, as well as reinstating the site in line with the terms of the licence and the council’s Domain Parklands Masterplan, which recommends a continuation of the park’s current “ornamental and passive recreation status”. ●



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Historic Hopetoun Tea Rooms relaunch is a sweet success

The iconic Hopetoun Tea Rooms, renowned for its enchanting cake displays, is captivating Melbournians once again at its new CBD home.

WORDS BY
BRENDAN REES



After gracing the Block Arcade for more than a century the famous cake store relaunched at the corner of Bourke and McKillop Streets in July last year following a change of ownership.

The business, which first opened its doors in 1892, opened a new bake shop last July at 20 McKillop St, with three new levels expected to open later this year at the main tearooms building 421 Bourke St, offering customers a unique dining experience that is both nostalgic and current.

"Hopetoun BakeShop is a modern take on traditional English bakery; that's exactly who we are," new owner Vikram Singh said.

While he admits he would have loved to have stayed at the Block Arcade after buying the business in 2020, he was unable to secure a lease.

But like its original home at the Block Arcade, the relocated bake shop exudes vintage charm with elegant décor and, of course, the timeless tradition of tea with an assortment of delicious treats from handmade biscuits, relishes and jams, petit cakes, and sandwiches – all baked onsite.

"Our chefs are putting a lot of effort into it, the team is very passionate, they want to get everything correct as well as get the right English traditional recipes," he said.

"So far we're going really good. It's about heritage where you bring your kids and grandparents to see the traditional way of making cakes."

He said they look forward to opening new spaces at the 163-year-old Bourke St building, which had been delayed due to heavy construction happening around them.

The ground floor will have public tea rooms while level one will be a dedicated, bookings-only high tea floor, and level two will house a function room catering up to 30 people.

But the opening hasn't been without its challenges.



According to Mr Singh, a new business called The Tea Rooms 1892, which opened at the original location of the Hopetoun Tea Rooms at the Block Arcade, too closely "mimics" his business including the gold signage and typography.

"The tearoom running in Block Arcade has no association with Hopetoun Tea Rooms," Mr Singh said, noting customers "seem to be confused".

"We're working with the Block Arcade management to resolve it so we can get on with our business separately."

The Block Arcade's owner Grant Cohen – who runs The Tea Rooms 1892 – said he had been in talks with Mr Singh and that it was "completely business as usual" at the Block Arcade.

"The owner of the Hopetoun Tea Rooms agrees that the tea rooms at the Block Arcade are significant and historic and that we also agree that the name 'Hopetoun' is significant as well," he said.

"So, they've both got their place here in Melbourne; very much so."



As part of the mediation process between both parties, the original gold signage under the windows was removed and replaced with a sign saying, "Historic Tea Rooms".

The original sign will be sent to Mr Singh's Bourke St shop where it will be displayed.

Mr Singh said, "at the end of the day we don't have any issue with them (Block Arcade) running a

tearoom so long as it doesn't mislead people".

"The Block Arcade is a beautiful place, it's a beautiful location. It's heritage and you don't want to spoil the heritage. We want to wish them all the best."

In the meantime, Mr Singh said he would "love for people to come in and try our product and give their feedback". ●



New trader shed takes shape at Queen Vic Market

Work is under way to construct a new trader shed at the Queen Victoria Market, which will replace the current meat and seafood delivery dock built in the 1980s.

WORDS BY
BRENDAN REES



The project will see a new three-storey above-ground facility with a four-storey basement with loading docks, climate-controlled trader storage, improved waste and recycling facilities, dedicated trader toilets, as well as showers and lunchrooms.

It will also have break rooms, back-of-house services, new customer toilets, a

family room, and an accessible toilet.

The site was cleared at the start of the year in preparation for works.

Piling works have taken place between February and April with about 50 piles being dug into the ground using a specialised drill rig.

The next stage of construction involves excavating the basement to a depth of 20 metres.

The new trader shed is expected to be completed by the end of 2025.

"Melbourne relies on our proud market traders to serve customers from all corners of the globe – that's why we're building the facilities they need," Lord Mayor Sally Capp said after visiting the site on April 19.

The City of Melbourne said works were being carefully managed to allow day-to-day operations of the market to continue with minimal impact. ●

Eye'll be watching: new street art deterring illegal dumping in Bullens Lane

Walk along Bullens Lane in Melbourne's CBD, and you might feel the piercing gaze of a pair of eyes staring you down. The source? A new street art installation.



WORDS BY
MARILYN TAN



The new artwork by Hong Kong-born artist Mimi Leung portrays a pair of eyes, which act as a form of visual surveillance to deter illegal dumping in the area.

Ms Leung, who studied a Master's in communication art and design at the Royal College of Art in the UK, is a multidisciplinary artist working with mediums such as drawing, illustration, and animation.

According to the City of Melbourne, her body of work "explores identity, belonging and using art to understand and transcend the mundanity of daily life".

This installation tells the story of nature finding a way to thrive in the city, such as weeds squeezing through pavement cracks. The flowers in the artwork symbolise growth and joy, a stark contrast in an alley used for waste disposal.

With this artwork, Ms Leung hopes to inspire people to look beyond the surface and appreciate the possibilities of life in the least likely places. ●

“Swanston Triangle” to undergo green renewal

An unused corner pocket of the CBD located at the intersection of Swanston and Victoria streets will be transformed into a new green open space under a City of Melbourne plan.

WORDS BY
SEAN CAR



Councillors unanimously endorsed the final concept design of the “Swanston Street Triangle” at their Future Melbourne Committee (FMC) meeting on April 9 after draft plans were put to the surrounding community for consultation in February.

The idea to revitalise the area opposite the Melbourne City Baths was conceived following Yarra Trams’ plans to renew existing tram tracks along Victoria St, whereby it revealed that the tracks through the triangle would be removed.

While the tram operator had originally proposed replacing the tracks within the triangle with asphalt and new kerbs to “tie into the existing footpaths” on Victoria and Swanston streets, the council identified an opportunity to instead add more green space.

With Yarra Trams to only provide funding for the new space within its original project scope, the council is expected to tip in an additional \$1.5 million in order to deliver the final concept plan.

The council’s deputy chair of planning Cr Rohan Leppert commended council management for “making good on a really clever opportunity to build new green open space right near the heart of the central city”.

“We have a very big park building agenda here at the City of Melbourne,” Cr Leppert said.

“We know that population is booming and that opportunities for new public open space in an area that is well established isn’t always easy, isn’t always cheap, and often come with unexpected complications part way down the line.”

“The Hoddle Grid, of course, famously never had any public open space built into it. Democracy was not in vogue at the time, and so places like City Square or, more recently, the sliver of the Market St Square, have been added well after those streets were laid down and all the land between the streets and the little streets was sold. So, this is a beautiful opportunity”.

The final concept approved by councillors includes plans for a new expanded raised lawn with new trees, and a new outdoor dining zone for surrounding restaurants as well as new seating.

The plan also identifies a “potential future activation opportunity” for the disused heritage-listed tram signal box building that sits at the corner of Swanston and Victoria streets.

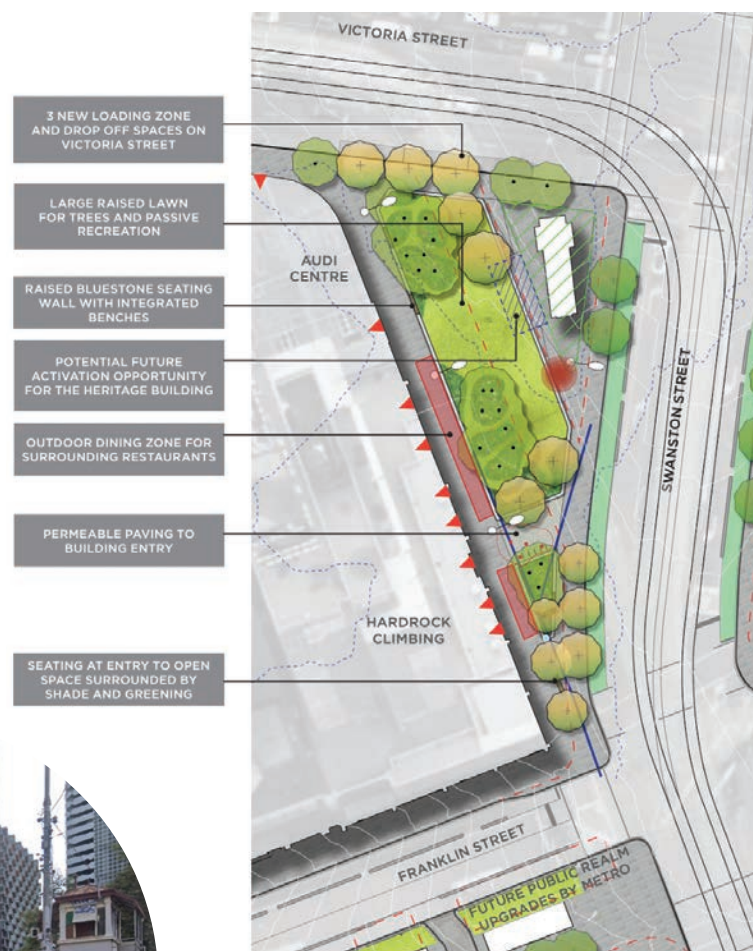
While the plans received broad support during consultation with the community, the report from council management noted a

“consistent theme” among traders and building managers in the area regarding rough sleeping and vandalism.

In a question put to the council’s planning team during the meeting, Cr Roshena Campbell asked how the concept design would help deter antisocial behaviour to “avoid the type of situation we’ve seen in Elizabeth St south”.

The council’s general manager, strategy, planning and climate change Evan Counsel said while management wasn’t aware of any current issues with antisocial behaviour in the triangle, the plans had been designed to encourage a range of uses.

“Our experience in the renewal of these types of spaces is that through design we can successfully deter antisocial behaviour,” Mr Counsel said.



“Of course, [only] to a degree; we can’t control people through design, but we can do what we can to design these public spaces as best as possible.”

“Existing activity and passive surveillance at this location on Swanson St from apartments, Melbourne City Baths and restaurants would also be expected to promote community use of the space and create a welcoming environment where there are eyes on the location which does help.” ●

State Government scraps plans for safe injecting room in CBD

Continued from page 1.

Select participants will be identified by cohealth of trialling the strong drug with the aim of diverting people from the illicit drug market.

“Drug harms touch every community – with around 90 per cent of overdose deaths involving heroin occurring outside the City of Melbourne. This is a state-wide problem, and it calls for a state-wide solution that also provides for Victoria’s suburbs and regional centres and boosts services in areas where it’s harder to access care,” the government said.

“The state-wide action plan does just that, starting with a much-needed increase in services of the most effective treatment option available to mitigate the problems that stem from opioid dependence: pharmacotherapy.”

Ms Stitt said pharmacotherapy was the most effective treatment option available, noting the government would invest \$8.4 million to boost it in up to 30 locations through a grants program targeting areas of high-demand or looming service gaps, allowing up to 1500 people to access treatment.

As part of a health-led approach to addressing drug harms in the city, multiple agencies, health providers and community will also come together in a “CBD Reference Group” to coordinate the local response.

The government said the Victorian Health Building Authority would immediately initiate design and procurement work for 244 Flinders St, and cohealth would scale up outreach services in the CBD now, with new locations to roll out after July 1.

Work also began on April 23 for Naloxone,

an overdose reversal medicine, to be trialled at 20 vending machines alongside needle exchange programs.

The plan also sees the appointment of Victoria’s first “chief addiction adviser” within the Department of Health system and starts the development of Victoria’s first state-wide strategy to address drug harms over the long-term.

Beyond the new hub, the plan also delivers wraparound services at the Salvation Army at 69 Bourke St providing medical, nursing and mental health supports.

Cohealth chief executive Nicole Bartholomeusz said their organisation would work closely with the CBD community to provide increased access to healthcare in the heart of the city.

“Through our unwavering commitment to harm reduction we will work closely with the community, stakeholders, partners, the people who need our services and Government to deliver support to those who need it most, with compassion and expertise. Our aim is to build a healthier, safer, and more inclusive community,” she said.

Salvation Army Major Brendan Nottle welcomed the government’s announcement, saying it would “provide significant support to the most vulnerable in the city and across the state. We believe these initiatives will genuinely help keep people alive.” ●

Brendan Rees

JOURNALIST
BRENDAN@HYPERLOCALNEWS.COM.AU



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GUIDE TO WASTE-FREE SHOPPING AT QUEEN VICTORIA MARKET



Bettina de Chateaubourg has all the tips for waste-free shopping at Queen Victoria Market

Bring your reusable containers and bags to Queen Victoria Market to stock up on meat, fish, cheese, antipasto, wine, olive oil, grains, fruit, vegies, soap and more.

Join the Melburnians changing the way they do their grocery shopping to help save waste from landfill and live more sustainably.

Waste-free alternatives to almost every packaged grocery item are on hand at Melbourne's iconic market, along with a hearty serving of cost savings and community connection.

Shop waste-free with Bettina

Bettina de Chateaubourg has worked at Queen Victoria Market for 10 years. She started as a tour guide, and she's now the market's Tours and Visitor Experience Coordinator.

Low-waste living isn't something new for Bettina – the routine of shopping with her powder-blue vintage trolley, old flour sacks and reused containers is innate, and a great source of joy.

"When you shop at the market, you know that what you're buying is super fresh, and you can ask for the exact weight you need, so nothing is wasted," Bettina said.

"The traders are the produce experts. They know what the cucumbers or apples are like on any given day, what cheeses to buy and what to pair them with. We even swap recipes.

"These are great interactions – you don't get that at the supermarket."

Check off your shopping list

Bettina says she can get just about everything she needs at Queen Victoria Market, except for toothpaste. If you'd like to try shopping more sustainably, it's easy to get started.

"Just come along to the market and explore what's on offer," Bettina said. "Shopping waste free is great because you can buy in small amounts, and only what you need."

Beyond bananas and broccoli, there are plenty of specialty and gourmet items to be found at Queen Victoria Market that can also be purchased waste-free.

Head to Bill's Farm to pick up Meredith Dairy Goat Cheese in your own jar, or browse the beloved Dairy Hall for smallgoods, antipasto, or any other treats that takes your fancy.

Bring a cloth bag to purchase grains, pulses, dried fruits at Market Organics. And forget the cleaning aisle at the supermarket – refill your liquid soap and dishwashing liquid at Soapbox.

Then head to Rewine where you can refill bottles with premium wine straight from the barrel.

How to prepare for a waste-free shop

Queen Victoria Market has a plastic bag ban in place and encourages the use of cloth bags, reusable containers and coffee cups.

"Bring along plastic containers for meat, fish, cheese and butter. Bring jars for dips and antipasto. And bring

cloth bags, or reused plastic bags, for your fruit and veg," Bettina said.

"All the traders are very comfortable weighing and using your reusable containers. Just make sure the containers are really clean so they're pleasant for the traders to handle.

"Many fruits and vegetables don't need to be put in a bag because they have their own skin – like bananas and mangoes, to name a few," Bettina said.

Shaping Queen Victoria Market for the future

The historic Queen Victoria Market is the biggest open-air market in the southern hemisphere, spanning seven hectares and housing almost 600 traders.

The Queen Victoria Market Precinct Renewal is City of Melbourne's biggest investment to date.

Alongside renewal works – like shed restoration, modernising trader amenities and turning the old car park into a vibrant public space – sustainability is a primary goal for the market.

Learn more about the market's achievements at qvm.com.au/sustainability

Plan your shopping trip

The market is open on Tuesdays, Thursdays, Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays. To learn more, visit qvm.com.au

IN BRIEF

CITY CLEANING AROUND THE CLOCK

We're supercharging our cleaning efforts like never before. The city's clean team will now be scrubbing, pressure washing and removing graffiti 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Report cleaning or graffiti issues at melbourne.vic.gov.au or phone 9658 9658.

FIRELIGHT FESTIVAL RETURNS

Melbourne's epic winter festival will be back from 28 to 30 June with fiery installations, live music and pop-up foodie feasts. And this year, get ready to experience Firelight Labyrinth, a colourful immersive experience like nothing you've ever seen before. From 28 June to 14 July. For festival details, visit whatson.melbourne.vic.gov.au

CREATIVE WRITING COMPETITION NOW OPEN

Are you an aspiring storyteller? Enter the Lord Mayor's Creative Writing Awards to win a share of \$12,000 in prizes. Choose your literary path with one of our five writing categories: short stories, poetry, non-fiction, First Nations writers or this year's special feature category, Stories by Trans and Gender Diverse Writers. Entries close 3 June. Find out more at melbourne.vic.gov.au/writingawards

EPIC EVENTS IN 2025

Are you looking to host an event in Melbourne in 2025? Our Event Partnership Program supports free, accessible events that make lasting memories for locals and visitors. Whether it's a community, music, sports, food, arts, or cultural event, we want to hear from you. Applications are open until 31 May. Visit melbourne.vic.gov.au and search Event Partnership Program to learn more.



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Your City of Melbourne community update



How we're helping keep the community safe

As the third most liveable city in the world, we take safety and security seriously here in Melbourne.

We know how important it is to feel safe in the city - it is the most fundamental aspect of a liveable city. If people don't feel safe, they won't want to live, work or visit here.

That's why we work closely with Victoria Police and other agencies to monitor antisocial behaviour and support city safety.



CREATING SAFER, MORE SECURE STREETS

This year, we've invested \$6 million in critical safety infrastructure and resources, including more safety lighting to reduce antisocial behaviour at night.

In partnership with the Victorian Government, we've expanded our closed-circuit television camera network into new neighbourhoods - like Carlton - with eight cameras installed in key locations like Lygon Street and Argle Square by July.

We've also upgraded our safe city cameras in the CBD, along with upgrading lighting in key precincts such as Bourke Street, between Exhibition and Spring streets.

We know police can't be everywhere at once but this network of closed-circuit TV surveillance cameras helps

create a safer environment and reduce crime levels by deterring potential offending and helping in crime detection.

The cameras operate in areas where antisocial behaviour or criminal activity is historically more likely to occur.

Signage is placed in the monitored areas to alert the community of the surveillance.

Our specially trained security contractors in our Safe City Cameras Program Control Room monitor these cameras 24 hours a day, seven days a week, recording incidents and alerting police.

The footage can also be viewed at police stations and on officers' devices when responding to an incident.

In the past decade, the Safe City Cameras Program has:

- Recorded 47,258 incidents
- Provided 9,706 copies of recorded footage to Victoria Police
- And transferred 30,160 occurrences of live vision to police and triple 000.

What started with 23 cameras in 1995 and a team of one has grown to a slick operation of 254 cameras and a mobile CCTV car, plus 11 dedicated contract security staff, comprising two round-the-clock operators and a full-time technician and apprentice.

And we're not stopping there. In May, we're adding a Safe City Supervisor role from Monday to Friday.

This will enhance our proactive monitoring capability on the streets, improve training of existing and new Safe City Operators, streamline our administrative functions by processing police applications for footage faster, and provide us with a resource to constantly look at improvement of the system and operations.



Our Safe City CCTV car, which operates from 10pm to 6am on Friday and Saturday nights, will also be expanded to Thursday nights this year.

This vehicle is fitted with 360-degree CCTV surveillance cameras to record in real-time with electronic media downloaded at the end of each shift.

The car's movements are directed via the Safe City Control Room and tasked to jobs where our permanent cameras can't view - for example, if there's an incident in a small laneway.

This means we are able to report live incidents of crime, with accurate descriptions and paths of travel, to triple 000, and support police responses.

This is just one example of our collaborative efforts with emergency services across the city.

TRENDS WE'RE SEEING IN MELBOURNE

We constantly identify and respond to emerging security trends.

One of these is an increase in high-level criminal damage and arson in some of our main amenity blocks in our parks.

Thanks to our security team's innovative approach, we're trialling an environmental sensor - the HALO - that can detect smoke, spray paint and yelling to alert us to incidents for potential monitoring.

The sensor is linked to our CCTV management system.

Already, footage has been provided to police from arson events in an amenity block in South Yarra; and incidents of arson have reduced in the past five months.

BOOSTING SECURITY FOR BUSINESS

Our investment in security infrastructure is not only about liveability, it's also about supporting our business community.

We know that security done well supports local business and gives customers the confidence to visit our local traders.

That's why we work with our business community, encouraging them to maintain their own security equipment - such as lighting, CCTV cameras, door hardware and signage - to enhance the perception of safety in and around a property.

This also includes reporting faulty public lighting, dumped rubbish, graffiti or overflowing bins so we can rectify this as soon as possible.

If you notice an issue, report it via our hotline on 9658 9658 or at melbourne.vic.gov.au/pages/report-issue

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Iconic celebrity prints on display at City Gallery



A new City of Melbourne exhibition will take Melburnians on a nostalgic trip through the city's past as iconic celebrity handprints, once proudly displayed at the entrance of McEwans Hardware Store, make their triumphant return to the heart of Melbourne.



WORDS BY
GEORGIE ATKINS



A beloved fixture of the CBD in the 1970s and 1980s, McEwans Hardware Store was nestled in Bourke St before being purchased by Bunnings in 1993.

As visitors stepped into the store, they were welcomed by the imprints of actors, musicians, sports stars, writers, dancers, politicians, an astronaut, a racehorse, and even a talented opera-singing dog.

After two decades tucked away in an off-site warehouse, these concrete mementos are now on display at City Gallery, forming the centerpiece of the captivating GOTCHA! exhibition, running from April 17 to August 16.

"I was alerted by Eddie Butler-Bowden who heads the Art and Heritage Collection at the City of Melbourne, that there were these concrete blocks that had been taking up space and shuffled from spot to spot over the past 20 years," exhibition curator and Melbourne history writer, Robyn Annear said.

"They've kind of been sitting there waiting for their moment and Eddie suggested to me late last year that I might like to take a look at them and see what I could make of them."

Among the 40 prints on display include celebrities such as Evonne Goolagong, Jamie Redfern, Kamahl, Merv Hughes, Colleen Hewett, Heather McKay, John Bertrand, Paul Cronin and Johnny Letts, each with their own tale waiting to be uncovered.

"I had the best time trawling through old newspapers of the period, trying to pin down the daily stories and images of these ceremonies and celebrity appearances on the footpath outside McEwans Hardware Store," Ms Annear said. "You get such a sense of pre-social media, and how people craved to get close to celebrities and to get their faces in the picture as well."

One of Ms Annear's favourite stories discovered in the process of creating the exhibition is the intriguing narrative surrounding character actor Derek Nimmo, whose distinctive footprint captivated her.

"He appears to have no big toes," she told CBD News.



"I googled his name, 'Derek Nimmo' and 'toes', and discovered that his big toes were double jointed, and he couldn't make them stand vertically up in the air while his foot remained planted on the ground. That must have been what he did when he put his foot in the cement pavement."

Designed for Melburnians to get "up close and personal" with the prints, Ms Annear hopes that visitors will be able to "put a face to the prints", as well as bridging the gap between Melbourne's past and present.

GOTCHA! will run at City Gallery from April 17 to August 16. ●



Hemispheres collide in *Eight Seasons*

"Spring has arrived with joy
Welcomed by the birds with happy songs,
And the brooks, amid gentle breezes,
Murmur sweetly as they flow."

- Poem inspired by Vivaldi's *Spring* (Concerto No. 1 in E Major) Allegro

As Melbourne begins to descend into the cold this May, Orchestra Victoria will traverse through the seasons with a pairing of two unmissable classical works with *The Eight Seasons*.

The Eight Seasons features Vivaldi's *The Four Seasons* presented alongside Argentinian composer Astor Piazzola's *The Four Seasons of Buenos Aires*.

Both works will create a masterful fusion of a timeless classic and a modern interpretation that translate the changing seasons to sound.

The performance will feature 35 musicians comprising Orchestra Victoria's full string section, including award-winning concertmaster Sulki Yu leading the program. Bespoke lighting will set the scene as the orchestra moves through spring, summer, autumn, and winter.

"*The Four Seasons* in concert has always been a delightful experience for any classical musical fan, and Piazzola's *The Four Seasons of Buenos Aires* is a richly engaging work that we are excited to present this year," Yu said.

"Both bodies of work encapsulate each season with stunning violin movements, and I am very excited to perform this program alongside my fantastic colleagues from Orchestra Victoria at the Melbourne Recital Centre. I invite all classical music lovers and those interested in expanding their musical horizons to come and travel with us."

This enchanting evening will serenade audiences at the Elisabeth Murdoch Hall, Melbourne Recital Centre on Saturday, May 2.

It will feature Orchestra Victoria's concertmaster Sulki Yu performing virtuosic violin solos. Appointed concertmaster in 2021, Yu was most recently Principal First Violin at the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra in London.

She has appeared as soloist with many orchestras including the Royal Flemish Philharmonic, Orchestre Nationale de Lille, Budapest Symphony, Moscow State Academic Symphony, and Royal Wallonie Chamber Orchestras.

For more information: orchestravictoria.com.au ●

Six-fingered orphan's forgotten masterpiece

The Australian Chamber Choir is making history by performing music by a disabled orphan girl after 300 years of silence.

Music lovers all over the world are familiar with Antonio Vivaldi's *The Four Seasons*. Much less known is the fact that Vivaldi wrote this work, and many others like it, for a Venetian orchestra of orphaned girls.

At the orphanage known as the Ospedale della Pietà, Vivaldi directed one of the finest orchestras in Europe. While other orchestras excluded female players, Vivaldi's choir and orchestra consisted entirely of women, educated in one of the world's first conservatoriums.

Agatha, born without fingers on her left hand, was given up to the orphanage in 1712, shortly after her birth.

She grew up to become a fine soprano soloist and a respected teacher, but her compositions were left forgotten in a Venetian library for nearly three centuries.

Australian Chamber Choir (ACC) manager Elizabeth Anderson told CBD News how Agatha's manuscripts were discovered.

"At high school, our music teacher explained how Vivaldi taught music at a girls' orphanage. I was captivated by the idea that music composed by those orphans might have survived," Ms Anderson said.

Fast forward 40 years, and Elizabeth was discussing with her husband, Douglas Lawrence (the ACC's director) what music the choir should sing alongside Vivaldi's *Gloria*.

"After a brief online search, I found the names of three orphan composers and a Venetian library with some of their music," he said. "I wrote to the librarian, and, to my surprise, within a week, copies of the yellowed manuscript parts for Agatha's *Cantata* arrived in my inbox."



Since then, the ACC has made history by giving the first performances of Agatha's music (other than those presented by Vivaldi's famous all-girl band).

In July, Lawrence and his singers are invited to present the *Cantata* in Venice's Pisani Palace. During the concert, they will gift Anderson's edition of Agatha's *Cantata* to the citizens of Venice and to the Benedetto Marcello Library, where the manuscripts reside.

A small group of Friends from Australia will accompany them on their 11-stop concert tour and celebrate with them after this special concert.

A CD of Agatha's *Cantata*, entitled *Keys to Heaven*, is available at auschoir.org, and before they depart for Europe, the ACC will give four concerts (including two in Melbourne).

An on-demand video of Vivaldi's *Gloria*, Agatha's *Cantata* is available on ACCess (the Australian Chamber Choir's Excellent Streaming Service). Performances will be held at 3pm, Sunday, May 5 at Scots' Church (corner of Russell and Collins streets) and 3pm Saturday, May 25 at Church of the Resurrection in Macedon.

Information on the ACC's concert tour of Europe, concert tickets, CDs and on-demand videos can be found at auschoir.org or call 0452 531 750. ●



RMIT student to compete at WorldSkills 47th International in France

CBD resident and RMIT University student Randy Gunawan is gearing up to head to France in September to compete at the 47th international WorldSkills competition in the Industry 4.0 category.

WORDS BY
GEORGIE ATKINS



The international trades and skills competition brings together thousands of apprentices and trainees to showcase their skills across 59 disciplines, with Industry 4.0 focusing on the integration of information and communication technology into manufacturing.

Growing up in Indonesia, Randy has been "fascinated by engineering and the opportunity to understand how things work" from a young age, moving to Australia to pursue study at RMIT.

"Innovation has been my passion since my childhood – I like turning my ideas into reality," Randy told CBD News.

The Australian Skillaroos team will compete in practical tasks over four days from September 10 to 15, with industry experts assessing their knowledge, competence and employability skills against a set of strict criteria.

Joining forces with his teammate after a triumphant win at the national competition last year, Randy will represent Australia alongside more than 1500 students from 75 countries in Lyon.

"I feel excited because it's a huge opportunity for me to expand my skills and my knowledge, as the upcoming WorldSkills international is where I compete against people that are the best in their own country and their respective field," Randy said.

"With this opportunity as well, I hope to secure internships or jobs."

Before their grand adventure in France, Randy and his teammate will face one final "pressure test" at the 2024 Global Skills Challenge in Melbourne this May.

The event, hosted across various Victorian TAFE campuses, will prepare competitors by simulating the conditions of the international competition.

"It's basically like a warm up to get ready for the international competition," Randy said.

"I'm proud of myself to be in Skillaroos representing Australia."

With a significant state government investment of more than \$4 billion since 2014 to revamp the TAFE system, initiatives like the WorldSkills competition have empowered more than 157,500 students to acquire the skills needed for their desired careers.

"Congratulations to everyone selected for Team Australia at the WorldSkills 47th International Competition, and to the Victorian Skillaroos who will showcase their skills and represent our world-class vocational training system," Victorian Minister for Skills and TAFE, Gayle Tierney said.

"Victoria is proud to host the Global Skills Challenge through our fantastic TAFE Victoria network, and to showcase Victorian TAFE and student excellence – I wish all the competitors the best of luck." ●

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A corner of Melbourne at the crossroads

Standing tall on the right-hand side of this photograph, taken looking east along Little Collins St from Russell St, is the head office of Preston Motors, the go-to place to buy the latest Chevrolet and Buick cars.



The year is 1939, just before the outbreak of war, and the building's clean, stylised lines and tall, slim windows speak to us of its Art Deco inspiration. Yet it sits side-by-side with an old, elaborate streetlight, a relic of the land boom era of the 1880s, the time known to us as "Marvellous Melbourne".

On the opposite corner is a two-storey building, identified as Winbourne House. That building is not many years old, yet the ground floor appears to be boarded up, speaking to us through the years of the effects of the 1930s Depression. Just along Little Collins St, at #142, is Kemp & Sheehan's, iron merchants and plumbing suppliers. This company speaks of the good times of the past. They have been there for years yet within a year or two of this photo being taken, the building has been taken over by the furniture store, Malcom Reid.

This is a time and place where things are about to change, in a world that is about to change. War comes and with it comes the need for administrative headquarters. The Defence Department's Censorship Office

opens in Russell St next door to Winbourne House. The RAAF's no. 1 Recruiting Office moves into the first floor of Preston Motors.

The Postmaster General's Department (PMG) already has a strong presence in this unglamorous corner of the CBD. Nearby is its Transmission Section and next to Winbourne House is the training section of its Chief Engineers Branch.

In a few years the skyline will change, as Winbourne House is pulled down to make way for the Postmaster General's Department (PMG)'s Russell Telephone Exchange. All eyes are on this site as it undergoes an agonisingly slow transformation that takes more than six years.

Eventually, the Russell Exchange emerges, a nine-storey telephone exchange and

postal hall, feted as the first large building constructed in the CBD after World War II.

The site has been plagued by problems, many of them due to shortages of workmen and materials leading to escalating costs. There are building disputes, too, and strikes, all of which mean the building is not opened for business until 1954, 11 years after the last major construction work had taken place in the CBD.

In the meantime, city workers are treated to amazing displays of acrobatics as dogmen (the men who guide the steel girders into place) "sit out on steel girders 100 feet above the street with all the aplomb of circus trapeze artists". They are accompanied by the spectacle of the steel riggers, who "stroll along the 18-inch-wide steel girders", thrilling and entertaining the watching crowds in equal measure.

Time never does stand still. Within a decade, the nine-storey Russell Exchange is old news. Not too far away, on the corner of Nicholson and Albert streets, the harbinger of the high-rise boom, the 21-storey ICI House, dominates the city skyline. At the time, it is the tallest building in Australia. ●

Dr Cheryl Griffin
ROYAL HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF VICTORIA
HISTORYVICTORIA.ORG.AU



RESIDENTS 3000



Here come the peds!

Who are the peds?

You may have noticed that more and more people are frequenting our footpaths. The old hustle and bustle of city life is back in force.

Pavements filled with parents towing little kids, prams with babies, students buried in their iPhones, school kids looking dishevelled and congregating in animated groups, fast-paced business types, slow-paced older folk, buskers and beggars and tourists looking around, taking photos.

The state of the pavement is the life of the city. It indicates a vibrant local economy and that is beginning to repair so well after the traumas of COVID.

All is not roses

At a recent Residents 3000 meeting introducing the City of Melbourne's CEO Alison Leighton, one of the questioners caught my interest.

She told the story of stepping out onto the sidewalk from her apartment front door, then started to walk down the street but had to quickly step backwards to avoid a scooter driver zooming past, but in doing so, was clipped in the back by an Uber driver's bike.

Here we see the problem. Not only do we have the peds moving within the city, but there are also bikes, scooter, Ubers, trams, cars, buses, and trucks to deal with. All have different speeds and size. How to accommodate all?

Logic calls for organisation. Trams down the middle, then the cars, buses, and trucks, (maybe we ask the trucks to avoid going right through the middle of the city?), then the bike lanes for cyclists, scooters, and Ubers.

Seems so easy and maybe we need some city/police promotion to make it happen that way. This leaves the footpath for the peds to walk or trot along safely, as well as having their stopping places for the wonderful Melbourne habit of sitting outside to have a coffee or other, along with good conversation.

But the footpath is congested, you say

There is a solution for that too. Here is what the *Pathway Book of Etiquette* has to say about engineering a happy experience for the peds when traversing the city streets. The list follows:

- Keep to the left and walk in a straight line.
- Use your peripheral vision to be aware of other around you. Embrace the crowd as being the heart of a lively city.
- Walk with purpose, look ahead, take in the

scenery (remember walking is good for your health! City people stay fit by walking everywhere).

- Don't cross the road when the light is flashing red. It is so frustrating for motorists not being able to make the left turn due uncooperative peds.
- Be polite and courteous to others.
- Take the opportunity to smile at passers-by if appropriate. Look up and bounce along with purpose. It is amazing how your attitude on the street affects others.
- Don't litter. Even pick up litter and place in bin. Shut the bin door if left open. Deposit butts in the bin not in the gutter.
- Report graffiti to the police and City of Melbourne or use the Snap Send Solve app.
- Pick up from your dog and give your best friend a hug. Good dog.
- Stop and move over to the side if you need to use your iPhone.
- Help a tourist find their way. Take their photo if they seem to need a helping hand. Make them feel welcome in our proud city.

I am sure that when you read these extracts, you could add some "etiquette" items of your own. The main point is that people make the city and the peds are an important indicator of its health and viability.

Residents 3000 – next Forum 3000

This coming month, Residents 3000 is hosting a "Community Showcase" from 6pm on Thursday, May 2, 2024. This is an opportunity to learn about a selection of community-oriented groups and social activities primarily run by volunteers or not-for-profit organisations.

It is a new event in collaboration with our City of Melbourne Neighbourhood Partner, with support from City Precinct, and it is free to attend. All are welcome. Further details: residents3000.com.au. ●

Dr Sue Saunders
VICE PRESIDENT



"Peds" – remember the signs? "Give Way to Peds" equals pedestrians.



QVM TRADER PROFILE

Art n Groove: QVM's third generation prints and posters

At Art n Groove, discover exclusive prints and posters of renowned artists and celebrities created in-house by the talented family behind-the-scenes, reflecting their passion and dedication to the business.

WORDS BY
GEORGIE ATKINS



A third generation business run by owner Kris, Art n Groove has been operating for more than 10 years at Queen Victoria Market (QVM) as a leader in the poster and print business.

"I'm married to an Australian girl, so we ran the business for about 20 years in Ireland before we came to Australia and I opened up the stall," Kris said.

Although specialising in music and movie posters, Kris notes a shift in demand towards sports-themed and cityscape designs, particularly among their tourist clientele.

"We do them to one size, so they're all

mounted and printed to a standard size of 40 by 50 centimetres," Kris told CBD News. "We keep them to one uniform size for the market because most of our customers would be travelling."

While AFL team posters are popular, Art n Groove's "top seller" is always their collection of Michael Jordan prints, much to Kris's dismay as his own football team, English Premier League club Tottenham Hotspur, hangs behind as their "weakest seller".

Among the diverse array of prints on offer, a selection is sourced from talented local artists as well as designs by Kris's brother, enriching the family-run business with a unique and "very special" charm.

"He's a digital artist, he produces a lot of the stuff now so it's Melbourne-based. Before that, we worked with artists in Camden and London to produce the prints," he said.

"Once you work for your own father in the same business and then you see your son following in similar footsteps, it certainly gives you a renewed interest in the business."

Having run his business from within the market for the past 10 years, Kris says the community of traders at QVM is "second to none".

"It's an unbelievable place to work.



Coming through the harshest trading times that the market has probably ever seen through COVID when we weren't making a dollar, it was the community of traders that kept us all going," he said.

"They came every morning, no-one was making any money, but we just had the foresight and the tenacity to keep it going

within all ourselves."

"I'm a first-generation immigrant to Australia, so the market certainly has facilitated a lot of people's livelihoods as well."

Art n Groove is located in Shed E, and is open Tuesday and Thursday from 9am to 2pm, Friday and Saturday from 9am to 3pm, and Sunday from 9am to 4pm. ●

How can your strata manager contribute to shaping your building's community?

Ever contemplated the role your owners' corporation (OC) manager plays in shaping your building's community?

WORDS BY
MELCORP STRATA



A positive and thriving community fosters a sense of connection among residents, creating a supportive environment where individuals feel heard, understood, and can grow together.

If your OC manager is not proactive in community-building efforts, it may be time to explore other options. Let's take a look at some ways your manager can contribute to enriching your community and facilitating a deeper connection among neighbours.

Improving communication

Effective communication lies at the core of a connected community. OC managers can play a pivotal role in facilitating communication among owners through the distribution of newsletters and utilising owner portals if available.

Your manager should be well-versed in recommending user-friendly and integrated software platforms tailored to your building's unique needs.

This streamlines communication

and enhances overall management for residents, non-residing owners, building managers, and OC managers, fostering a community where everyone is well informed about the happenings within their building.

Community events

Creating a sense of camaraderie is vital for a thriving community, and a proficient OC manager should be adept at organising events and neighbourhood gatherings alongside your committee.

Whether it's a festive Christmas party or a casual meet-and-greet night, ask your manager if they can help distribute the event details to owners and residents.

Also consider tailoring these events to suit the size and preferences of your building – smaller communities may prefer book club gatherings while larger communities may prefer a once-off annual event over the holiday season.

Meetings where your voice matters

Nobody enjoys chaotic and tense meetings. Well-organised meetings are essential for ensuring that every owner feels heard and empowered. Whether it's an annual, special, general, or committee meeting, a skilled OC manager will make sure that all participants can express their opinions and concerns constructively.

Some meetings may even incorporate catering options,

encouraging networking and informal discussions that further enhance the sense of togetherness among owners.

Your OC manager plays a crucial role in influencing the dynamics of your building's community.

Take the initiative to connect with them and explore how they can offer assistance in strengthening your neighbourly relationships and fostering a sense of community.

Learn more about how your strata manager can create positive communities by scanning the QR code. ●



Proudly representing the community in Melbourne's CBD



Evan MULHOLLAND MP
MEMBER FOR NORTHERN METROPOLITAN REGION

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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.

Melbourne's live music scene at risk

Whether you love sticky carpets and getting sweaty with a room of punters or sitting down with a nice glass of wine and listening to an up-and-coming singer-songwriter, we are so lucky to have so many incredible live music venues in Victoria.

But right now, many of our local pubs, bars, and local stages are under threat.

Rising rents and the cost-of-living is playing a part. But exorbitant increases in public liability insurance are hitting the hardest. Some venues are paying more than \$100,000 a year while others have copped a whopping 300 per cent increase in insurance premiums in the past year alone.

These insurance hikes have meant that some venues have had to close their doors

forever, like the beloved Bendigo Hotel in Collingwood.

Here's the deal: the Labor state government could actually help save our live music scene by offering cheaper insurance through the government's public insurer, the Victorian Managed Insurance Authority (VMIA).

They've done it before during COVID when the VMIA covered events from cancellation, and they've done it with the construction industry, so we know they can do it again. All it takes is a letter from the Minister.

However, Labor is choosing to let live music venues across Melbourne die a slow death, by not stepping in to help.

Our live music venues are more than a stage and a place to dance. They are community meeting spaces and pivotal starting places for emerging artists and culture. They make Melbourne uniquely Melbourne.

In the lead up to the state budget in May, the Greens and I are calling on the



government to step in and save live music in Victoria. You can help by signing the petition at ellensandell.com/issue/save-live-music.

We have to protect our local live music venues, and the artists they support.

If there's anything I can do for you, please get in touch. ●

Ellen Sandell

STATE MP FOR MELBOURNE

OFFICE@ELLENSANDELL.COM



APARTMENT LIVING

Living in a world of apartments is complex, so ask your question

Inside every building is a story but it is a complex story that is told from many different perspectives. Join us as we answer your questions so we can all understand that world a little bit better.

WORDS BY

TAHLA MOLLAH - CONTRIBUTOR
COMMERCIAL FACILITY SERVICES

Q: What's the best approach for handling difficult neighbours?

A: This can be challenging, but approaching the situation with patience, empathy, and open communication is often best.

It's important to address any concerns respectfully to understand their perspective while also expressing your own needs.

Initiating a friendly conversation or mediation with the help of a building manager or community mediator can often lead to a resolution that benefits both parties. If the issue persists, documenting incidents and seeking assistance from local authorities or strata management may be necessary to ensure a peaceful living environment.

In cases that escalate to a dispute, residents can file a formal complaint via the owners' corporation (OC) manager, which can only be lodged against a lot owner, occupier of a lot or the OC manager and not a third party. The *Owners' Corporations Act 2006* outlines a process for handling formal complaints, comprising three steps:

- **Internal complaints process:** lodging complaints with the OC manager, and then following a procedure that includes holding a grievance meeting with the grievance committee and, if as a consequence, issuing a breach notice. Breach notices typically allow 28 days for the respondent to remedy the breach before it would escalate. If the complainant isn't satisfied with the outcome, they have the option to resolve the dispute via the Dispute Settlement Centre of Victoria (DSCV) or go directly to the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT).
- **Resolving disputes with the DSCV:** Parties can seek assistance from DSCV, which aims to facilitate

resolution through mutual agreement. This is optional, and many residents may find this path is quicker and more cost effective. DSCV can only try to resolve a dispute if all parties agree to take part in this process.

- **Applying to VCAT:** If disputes remain unresolved, parties can apply to VCAT, which has authority to issue various orders and penalties.

Throughout the process, record-keeping is essential, and any complaints and actions that have occurred since the previous meeting must be reported at the OC's AGM. VCAT prioritises cases based on urgency and can issue a variety of orders to resolve disputes.

Q: How long can I hold lift doors open?

A: Only momentarily to accommodate additional passengers, but it's important to not hold it for too long. Extended holding or misuse can lead to breakdowns and lift shutdowns. Repair costs are substantial, so residents should be conscious of this.

Technicians emphasise that given a lift's continuous operation, they are programmed to regularly assess their safety status. Should an obstruction persist at the doors for an extended period, the lift automatically shuts off to mitigate the risk of injury. Although some lifts may self-correct, it often requires a technician to ensure proper functionality is restored.

True story

Who knew that the role of a building manager would transform into a professional translator overnight?

One day, a resident approached, holding a translating app on their phone. As the building manager I mirrored the action, and before we knew it, we were having a conversation in entirely different languages!

It looks like building managers have added "multilingual mediator" to their resume. Indeed, you never know what surprises each day holds in this job!

Have a question you'd like answered? Submit yours to admin@commercialfs.net.au and stay tuned to future editions. ●

METRO TUNNEL



State Library Station is taking shape in the heart of the CBD

New images have revealed the massive progress taking place on State Library Station deep beneath the CBD as part of the Metro Tunnel Project.

Sitting about 40 metres below the hustle and bustle of La Trobe St, the new station is making leaps and bounds towards opening in 2025, with 27 escalators and 19 lifts now fitted out.

The station has a direct pedestrian connection to Melbourne Central Station, which will allow passengers to change seamlessly between City Loop and Metro Tunnel services without passing through Myki gates.

A two-and-a-half-month operation to dismantle a noise-cancelling shed, supporting the construction of State Library Station, was finished in March.

A second shed on Franklin St will be dismantled later this year, paving the way for work to begin on the Franklin St entrance to the station.

State Library Station is one of two CBD stations – the other being Town Hall Station

– being built as part of the Metro Tunnel Project, to ease congestion on the City Loop.

There will be a total of five new underground stations – including Anzac (Domain), Parkville and Arden stations – that will form the Metro Tunnel network, providing more ways to move around Melbourne.

While work continues across all five stations, turn-up-and-go services have been trialled for the first time in a critical phase of the project's complex testing program.

Crews successfully ran test trains as frequently as every two minutes between West Footscray and Hawksburn during testing last month.

The team will start test running timetabled services with drivers and station staff in a dress rehearsal later this year, to ensure everything is ready for a safe and reliable opening for passengers.

The Metro Tunnel is the biggest upgrade to Victoria's train network since the City Loop opened in 1981.

It will connect the busy Sunbury and Cranbourne/Pakenham lines via twin tunnels under the city, creating an end-to-end rail line from the north-west to the south-east and better connecting all Victorians to jobs, health, and education. ●

RMIT大学揭开了一个价值100万美元的学习空间，专门用于苹果基金会项目

RMIT大学推出了一个新的教育空间，支持一项新的编码项目，该项目是与苹果基金会合作向学生提供的。

Marilyn Tan

这个学习空间由建筑公司Hinge设计，位于大学的城市校区。它采用可持续建筑设计，配备了最新的苹果技术。

它专门用于免费的为期四周的苹果基金会项目，该项目教导学生使用Swift和Xcode编程语言，并使用Mac和iPhone设计一个原创的苹果iOS生态系统应用程序。

该项目为代表性不足的群体提供了灵活的学习路径，并允许来自各种背景的本科生和成人学习者获得将增强他们未来职业生涯的技能。

RMIT大学STEM学院副院长、副校长伊恩·伯内特教授表示，该项目解决了高等教育中的不平等问题，并为技术行业提供了机会。

“未来的工作需要更多的终身学习机会，该项目提供了针对技术行业代表性不足群体的再培训和提升技能的机会，”伯内特教授说道。

新的学习空间支持该项目的扩展，并且其开放与今年的四个招生之一相吻合。



苹果公司全球开发者关系、企业和教育市场副总裁苏珊·普雷斯科特表示，她对该项目的扩展感到兴奋。

“我们很高兴看到RMIT通过一个新的专用设施深化了对苹果基金会项目的支持，并扩大了其iOS课程，以准备更多的毕业生从事应用开发职业，”她说道。

普雷斯科特女士补充说，自从该项目开始以来，许多RMIT学生已经获得了设计和应用开发方面的技能，为他们带来了新的机会。

“自2017年我们的合作开始以来，来自各种背景的数百名RMIT学生已经锻炼了他们的实际问题解决能力，并使用Swift获得了设计和应用开发方面的熟练技能，激发了创造力，并开辟了通往就业的新途径，”她说道。

历史悠久的茶室重新开张获得甜蜜成功

标志性的霍普敦茶室以其迷人的蛋糕展示而闻名，在其新的CBD家园再次吸引了墨尔本人的注意。

Brendan Rees

在澳大利亚的布洛克拱廊（Block Arcade）屹立了一个多世纪之后，这家著名的蛋糕店于去年7月在布尔克街和麦基洛普街的拐角处重新开业，这是因为换了业主。

这家企业首次开张是在1892年，去年7月份在布尔克街421号开了一家新的烘焙店，预计今年晚些时候还将开设三个新楼层，为顾客提供一种既怀旧又时尚的独特用餐体验。

“这是对传统英式面包房的现代诠释；这正是我们的定位，”新业主维克拉姆·辛格说。

尽管他承认自2020年收购该业务后，他本来很想留在布洛克拱廊，但他未能获得租约。

但就像它在布洛克拱廊的原址一样，这家烘焙店散发着复古魅力，拥有优雅的装饰和当然还有永恒的传统茶文化，提供各种美味的手工饼干、酱料和果酱、小蛋糕和三明治 - 所有东西都是在现场烘焙的。

“我们的厨师们在这方面投入了很多精力，团队非常热情，他们希望一切都正确无



误，也希望能掌握正确的英式传统食谱，”他说。

“到目前为止，我们的表现非常好。这是关于传统遗产，您可以带着孩子和祖父母来看看传统的蛋糕制作方式。”

他说他们期待着在这个拥有163年历史的布尔克街建筑中开设新的空间，但由于周围的施工工作而推迟了。

一楼将设有公共茶室，而二楼将专门用于预订的下午茶场地，二楼将设有可容纳30人的功能室。

“斯旺斯顿三角地带”将进行绿色更新

位于墨尔本市中心斯旺斯顿街和维多利亚街交汇处的一处未使用的角落将根据墨尔本市计划被改造成一个新的绿色开放空间。

Sean Car

在2月份向周围社区征求意见后，市议员们于4月9日在未来墨尔本委员会（FMC）会议上一致批准了“斯旺斯顿街三角地带”的最终概念设计草案。

改造这个位于墨尔本市游泳馆对面的区域的想法是在Yarra电车公司计划更新维多利亚街沿线的现有电车轨道之后产生的，该公司透露将移除三角地带的轨道。

虽然电车运营商最初提议用沥青和新的路缘石取代三角地带内的轨道，以“与维多利亚街和斯旺斯顿街上的现有人行道相连接”，但市议会却发现了增加更多绿地的机会。

由于Yarra电车公司只提供原始项目范围内新空间的资金，市议会预计将额外投入150万美元以完成最终的概念计划。

市议会规划委员会副主席罗汉·莱珀特赞扬市议会管理层“充分利用了一个非常聪明的机会，在市中心核心附近建造新的绿色开放空间”。

“在墨尔本市，我们有一个非常庞大的公园建设议程，”莱珀特说。

“我们知道人口正在激增，而在一个已经很成熟的地区增加新的公共开放空间并不总是容易、便宜，并且通常在中途会出现意想不到的复杂问题。”

“霍德尔网格（Hoddle Grid）当然以不同寻常的方式建造。在那

个时候，民主并不流行，因此像市政广场这样的地方，或者更近些时候的市场街广场的一小部分，都是在这些街道铺设后很久才增加的，而在街道和小街道之间的所有土地都被出售了。因此，这是一个美好的机会。”

市议员们批准的最终概念包括对一个新的扩建草坪的规划，配备了新的树木，周围餐厅还将有一个新的户外用餐区以及新的座椅。

该计划还确定了一个“潜在的未来激活机会”，即位于斯旺斯顿街和维多利亚街交汇处的未使用的受保护遗产电车信号楼。



墨尔本地铁隧道能帮助墨尔本重新找回活力吗？

自从墨尔本在COVID大流行期间获得了世界上最封锁的城市这个不受欢迎的绰号以来，“重振CBD的热闹”任务仍在继续。但是新的地铁隧道是否会在恰当的时机开通呢？

Sean Car

提出一个新的火车隧道将是墨尔本在COVID后身份认同危机中的答案可能听起来有些遥远，特别是对于那些已经把在家工作作为他们生活的永久一部分的许多办公室工作人员来说。

正如墨尔本市市长莎莉·卡普经常所说

的，“城市的节奏已经改变了”，尽管周末和夜间经济又在一个密集的活动日历的支撑下再次活跃起来，但周一到周五的情况更加复杂。

近年来，墨尔本遭受了一些分析师所称的“TWaTs”问题，即那些喜欢在周一和周五在家工作，只在周二、周三和周四通勤到办公室的人。无论工作模式如何，墨尔本的办公室入住率仍远远落后于其他澳大利亚主要城市。根据JLL研究，2023年底CBD办公室空置率创下了18.2%的历史新高，比全国平均水平14.5%高出3.7个百分点。

但是尽管办公室空置率趋势向着错误的方向发展，市内经济中仍有一些令人兴奋的绿色发展迹象，这可能表明这一轨迹很快就会开始迅速转变。

菲茨罗伊斯于4月17日发布的最新《漫步CBD》报告宣称，墨尔本正在经历一场



后疫情转型”，零售空置率继续下降，主要是在国际学生回归的推动下。

市场报告显示，CBD零售空置率已从过去一年的15.5%降至其主要零售区的8.7%，这主要是由于餐饮、食品饮料和娱乐运营商的空间被接纳。

在这些领域中，菲茨罗伊斯报道称CBD租赁空间已经从34.1%增加到了所有受调查空间的40.9%。尽管专业运营商略有退缩，服务零售也略有提升。

最新的墨尔本市行人数据还显示，2024年前几个月的CBD步行人流量是自2015年以来最高的，周六和周五是最繁忙的日子。

但也许房地产报告中最具代表性的趋势之一是斯旺斯顿街成为零售空置率的“最大改进者”，因为租户们开始在“未来地铁隧道站入口周围”占据空间。

WHAT'S ON May



May in Melbourne buzzes with cultural festivals, culinary delights, and artistic showcases, from the galleries to food extravaganzas.



VAL WENS: SENJA DI PANJALU (DUSK IN PANJALU)
A photographic project about the history of Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie (The Dutch East India Company) and its questionable and destructive colonialist activities in Indonesia, particularly in East Java.
Void Melbourne, level 2/190 Bourke St, Melbourne

UNTIL APRIL 27, 12PM - 5PM



MELINDA SCHAWEL: WEIGHTLESS
Drawing inspiration from the Japanese concept of 'akaru', which signifies a hopeful outlook, Schawel invites us on a journey of equilibrium within the tactile realms of paper and clay.
Flinders Lane Gallery L1, Nicholas Building, 37 Swanston St, Melbourne

UNTIL MAY 11, 11AM - 5PM



KOREA FESTIVAL
Korea Festival brings together Korean culture, cuisines and traditions in a two-day family friendly event.

Fed Square, Melbourne

MAY 10 - 11, 11AM - 8PM



HAWKER 88 NIGHT MARKET
The Hawker 88 Night Market returns to Queen Victoria Market, bringing the sights, sounds and tastes of Asia to Melbourne's favourite Marketplace this autumn

Queen Victoria Market, Melbourne

WEDNESDAYS UNTIL MAY 8, 5PM - 10PM



BEHIND THE LINES
Behind the Lines is a travelling annual exhibition developed by the Museum of Australian Democracy at Old Parliament House Canberra.

Old Treasury Building, 20 Spring Street oldtreasurybuilding.org.au

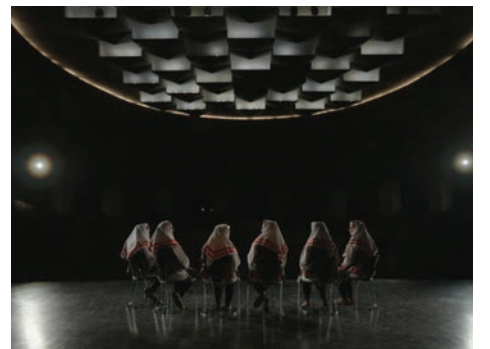
UNTIL MAY 24, SUNDAYS - FRIDAYS, 10AM - 4PM



NOW.HERE.THIS: LIVE JAZZ
Six years in the making, Now.Here.This. is all about nurturing Melbourne's rich and dynamic local music community and celebrating the city's vibrant jazz scene.

The Toff, 2f/252 Swanston St, Melbourne

TUESDAYS UNTIL JUNE 4



STANISLAVA PINCHUK: THE THEATRE OF WAR
Embark on a poignant journey through three captivating performances inspired by Homer's Iliad. Stanislava Pinchuk is the 2019 recipient of the Mordant Family Moving Image Commission for young Australian artists.

ACMI, Flinders St, Melbourne

UNTIL JUNE 9, 10AM - 5PM

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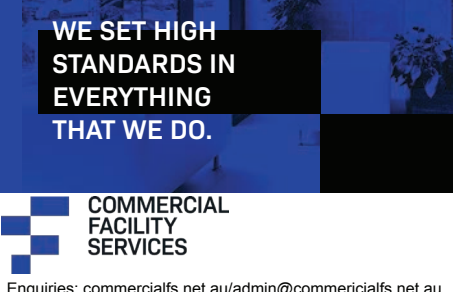
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Suzie Inglis 0416 671 572	Will Caldwell 0419 010 270

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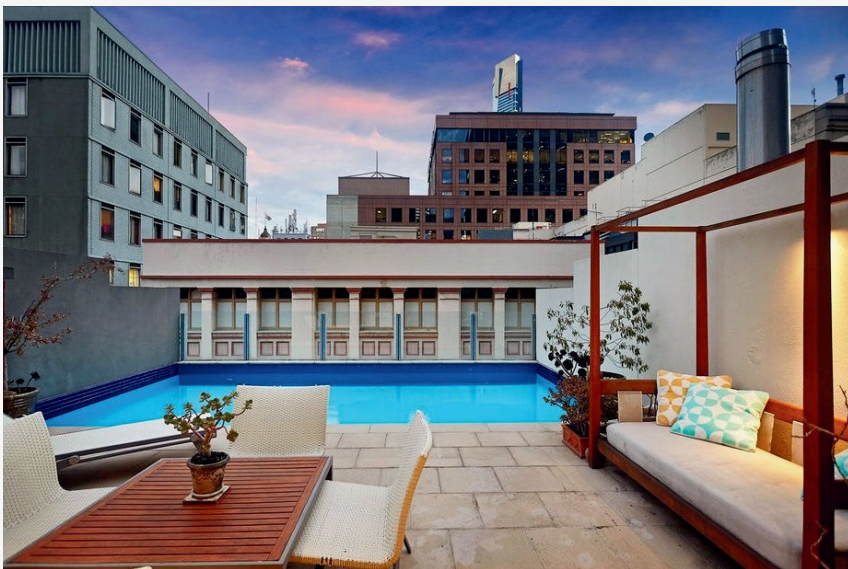
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