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FREE

CBD NEWS

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Our new Moomba Monarchs

Soccer star Archie Thompson and weather presenter Jane Bunn were revealed as the 2019 Moomba Monarchs in a ceremony on February 15.

Lord Mayor Sally Capp presented the monarchs the help of Ukrainian Cossack dancers from the Lehenda Dance Company and spaced-themed performers Box Wars.

"I'm thrilled to announce Jane and Archie as this year's reigning Moomba Monarchs," the Lord Mayor said.

Mr Thompson said he was "over the moon".

"When I was in the short list I was over the moon just to be in the running for something so special, but to be king is unbelievable," Mr Thompson said.

Ms Bunn said: "Having visited the festival as a child and over the years having

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Towers targeted for takeovers

By Shane Scanlan

Apartment towers are facing takeovers by short-stay apartment operators able to turn them into quasi-hotels.

Operators are successfully harvesting owners' corporation (OC) proxy votes in majority-investor-owned towers - and it's all perfectly legal.

Unlike NSW, there is no limit to the number, or total proportion, of proxy votes that individuals can harvest in Victoria - and it looks like the flood gates are about to open.

In the past, stories have emerged about OCs being taken over by utility and other contractor-type vested interests. But organised short-stay operators appear to be emboldened by the lack of regulation and oversight.

Professional facilities manager and former Residents 3000 president John Dall'Amico is involved in a draining struggle where an OC is being swamped by representatives of a property company, which has a short-stay apartment division and informal ties to a strata management company.

He said owner-occupier OC members were questioning the possible motive behind having members on the committee with no actual obvious connection with the building.

"They're neither owners, renters or investors," Mr Dall'Amico said. "I will leave it to others to determine the motives behind their push for control of the committee. And whether loop-holes in the law make it possible to profit from residential buildings."

"From my observations as a provider of facility management services it appears there is very little that can be done given the current laws. Most residents are first-time owners of apartments and have very little knowledge or understanding of owners' corporation matters. They are perplexed and left not knowing what to do, or believe."

In Docklands, a short-stay operator in November threatened a landlord with a \$100,000 lawsuit if he refused to pass over his OC proxy vote. It is understood a number of similar letters were also sent to other landlords.

A lawyer for the operator wrote to the landlord asserting the landlord was in breach of the Residential Tenancies Act because building management allegedly denied the lawyer's client a right to "peacefully enjoy their residence and access all common property in the building".

The lawyer complained about "intimidation, physical and racial abuse" of ethnic Chinese staff by building management.

The lawyer then suggested assignment of proxy voting rights to the short-stay operator as a solution to the problem and asked that irrevocable proxy rights be inserted into the lease. Suggested amended lease wording included:

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"The landlord may not revoke this appointment during the term of the lease, including any further term/s, except in instances where the tenant refuses to pay rent."

"The landlord acknowledges that the tenant has entered into the renewal of the lease at the specific rate in reliance upon the powers conferred upon it by the preceding clause and that the tenant will suffer damages and loss in the event it is prevented or attempts are made by the landlord to prevent the tenant from exercising its proxy in the manner set out above."

Three days later, on November 30, the lawyer again wrote to the landlord saying:

"In not taking action, after our clients have raised their concerns that the OC management is not allowing them to have quiet enjoyment of their property, our client feels that he has no option but to hold you liable as landlord. Our clients estimate that their total loss and damages are in the range of \$100,000."

"If our clients do not receive a response from you detailing the satisfactory steps you wish to take to immediately remedy the situation by close of business on Monday, 3 December 2018, we have been instructed to issue proceedings."

At the last annual general meeting of the circa 550-unit Docklands tower concerned, only eight people voted, leaving the OC



particularly exposed to takeover at the 2019 meeting. *CBD News* understands the tower has less than 10 per cent owner occupiers.

Strata lawyer Tom Bacon said proxy farming was rife in Victoria because the law was inadequate.

"There is little to curb this practice under the current OC legislation in Victoria. Proxy farming is rife in the industry, and this has allowed the rot to set in over many

years as sophisticated short-stay operators, managers, real estate agents and building caretakers have exploited the situation," Mr Bacon said.

"In NSW, the state government introduced sweeping legislative reforms in 2016 to end proxy farming by permitting a person to only hold one proxy vote at a time, made it unlawful for leases and other agreements to include an 'irrevocable proxy' clause, and disqualified persons and proxies from voting on certain matters when they had a pecuniary interest in the outcome of the motion."

Mr Bacon said the Victorian Government had been reviewing OC law since 2016 but secrecy surrounded its intentions.

"The rumour is that the legislation is being re-written secretly because it's already out of date, and because the reforms didn't go far enough to improve liveability for residents and owners," Mr Bacon said. "So, there is no cavalry coming over the horizon anytime soon. Many high-rise buildings in Melbourne are highly exposed right now, and for the foreseeable future."

The government has committed to releasing an "exposure draft" of an Owners Corporations Amendment Bill by June 30.

A spokesperson for Consumer Affairs Minister Marlene Kairouz said: "We're committed to working with the public to ensure the views of stakeholders and the community are carefully considered."

Advice for first time home sellers!

Selling a home for the first time?
Where do you start? How do you find
the right agent to list your house?
How do you understand the market?

First and foremost, selling a home is a marketing job. Your property listing needs to be positioned to get quality marketing exposure. While it might be tempting to appoint the nice real estate person that sounds good be sure you appoint an agent who demonstrates experience and professionalism.

So how do you find the right agent?

The right listing agent needs to demonstrate how they utilize all the marketing options for your benefit.

Do they have a website? Social Media presence? Is it attractive and useful to the buyer? The right agent should also be able to talk frankly with you about your home. Sugar coating the flowered wallpaper in the den will not do you any good if buyer-after-buyer walks in and sees your home as "dated."

At a minimum, you will want to spruce up your home: fresh flowers, shampoo the carpet, touch up worn paint. A good, professional house cleaner would also be a good idea...buyers will open cupboards, ovens and refrigerators.

You want to make sure that everything is organized, neat and clean. Your agent might also suggest that you bring in a stager to help arrange your furniture and belongings in such a way as to make a room appear larger. These are things you will talk about with your agent.

Once the home is ready for sale, then your agent can get to work marketing your home. Be prepared for some inconvenience. That's just the honest truth. You need to try and have your home available for viewing at the buyer's schedule.

Talking about showing times and days in advance with your agent can help minimize this hassle. The point is to talk with your agent and let them help guide you. By exploring these topics up front, you put yourself in the best possible position to sell your home for the highest possible sales price.



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A storm of pain is looming

Comment

Shane Scanlan



legitimises short-stay letting in residential buildings;

- The state's failure to outlaw proxy farming. In investor-majority buildings, it is ridiculously simple for any individual to harvest a majority of votes to control an OC; and
- Protection offered to short-stay operators under the Residential Tenancies Act. They are running a business, but the law protects them as if they are vulnerable renters. Some commercial operators are taking unreasonable advantage of this, effectively disenfranchising landlords.

The Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) is being clogged with cases brought by real estate agents pursuing unpaid rents by some short-stay operators. The "cat and mouse" games being played out are costing landlords thousands of dollars in legal costs.

In a current case, a landlord who succeeded in evicting a short-stay operator after months of unpaid rent is being sued for \$40,000.

Owners' corporation law is in serious need of an overhaul to reflect the realities of the 21st century. It appears legislators think they are dealing with how a small number of people living in blocks of flats in the suburbs interact.

But strata living will soon overtake detached housing as the default situation in Victoria.

And, in our part of the world, owner-occupiers are a vulnerable minority easily swept aside by proxy farmers determined to take over OC committees.

Take a look at Melbourne's skyline. Pretty much all of these recent residential skyscrapers are owned by investors (either off-shore or domestic) who are motivated by financial return.

Why wouldn't they give their proxy vote to someone promising to increase their profits?

These proxy farmers don't need an actual connection with a particular building to end up in control.

And they don't need many proxies in investor-majority buildings to achieve this. Low attendance at annual general meetings creates the opportunity.

They only need a relatively easily-acquired list of investor-owners with their addresses to get started. Once acquired, they either convince owners to grant proxies or simply fake their signatures on proxy forms.

Currently, there are few documented examples that this has happened. But that's no reason to be complacent. A storm is looming and, unless the Victorian Government takes urgent steps to prevent it, the damage will be catastrophic.

Our new Moomba Monarchs

Continued from page 1

broadcast live from the event providing Melburnians with the Moomba weather forecast, it's a surreal feeling and an absolute honour to be crowned monarch."

The Lord Mayor said 1.3 million people were expected at the carnival, which was the biggest community event in Australia.

"Our Moomba favourite again this year is Box Wars, the theme this year is space," Cr Capp said.

"In 2019 we've nearly doubled our dance zone and you can see why and it is programmed all over the long weekend with performances and workshops so you can watch but also participate."

"On Friday night on our main stage we'll be exclusively showing a program by rising Aboriginal artists. It will be curated by Yorta Yorta musician and poet Neil Morris of Dreaming Now."



The Lehenda Dance Company performs.

Unintended consequences are flowing from ill-considered decisions as well as a general failure to recognise emerging patterns in inner-city living.

The result is a looming perfect storm which will likely result in residents being displaced and wholesale profiteering by an unscrupulous and determined small cohort of opportunists.

The three major regulatory problems are:

- The state's deliberate backing of the short-stay industry by failing to grant owners' corporations (OCs) adequate control of their buildings. The just-enacted OC Amendment (Short-stay Accommodation) Bill 2016 formalises and



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Three strikes and you're out: Call for tougher rules on builders

By Meg Hill

Residents are calling on the City of Melbourne (CoM) to crack down on out-of-hours construction in the city, asserting that builders can break the current rules with impunity.

The council, according to limits set by the Victorian Government, can issue fines of up to \$2000 for out-of-hours work.

But residents said builders regularly start work before local laws allow because their cost-benefit analysis shows that time savings outweigh the fine.

A spokesperson for the council said: "The fine for carrying out illegal building works is set at the maximum amount council can set under the *Local Government Act 1989* being 20 penalty units or \$2,000. *The Sentencing Act 1991* sets local law penalty units at \$100."

Lendlease was fined \$2000 for starting early on January 24 at its Charter Hall development on Lonsdale St, and the Brady



Group was fined on January 25 for a breach at its nearby development on Little Lonsdale.

The council spokesperson said three infringements had been issued to Lendlease and one to the Brady Group since February 2018.

President of local residents' group EastEnders Jennifer Eltham said \$2000 was a "drop in the water" to such companies.

"It should be three strikes and you're out, the site gets shut for a week," she said.

"These breaches of permit, associated with the Brady site and Wesley Place, are not isolated issues that are happening with only these two sites. It is happening throughout the city."

"\$2000 is nothing to construction companies. It offers no deterrent."

Mrs Eltham said the CoM staff responsible for issuing fines were as frustrated as residents, but had their hands tied.

"The City of Melbourne needs to have the

powers to shut down a site when continual breaches of permit occur."

Councillor and planning chair Nicholas Reece said council had also required Lendlease and Brady to put in place additional operational measures to limit impacts on public amenity.

Other residents close to the Lendlease and Brady construction sites, who did not want to be named, told *CBD News* that the builders start early more than once a week.

On February 14 the council had issued 24 infringements for construction sites in the city this year.

As reported in *CBD News* in November 2018, the council was issuing fines for out-of-hours work at a rate of almost one per day.

One resident highlighted that out-of-hours work was not just a nuisance for residents, but was also a workplace health and safety issue.

"If they cared about safety they wouldn't make their employees operate a crane at 5.30 am," the resident said.

Barring emergencies or specific permits, building work can only be carried out between 7am and 7pm during the week, and 8am and 3pm on Saturdays.

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Heartache for fire-affected residents

By Rhonda Dredge

There were poignant family scenes at the fire-damaged Neo200 building on February 15 as residents arrived with suitcases hoping to get into their apartments, only to be turned back by security guards.

Work was still underway to make the tower safe, guards said, but some residents had been informed they could return.

To make matters worse for many, the 10-day lock-out occurred during Chinese New Year.

Some of the 1000 residents of the 40-storey apartment block on Spencer St had relatives staying for the celebrations and they had to find alternative accommodation for them as well.

One woman spent a stressful 10 days in a small hotel room with her daughter and parents. Another moved six times with his elderly mother and father. A third had her sister staying and her passport was still locked up on the 33rd floor.

There was no-one from the council at the building on Friday to assist residents with their problems, leaving security guards to bear the brunt of the frustration.



Lifeng Wang and his dad.

"You need to call this number," one guard advised the desperate resident whose sister was leaving the country the following day. He said that only the town hall could authorise access.

The woman had two small children in tow as she rang the number repeatedly. "No-one rings back," she said. She paced up and down the front of the building until she was

told to return at 5.30 so she could be let in.

"It's too bad," said Lifeng Wang, who was at the building with his father. "We went to a meeting this Tuesday. A guy said on Thursday we could move back. I've just checked out (of our hotel) and we can't go back."

"Now it's peak time. I've been living in

hotels and Airbnb. We've checked in and out six times. Four days cost \$1200. I haven't received any money."

Mr Wang, who works in the CBD, said he "feels pretty sad." His parents came for a visit for Chinese New Year. "It wasn't fun. We're homeless. I've got two pieces of luggage and my parents."

The owners' corporation has promised each apartment will receive \$2500 compensation to cover the cost of accommodation, but residents have to provide receipts.

"I was at the meeting when they discussed the body corporate policy," said a lawyer, who did not want to be named. "This is regardless of how long we're out. Some people could be desperate."

He said he would be returning to live in his apartment and that the fire was not putting him off.

"I was really casual. I left half an hour after the alarm. I couldn't smell any smoke," he said.

The City of Melbourne website said residents would be able to return to the building in stages. The Friday return was to be confirmed. On Thursday this had not occurred. The return was delayed but this information was not available. Some fire-damaged floors are expected to take six months to repair.

Smoke and mirrors on cladding - page 13

Fire expert speaks out - page 13



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Opposition grows over skinny tower proposal

By David Schout

Heritage and community groups are baffled that the Royal Society of Victoria (RSV) is pressing ahead with plans for an ultra-slim 60-storey tower on the CBD's north-eastern corner.

The RSV made headlines last May when it proposed the 330m tower – which would become Australia's tallest – on a triangular site half the size of a tennis court.

As one of the oldest scientific organisations in Australia, it hoped the skyscraper would generate enough capital to secure its long-term financial future.

But the site is situated on world heritage-listed land as part of the Royal Exhibition Building and Carlton Gardens – Melbourne's only UNESCO site.

It therefore must pass through numerous planning and heritage hoops before it is even considered.

Professor Charles Sowerwine, chair of the Royal Historical Society of Victoria's (RHSV) heritage committee, said the RSV appeared "hopelessly naive" on the development.

"I can't see it getting to first base," he said. "I can't see that any authority, even the most pro-development, would go for it."

The site, which neighbours the RSV's 160-year-old LaTrobe St building was, until 2015, used as a Bureau of Meteorology weather station until its climatic findings became unreliable as a result of increased traffic and development.

In June that year, the RSV sought expressions of interest on how to best develop the unique plot.

After receiving 30 applications, it eventually signed a formal agreement with developer Grocon and Decibel Architecture, who went on to grab news headlines for their ambitious blade-like structure.



Prof. Charles Sowerwine at the proposed site.

In early February, RSV held a two-day members' conference to bring together ideas for the site's redevelopment.

"I had difficulty persuading people [at RHSV] that we should take this seriously," Prof Sowerwine said.

"It's always difficult to speculate about people's motives, but it's beyond my comprehension how any outfit could report to its members that it was proceeding with something that every heritage consultant, and every architect I would think, would tell them is highly protected and [proposing] any building would be difficult."

Prof Sowerwine said it was difficult to understand the RSV's agenda, but argued it may not have genuine hopes for a 60-storey tower.

"We have a history of conceptions for extraordinary buildings that are put up to justify permission where it would not otherwise not be granted ... once the permit has been granted, it's very difficult to challenge wholesale revision of the permit."

The Friends of Royal Exhibition Building and Carlton Gardens have also expressed dismay with the proposed development, arguing the land holds significant historical value.

"[We] wish to convey dismay at the way in which the RSV appears to be pursuing a craven development agenda which is

contrary to World Heritage values," the letter written by member Margaret O'Brien said.

Mrs O'Brien also claimed in the letter that Planning Minister Richard Wynne had "made it clear to me that the development is not on".

A spokesperson from Mr Wynne's office did not address these comments when approached by *CBD News*, however confirmed there had been "no permit application or approach from the Royal Society to Heritage Victoria to discuss the proposed development."

RSV CEO Mike Flattley defended its position, arguing the organisation was well aware of its surrounds.

"We deeply respect our site's history and heritage – we've prioritised its care since 1859, consistently at the expense of our mission," he said.

The RSV, which boasts 750 subscribed members, voted in June last year to explore the proposal, which if approved, would allow it to:

- Upgrade its heritage-listed home;
- Develop a science engagement centre and science cafe; and
- Create an endowment fund to support Victorian science programs.

Mr Flattley conceded the area's historical significance made change difficult for locals, but wished to maintain healthy dialogue throughout.

"I acknowledge that considering proposals for change in a precinct of this nature is a difficult and unsettling process, particularly for the fortunate residents of this remarkable neighbourhood and we are working hard to balance the old and the new through reference to experienced and respected heritage advisors," he said.

"We will be discussing our plans, once suitably clarified, with the National Trust and Heritage Victoria."

The RSV aims to make relevant submissions later this year.



Cr Beverley Pinder.

Calls to dob in drug dealers

Local police and the City of Melbourne on February 14 asked locals to dob in drug dealers.

As part of a Crimestoppers initiative, Insp Craig Peel and Cr Beverley Pinder helped launch a local campaign aimed at disrupting the manufacture and supply of drugs in the city.

After being introduced by Crime Stoppers Victoria representative Caroline Reid, Insp Peel said information provided by the public was highly valued by police.

"Community information is vital to allow us to get a full picture about the manufacturing and selling drugs. The information could be the missing piece that allows us to disrupt these operations, disrupt organised crime," Insp Peel said.

He said police relied on information from the community every day and anonymous reporting was equally valued.

Cr Pinder said the City of Melbourne fully supported the initiative.

"This event today is to encourage Melburnians to pick up the phone and make a call. Police resources are always very stretched and I think it falls upon us as members of this community to feel a sense of responsibility and support the police," Cr Pinder said.

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Fears lead to fewer fines

By Shane Scanlan

Melbourne councillors have been told almost \$2 million in parking fines was not collected in the last quarter mainly because of "infringement officers requesting to be paired up over safety concerns".

In a quarterly financial report presented to councillors at the February 19 Future Melbourne Committee meeting, chief financial officer Michael Tenace reported that \$1.8 million less than expected was collected from fines in the second quarter of 2018-19. The figure is 8.4 per cent under budget.

"This unfavourable variance is due mainly to lower number of infringement notices being issued as a result of infringement officers requesting to be paired up over safety concerns," Mr Tenace said.

But his explanation has been corrected by an official council spokesperson who said: "The decline in parking infringement revenue is due to a number of factors, including the impact of extreme weather (both heat and rain) on our on-road staff in recent months, a small number of officers working in pairs and some vacancies in our team which are being advertised."

The spokesperson said the general trend for collection of parking fines was down in recent years.

"Revenue generated from parking fines in



our municipality has decreased year-on-year for the last four years as a result of fewer cars visiting the city," the spokesperson said.

However, the council's August 2018 financial performance reported that \$3.7 million (9 per cent) more than expected was collected in 2017-18.

"This favourable variance is due mainly to increased number of parking infringement penalties," the report said.

The first quarter report for 2018-19 also reported a "minor favourable variance" of \$200,000.

The council spokesperson revealed that parking officers were soon likely to be wearing body cameras in an attempt to prevent them being assaulted.

"There was no specific incident that led to a relatively small number of officers asking to be paired-up," the spokesperson said.

"It is not yet clear whether pairing-up officers has had any impact on reports of assault. The majority of assaults on our officers are verbal assaults."

"The streets are our officers' workplace and we do not tolerate any form of abuse encountered by our officers in the course of their work. We work closely with Victoria Police to ensure the reported assaults are investigated."

"We are currently in consultation with a view to introducing body worn cameras as a proactive measure to support officers' safety on street. A number of other councils around Australia are using this technology and have reported a significant drop in incidents," the spokesperson said.

Blender finds new lane for street art

The crew dubbed Melbourne's "spiritual home" of street art has moved into a new abode near Flagstaff Gardens.

Blender Studios started almost 20 years ago in a laneway near Queen Victoria Market. Many see the beginning of the modern Melbourne city street art culture in the birth of Blender.

The crew has recently had a two-year stint in Docklands, but their new lease on at 35 Dudley St is the first long-term lease it's signed. It's secured the space for at least five years.

The artists have picked up the benefits of moving around, but Blender founder Adrian Doyle said it wasn't a choice.

"We always had short-term leases. As an art studio in Melbourne we often get the buildings that aren't in the best condition, because the ones that are aren't affordable for us," he said.

"We've got security now, so we can take our time and make sure the gallery is beautiful and the quality of the artists is up to standard."

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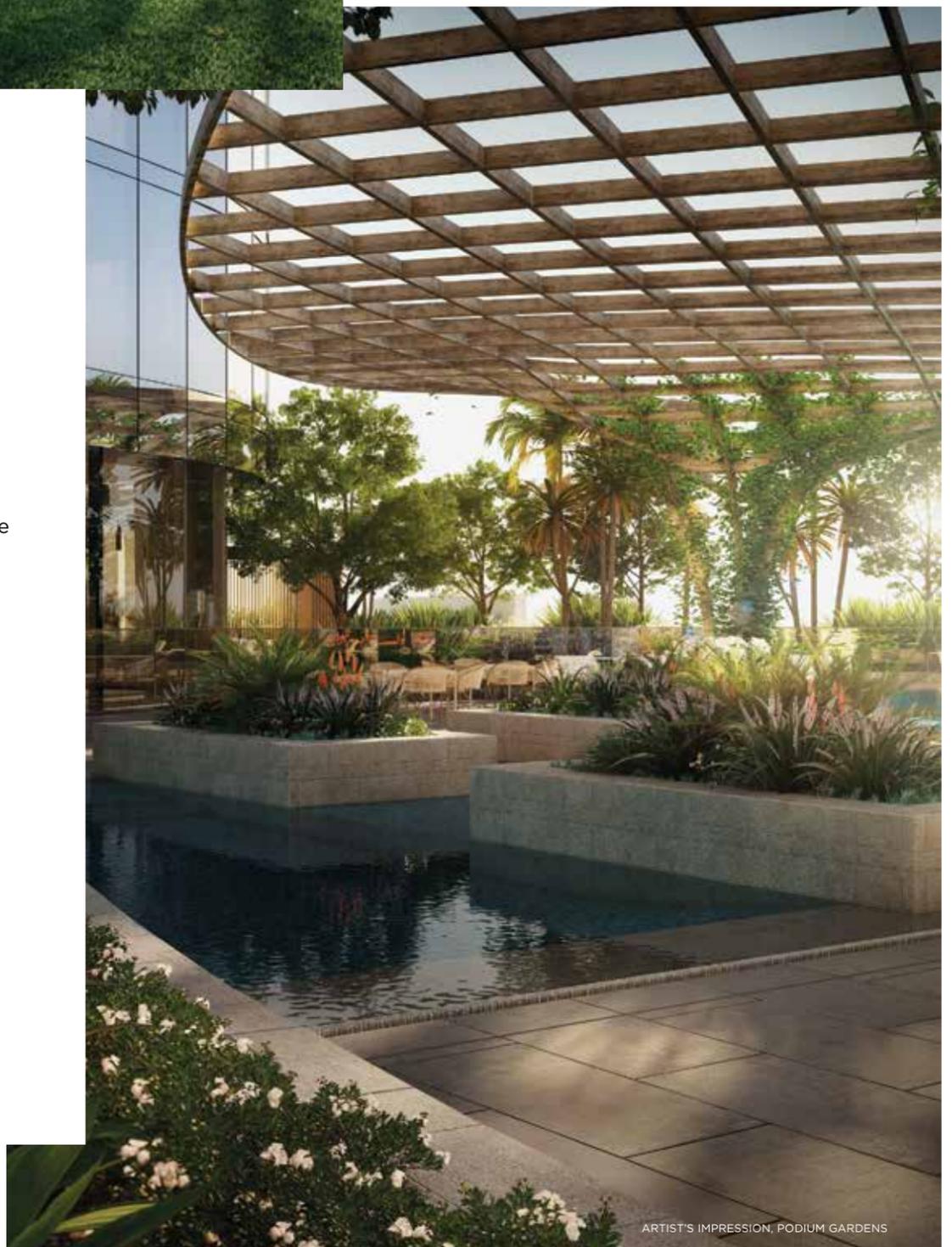
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Celebrating St Pat's Day

By Asleen Mauthoor

Since 1897, St Patrick's Cathedral has been a key focus for St Patrick's Day celebrations.

Although St Patrick died around 462, the new cathedral dean, the Reverend Werner Utri, believes the saint is still a significant figure.

"St Patrick was a person who suffered much, having been sold into slavery while still young," he said. "Perhaps Patrick is still a model for us today as we face life's trials and tribulations – perhaps we need to be reminded that God is with us."

Fr Utri, who took up his position at the cathedral in January, finds the work quite different from usual parish appointments.

"It's part of my brief from Archbishop Peter Comensoli that St Patrick's Cathedral be a place of welcome and hospitality, a place where music, the arts, theology and faith intersect; a place of outreach and mission to the wider community," Fr Utri said.

"My hope is that all visitors will experience something of that hospitality and welcome, and some of the sense of peace that a beautiful place of prayer can instil in people."

"We are planning to offer refreshments and hoping to have live Celtic music after each of the Sunday masses on St Patrick's Day."

Renowned for its excellent acoustics, the cathedral has always been a venue for fine ecclesiastical music and music will play a prominent part in the 11am mass on St Patrick's Day.

"The St Patrick's Cathedral Choir will sing a recently-commissioned work, entitled the *Mass of St Patrick* by Melbourne musician and composer Roger Heagney," director of music, Paul Taylor, said.

Visitors can take a virtual tour by downloading the St Patrick's Cathedral Melbourne Virtual Tour app.

Mass times: St Patrick's Day Schools Mass - Friday, March 15 - 10.30am; Saturday, March 16 - 6pm; Sunday March 17 - 8am, 9.30am, 11am and 6.30pm.

Further details to be published at www.stpatrickscathedral.org.au

Apple missing in Fed Square debate

By Meg Hill

Apple has been conspicuously absent in the latest saga between heritage and development over its proposed flagship store at Federation Square.

The clash has recently centred, with Federation Square management on one side and the community opposition campaign on the other. On January 30, Federation Square applied to Heritage Victoria for a demolition permit for its own Yarra Building.

Heritage Victoria placed interim protection on the square late last year and is preparing to decide whether it will be added to the heritage register following public hearings scheduled for April. The application to demolish the Yarra Building has been seen as an attempt to pre-empt the heritage decision.

Brett de Hoedt from the opposition campaign, Our City Our Square, said Federation Square paying for planning documents and permits to demolish the building was essentially "public money spent destroying public space".

"We do think it's strange that this development primarily benefits Apple but it's Federation Square doing the dirty work," he said.

"The whole process shows that Federation Square management doesn't believe in public space, we recommend they go back and read their charter which was one of the founding documents."

"They're negligent, this is nothing more than corporate vandalism."

The last time Apple made a significant public statement on the issue was when it released its redesigned concepts in July 2018, before heritage status had been formally recommended.

Our City Our Square also believes that

the departure of Apple retail chief Angela Ahrendts, announced on February 6, is a sign of instability at Apple and its plans.

Mr de Hoedt said Apple had recently abandoned plans to build a flagship store in a park in central Stockholm following widespread opposition.

Federation Square general manager Suzana Bishop said the permit application for the Yarra Building was the next step in the planning process.

"The application follows the same process as the permit obtained last year for the Metro Tunnel Station entrance site works at Fed Square," she said

Metro applied for and was granted permission to demolish the visitor centre last year while it was under interim protection, but City of Melbourne councillor and heritage chair Rohan Leppert said the situations were different.

"The demolition of the visitor centre and the demolition of the Yarra Building both need a heritage permit due to the interim protection order in place, but they are hardly comparable," he said.

"There is a mandate for Metro Tunnel, and the plans for demolition of the visitor centre were properly advertised and publicly scrutinised through the planning process well before a heritage permit was applied for."

"The Yarra Building's demolition, however, was announced without notice in December 2017, there has still been zero public consultation on any of the plans, and the heritage permit application was simply reverse engineered from that original secret cabinet decision."

Similarly, National Trust CEO Simon Ambrose said the process was the same but the examples had differences.

"With the tunnel there was a very considered plan and understanding of the work that was needed to be done, and it was part of a master plan for infrastructure across Melbourne," he said.

"For the store, it's a retail change for Federation Square so it's quite different."



Police would like to speak with these people.

Police seek mail thieves

Local police are investigating a series of mail thefts from a Collins St building.

On the first occasion, investigators believe a man followed residents into the Collins St building about 1.30am on December 29.

Once inside the building he made his way to the mail room where he stole mail. He is perceived as Caucasian in appearance and about 25-30 years old with an average build.

At the time he was wearing a grey hoodie with a black baseball cap with the logo GLTH90, grey pants and dark-coloured runners. He was also carrying a black satchel bag over his shoulder.

On January 7 police believe a man and woman followed residents into the same building about 11.30pm.

They both entered the ground floor mail room where they stole a large amount of mail.

The woman is about 20-25 years old with long black hair and has a thin build. She was wearing green pants and dark blue runners, and was carrying a black canvas bag with a Cotton On logo on the front.

The man is perceived as Indian or Middle Eastern in appearance and aged between 20-25 years old with a dark beard and moustache.

He was wearing grey pants, a black jacket with white writing on the back, and a black cap.

Anyone with information is urged to contact Crime Stoppers on **1800 333 000** or submit a confidential report online at www.crimestoppersvic.com.au

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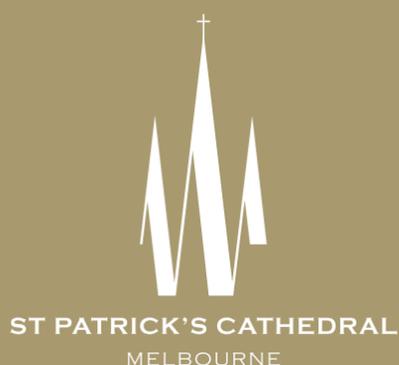
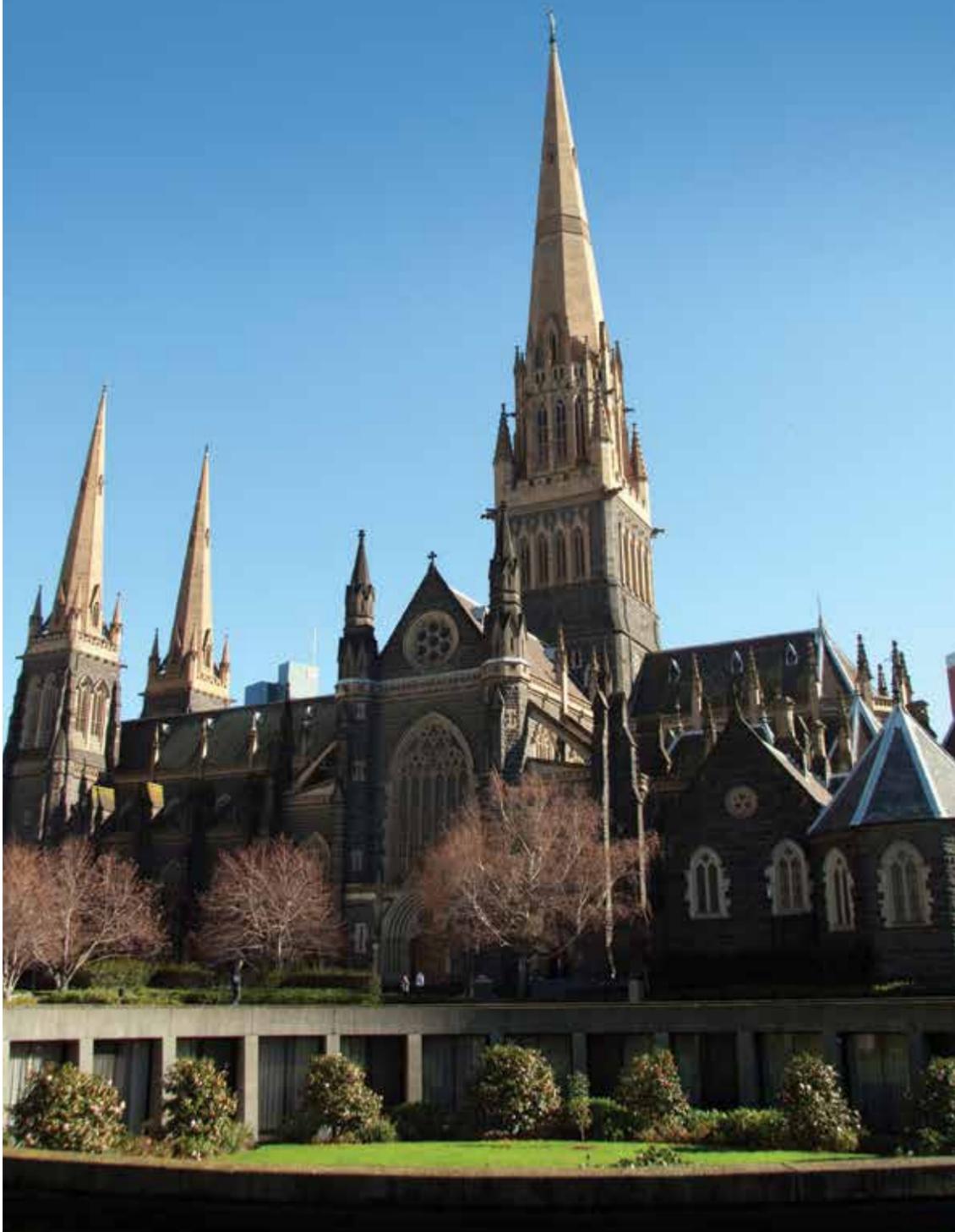
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EASTER MASS TIMES

AT THE
CATHEDRAL



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SUNDAY 14 APRIL – PALM SUNDAY

Vigil Mass of Sunday | 6:00pm, 13 April
with cantor and organ

Mass

with cantor and organ | 8:00am, 9:30am

Solemn Mass | 11:00am

With procession celebrated by Most Reverend
Peter A Comensoli with St Patrick's Cathedral Choir

Evening Mass | 6:30pm

with cantor and organ

MONDAY 15 APRIL

Weekday Mass | 7:00am, 1:00pm

TUESDAY 16 APRIL

Weekday Mass | 7:00am, 1:00pm

Chrism Mass | 11:00am

(Mass of the Oils)

Celebrated by Most Reverend Peter A Comensoli
with St Patrick's Cathedral Choir

No Reconciliation

WEDNESDAY 17 APRIL

Weekday Mass | 7:00am, 1:00pm

Reconciliation | 12:00 midday

THURSDAY 18 APRIL – HOLY THURSDAY

Reconciliation | 12:00 midday

Solemn Mass of the Last Supper | 7:30pm

With Cathedral Choir celebrated by Most Reverend
Peter A Comensoli with St Patrick's Cathedral Choir

FRIDAY 19 APRIL – GOOD FRIDAY

Stations of the Cross in the Cathedral | 9:00am

Ecumenical Way of the Cross | 10:00am

Begins at St Francis Church, cnr of Lonsdale
& Elizabeth Sts

The Passion of our Lord | 3:00pm

With Cathedral Choir celebrated by Most Reverend
Peter A Comensoli with St Patrick's Cathedral Choir

Reconciliation follows The Passion

Tenebrae | 7:30pm

With Cathedral Singers

SATURDAY 20 APRIL – EASTER SATURDAY

Easter Vigil in the Holy Night | 7:30pm

With Cathedral Choir inc. paschal fire, Baptism,
Confirmation and first Holy Communion

Celebrated by Most Reverend Peter A Comensoli
with St Patrick's Cathedral Choir

SUNDAY 21 APRIL – EASTER SUNDAY

Mass | 8:00am, 9:30am

with organ and cantor

Solemn Mass | 11:00am

Evening Mass | 6:30pm

with cantor and organ

Rhetoric outstrips council commitment

By David Schout

The City of Melbourne is leading a green power shift with the announcement of a transfer to “100 per cent” renewables, but its ambitious plan to reach zero net emissions by 2020 has suddenly been pushed back 30 years.

The council announced on January 17 that all council facilities would be powered by renewable energy sources after co-funding 39 new wind turbines in regional Victoria.

“Every light on our streets, every treadmill in our gyms and every barbecue in our parks is now powered by renewable energy,” Deputy Lord Mayor Arron Wood said, adding that it was the first Australian capital city to do so.

The “100 per cent renewable” claim was rubbished as “lies” by business icon Dick Smith who claimed that, without advanced battery technology, the council would still be powered by coal at certain stages.

“On a winter’s night, they’re still getting power from coal,” Mr Smith was quoted as saying in *The Australian*.

But Cr Wood countered that the council’s new 10-year contract with Tango Energy stipulated 100 per cent renewable supply and it was “up to them to manage the idiosyncrasies or complexities of the grid and its inputs”.

The move follows news in December that the council would no longer be chasing its long-term “Zero Net Emissions by 2020” strategy.

In place since 2003, the target has now been pushed spectacularly back to 2050 after the council cited an expected rise in the global cost of carbon offsets.

The council’s policy was to increase energy efficiency and offset remaining emissions.

“The uncertainty on climate change policy in Australia has meant we are not on track to achieve this target unless we purchase carbon offsets,” a council spokesperson told *CBD News*.

“The international rules governing carbon offsets are currently being negotiated ... and they are expected to substantially increase in cost after 2020, presenting a significant cost and risk to council.”

While the council has received favourable press for its decision to move to 100 per cent renewable energy, it failed to address the 30-year deferral of a long-held goal at

the meeting where the new 2050 policy was endorsed.

Rather, Lord Mayor Sally Capp commended the new “Climate Change Mitigation Strategy” as another “ambitious plan”.

“This is an ambitious plan and I’m really proud of it for being ambitious,” she said.

The over-use of the term “ambitious” by the council is nothing new in this space.

In the original document from 2003, the 2020 goal was also described as “ambitious”, but included a prophetic warning .

“All too often, ambitious strategic plans are developed, then left in limbo due to the sudden realisation that ‘we do not have the resources to cover this plan,’ the 2003 document stated.

But the new strategy appears to not have heeded this advice, as the council congratulated itself on being “one of the first cities to set such an ambitious target and many other cities followed our lead”.

The City of Melbourne is a clear proponent of clean energy and some councillors, notably Cr Wood, have been strident critics of federal government inaction in this area.

A rebuke of the federal government was testament to this, going as far as to say he was “really pissed off” when PM Scott Morrison criticised school students for marching on city streets due to climate change inaction.

But the lack of communication, aside from a small FAQ answer on its website, as to why its long-term 2020 target has suddenly been postponed 30 years can only lead to questions of transparency.

The move to renewables via the co-purchase of wind turbines shows the council’s climate goals move beyond rhetoric.

But its inclination to commend itself on the “ambition” of a new greenhouse gas target while simultaneously brushing over a failed previous goal may leave some scratching their heads.

Festival follows in the footsteps of the suffragettes

A new festival running in the CBD over the International Women’s Day long weekend will thread together history, gender equality and music.

The Women in Music Festival will be held at RMIT and will focus on five categories: indigenous, games, film, jazz and classical.

CBD resident Caroline Neeling founded the Women in Music Festival after she became

aware of a consistent and severe under-representation of women in the field.

The festival’s location, at RMIT in the city, is more than simply convenience. The facade of RMIT’s Storey Hall is an artistic reference to history – the tiling is an impression of the suffragettes’ clothing, while the green and purple colours are taken from the women’s liberation movement.

The building was a centre of the suffragette movement. Ms Neeling said the Melbourne suffragettes were in the building when women won the right to vote in Australia.

The festival will hold a variety of different events – including talks, panel discussions, musical and artistic performances.

Ms Neeling said that the title *Women in Music* didn’t reflect a binary representation of gender, but that the festival would incorporate different gender identities.

From the game genre, “agender” composer, sound designer and audio programmer Maize Wallin will present *Noise Draws*.

You can find more information about the festival and book tickets here: www.womeninmusicfestival.net



Caroline Neeling at Storey Hall.

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On the transport watch

By Rhonda Dredge

Treasure Jennings loves the Sandy line. She catches it to work in the morning but likes to vary her times so she gets a different public transport experience each day.

“Public transport is the heart of a city,” Ms Jennings said. She should know. As Victoria’s Public Transport Ombudsman she receives all the complaints.

Since reaching a high in 2016, the number of investigations of complaints against authorised officers has been dropping, making travel to the city a less scary prospect for those who have forgotten to touch on.

The humanising of the ticket inspector role is a credit to Ms Jennings’ willingness to tackle the hard issues around passenger wellbeing.

Over the past four years, she has used some hard-nosed statistics and case studies to encourage a change in state policy, which saw the abolition of on-the-spot fines (also known as penalty fares) in 2017.

In the bad old days, authorised officers overstepped the mark in terms of “methodology and relationships with the community”.



Victoria's Public Transport Ombudsman Treasure Jennings.

In 2016/17 the Ombudsman investigated 68 complaints about officer conduct. In the last annual report that figure had dropped to 16.

“What I’ve done is reflect community sentiment,” Ms Jennings said. “My data said that the community thought the fare was unsatisfactory. The government was open-minded.”

“The complaints were turned into a narrative that helped improve the system. I highlighted in a number of reports the difference between someone who forgets to tap on and someone who is fare evading.”

She now prefers to think of inspectors as

customer service officers.

Ms Jennings’ staff are on a first-name basis with those who direct authorised officers for trains and trams.

CBD News reported in 2017 that authorised officers had sometimes bullied vulnerable passengers into coughing up a \$75 fare or be liable for a more excessive fine down the track.

“The fare wasn’t fair. When I first started in the role I was very concerned with the way authorised officers interacted with young people and vulnerable people who are less likely to complain.”

Kids get a piece of library

A \$2 million donation to the State Library Victoria will fund an innovative project aimed at hands-on literacy development for children.

The donation from Gandel Philanthropy will deliver free literacy programs created by and for kids. It will also support the development of the Pauline Gandel Children’s Quarter – due to open in late spring.

Workshops with children’s authors and five to 12-year-olds have already started as part of the early stage of program development.

“With the vision and generosity of Gandel Philanthropy, State Library Victoria is putting kids in the driver’s seat to help shape a new era of creative and exciting literacy programs,” Minister for Youth Gabrielle Williams said.

“When this amazing new Children’s Quarter opens at our State Library later this year, it will offer a range of kid-designed programs that will boost literacy skills, build confidence and spark imaginations.”

The Quarter will be six times larger than the library’s previous children’s programming space, and will include a new children’s book collection.

"The Clock" stops time in the city

By Meg Hill

*“It’s always synced to real-time, so you have to come back at different times of day to see something new,” ACMI staff member Christian Marclay explained *The Clock* to a curious homeless man.*

Every time I visit *The Clock*, a staff member is having a similar conversation with a curious patron at the entrance.

“It’s a huge montage of scenes about time.”

“It took years to make.”

“... and it works as a clock.”

It’s showing underneath Federation Square in the ACMI basement until March, including for 24-hour stretches every Thursday. Next door Metro Tunnel is cutting through chronological layers of time from ground level.

A visit in daylight sheds time-markers as eyes adjust to an unnatural level of darkness. It’s kind of like going to the cinema as a child and expecting it to be night-time when you leave.

So, it feels more like stepping away from time than into any serious study of it. Or from manufactured time, at least. It’s 1pm on a Thursday and the room is packed. Don’t these people have day jobs?

Of course, not all of them do. Another homeless man was entering as I left. A meditation on time seems a tense activity for those who have far too much of it. But



Step away from time at *The Clock*.

although they might seem fixtures of the city that grows around them, they have agency too. It’s also mid-summer and 40 degrees outside.

It’s more like moving into an editing room, where directors and producers are watching through endless options: how should people perceive and experience time? What expectations should it create? What universal norms can be inserted into a particular time of day?

Upstairs, ACMI exhibitions run through Melbourne’s history chronologically. Although *The Clock* is pedantically accurate on minutes and hours, it has no regard for dates.

Some don’t see any stories in the piece, just a magnificent collage. But others assert the existence of sub plots. There’s so much there that if you’re looking for something, you can convince yourself you’ve found it.

A young De Niro yelling at his wife and

upending a table over an overcooked steak in *Raging Bull* cuts to a scene from *Three O’Clock High* where an attempted show of masculinity turns into schadenfreude. Is this commentary, or just useful arrangement?

Of course, it’s impossible for *The Clock* to say nothing at all, there’s plenty transplanted from the originals. A slapstick scene depicts a comical way to be saved by time, with a man who falls out of a building and hits the huge clock perched on its wall. The clock breaks and its spring, stuck on his trousers, stops his fall.

As you might expect, settings shift rapidly. Jarring cuts are softened by bleeding audio from one scene into another, like from a stormy London to a parched wild west.

One of the strongest senses the exhibition gives is that, were it not for the anonymity of darkness, you might recognise some of the other audience members. Visiting in the middle of the day, the city motions go on as normal outside, but here they seem to stop.

Anyone can walk in for a 15, 20, hour-long break and leave as they please. And if you’re on a schedule it’s an exhibition that tells you when you’re due to leave, if you’re listening.

Smoke and mirrors cloud the cladding issue

Editorial Comment

By Shane Scanlan

The Neo200 fire in Spencer St on February 4 reignited public disgust that, five years after Lacrosse, this can still happen. But it will continue to happen until actual liability is determined.

Until “who’s to blame” is universally accepted and legally binding, no real progress is possible.

Like in the 2014 Lacrosse case, builder LU Simon was singled out and besmirched in the media as the obvious villain. But does the “builder” actually define what materials should be used? Or does the builder merely follow the plans and specifications provided?

Wouldn’t the developer, in collaboration with architects, define these things?

What about the role of the fire engineers?

And (to directly address the elephant in the room), what about the role of the building inspectors? Surely the organisation that signed off the building carries responsibility?

It has been well documented that outsourced building inspections have failed the public, but you won’t hear that from the state government. And that’s because such an admission would invite liability to its door. The role may be technically outsourced, but it’s done on behalf of government.

The Melbourne Municipal Building Surveyor finds himself in a curious position in these cladding fire situations. Issuing building orders to rectify problems caused by “approved” non-compliant materials is not a good look.

The Victorian Building Authority and municipal councils are happy to make demands of owners. A series of notices were dispatched late last year.

Indeed, the government position is to burden apartment owners with the responsibility and cost of rectification works. How is that fair? Wasn’t it incumbent on government to ensure apartments were constructed with compliant materials?

Also last year the state government offered loans to owners to undertake remedial works. A generous gesture? Or a cynical attempt to “normalise” the idea that owners are responsible and the government is not?

The process has started, but it’s hard to say how many years we are still away from having a legally binding understanding of

exactly where such liability lies.

After a six-week hearing, the Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) retired in October to ponder just this question in a test case centred on the Lacrosse situation. As *CBD News* went to press, a finding had not been made.

But it is likely that multiple parties will be saddled with proportional blame. In the firing line are owners, builders, developers, building surveyors and inspectors, architects and fire engineers.

And, with so much at stake, the “losers” are not likely to accept the VCAT decision anyway. The Supreme Court is likely to be the next theatre of combat, followed by the Supreme Court of Appeal. How far will this go?

Five years could easily turn into 10 years before this fundamental question is resolved.

In the meantime, taskforces, building authorities and councils continue to assess and direct owners’ corporations (OCs) to take action.

Considering that liability is still to be resolved, you can understand the desire of OCs to make their buildings safe, but also their hesitation to pay for someone else’s mistakes.

What’s causing all the congestion?

By Meg Hill

Melburnians reported over crowding as one of the top issues last year in a City of Melbourne survey of transport and pedestrian users.

But the cause of the issue is likely to have more to do with planning than with population. Victoria Walks executive officer Ben Rossiter said a major cause was the prioritising of cars over pedestrian and public transport space.

“Cars account for about a third of the trips in the city, but they get over 60 per cent of the space. We actually have to start reallocating the space, otherwise the city won’t function properly” Mr Rossiter said.

Mr Rossiter said the City of Melbourne had shown initiative on the issue, but the Victorian Government has halted progress.

“We think the change in Lord Mayor has refreshed the whole agenda, the public conversation and the desire to look at all the options. We’d like to see the Victorian Government step up,” he said.

“The changes need Victorian Government approval but they also need a lot of money. The state government has been very car-focused and narrow in their outlook.”

“It will impact the economic functioning of the city. We’re at risk of going backwards fast, and that process has started.”

This is partly why Mr Rossiter described the free tram zone as a “bad policy decision”.

“A good policy decision on public transport would be to make them free in the outer suburbs so people can come into the city on public transport.”

City of Melbourne data also shows that those who drive into the city tend to be more affluent, leading Mr Rossiter to identify congestion as an equity issue.

Mr Rossiter said plans were needed to close various streets and areas to cars. He believes the City of Melbourne’s proposed Elizabeth St mall should be extended all the way to Queen Victoria Market.

“Down the bottom of Bourke St should be closed and the tram stops opened up. We need to get to the stage where the little streets – Flinders Lane, Little Collins, Little Bourke – are made car free.”

Alternatively, Mr Rossiter recommends the little streets be redesigned as 20km an hour shared spaces. The redesign would include levelling the street, as gutters and road space in such areas cause pedestrians to stick to the footpaths as before.

He also highlighted pedestrian crossings outside most of the train stations as the most congested and dangerous. Mr Rossiter said the crossing between Federation Square and Flinders Street Station, for example, should also be closed to cars.

Fire safety expert speaks out

By Rhonda Dredge

It’s easy to buy an apartment with combustible cladding, according to fire safety engineer Dr Jonathon Barnett, who is working as a consultant on the restoration of Neo200.

Dr Barnett knows from painful experience and is not afraid to speak out about the issue.

He bought an apartment off-the-plan in a Prahran tower development in 2012.

“I asked about the cladding and was told it was non-combustible and compliant and that was not the case,” he said. “I had to believe what they told me.”

By 2017, after the Grenfell disaster in London, the building began attracting attention and this wasn’t because of its design features or flame red appearance.

Notices began appearing in public places, warning residents against the lighting of barbecues or using lights and power points on balconies for fear that the building’s cladding could catch fire.

When *CBD News* spoke to Dr Barnett, he was working with engineers and hygienists to check fire systems and assess the risk of moulds in water-damaged areas of 200



Dr Jonathon Barnett.

Spencer St.

“The same cladding is here. It’s a different brand but the same product,” he said.

Dr Barnett was reluctant to comment on the likely cost of the blaze at the 40-storey CBD building but is working with the City of Melbourne to investigate what went wrong.

“There were a lot of things,” he said.

His personal background and expertise have

made him especially alert to the issue.

No-one has agreed to pay for the replacement of the cladding on the Prahran tower and owners are deciding whether to go to court. Dr Barnett is potentially facing a bill of \$5000 for his unit.

While lawyers argue over culpability, residents are living in non-compliant buildings that are not as safe as they could be.

“I lived in one,” the fire safety engineer said.

The dangerous cladding, which resulted in the deaths of 71 people in the Grenfell fire disaster in London in 2017, is an aluminum composite panel with a polyethylene core.

The cladding was invented in the 1980s and used on high-rise apartment blocks around the world. It is combustible and non-compliant. The cost of removal is dependent on access, on whether cranes or scaffolding are required.

Dr Barnett is president of the Society of Fire Safety, and chairs his building’s owners’ corporation and was a consultant to the State Taskforce on Cladding.

This month, Engineers Australia published a practice guide he wrote for the design of cladding on buildings and a how-to for making an assessment for removing problem cladding.

On board a humiliating journey

Local William St company Text Publishing had three titles in the short list for the Victorian Premier's Literary Awards but was pipped at the post by an extraordinary book written on Manus Island.

The book *No Friend But the Mountains* had sold out in Melbourne's bookshops by the time the award was announced in February.

Literati gathered for a garden party to celebrate, including Text publisher Michael Heywood.

Heywood was generous about the win, suggesting that the literary awards have always favoured a political edge and as an asylum seeker, author Behrouz Boochani certainly fitted the bill.

No Friend But the Mountains is a dispassionate account of Boochani's journey across Indonesia to confinement on Manus Island.

Unlike many second-hand accounts of refugee journeys told for political purposes, this book is descriptive, analytical and sparse in some places, leaving space for the reader's imagination.

Boochani is a master at creating images of power and at analysing the mechanisms that are so humiliating for asylum seekers.

In one scene he describes the way biscuits and cigarettes rained down on the refugees' tiny failing boat from a towering British cargo ship and in another the way the Australian navy crept up on them flying the flag "with a pomp all of its own".

Boochani worked as a journalist in Iran and this shows.

The method he uses is one of participant observer, as if he was out on an assignment, but instead of doing interviews and collecting observations of survivors of a tragedy, he becomes one himself.

There is a long and distinguished history of writers passionately following issues of justice and finding themselves imprisoned. Arthur Koestler wrote from a prison cell during the Spanish civil war while waiting



Prize-winners Elise Valmorbida and Omid Tofighian, who translated "No Friend But the Mountains", at the Premier's Literary Award ceremony.

for his own execution.

Perhaps Boochani got involved in the asylum seeker issue so he could write an account from the inside? He had vowed to take up the pen as a weapon on behalf of his Kurdish background and such testimony in the hands of a skillful writer can be used effectively through international organisations such as Pen to expose the hidden practices of governments.

The story in *No Friend But the Mountains* follows Boochani's journey by boat in 2012 through Indonesia with a group of asylum seekers to their processing on Christmas Island. He was unlucky to arrive just after entry to Australia was shut down.

The forced repatriation of prisoners from Christmas to Manus Island shifts the narrative a notch and Boochani delves into only-too familiar features of the worst aspects Australia's paternalistic rhetoric.

The refugees are so terrified by lectures

they receive about the dangers of Manus Island, they conjure up a malaria-infested hell hole filled with savages and cannibals, just about as far as you can get from the idealised democracy they are seeking.

The most humiliating aspect of this rhetoric for Boochani is the way prisoners were marched like criminals onto planes, wearing unbecoming over-sized yellow t-shirts and thongs, while blonde-haired journalists dip down to their knees to get the best shots for international press distribution.

Boochani's own profession was turning against him. Journalists were being used in what he calls The Kyriarchal System, a method that enhances fear and attempts to humiliate prisoners by belittling them physically and emotionally.

Boochani grew to hate the Australian officers at the Manus Island Detention Centre. When one officer admitted that he

didn't understand the prisoners, Boochani was unable to use this as an opening for a more humane discussion.

The Kyriarchal System the officers practiced was punitive rather than protective, according to Boochani. Prisoners were not allowed to have pen and paper nor play games. A makeshift backgammon board was destroyed. They were forced to queue for hours for food and those at the end of the line received the dregs. Schedules and rules changed erratically. Boochani was convinced the system was aimed at breaking down prisoners so they'd ask to go back home.

The details he provides are so convincing the reader slips into the persona of Boochani and is soon imprisoned with the men.

The best prison narratives reflect on the psychology of humans under duress. A prisoner in one prison account made an abacus out of bread and hair to keep himself from going crazy in solitary confinement. Another counted all the characters in Dickens' novels. These details stick in the collective memory, as does the one that Boochani composed his 356-page account on a mobile phone and sent it out as texts to his translator Omid Tofighian.

It is difficult to contain such a large story as Australia's treatment of asylum seekers within one book and Boochani doesn't really try. He is not after a retelling of refugee stories but an analysis of the process of incarceration of people who have asked for help and his methods work well to bring readers on board.

Rhonda Dredge
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VCAT Watch

Melbourne's solution to heritage?

One of the challenges in urban renewal planning, especially in a capital city context, is designing for new buildings on a site where an existing heritage building is to be retained.

One approach is to set back the new building behind the old building (a la 386-390 Spencer St, currently under construction) or to set the new building above the old building (a la Herald and Weekly Times building in Flinders St).

This latter approach has also been described as a "growing out of" design response.

In *Metro Pol Investment Pty Ltd v Melbourne CC* [2019] VCAT 128, the tribunal

considered a proposal for a 20-storey building on the historic Metropolitan Hotel site at 263 William St that applied "the-new-above-the-old" or "growing out of" design approach.

In a previous case where the same design approach was proposed, former tribunal president, Stuart Morris QC, acting for the applicant, contended this was "Melbourne's solution to heritage".

The City of Melbourne opposed the design approach for the Metropolitan Hotel site. Its heritage expert witness told the tribunal that it was not an accepted conservation standard and took the tribunal to a number of examples where he considered it to be a poor outcome.

The overriding concern with this design approach was that the new building dominates the heritage building.

The tribunal considered that there should not be a hard and fast rule about the

design approach and that it would depend on a range of factors, such as the age and significance of the retained heritage building for example.

In this case, it considered that the tower sitting above the historic Metropolitan Hotel building was acceptable, noting that at the pedestrian scale, the retention of the heritage hotel ensured that the traditional parapet line was consistent with the scale of adjoining heritage buildings to the south and west in Little Lonsdale St.

However, the tribunal was not completely satisfied with the design detail. It was not convinced about the "break" between the top of the heritage building and the commencement of the tower building. It was also concerned that the proposed bronzed glazing of the tower would potentially compete with the red brick to be reinstated on the hotel.

The tribunal granted leave for the

applicant's architects to come back to the tribunal with some options to address its concerns. Four options were tabled. It preferred an option that simplified the colour scheme which, it concluded, would assist in integrating the space between the heritage building with the building above and make it less dominant to the retained heritage structure.

Retaining heritage buildings is critical for preserving Melbourne's identity and character. How to design new buildings around old buildings to be retained is a significant design challenge to ensure heritage fabric is not overwhelmed.



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CBD Local

Accolades for Ludovic

A CBD resident aiming to eliminate waterway pollution has been receiving international recognition.

Ludovic Grosjean was named one of six Young Innovator Rotary People of Action last year and in November presented his work to the United Nations in Kenya.

"They flew me to Kenya and I had the chance to speak in front of 1000 people," Mr Grosjean said.

"I always take my yellow diving fins to conferences and carry them around with me. It makes people remember that I'm the one that does ocean technology and they come and talk to me."

Mr Grosjean said his company, OceanX Group, combined his two areas of expertise – engineering and oceanography – to tackle the issue of pollution.

The company operates in two fields: consulting for a variety of stakeholders, including local councils, as well as research and technology development.

Mr Grosjean said the point was to target pollution "at the source".

We don't want to wait for the pollution to get there, we want to stop it before that," he said.

But his first "mini-business" was just Mr Grosjean and his fins in the harbours of France, where he is originally from.



"People in the harbours got stuck because of pollution. There was a lot of plastic and when they turned on their propellers all the garbage got stuck," he said.

"I would bring my equipment and work in the harbours collecting the pollution and

I discovered how much of an impact it was having."

"Do we want coral growing around plastic bottles? When I was in Africa I snorkelled in places where you would think it was the most untouched place and there's coral

everywhere, but it's surrounded in plastic."

The immensity of the problem dwarfed the capabilities of an individual diver and this led to Mr Grosjean's current solution model.

Through compiling data, an autonomous monitoring system is developed that shows what kind of pollution enters what area at what times and from where.

The second part, Mr Grosjean said, was "social".

"You need a team of local people in each area putting in impact to avoid the pollution in the first place," he said.

Mr Grosjean refers to this as community power.

His team has run a number of local initiatives, much of it to clean up the Yarra River, including oBike-fishing events.

He said the trick to his company's success was combining the technology and social sides.

"People do technology, people do social, but nobody does both," he said.

Mr Grosjean and his team would focus on the Yarra again for CleanUp Australia Day on Sunday, March 3.

Get involved here: oceanxgroup.org

Vertical Living

Energy vulnerable vertical villages?

Energy is the bedrock of modern life but are we high-risers too exposed?

Our vertical villages stand already accused of energy guzzling with claims that apartment living can consume 25 per cent more energy than detached dwelling living. A large percentage of this goes to our dependence on air conditioning due to our floor to ceiling windows. Added to this, our common property – lifts, pools, gardens – also draw heavily on our purse with the energy used here accounting for up to 60 per cent of the total building's energy consumption and 25 per cent of administrative fund levies.

While our energy consumption is, of course, a financial concern, perhaps more worryingly, we vertical villagers are now being discussed in terms of our energy vulnerability.

Are we a "vulnerable group" in terms of energy?

Let's be a little pedantic and look at the meaning of vulnerable.

Coming from the Latin vulnerare (to wound) and from vulnus (a wound), being vulnerable can be about exposure to particular adversity and, in our case, being open to specific hurt (wounding) due to our energy arrangements.

According to the Group of Energy Efficiency Researchers (GEER), this is precisely what we of the vertical villages are – that is, exposed, susceptible and energy vulnerable.

And who is GEER to so deem us?

GEER is a group of research and industry

members drawn from institutions across Australia which are concerned with the health, wellbeing and quality of life for people who are confronted by energy challenges such as affordability and sustainability. (I must now disclose that I am a member of GEER and will be presenting in April at the IREE conference on improving residential energy efficiency.)

So, how are we vulnerable?

Consider the wide array of ways in which we vertical villagers might be wounded by our energy arrangements.

Let's start with thermal performance. A study by Melbourne University (2017) found many of Melbourne's high-rise apartment blocks deficient in their thermal performance. In fact, without constant air conditioning for cooling, these apartments become "uninhabitable". Compounding this, the frequency and length of heatwaves are expected to significantly increase (potentially tripling), as is Melbourne's "heatwave amplitude" (i.e. the intensity of the hottest day of the hottest heatwave), so say researchers Herold, Ekstrom, Kala, Goldie and Evans (2018). This means we will be cranking up our air conditioning even more, which leads us to another sore point – embedded energy networks and our ability to choose our energy provider.

Canstar Blue explains an embedded network as a contract between the building owners and an energy retailer for the latter to supply power to all of the properties in

that development. Developers often opt for this arrangement as it is less expensive than installing individual meters. However, it also means that the option of switching electricity providers is not possible for individuals and can be extremely costly for the entire building.

But perhaps we could seek help through the energy schemes offered by our governments such as the Victorian Government's Solar Homes Package?

Unfortunately, as vertical villagers, we do not "own" our roof, and this means that individually we do not qualify for these types schemes.

Perhaps help might be more forthcoming from programs specifically aimed at vertical living, such as Smart Blocks and NABERS for Apartments.

Disappointment again.

Smart Blocks has slipped quietly away and, as for NABERS for Apartments, while most residential buildings which participated in the pilot have received their rating, little else has been forthcoming (i.e. how to improve these ratings). And logic dictates that without dedicated action to improve energy consumption, a building's rating will likely be the same (or lower) next year – so why go to the bother of participating next round?

Yet hope springs external.

There are emerging some very clever innovations for vertical dwellers.

Take Solgami.

These origami-style blinds hang inside a window and generate electricity as light reflects against the folds of the panel. The geometry of the design also allows more natural light inside, a point in its favour compared with the darkening effect of strong window tints.

According to Ben Berwick, the director of the Australia-based design firm Prevalent, the aim is to reposition cities (and specifically our vertical villages) as places of production rather than solely consumption.

Naturally the amount of power generated will vary inline with window size, orientation (in this case, west is good!) and climate.

And while Solgami is not yet commercially available, it is this type of multi-faceted approach where several issues are simultaneously dealt with (temperature, light and energy) that promise us a better path.

In this way, we vertical villagers can become less energy vulnerable – but only if we are energised about our issues!



Janette Corcoran
Apartment living expert
<https://www.facebook.com/SkyPadLiving/>

History

The “Sands & Macs” - a goldmine

Melbourne historians owe a huge debt of gratitude to a Melbourne publishing company – Sands & McDougall.

Its foremost publication, the *Melbourne Directory*, is a prime information source for anyone tracing the history of buildings and people in the city and suburbs.

The company had its beginnings in 1853. In that year John Sands, an English-born engraver, printer and stationer with an established business in Sydney, formed a partnership with his brother-in-law Thomas Kenny.

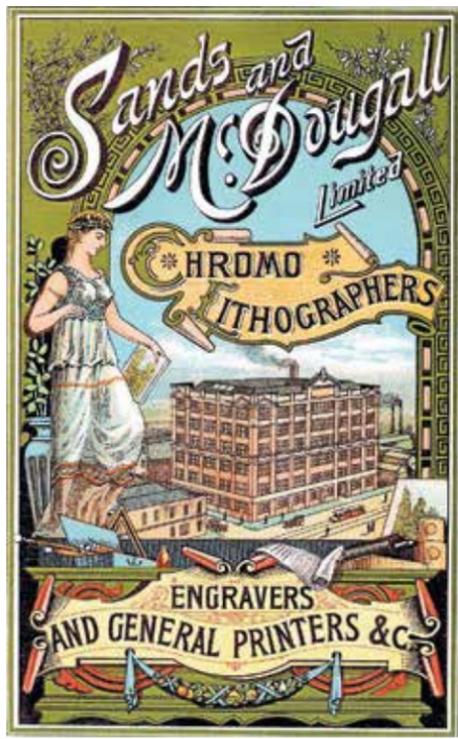
Sands and Kenny took over the business of James Williams, a printer in Collins St. The company was joined by Dugald McDougall, a former employee of James Williams, and he became manager in 1857. He was admitted as a partner in 1860 and the company became Sands, Kenny & Co.

In 1861 James Kenny retired and the company became Sands & McDougall. In 1872 Dugald's cousin James Macdougall became a partner. (Three McDougall brothers of a previous generation had each adopted a different form of surname spelling to stop confusion over wrongly-delivered mail.)

1872 also saw the death of John Sands. The McDougalls bought his share in the company and in the same year a new factory was opened at 151 Collins St.

Probably the company's most well-known product first appeared in 1857 as Sands and Kenny's *Melbourne Directory*. It was an instant success and became an annual publication. From 1862 the directory was published as *Sands & McDougall's Melbourne Directory*. In 1871 *The Age* commented:

“The 15th issue of *Sands & MacDougall's Directory* is to hand. Greater praise cannot be accorded this publication than by saying that no counting-house nor place of business is properly furnished unless the directory



1891 advertisement for Sands & McDougall showing building at 357 Spencer St (RHSV Collection)

finds a place with their books of reference.”

As Melbourne expanded, so did the directory. In 1860 it contained about 10,000 names. By 1896 this number had risen to 100,000.

Although the directory may have been the company's most well-known product, it also engaged in a wide range of other activities. Additional space was required and, on February 12, 1889, the company, by then one of Melbourne's largest commercial printers, began operations in a huge new six-storey building at 357 Spencer St in West Melbourne.

Called by some “James Macdougall's White Elephant of the West”, the building nevertheless was soon completely occupied. By 1897 a company publication records the activities of no less than 16 separate departments in the building, including Box Making, Writing Ink Making, Cheque Department, Lithographic Printing, Rubber Stamps, Bank Note Room and the Publishing Department.

In the Bank Note Room bank notes were printed under extremely tight security until 1910 when the Federal Treasury took over this role. The company also produced a vast range of other products ranging from account books, exercise books, illuminated addresses, formal invitations, and award and prize certificates to tickets for Melbourne's tramway system and wall maps of “Melbourne and Suburbs”.

And while all this other activity was in progress, the Publishing Department pressed on with the annual production of the *Melbourne Directory*. The workforce was divided into the outdoor staff and the indoor staff. The outdoor staff members were responsible for gathering the required information. The so-called “walkers” tramped the streets of Melbourne, knocking on doors to ask the names and occupations of each building's occupiers.

The information gathered by the walkers was collated by the indoor staff and prepared for publication. As well as a street-by-street record of building residents and their occupations, the directory provided alphabetical listings of residents and of practitioners of trades and professions.

The final edition of the directory was published in 1974. Demand for the publication had fallen, and the cancellation by Victoria Police of an order for more than

600 copies of the planned 1975 edition was a major blow. Also the growth of Melbourne, coupled with an increasing concern over privacy issues, had made the task of collecting information increasingly difficult.

However, the nearly 120 years' worth of information collected in the directories is a goldmine for historians. Many of the directories are available in digitised form but the original bound volumes are still available in several locations.

The Royal Historical Society of Victoria has an almost complete set and they are extensively used by historians and genealogists. A dedicated group of RHSV volunteers also use the directories to research the histories of specific sites in response to requests from builders and developers who have to demonstrate that there is no historical, heritage or environmental objections to their proposed projects.

So, more than 160 years after the first *Melbourne Directory* was published, the “Sands & Macs” still serve a valuable purpose.

The Sands & Mac building still stands at 357 Spencer St as the Menzies Institute of Technology. Fittingly, it backs on to McDougall Lane.



David Thompson

David is researcher at the Royal Historical Society of Victoria

Commuter Tales

On the meaning of life and being a badass

This month's commute has seen me working my way through Michele de Kretser's “The Life to Come”.

Like some long journeys it's only now, as I approach the final few pages that I actually think I understand the meaning of all those words I have been reading, reluctantly, begrudgingly and only because it is a winner of the Miles Franklin Literary Award.

I know it's a dumb reason to persist with a book if you are truly not enjoying it but hey, nobody's perfect.

The book, told in five parts, is written in a poetic style awash with vibrant imagery and a kind of hand-held camera style that is jumpy and inquisitive. It tells the story of seemingly disparate groups of people bound by a character who, in the first part of

the novel, appears to be a relatively minor influencer but in fact appears and reappears throughout the story.

Part of the reason I didn't like the book is that I didn't really like any of the characters. Part of De Kretser's talent appears to be to distance herself enough from her characters that she betrays no fondness for them and, as a consequence, neither did I.

This life is one observed in fragments, in parts, as one observes the lives of others. We can never truly know other people – what motivates them, what makes them tick – so why should the author?

And the broader question it posed for me in the end was should it matter? Should it matter that these people didn't act, say or do anything particularly likeable? Is my compassion and understanding of other people bounded by how like me they are or whether I can relate to them? I guess the answer is yes, it is. To a point. But I am prepared to be challenged on that.

The latter part of the book, which spans decades, is a kind of wistful contemplation on ageing, loneliness and living a life with meaning. It is almost unbearably sad, so doesn't make for good reading on a tram. Unless of course you like doing a deep dive into vulnerable states when on your morning commute!

The other book I've been listening to on Audible is a self-help book by Jen Sincero called *You are a Badass*. There is something about the term “badass” that appeals to me – don't know why. Makes me feel all proud and feisty.

Like all self-help books that talk about achieving your dreams, being your own authentic self, making lots of money, etc, etc, this one stands on the shoulders of some great philosophy and great thinkers.

She talks mindfulness and meditation, motivation, the laws of attraction (things, lifestyles, careers, moments as well as people), and a whole lot of other stuff I

recognised from other books I have read (I have read many).

And like any self-help book, no matter how good it is, you've got to be ready to receive the advice, otherwise it just goes over your head, right through you or around you.

Well, I was ready for this book. Maybe it's an age thing (having suddenly found myself 50-something and realising that no, I can't go back to uni and study to be a clinical psychologist) but I was (am) ready to start living more closely to my authentic self.

What this means is yet to be determined. But the realisation has and is leading me to a calmer and more accepting state I quite like.

Until next time. x



Maria-Doogan

CBD Worker

Metro Tunnel



Photo courtesy Charlie Kinross.

Construction update

Metro Tunnel construction continues across Melbourne with works on the new Town Hall and State Library stations making significant progress in recent weeks.

A 121-tonne, 15-metre long road header launched 30 metres underneath A'Beckett St late last year. It continues to dig out a pedestrian access passage for the new State Library Station ahead of five other road headers arriving to mine out the caverns for both CBD stations.

Vertical support structure works, known as piling, will support the construction of the stations and is more than 50 per cent complete at the City Square and Franklin St West sites.

Flinders Quarter, behind Young & Jackson, has transformed since archaeological digs wrapped up and preparation works have started ahead of final demolition of Port Phillip Arcade and the KFC building and the commencement of piling.

Federation Square works also continue to evolve with the demolition of the old Melbourne Visitor Centre basement and Federation Square deck close to completion in preparation for piling.

Collins St changes

Utility services were being relocated in February underneath the footpath on Collins St near the Metro Tunnel City Square site,

home to the new Town Hall Station.

These changes will allow for the construction of a driveway for trucks to enter the site.

This entry will become operational once a steel deck is created later in the year. Trucks will enter the City Square site via Collins Street and exit onto Flinders Lane.

Josh Muir artwork on show

Artwork by Josh Muir, a Ballarat-based Yorta Yorta/Gunditjmara artist, has been installed on hoardings outside the A'Beckett and Franklin streets construction sites along Swanston St.

Muir's solo exhibition, JOSH X MUJR, was presented by the Koorie Heritage Trust in November 2018 with support from the Metro Tunnel Creative Program.

The pieces are from the exhibition which continues the artist's journey of self-exploration in which he surprises with his colourful digital prints on aluminium.

His works reflect contemporary street and pop art but incorporates imagery from his own Aboriginal heritage and strong sense of place and community.

Heritage

Yarra Building is self-evidently vital

Earlier last month Melbourne Heritage Action (MHA) sent in an objection to the demolition of part of Federation Square for an Apple store, which we see as having little justification now that the square is heritage listed.

We submitted that it was architecturally self-evident that the Yarra Building is vital to the integrity of Federation Square as a self-contained architectural statement.

While we acknowledge that the inclusion of the Yarra Building came late in the design process of the square, it does form a cohesive part of the square's design which cannot be seen as an afterthought by any layperson.

The idea that a change in design lessens the integrity of a heritage place is obviously absurd, as we would then need to consider the demolition of such places as Flinders Street Station being acceptable due to changes made to the station during its late design and construction phase, such as the smaller scale of floors, or the change in concourse design.

Furthermore, the proposed Apple store design forms an antithesis to the recognised heritage values of the square's "deconstructivist" style, placing an incongruous minimalist glass box in the middle of a unique "fractal" design.

We believe any discussion about what the new design might do to "open up" the river or square architecturally is irrelevant, as extra open space is not a criteria on which to judge the effect of the heritage values of a place. We wouldn't agree to changes to the Treasury Building, for instance, in return for some open space.

Socially, we need to ask what kind of Federation Square the public of Melbourne has valued for the past 17 years, and indeed the kind the public space Melbournians desired that led to the construction of Federation Square.

While it is true that parts of the square including the Yarra Building already maintain some commercial uses, these

are currently of a hospitality nature, the kind of places that encourage socialisation. They are supporting in nature, rather than being a major corporate presence.

Despite some corporate posturing about being a universal meeting place, an Apple Flagship Store is at its core simply an exercise in branded advertising space, with a target market of high disposable incomes and fans of a particular product.

It is not in any sense a community space or a communal city experience, the functions Federation Square was designed to allow.

The outcome of Heritage Victoria's decision doesn't just tell use about one small part of Federation Square, but what wider values are held for heritage and public space in our city.



Tristan Davies
President
Melbourne Heritage Action

Open for business

The Nicholas Building

Throughout construction of the new Town Hall Station, the Nicholas Building will remain open and accessible from Swanston Street and Flinders Lane.

Please continue to support your favourite Nicholas Building businesses. For more information visit metrotunnel.vic.gov.au or call 1800 105 105.



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Music

Gold afternoon Melbourne

At the height of summer every year, 3PBS has a series of free live music performance extravaganzas from its Studio 5 happening during drive time.

This event celebrates Melbourne's vibrant live music scene.

One of the many highlights was the fabulous Ainslie Wills performance of her song *Society*.

Wills is a very talented writer, her work reminiscent of the American author William Kennedy. Moody, melodic Wills's key music collaborator is Lawrence Folvig.

Wills's latest transcendent musical release is the EP *Oh The Gold*. She also put in a hypnotic performance at the recent Falls Music Festival. Later in the year she will be touring in the UK.

The Thursday, February 7 arvo 3PBS drive time show *Fang It!* hosted by the eminent Ruari Currin had a great clutch of awesome rockin' on nitrous oxide bands ripping out some stonkin' tunes.

There were some great sets of music from some mighty Melbourne bands kicking out the jams, playing some sweet performances and I refer to Ute Root, LAI and Private Function!

Ute Root are getting their mojo back for

2019 and the trio put in a ferocious set. They will be performing at The Old Bar on March 31 with Moody Beaches, Some Jerks and Party Pest!

Moody Beaches should be worth checking out as they have just returned from a recent successful tour of New Zealand and they have a residency happening at The Old Bar through late March and April - something that will be an absolute apogee for many punters.

Another highlight was Jaala, the lead singer from Melbourne outfit Mangelwurz. Her debut solo album *Hard Hold* is an exceptional collection of songs showcasing her ability for great jazz-inflected tunes. She has been compared in a favourable way to Siouxsie Sioux.

Melbourne's soul scene is going ballistic in the 21st century and one of the finest purveyors of Melbourne soul, That Gold Street Sound have just released their second album entitled *Trick Of The Light*.

2018 was a phenomenal year for That Gold Street Sound and they have kicked off 2019 in sensational style with the launch of their incredible *Trick Of The Light* sophomore album.

They have cranked out a phenomenal sassy funkified soul album. Kudos to That Gold Street Sound for delivering the goods. They are a very fine Old Melbourne Town musical posse.

The first single from this much-

anticipated album is the song *Trick Of The Light*, a song about the beauty of the light in the sky just before the sun rises, walking home, imagining that perchance you might be in love. One of the great things about That Gold Street Sound is that the lead singer has cajones.

Other Melbourne soul bands that That Gold Street Sound draw inspiration from include Cookin On Three Burners, The SevenUps, The Sugar Canes, Sex On Toast, Fulton Street, Stevie And The Sleepers.

That Gold Street Sound came to the attention of many punters when they put in a scintillating show at the Taste of Melbourne Festival at Albert Park. That Gold Street Sound play their music for love. They play their music for the funk. You can catch That Gold Street Sound performing at the Northcote Social Club on Friday March 19.

Legendary Northern Soul champion Vince Peach, the 3PBS *Soul Time* guru will be DJing at this event and the night will be like the Cherry Bar Thursday funk night travelling through time and space to a Saturday night in Northcote.

That Gold Street Sound are in pretty good shape and *Trick Of The Light* is a very well-balanced offering. The brass inflections are precise, with gut-busting flair, the drummer is total accuracy - the beat within the beat - and the lead singer has the cajones to deliver the party machine into full flight mode. The guitarist is on a par with the Lance Ferguson

machine.

Go you good thing That Gold Street Sound. Transient music for a golden afternoon filled with lustre and light. On this effort you cannot dismiss the mighty funk of That Gold Street Sound.

One overseas band that is a favourite of many Melbourne musos, Swervedriver have released a new album *Future Ruins* and the highlight song from this brilliant hypnotic space travel rock and roll group is the first track of the album *Mary Winter*.

It is an absolute ripper of a Swervedriver song. The song narrative drive is about an astronaut reminiscing about his favourite things on planet earth. Swervedriver have a tremendous ability to go with great agility through the gears with sensational melodic inventiveness, going further and further into the sun. Of recent times Swervedriver have been touring promoting *Future Ruins* around America. Bravo Swervedriver.

Gigs/Shows

Sunday arvos in March - Cherry Blues Sunday arvo sessions



Chris Mineral
email: mineralsands@hotmail.com

Planning



Melbourne's changing skyline. Image: Laurence Dragomir/Areaone.net.au

Take a walk or look at these virtual updates

Take a walk around Melbourne's Central Business District and you'll notice it is a hive of construction activity.

Keep your eyes to the ground and you'll notice excavation underway on the stations for the Melbourne Metro Tunnel or for the latest high-rise to grace the Melbourne skyline.

Tilt your head up and you'll see a sea of cranes scattered across the skyline, with the majority of activity concentrated west of Swanston Street.

To highlight the level of construction activity underway, I have prepared the following diagrams which illustrate the various buildings under construction, approved and proposed.



Existing Skyline.



Under Construction.



Approved.



Proposed. Images: Laurence Dragomir/Areaone.net.au



Laurence Dragomir
Laurence is an Urban Melbourne director with expertise in the CBD urbanmelbourne.info

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We Live Here

Cladding, short-stays and rooming

As evacuees trudged out of the CBD high-rise building that caught fire in February, the media stepped in to interview the victims of this alarming incident that has been blamed on combustible cladding.

Many people interviewed were short-stay visitors. One interviewee was a short-stay business operator who claimed to manage dozens of apartments in the building.

Overcrowding was also reported as a feature of an earlier fire at the same address two years earlier, and just last year there was a report of gangs of youths running amok at an out-of control party in a short-stay apartment in the same building.

These are not isolated incidents.

It is time the government took notice of what is going on under its nose. Instead, we are supposed to congratulate it for enacting the OC Amendment (Short-stay Accommodation) Bill 2016, which became law early this year, but which doesn't begin to scratch the surface of the many issues facing residents in high-rise communities.

The fire that raced up the 41-storey building at Neo200 in Spencer St had some similarities to the Grenfell fire in London in 2017 and the Lacrosse fire in Docklands in 2014, both of which were linked to combustible cladding used on the exterior of

the buildings.

The fire appears to have started in an apartment on the 22nd floor and raced up seven floors damaging the balconies before it was extinguished.

One person suffered smoke inhalation and hundreds were evacuated from the 371-apartment building opposite Southern Cross Station.

The assistant chief fire officer for the Metropolitan Fire Brigade said combustible cladding material was found on parts of the building near the balconies and it is believed to have been one of the fuels that accelerated the fire.

It was also reported that the Victorian Building Authority (VBA) knew that this building was fitted with "non-compliant cladding material" and had referred it to the City of Melbourne Municipal Building Surveyor (MBS).

However, following an audit in 2016, the City of Melbourne MBS determined the building was "safe for occupation" and "no further action" was required.

This is not the first time We Live Here has been made aware of different advice being provided by the relevant authorities and it is fortuitous that no one was killed or injured in this fire.

Combustible cladding, however, is not the only feature of this fire being investigated.

A history of overcrowding and short-term rental parties at this building has also been identified.

After another fire in 2015, beds were found in stairwells and apartments converted

into cramped rooming houses with living areas rented to multiple tenants as sleeping spaces.

In September last year, police were called to the building at 7 am one morning following reports of 40 young people running wild and fighting inside the building. Some youths were armed with knives. On arrival police found that the party-goers had dispersed, leaving behind significant damage to the building.

In February the Victorian Minister for Consumers Affairs issued a media release announcing the enactment of "tough new penalties for out of control parties".

In the light of the events referred to above, which are by no means uncommon, it is risible and insulting to owners' corporations (OCs) that try so hard to manage their buildings to be burdened with such a piece of legislation as vacuous and self-serving as the so-called Airbnb Bill.

This legislation only makes things worse for high-rise owners trying to recover costs from delinquent short-stay guests. We repeat the question we asked of Daniel Andrews and Marlene Kairouz in our previous newsletter, namely: Please tell us how this Bill is actually meant to work in practice?

There will be more on these issues in the coming weeks.

In the meantime, if anything raised in this column strikes a chord with you, please write to the government with your stories and let them know what they need to do:

REVIEW the process for determining which buildings are at risk from combustible

cladding and improve the method of communication with those buildings;

RESTORE powers lost by OCs as a result of Justice Riorden's 2016 Supreme Court judgement; and

REFER to owners and residents for our opinions on proper regulation of the short-stay industry.

Put a fire risk management plan in place NOW

We Live Here made this recommendation before and the recent fire makes it important enough to repeat: All high-rise apartment buildings must implement a fire risk management plan NOW.

The plan should set out all the management steps you have implemented to make your building safe while the assessment is being carried out.

Campaign donations

As a not-for-profit organisation, donations from individuals and buildings keep our campaigns going. To register as a supporter of We Live Here or to make a donation please visit our website at welfare.net

We Live Here does not accept donations from commercial tourism interests.

We welcome your comments and feedback and invite suggestions for topics you would like us to address in this column.



www.welfare.net
emails to campaign@welfare.net

Residents 3000

How to reduce our use of plastic bags

A simple internet search will bring up countless articles on the detrimental impact of plastic bags on the environment. Here are some tips to help relieve the problem.

Plastic bags are light and fly about. They tend to end up in landfill, in water ways, in the ocean and they block drains in cities. Evidently, they cannot be recycled. If they do find a place in the soil (landfill) they stay there. These bags will still be there over one hundred years from now. Not good for the environment. They get into the food chain. They are known to kill our precious birds and fish.

You may wonder why we have plastic bags anyway? Well, they were invented to help with the preservation of food. Food wrapped in a plastic bag lasts longer in the refrigerator. Wrapping food in plastic is hygienic. Plastic bags can be made cheaply, they are strong and they are often transparent which helps in identifying their contents.

However, as a community we are responding to the mounting problem of too



much plastic in our environment. We need to look after our planet. After all, we only have one.

Measures are being taken to ensure plastic bags in supermarkets are not provided for single use any more. What can city people do to significantly reduce their use of plastic bags?

- Always take your re-usable bag(s) with you to the market, supermarket and for general shopping. Be bold and refuse the offer to take your goods away in a plastic bag;
- Use smaller, mesh bags for citrus, apples, potatoes, carrots, beans to name a few. There are all manner of vegetables and fruit that have their own skins and do not need to be transported in a plastic bag;
- Use paper bags where possible as paper bags are bio-degradable;
- Re-use the recyclable containers before

they have to be re-cycled. In the photo, the strawberry container was used for cherries the following week; and

- In the refrigerator, put mushrooms in their paper bag and then add a plastic bag over the top. The mushrooms and other vegetables will keep really fresh for a long time using this method. The paper bag is disposable, but the plastic bag can be used over and over again, as it is not contaminated with the item being preserved.

Have you noticed that bio-degradable plastic bags are now starting to appear in our supermarkets? Always buy the bio-degradable ones! Even cling wrap which is so useful for wrapping left-overs, comes in a bio-degradable version now.

What about the larger plastic bags used for general household rubbish? The plastic bag is required for health reasons and to facilitate disposal down the chute in apartments. Well, somewhat magically, these bags too are starting to be available in the bio-degradable versions. Buy these.

With just a little thought and ingenuity, city people can make a difference to the plastic problem. Bring out the inventor in yourself and see how many plastic bags you can avoid using! It is quite a good fun game to play and your efforts are rewarded with a satisfying feeling of doing something to help our planet's health.

Forums first Thursday of every month

Residents 3000 holds a forum on the first Thursday evening of each month at the Kelvin Club where you can be informed about crucial issues for CBD residents and perhaps, more importantly, meet other residents and start to join a community that will make living in the city even more rewarding than you expected.

Events are published on the Residents 3000 web site: www.residents3000.com.au as well as on our Facebook page at: [Residents3000](https://www.facebook.com/Residents3000).

Our next event has been confirmed for March 7 at 6pm - Meet and discuss with our parliamentarians - federal member Adam Bandt, Fiona Patten MLC and state member, Ellen Sandell MLA.

Members and guests are welcome. If you are not sure whether Residents 3000 is for you, just come along as a guest for a few times to try us out!



Susan Saunders

Vice President
Ph: 0412 566 606
email: sue@residents3000.com.au



Street Art



Major tourist attraction in decay!

So, over the past six years street art in Melbourne has dropped in quality and quantity.

There are a number of reasons for this, but before I go into them, I would first like to discuss the economy of street art.

I have spent most of my life in and around the different forms of street art. And at the beginning it was a political movement with little paint technology and no commercial interest.

It was mostly middle-class, inner-city design kids that made it an extension of their studio or design practice.

Much has changed since then. The kids have grown up and so has street art.

The most popular and largest art movement in Melbourne has become a major commodity to Melbourne and its reputation.

Having run Melbourne Street Art Tours for nearly 10 years I have seen thousands of

domestic and international tourists come to Melbourne purely to see the street art.

I estimate that street art is worth about \$72 million dollars to the Victorian economy annually.

It is a major boost to the travel industry, hotels, restaurants and bars. And it's not surprising why so many people come to Melbourne to enjoy its urban street art and hidden laneways.

The laneways are amazing. They are the cultural veins of an internationally-recognised creative city.

The laneways have been activated with artwork and the public space has transformed into the world's largest public art gallery. It is an amazing wonderland of creative hidden treasures.

Given the value of street art to the

Victorian economy, you would think that over the years the walls would have grown with more art and more quality artists. But a series of bad decisions has let down the people benefiting from the street art economy.

I don't want to get into the politics, or relationships or what went wrong. What I want this article to do is to let people know how important street art has become to Melbourne and Victoria.

It has helped transform the reputation of Melbourne and it has created its own economy. We look after the penguins and we understand the importance of infrastructure and upgrades along the Great Ocean Road.

We are all happy to promote Melbourne as a street art city in all the tourism advertising, and even on social media. Yet, we are doing nothing to help the ailing laneways, we just

exploit the benefits without giving anything back.

People need to realise the importance of street art and unite and begin to fix it before it dies out.

It is so important to Melbourne that we get the laneways looking fresh again. They are such an awesome and transformative part of our city.

Cheers thanks for reading.

Go check out some lanes.

Cheers, Doyle



Adrian Doyle

Street Artist

Blender Studios founder and director

Pet's Corner



Luna makes a mysterious friend

Poodles are famous for their "circus walks" – standing on their hind legs and walking around upright.

They were bred over generations to be good at it and Ciara, like many poodle owners, discovered her companion performing without encouragement.

One-and-a-half-year-old Luna was bought as a "toy poodle", the smallest kind, but she's actually the size of the slightly bigger miniature poodle.

"We live on Bourke St. We come to Flagstaff Gardens a lot but I change it because she gets bored of doing the same walk," Ciara said.

The sea changes include trips to the beach in Brighton.

She said Luna got a haircut every month,

summer or winter. She appeared to have just had a trim on the 25-degree day she met *CBD News* in Flagstaff Gardens.

Ciara always had a pet when she lived in her home country, the Philippines, so decided to get one for companionship here too.

But golden-coloured Luna wouldn't take the bait and do a circus walk for *CBD News*, although she did make a friend while in our company.

The black puppy in our picture moved on through the park before we could get his details.

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大楼公寓经营短期住宿

撰稿Shane Scanlan

公寓大楼正面临着由短期住宿公寓运营商接管，从而可能把公寓大楼变成准旅馆。

这些运营商正成功地获得大多数投资者在大楼物业管理(OC)中的代理投票权——这就完全合法了。

不同于新南威尔士州，维多利亚州的个人可以获得的物业管理代理投票权，而且数量和总比例没有限制，似乎洪水闸门即将打开。

以前有关物业管理公司被一些公用事业公司和其它承包商之类的既得利益集团接管的故事已经层出不穷，现在由于这方面的

管理疏忽和缺乏，使得有组织的短期住宿运营商似乎更加胆大妄为了。

物业设施经理及前居民3000组织主席约翰·达尔·阿米科(John Dall' Amico)卷入了一场排水系统的纠纷，其中的这个物业管理(OC)正在被一家房产公司的代表吞没，该房产公司有一个短期公寓住宿部门，又和物业管理公司有非正式联系。

他说物业管理中的业主成员正在质疑那些与公寓楼没有实际关系的委员会成员之动机。

达尔·阿米科先生说：“他们既不是业主，也不是租户或投资者。我让别人来看看他们意图控制物业管理委员会的动机。法

律上是否有漏洞让他们可以从住宅楼房中获利。”

“作为一名提供设施管理服务的人员，根据我的观察，目前的法律对此似乎没有什么约束。大多数居民是第一次拥有公寓，对物业管理机构的事务知之甚少或者根本不懂，他们感到困惑，不知道该做什么或者相信什么。”

道克兰区(Docklands)的一个短期住宿运营商在11月份威胁其中一名房东，如果拒绝递交他在物业管理机构的投票代理权，将会面临10万澳元的法律诉讼。据了解，这个运营商还向其他房东发出了类似的信件。



市政担心停车罚款收入减少

撰稿Shane Scanlan

由于“抄牌人员出于安全考虑要求成对上岗工作”，导致上个季度少收了近200万澳元的停车罚款。

2月19日在墨尔本未来委员会会议上向市政议员提交的季度财务报告中，首席财务官麦克·泰纳斯(Michael Tenace)指出，2018 - 19年度的第二季度

罚款收入减少了180万澳元。这个数字低于预算的8.4%。

泰纳斯先生说：“这次逆差主要是由于抄牌人员出于安全考虑要求成对上岗工作，所签发的罚单数量较少。”

但是一位市政官方发言人纠正了这种解释，说：“停车罚款收入的减少是由于多种因素造成的，包括最近几个月的极端天气(高温和大雨)对我们在街上抄

牌人员工作的影响，少数抄牌人员成对工作，另外我们团队的一些职位空缺，为此也正在做招聘广告。”

该发言人表示，近年来停车罚款收入的总趋势有所下降。

发言人还说：“由于进入大都市的汽车在过去四年来逐年减少，我们市政的停车罚款收入也由此每年递减。”

然而，市政2018年8月的财

务业绩报告显示，2017 - 18年度收集的罚款金额超过预期370万澳元(约9%)。

当时的报告称：“这种顺差主要是由于违章停车处罚单的数量增加。”

2018 - 2019年度的第一季度报告也有20万澳元的“微小顺差”。

举报 毒贩

2月14日墨尔本地区警方和墨尔本市政要求当地居民对毒贩活动进行举报。

作为阻止犯罪

(Crimestoppers)倡议的一部分，墨尔本警局克雷格·皮尔(Craig Peel)督察和市政议员贝弗利·平德尔(Beverly Pinder)共同发起了一场旨在阻断本市毒品生产和供应的运动。

在维多利亚阻止犯罪机构代表卡罗琳·里德(Caroline Reid)的介绍之后，皮尔督察表示，公众所提供的信息受到警方的高度重视。

他说：“社区信息对于我们全面了解毒品生产和销售至关重要。让我们能够阻止这些有组织的犯罪活动，这些信息可能是重要的缺失部分。”

他说，警察每天都依赖社区的信息，匿名举报同样受到重视。

市政议员贝弗利·平德尔说，墨尔本市政完全支持这项倡议。

她说：“今天的活动是鼓励墨尔本人拨打我们的电话。警察的资源总是非常紧张的，我认为作为这个社区的成员，我们应该有一定的责任感，支持我们的警察。”

如果你知道任何有关毒品的生产或交易或个人的信息，可以拨打阻止犯罪机构电话1800 333 000，或者登录www.crimestoppers.com.au进行网上举报。



大楼火灾 居民痛心

撰稿Rhonda Dredge

2月15日在遭受火灾损坏的Neo200大楼前面，当一些居民提着手提箱回到大楼公寓时，却被保安拒之门外，现场令人痛心。

保安说，大楼的安全工作仍在进行中。可是一些居民却被告知他们可以返回。

更糟糕的是，这10天的封锁发生在农历春节期间。

这个坐落在斯宾塞(Spencer)街的40层公寓楼里，约有1000名居民有亲戚前来参加春节庆祝活动，他们也不得不寻找其他住宿。

一位妇女居民只得在一间小旅馆房间里与女儿和父母度过了焦虑的10天；另一个居民和他年迈的父母一起搬了六次家；还有一位居民的妹妹来居住，可她的护照却被封锁在33楼房间里。

那个星期五，墨尔本市政没有派一个工作人员来帮助居民解决问题，而让大楼保安人员首当其冲地来承受责难。

面对那位绝望的居民，因为她的妹妹第二天就要飞离出境，



保安说：“你需要拨打这个电话号码，只有市政厅可以授权进入大楼。”

这位带着两个小孩的妇女，不停地拨打这个电话，她说：“没有人回电啊！”，她在大楼前走来回踱步，直到被告知要在5点30分后才能进入大楼。

王立峰(音译)和他的父亲也住在这个大楼里，他说：“这太糟糕了，我们这个星期二去开会，会上有人说我们周四可以搬回去了。这下我刚刚(从酒店)退房，又告诉我们不能搬回去住。”

他说：“现在是高峰期。我一直住在旅馆和民宿(Airbnb)，我们已经登记入住和退房六次了，四天花费1200澳元。我还没有收到任何钱。”

WHAT'S ON

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

FEB | **MAR** | APR | MAY | JUN | JUL | AUG | SEP | OCT | NOV | DEC | JAN

10AM - 4PM, FIRST SUNDAY OF EVERY MONTH ACMI, FEDERATION SQUARE ACMI FAMILY SUNDAYS

On the first Sunday of every month, ACMI will be hosting a day of free family and kid-friendly events and interactive activities for Family Sundays. **FREE**

7.30PM WEDNESDAYS, 16 CORRS LANE CRAB LAB

Comedy in the city at the House of Maxion with well-known performers from radio and TV plus some new talent. **FREE 0422 686 933**

INNER MELBOURNE LIFE ACTIVITIES CLUB

Meeting on selected dates and various locations, IMLAC takes in the city's parks, its culture, fabulous eating options as well as festivals, galleries and concerts.

www.life.org.au/implac
or call Dianne 0425 140 981

7.20AM FOR A 7.40AM START, TUESDAYS

ROTARY CENTRAL SUNRISE

Interested in what we do? Join us for breakfast! We meet at the RACV City Club 501 Bourke St, Melbourne.

rotaryclubcentralmelbourne.org.au

10.30AM-2PM WEDNESDAY & FRIDAY 10AM-3PM SUNDAY, 326 LONSDALE STREET

MEET UP WITH FRIENDS

Instant coffee or tea with a biscuit for **\$2.00**. Meet up with friends or enjoy meeting others at St Francis Pastoral Centre (entry next to the book shop in the church yard). **9663 2495**

MONDAYS 8.30PM, 41 BOURKE STREET COMEDY AT SPLEEN

Mixing some of the big names in comedy with the best up and coming acts, this will be sure to make you forget the Monday blues. Gold coin donation. **0439 660 836**

4TH MONDAY OF EACH MONTH. LUNCHTIME, ST PETER'S EAST MELBOURNE AUSTRAL SALON OF MUSIC

Listen to music from talented young musicians. Make new friends.

www.australsalon.org
0449 727 910

EVERY SUNDAY FROM 2.30PM, THE HUB, 506 ELIZABETH ST FILM CLUB

The film club has some of the best film noir classics including 1962 French Classic and two time Cannes winner "Sundays and Cybelle". **FREE**, coffee provided.

Contact John on 0459 398 358

6:30PM EVERY MONDAY, ST. FRANCIS CHURCH, 326 LONSDALE STREET JOIN OUR SPIRITUAL FAMILY

Students with no family in Melbourne, are welcome to pray for each other. It is a unique gathering of learning to walk in faith and hope. After prayer we share concerns and network. **FREE. 9663 2495**

MARCH 27 – 31, ROYAL EXHIBITION BUILDING AND CARLTON GARDENS, MELBOURNE INTERNATIONAL FLOWER & GARDEN SHOW

Local and international Show Garden designers and Boutique and Achievable Garden creators.

Tickets melbflowershow.com.au

EVERY WEDNESDAY, FROM 6PM. MELBOURNE CENTRAL LION HOTEL LANGUAGE SWAP

Speak another language but no one to practise with? Come along to the free language exchange and meet like-minded people who love language.

Bookings www.NewToMelbourne.org

7-9PM, EVERY *WEDNESDAY, WELSH CHURCH, 320 LA TROBE STREET MEN'S CHOIR PRACTISE

Australian Welsh Male Choir weekly practise. Sing with our City Chapter. No need to be Welsh. *Except last Wednesday of the month. **www.awmc.org.au** or call Geoff on **0405 987 567**

EVERY THURSDAY FROM 1PM, ST MICHAEL'S, 120 COLLINS ST ST MICHAEL'S RECITAL

Experience spectacular music as the St Michael's grand organ comes to life for a free 30-minute recital every Thursday. No booking required. **9654 5120**

MELBOURNE MUSEUM, CARLTON MAKE BELIEVE

The Story of the Myer Christmas Windows celebrates a beloved tradition. Magical models, working drawings, beloved books and playful puppets. **\$0 - \$15, museumsvictoria.com.au/melbournemuseum/whats-on**

10AM, EVERY 3RD TUESDAY, POMODORO SARDO RESTAURANT, 111 LONSDALE ST

EASTENDERS COFFEE CLUB

Come along and join the company of friends and neighbours. Meet new people and be informed.

eastendersinc@gmail.com

6PM, 1ST THURSDAY OF THE MONTH THE KELVIN CLUB, 14 MELBOURNE PL RESIDENTS 3000 FORUM

A community group to inform, connect and support CBD residents. Regular social events with speaker.

Details posted on residents3000.com.au

4-6PM, EVERY SUNDAY, CAMPARI HOUSE, 23-25 HARDWARE LANE TRIVIA ON THE ROOF

A retractable roof and drink specials will help warm up your brain for Sunday trivia. Bookings not required.

9600 1574 or info@camparihouse.com.au

10.30-11.15AM, EVERY 3RD SATURDAY, CITY LIBRARY ONCE UPON A TUNE

An interactive musical adventure that features live music by Beethoven, Brahms and Brumby. Suitable for children aged from 5-12 years. **FREE**

1PM, EVERY THURSDAY & FRIDAY, LEVEL 1, YARRA BUILDING, FEDERATION SQUARE

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Learn about how the land under Melbourne has changed over time and its significance to the local Kulin people.

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10AM-5PM, FRIDAY TO WEDNESDAY, AND THE FULL 24-HOUR INSTALLATION THURSDAY NIGHTS. TO 10TH MARCH, ACMI, FEDERATION SQUARE THE CLOCK

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Ph: 9525-9929
Chabad of Melbourne CBD hosts regular lunchtime lecture series on various topics.

City on a Hill

Sundays at 9am, 10.30am and 6pm.
Hoyts Cinemas, Melbourne Central

Victorian Friends Centre

484 William Street, West Melbourne
Quaker Meetings for Worship: Sunday 10.30am

Collins Street Baptist Church

174 Collins St
Ph: 9650 1180
Sundays services: 10.30am

CrossCulture Church of Christ

333 Swanston St, Melbourne (Corner of Swanston & Little Lonsdale St)
Ph: 9623 9199
Sunday services (English) - 9am, 11:15am & 6pm
Sunday service (Mandarin) - 10:45am
www.crossculture.net.au

Hillsong City Youth

Krimper Cafe, 20 Guildford Lane, Melbourne - Every Friday 7pm-9pm

Holy Cross Orthodox Mission

261/265 Spring St
www.australianorthodox.org

Scots' Church

156, Collins St
Ph: 9650 9903
Sundays 10:30 am (Indonesian), 11:00 am (Traditional) and 5:00 pm (Contemporary)

St Francis' Church

326 Lonsdale St | 9663 2495
Sunday: 7am, 8am, 9:30am, 11am (St Francis' Choir) and 12.30, 1.30, 4.30, 6.00 pm
Filipino Community Mass: Second Sunday of the month at 2.30pm
Indonesian Community Mass: Third Sunday of the month at 2.30pm

St Paul's Cathedral

Cnr Flinders and Swanston Streets
Ph: 9653 4333
Sundays: 8.00am, 9.00am, 10.30am, 6.00pm

St. Augustine's Catholic Church

631 Bourke St. Melb
Ph: 9614 1722
Sundays Mass: 10.30am & 8.00pm
Mon - Fri Mass: 1.05pm
Mon - Fri Confessions: 12.30pm

Wesley Church

148 Lonsdale St
9.15 am Gospel Hall Cantonese/Mandarin Service
11.00 am Morning Worship Service
6.00 pm Evening Worship Service

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PUBLIC NOTICE

OPTUS

Notification of a proposal to install and decommission equipment on an existing telecommunication facility located at 180 Russell Street, Melbourne VIC 3000

- The proposed works will consist of: The relocation of required technologies from the Optus shelter to the eJV VHA shelter. The installation of new and replacement remote radio units on the eJV site. The removal of all Optus-only mobiles equipment, mounts, antennas, shelter and other Optus-only associated infrastructure. The restoration of the post-decommissioned Optus site.
- Optus regards the proposed installation as a Low-impact Facility under the Telecommunications (Low-impact Facilities) Determination 2018 ("The Determination") based on the description above.
- Further information can be obtained from Catalyst ONE Pty Ltd by emailing sma@catalystone.com.au or by going to www.rfnsa.com.au and typing in RFNSA No 3000001.
- Written submissions (email accepted) should be sent to: Catalyst ONE Pty Ltd, PO Box 361, South Melbourne VIC 3205 by 8th March 2019.

OPTUS

Notification of a proposal to install and upgrade equipment on an existing telecommunication facility located at Rod Laver Arena, 200 Batman Avenue, Melbourne VIC 3004

- The proposed works will consist of: The installation of new and replacement remote radio units. Antenna A7 azimuth to be changed from 290° to 270°. The relocation of antenna A2 to antenna A6 location at 120°, along with the addition of new technologies. The removal of redundant Antenna A5 and A6. The installation of associated ancillary equipment if necessary, along with internal shelter equipment upgrade work, to facility to safe operation of the facility.
- Optus regards the proposed installation as a Low-impact Facility under the Telecommunications (Low-impact Facilities) Determination 2018 ("The Determination") based on the description above.
- Further information can be obtained from Catalyst ONE Pty Ltd by emailing sma@catalystone.com.au or by going to www.rfnsa.com.au and typing in RFNSA No 3000298.
- Written submissions (email accepted) should be sent to: Catalyst ONE Pty Ltd, PO Box 361, South Melbourne VIC 3205 by 8th March 2019.

More garbage truck woes for city

Garbage trucks are illegally reversing up Hosier Lane late at night and in the early hours of almost every morning according to one CBD resident who said he has been asking council to resolve the issue since last May.

Mark Tidy lives in an apartment above Hosier Lane. He said multiple trucks reverse up the lane most nights between 11pm and 5am.

"I have had to endure months of sleepless nights with reversing sirens blaring outside my bedroom window at 2am, 3am, 4am etc," Mr Tidy said.

"I have provided exact details of when this has been occurring and in most cases the waste collection company whose vehicles they belong to."

Hosier Lane is a one-way street which exits onto Flinders Street, where Mr Tidy said the trucks enter and reverse from.

"Despite this activity being illegal and dangerous, as I have pointed out to the City of Melbourne (CoM), there has been no action taken to combat this and hence resolve the ongoing issue of noise generated



A garbage truck reversing up Hosier Lane.

by the reversing sirens," Mr Tidy said.

"By their inaction, CoM clearly considers this activity acceptable despite being an unsafe work practice."

"There was an incident in Brisbane last

year where a homeless man was killed by a reversing garbage truck in the early hours of the morning while he was sleeping. I have pointed this out to City of Melbourne."

A City of Melbourne spokesperson said

council had advised two waste companies of noise complaints in the area "which does not have restricted hours for waste collection".

Garbage trucks were deemed a serious issue by Lord Mayor Sally Capp in October 2018, after residents lobbied the council to clean up the system.

About 40 different waste collection companies are licensed to pick up garbage in the city, as well as CoM-owned company Citywide.

The system has resulted in a convoluted pick up web around the city, with trucks criss-crossing and shadowing each other down streets that one truck could manage.

Mr Tidy said Citywide regularly reverse up Hosier Lane and collect garbage at varying times between 3am and 6am, but that in response to complaints the CoM merely stated Citywide trucks do not collect garbage prior to 6am.

He said that the council also told him that enforcing road rules regarding moving vehicles is the responsibility of Victoria Police, but that they didn't address the unsafe work practice issue.

Amongst work safe statements and studies on reversing and safety, Mr Tidy cites The Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008 which states: "A council has a duty to remedy as far as is reasonably possible all nuisances existing in its municipal district."

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