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Men's Shed is back!
Photo by John Tadigiri

After a tumultuous 2020, the CBD's "shedders" are glad to be back on the tools and enjoying some camaraderie at the Melbourne Men's Shed at Federation Square, and are calling on new members to join. *Continued on page 11.*

Council backs a CBD safe injecting room

Plans for a safe injecting room in the CBD remain on track despite an attempt to block it by a group of city councillors.

WORDS BY *David Schout*
HEALTH

In the most passionate debate at Town Hall in years, councillors voted 7 to 4 in support of the Victorian government's plans to house the state's second Supervised Injecting Room (SIR) within the CBD.

The debate was prompted by the government's controversial move to scrap its "preferred" SIR site at 53 Victoria St, reportedly shifting focus to a prominent Flinders St site.

Angered by the prospect, Cr Roshe-na Campbell put forward a separate motion at the May 25 council meeting to reject an SIR within the City of Melbourne outright on the basis it would "significantly hinder" the city's COVID-19 economic recovery.

But councillors voted against it, paving the way for the government to push ahead with plans.

In a plea to councillors, Cr Campbell described reported plans to open an injecting room on Flinders St as "nothing short of insanity".

She said anecdotal evidence from locals and traders near the North Richmond SIR — the state's first and only facility — was damning.

"I have spoken extensively with residents and businesses in the North Richmond community, and they told me the injecting room there destroyed the safety and amenity of their area ... they told me they would not wish it upon anyone else."

She was supported by three others, including Cr Philip Le Liu who said the move would turn the CBD into the "CDD ... the central drug district".

However, the other seven councillors backed an "evidence-based" approach to the divisive issue, and referenced the findings of an independent expert panel, which found that the North Richmond site had saved at least 21 lives in its first 18 months and thwarted 271 "extremely serious overdose incidents".

This report also found that the state's second SIR — a hygienic place where people can inject drugs in a supervised health setting — should be located within the City of Melbourne.

Ambulance Victoria data showed that opioid-related ambulance attendances had doubled in the CBD from 2015 to 2019.

"I acknowledge it will be controversial, but the evidence shows that services such as these save lives, and they do reduce the number of people who are shooting up in our city streets," Lord Mayor Sally Capp said.

Reports suggested the former Yooralla building at 244-248 Flinders St was the government's new "preferred site" for the state's second SIR, although it was yet to confirm this.

Both Cr Capp and her deputy, Cr Nicholas Reece, expressed grave concerns about this part of the CBD at present.

Cr Capp said the "hotspot" at the intersection of Flinders and Elizabeth streets had caused "trauma" to residents and traders.

Cr Reece, who referenced his recent visit to the SIR at Kings Cross in Sydney, as well as a personal drug-related tragedy, counted 17 people in "various states of

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Theatre-goers win in Exhibition St upgrades

WORDS BY *David Schout*
PLANNING

The CBD's East End theatre district is set to become a "beautiful boulevard" under new streetscape improvements on Exhibition St.

City of Melbourne councillors have approved plans to widen footpaths, plant new trees and improve street furniture outside Her Majesty's Theatre and The Comedy Theatre.

The Exhibition St project aimed to improve the experience of theatre-goers spilling out from shows between Little Bourke and Lonsdale streets.

Under wider improvements for the street, the council will also install new protected cycling lanes between Bourke and Little Lonsdale streets, termed the "missing link" for the city's north-to-south protected cycling lanes.

Cr Rohan Leppert, who initiated the upgrades three years ago, said the move was "very exciting".

"This isn't just a project to make the streets safer for cyclists and pedestrians, although it will undoubtedly do that," he said at the May 18 Future Melbourne Committee meeting.

"This is actually also a project that is going to make the theatre district and a whole lot of shopfronts on Exhibition St a remarkably different space."

Cr Leppert said post-show congestion would be eased after the project's completion, which would benefit nearby businesses.

"The expansion of the footpaths, the planting of trees that are going to turn that part of Exhibition St into the most beautiful boulevard ... it is going to make what is currently a difficult place to get in and out of at showtime, into a place for people to linger, a place for people to enjoy, and the benefits for neighbouring hospitality businesses in particular is going to be extraordinary."

Feedback from key stakeholders at both Her Majesty's Theatre and The Comedy Theatre, as well as the Rydges

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CONTACT
Suite 108, 198 Harbour Esplanade
Docklands 3008
cbdnews.com.au
Tel: 8689 7980

EDITOR
Sean Car

PUBLISHER
Hyperlocal News Pty Ltd
ABN: 57 623 558 725

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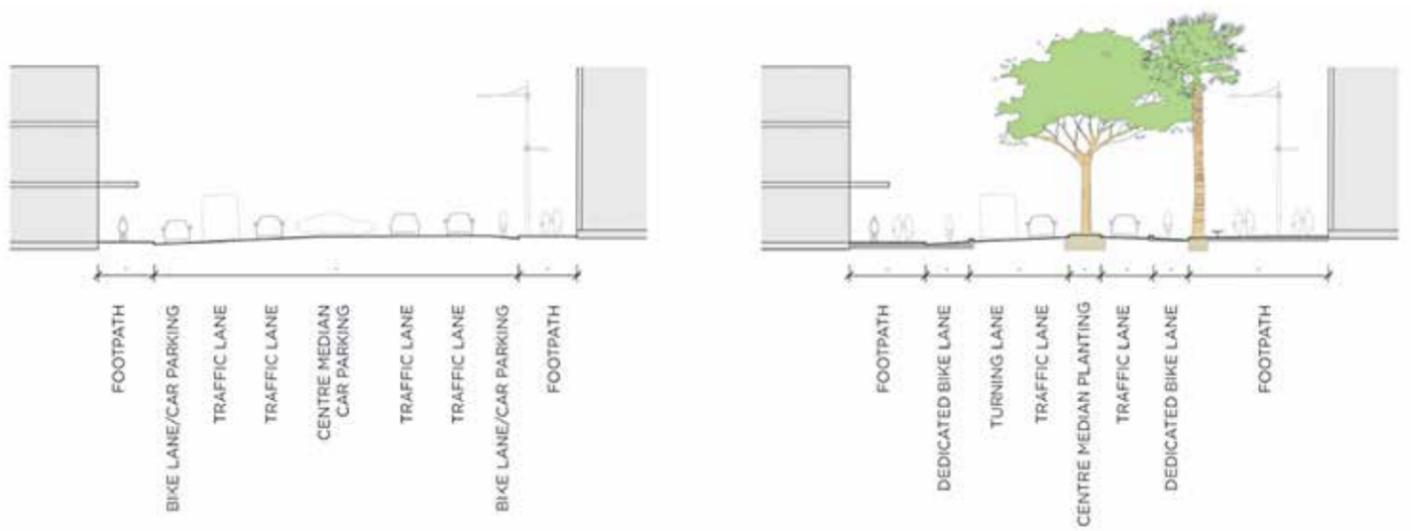
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▲ Exhibition St theatre precinct before (left) and after (right) upcoming streetscape upgrades.

Picture: City of Melbourne.

Theatre-goers win in Exhibition St upgrades

Continued from page 1.

Hotel, Marriott Hotel and The Elephant and Wheelbarrow, was positive.

“I think it is extraordinary to ever have a project that has the word ‘bicycle’ in it to come back with a list of stakeholders showing support for it. This is no small feat,” Cr Leppert said.

Lord Mayor Sally Capp said the upgrades would improve the experience of theatre-goers.

“Our East End of the city, like the West End of London, is our primary theatre district and just that sense of people spilling out onto the streets and enjoying their experience even more is something I’m looking forward to,” she said.

The new safe cycling lanes as part of the project provides the final link connecting Melbourne’s northern suburbs (down Canning and Rathdowne streets) to the central city and the Yarra River trails to the south.

Protected kerbside lanes on Exhibition St between Flinders and Bourke streets were

“This is actually also a project that is going to make the theatre district and a whole lot of shopfronts on Exhibition St a remarkably different space.”

completed in February, and this project represents the final piece of the puzzle.

“Research in 2018 showed that when we provide protected bicycle lanes, 83 per cent of people who live within 10 kilometres of the CBD and own a bike will actually consider cycling for transport vis-à-vis other modes of transport, and that’s compared with only 22 per cent who feel confident to ride on the painted bicycle lanes ... as a bicycle rider I know I feel much safer,” Cr Capp said.

The project’s draft designs are now set to be exhibited for community feedback ●



David Schout
JOURNALIST
DAVID@HYPERLOCALNEWS.COM.AU



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Council backs a CBD safe injecting room

Continued from page 1.

intoxication” in a recent walk down Flinders St.

“It’s ugly, it’s not good,” the Deputy Lord Mayor said.

“It’s a sign of a city, of streets, that are failing. And if I’m being really honest with you, Darlinghurst Rd in Kings Cross is in a better state than Flinders St is in Melbourne at the moment ... it’s easy for us to be critical of supervised injecting services. But if you’re going to rule them out as an intervention, the ‘we don’t support them in our town’, well I also think it’s incumbent on you to tell us, what is your solution? What are you going to be put forward to try and change things? Because the situation as it stands is unacceptable to me. We’ve got to do something. We’ve got to have some informed intervention.”

While the decision to open an SIR in the CBD is ultimately a state government decision, but as the key stakeholder, the council’s approval is vital.

53 Victoria St off the table

The government’s move to scrap plans for the northern CBD site is a significant development.

Since June 2020 it publicly maintained that Cohealth community health service at 53 Victoria St was its “preferred site” for the state’s second SIR.

However, it took the site off the table after strong pushback from the council, nearby residents and the Queen Victoria Market.

It is believed concerns raised by Drill Hall affordable housing residents next door were crucial in convincing former police chief Ken Lay, who has led the consultation process, to not endorse the location.

Drill Hall Residents’ Association president Martin Mulvihill said there was sense of relief among residents.

“I’m sure a lot of the people here would be very glad that it’s no longer here. I never thought this site was suitable,” he told *CBD News*.

Drill Hall, a pre-war army officer training

facility, was refurbished in 2011 and seven levels of affordable housing were built atop the original building.

Mr Mulvihill was worried about the “relegation effect” of an SIR, which would place “different stigmatised groups together in the one area to the disadvantage of all of them”.

He said some vulnerable residents, plus those experiencing homelessness who often congregated in the community garden downstairs, would be confined to one area.

“We would have had three groups shoved up against one another. And in our minds, it would have multiplied the problems. I made that point to Ken Lay and my impression was he was very responsive to it,” he said.

While he said the government’s rollout had been “clumsy”, he hoped the Flinders St site — which he believed to be a “better proposition” — would work.

“I really do hope they get it right. I think it is a problem.”

The move to scrap plans for the northern CBD site is set to further delay the SIR rollout within the CBD.

Mr Lay’s report to government is already five months behind schedule and is now not expected until late July at the earliest.

“Nobody deserves to die from a drug overdose”

Reports that the government had now prioritised a site opposite Flinders Street Station drew impassioned responses on various mediums.

Asha, who lives near the corner of Flinders and King streets, told *CBD News* she supported the move.

She said at present, there were what felt like continuous police and ambulance callouts.

“Anyone who has lived in the city and says there’s not a drug problem is insane. There are drugs everywhere,” she said.

“On the street they leave needle wrappers and baggies everywhere. I think it’s better for them to have a venue to go, they can get NSP



(needle and syringe program) supplies, condoms, connect with social support programs, and if an overdose happens a nurse will be there to make sure they’re okay.”

While a number of business owners had raised alarm at the proposal, Asha said the issue was a matter of protecting lives, and Flinders St’s prominent location made sense to ensure that happened.

“Nobody deserves to die from a drug overdose, and the drug users in the city grid are not going to go all the way to Richmond to get high. They score the drugs around the City Loop train stations, so the safe injecting room needs to be in proximity to that.”

Councillors back experts

The majority decision by councillors effectively re-endorses an expert panel which last year recommended Victoria’s second SIR be located within the City of Melbourne.

The independent panel, chaired by drug and alcohol expert Professor Margaret Hamilton, found that the state’s first injecting room in North Richmond had saved at least 21 lives in its first 18 months, and thwarted 271 “extremely serious overdose incidents”.

However, it required help dealing with demand, and deemed the City of Melbourne

— which has the second-highest ambulance attendances for heroin overdoses after the City of Yarra — the most appropriate municipality.

Councillors did make their continued support conditional, however.

They said the SIR must be “located within a comprehensive health service” and wanted a commitment from government it would “work to improve amenity to surrounding residents, businesses and other visitors”.

Divisive topic

Unsurprisingly, news that the government was considering a Flinders St site for a new SIR generated strong, vexed debate.

A range of prominent figures weighed in, and here’s what some of those figures had to say ...

Clover Moore, Sydney Lord Mayor:

“I remember the outrage and misinformation that was peddled as we worked to establish the safe medical injecting centre in Kings Cross. We pushed on, and the centre has saved lives.”

Michael O’Brien, State opposition leader:

“The state government hasn’t got the Richmond facility right, why would you take that flawed model into the CBD? The heart of Melbourne is struggling enough as it is.”

Ellen Sandell, State MP for Melbourne:

“The Greens are supportive of a site in the inner city. The exact site is up to the state government, but it would be better if they actually worked with the council and the community in making their decision.”

Bill Lang, executive director of Small Business Australia:

“It will have a direct impact on the interest of customers to visit the area and do business with them, therefore reducing their revenue, their profitability and the value of their small businesses.”

Dean Hurlston, president of Ratepayers Victoria:

“The CBD needs all the love it can get. These sorts of facilities need to be near medical and security facilities like hospitals where they can be properly dealt with.” ●

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Narrow approach comes back to bite government

The Victorian government's eggs were firmly in one basket for the state's second injecting facility in the CBD. But now that has failed, it has created a mess it might have avoided from the outset.

WORDS BY *David Schout*
COMMENT

For more than six months the government considered just one location, Cohealth at 53 Victoria St, for the new supervised injecting room (SIR).

The narrow approach has not paid off however, after reports suggested it had now scrapped the idea in favour of a Flinders St site, at the opposite end of town.

Backlash from the council, Drill Hall residents and Queen Victoria Market traders was enough to convince the government to ditch the Victoria St proposal.

Now, it is seemingly back to square one.

Which begs the question: why was just one site considered for such a long period?

Why wasn't the net cast wider, with a number of CBD locations considered as part of the review led by former police chief commissioner Ken Lay?

Things could have — and should have — been handled better from the start, 12 months ago in June 2020.

Back then, the release of an independent report showed that Victoria's only injecting facility (in North Richmond) had saved at least 21 lives in 18 months

However, it needed help dealing with demand.

"One site cannot effectively address all the needs for such a service in a city the size of Melbourne," the report said.

"Based on analyses of available data, the panel recommends that the government considers an appropriate location within the City of Melbourne."

But before consulting key stakeholders — not least the council itself — the government went ahead and nominated Cohealth as its "preferred" site.

This incensed councillors, who would later reject the location.

One said they had "been treated with complete disdain" by the government, while another said it was "appalling" they had been kept in the dark regarding relevant evidence.

The council's position is broadly supportive of a SIR, but it rejected the Victoria St site for a number of reasons.

"It is one of the most densely populated areas in the City of Melbourne; opposite the Queen Victoria Market which is the City's most significant tourist attraction, a transport interchange, child care services and vulnerable residents all within hundreds of metres," a spokesperson said in November.

At the time, Lord Mayor Sally Capp indicated that the council (which had a long-term lease on the Cohealth site) would look to block the government's plans.

But despite the council's round rejection of the site, it was next-door residents at Drill Hall that likely convinced Mr Lay the location wasn't right.

Drill Hall, a pre-war army officer training facility, was refurbished in 2011 whereby seven levels of affordable housing were built atop the original building, and residents now occupy the 56 apartments inside.

One of those, Martin Mulvihill, a retired teacher and president of the building's residents' association, expressed his concerns to Mr Lay.

Theirs wasn't a NIMBY fight (not in my backyard), but one of genuine concern for existing residents.

He was worried about the "relegation effect" of a SIR, which would place "different stigmatised groups together in the one area to the disadvantage of all of them".

Mr Mulvihill said some vulnerable residents, plus those experiencing homelessness who

The former police chief should have been afforded more time, and more CBD locations, to properly assess before reporting back to the government the most appropriate site for the state's second SIR.



often congregate in the community garden downstairs, would be in one confined area should the injecting facility go ahead.

"We would have had three groups shoved up against one another," he told *CBD News*.

"And in our minds, it would have multiplied the problems. I made that point to Ken Lay and my impression was he was very responsive to it."

This, plus council and market pushback, threw the government's plans off track.

It had said Mr Lay would present his findings by the end of 2020 (as late as November 20 it confirmed this was on track) and, it was assumed, they would push on with establishing the SIR at Cohealth in 2021.

But the report, now five months overdue, is still yet to be seen.

It is not expected until late July at the earliest. The delay is because it has had to shift focus entirely away from the Victoria St site.

For months the government said this was its "preferred site", and all consultation was focused on this.

Now, however, everything is up in the air.

"Ken Lay is currently leading a process around the preferred site, which has not been finalised yet," a government spokesperson confirmed.

Had the government expanded the scope of his consultation from the outset, things might have played more favourably for all parties.

The former police chief should have been afforded more time, and more CBD locations, to properly assess before reporting back to the government the most appropriate site for the state's second SIR.

Instead, it spent more than six months considering just one site which would eventually prove unfit given the issues it could cause to those nearby.

The government might argue that the vexed injecting room debate now playing out at Spring St, Town Hall and in the media is inevitable *wherever* they decide to put the state's second SIR.

And this is true.

But it might have avoided the ire of almost every stakeholder had it better handled the consultation process from the outset ●



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Greenline project to “transform” Melbourne

A four-kilometre green trail along the Yarra would represent Melbourne’s “biggest transformation” since the opening of Federation Square in 2002, according to Lord Mayor Sally Capp.

WORDS BY David Schout
PLANNING

The \$300 million “Greenline” project, a key election pledge from Cr Capp, would see a pathway established along the river’s Northbank from Birrarung Marr all the way to the Bolte Bridge.

City of Melbourne councillors unanimously endorsed draft plans for the project on May 4.

Plans revealed a vision to better connect pedestrians and cyclists between a series of “reinvigorated, lively riverfront precincts”; via the riverside pathway and associated bridges and boardwalks.

It also sought to celebrate the river’s historical importance to Aboriginal culture and improve its overall health.

“The north bank of the Yarra River Birrarung is currently under-utilised, and broadly characterised by a lack of cultural expression, limited ecological or habitat value, poor pedestrian and community connectivity, and a lack of social amenity. The Greenline addresses these challenges,” the draft plan said.

There was no timeline yet for the project, however the draft implementation schedule indicates work would continue until 2028.

Cr Capp said Greenline would be one of Melbourne’s most important projects in decades.

“Greenline would deliver one of the biggest transformations of the city since the completion of Southbank Promenade in 1990 and the opening of Fed Square in 2002,” she said after the plans were publicly released.

“We want Northbank to become one of the city’s premier destinations for workers, residents and tourists! Our investment in the waterfront would create jobs for Melburnians and encourage investors to open their cheque book and deliver new projects.”

Cr Capp made Greenline a key part of her 2018 by-election and 2020 general election strategy, winning on both occasions.

Greens councillor Rohan Leppert, who contested the 2018 by-election, said Cr Capp’s results indicated public support for the project.

“That [2018] election was won on Greenline. A second election has been won on Greenline – there is no denying that there is an overwhelming political mandate for this project,” he said at the May 4 Future Melbourne Committee meeting.

“This is an exciting project, it is a genuinely transformational project whether you look at the economic uplift opportunities alone, the job impacts, or the international or interstate tourism drawcard that a Greenline will create.”

Northbank an “underwhelming experience”

The draft plans revealed a scathing assessment of Northbank’s current condition.

Despite possessing a “rich history and distinctive features”, it was described as of “poor



quality”, “lacking activity”, “prone to safety and security issues”, and was an “overall underwhelming experience”.

According to the report, the northern side of the Yarra River was poorly integrated with the Hoddle Grid despite its close proximity.

“Connectivity from the CBD to the Northbank is currently poor. Overhead rail infrastructure and vehicle traffic on Flinders St separate the Northbank from the CBD both visually and physically. Many of the streets that lead to the Northbank are unpleasant for pedestrians.”

The report said that this contrasted with Southbank, which featured “sunny, attractive, and generally well-maintained pedestrianised public spaces and active building frontages”.

However, the project sought to differentiate itself from the river’s southern side.

“Rather than recreating the outdoor dining, arts and events focus of Southbank, the Greenline is an opportunity to build on the existing character of Northbank to create an enhanced connected river front experience that remains authentic to these unique attributes.”

Initial project plans identified five key precincts for the four-kilometre trail, each separated on the basis of land management, activity and character attributes.

These are (from east to west):

- Birrarung Marr
- Yarro Yarro (near Queens Bridge)
- River Park
- Maritime
- Salt Water Wharf

The council would seek funding contributions for the project from upper levels of government and the private sector.

In a huge win for community-led group Yarra Pools, as part of the Greenline project the council also resolved to explore the feasibility of a large pool facility at Enterprize Park, next to the Melbourne Aquarium.

Group president Felicity Watson said the decision was “justification” for years of hard work, and vindication that the proposal was a credible one (see our report on page 9 for more).

“We believe, after much discussion, believe that it is an appropriate time to formally assess that proposal,” Cr Capp confirmed.

“Many fingers in the pie”

The fragmentation of controlling authorities along the river meant the project would need to jump through a significant number of hoops before it gets off the ground.

The City of Melbourne does not own or independently manage the waterways or banks of the Yarra River (now referred to by the council as “Yarra River Birrarung” in a nod to its traditional name). Key stakeholders included the state government, Development Victoria, Parks Victoria, VicTrack, Melbourne Water and other landowners.

Yarra River Business Association executive officer Tim Bracher told *CBD News* collaboration could make or break the project.

“The key to its success will be for state government to take co-ownership of the plan and to overcome the silo effect created by the many government departments involved in the current jurisdiction of Northbank,” he said.

“Until legislation changes to create a Lower Yarra River Authority, or at least a strong planning overlay, great projects like Greenline will proceed only spasmodically because of all the fingers currently in the pie.”

Cr Capp said she did not underestimate the project’s scale. “There is still a lot of work ahead, I absolutely understand that.”

Traditional custodians

The “key guiding document” for Greenline is the council’s in-depth Yarra River Birrarung Strategy, endorsed in December 2019.

One of the 15-year strategy’s primary ambitions was to improve reconciliation with traditional owners.

According to the strategy, for traditional owners’ water bodies such as rivers were and are inextricably connected to life’s meaning and have powerful cultural associations.

Cr Capp said they hoped to reflect those values in Greenline designs.

“The Greenline would tell stories of Melbourne’s history and increase visibility and understanding of the area’s Aboriginal culture and heritage,” she said.

The council was now set to implement a final Greenline implementation plan by the end of 2021 ●



Council puts down a record budget

ECONOMY

The City of Melbourne has handed down a record 2021-22 draft budget of \$789.9 million to help the city continue its recovery from the pandemic.

Given the challenges imposed on the city by last year’s lockdowns, the council has impressively achieved a \$31 million turnaround since delivering a \$57.4 million deficit in last year’s budget.

Despite a forecast deficit of \$26.2 million, the council has delivered a record spend headlined by \$244.7 million in infrastructure, as well as \$4.8 million in rates discounts, which the Lord Mayor Sally Capp said would save ratepayers between \$10 and \$50.

The Lord Mayor was joined by finance governance and risk portfolio chair Cr Phil Le Liu at Queen Victoria Market’s (QVM’s) new underground car park on May 25 at the Munro development to announce this year’s budget.

QVM’s precinct renewal program is one of the winners in the council’s big infrastructure spend, with a further \$50.2 million committed. The Lord Mayor’s \$300 million Greenline project also received \$1 million towards designs.

The council has also included \$21.5 million for bringing major events back to the city, while more than \$50 million will be invested in providing core services such as waste and recycling, cleaning and graffiti removal and safety upgrades.

Businesses will also continue to receive support through the joint \$200 million Melbourne City Revitalisation Fund with the state government.

This includes more than \$800,000 for the city’s precinct associations, subsidised fees for outdoor dining, expansion of the Business Concierge program and the establishment of Invest Melbourne – a new entity which will seek to fast-track planning processes, building permits and work to attract global headquarters and research centres to the city.

The budget also includes more than \$2 million to support people experiencing homelessness in partnership with organisations like Launch Housing, Front Yard Youth Services and the Salvation Army.

Fees and charges for more than 70 per cent of council services will not change, or will be modestly increased in line with CPI inflation.

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Put food and garden waste to good use with the City of Melbourne's new organic waste collection. Coffee grounds, banana peels, even lawn clippings can all be composted to benefit Melbourne's parks and gardens.

We've listened to the community's concerns around recycling and from June we are introducing a food and garden organic waste collection service - an important step in addressing climate change impacts. We'll begin by supplying more than 9000 single-unit properties and single-storey apartment blocks with new food and garden organic waste bins.

Increased recycling will help us reduce emissions citywide, and bring us closer to a circular economy, which aims to eliminate waste by reusing and recycling resources.

Organic material disposed of in landfill also generates methane, a gas that has a climate change impact 25 times greater than carbon dioxide. That's why it's important we process this organic material differently.

From June, residents in single unit properties, such as a house or townhouse, and single storey apartment blocks of fewer than 30 dwellings will receive:

- A new lime green-lidded food and garden organic waste wheelie bin (120-litre)
- a kitchen caddy for collection of food scraps
- a roll of 52 compostable caddy liners to avoid bin odours.

This will be a staged approach, and we'll work with the community to find innovative ways to offer this service to multiple level apartment buildings and highrise Melbourne.

COLLECTIONS FREQUENCY

Did you know most 240L recycling bins collected with the current weekly service are only half-full?

With this data, when households receive a food and garden organic waste wheelie bin, there will also be improvements to their overall kerbside collection service - recycling collection will shift to fortnightly.

Any household with a smaller bin will be able to upgrade their recycling bin to 240L.

For more information, visit melbourne.vic.gov.au/foodgardenwaste

IN-BRIEF

NO MORE LIBRARY FINES

In good news for library users, City of Melbourne libraries will no longer fine people for overdue items. During last year's lockdowns all library fines were put on hold - and this will continue indefinitely to make sure everyone in the community can enjoy our library services. All borrowers are encouraged to continue to return items by the return date.

DREAM FACTORY

From Aussie classics to contemporary concept cars, this exhibition captures the story of design and innovation at General Motors Holden in Fishermans Bend, home to Melbourne's most successful city-based automotive factory. Visit melbourne.vic.gov.au/dreamfactory

VIRTUAL VISITOR HUB

Planning a trip to the city? Drop a line to our virtual visitor hub for local recommendations on how to make the most of your time in Melbourne. Visit whatson.melbourne.vic.gov.au/visitor-info

BUSINESS WORKSHOPS

If you're an inner city small business owner in Melbourne's city centre, Docklands or Southbank, explore our virtual and in-person workshops in June. Get support with marketing, budgeting, resilience and change and digital transformation, and more. To find out more contact our Business Concierge Service on 9658 9658 (press 1 for business) or visit melbourne.vic.gov.au/innercitysupport

CITY BATHS RESTORED

Works are underway at Melbourne's oldest bathing site, the Melbourne City Baths, to restore the brickworks, replace roof tiling and repair the timber ceiling planks in the pool halls. These works will help preserve the building for future generations.

COUNCIL MEETINGS

Watch meetings live from wherever you are thanks to our live-streaming capability. Tune in live or catch up later. Find all the details about Council and committee meetings at melbourne.vic.gov.au/aboutcouncil

Information and events in this publication are current at the time of printing. Subsequent changes may occur.

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OLDER PEOPLE CONNECT

Stay active and connected with City of Melbourne programs for older residents. Whatever your preferred pace, explore our social and recreational activities to stay healthy and meet others.

Connect Café

Plan a visit to Connect Café, a new series of free weekly technology support sessions at South Yarra Senior Citizens Centre (66 Toorak Road West, South Yarra).

You'll be joined by tech experts from Lively who can provide support in English, Cantonese, Mandarin and Hindi. The sessions are designed to help people learn new skills in a one-on-one setting. Participants can bring their own device or use one that is provided.

You'll find help with:

- connecting to wi-fi
- setting up and using email
- video chatting with friends and family
- finding information about services
- learning about what is happening in the neighbourhood and more.

Chair yoga and seated dance

Enjoy an hour of gentle stretching, breathing and relaxation with chair yoga. Or try moving to music at a free social seated dance class at Kathleen

Syme Library and Community Centre (251 Faraday Street, Melbourne). No prior experience necessary and all abilities welcome.

Tai Chi and tea

Experience the health benefits of Tai Chi overlooking Fawkner Park followed by a social morning tea at the South Yarra Senior Citizens Centre.

Advance Care planning

Interested in making an Advance Care plan but unsure where to start? Helen Carr from Carers Victoria will lead a two-part workshop at Kathleen Syme Library and Community Centre

to explore the care you might want if you became seriously ill.

The program is open to families and carers or anyone wanting to gain a greater understanding of Advance Care planning. Explore health care options and discuss how to appoint a Medical Treatment Decision Maker, complete an Advance Care directive, and more. This is a relaxed, honest and safe space to talk about how you can stay in charge in later life.

To register and book for any of these activities please contact Healthy Ageing on 9658 9190 or email healthyageing@melbourne.vic.gov.au



Experience the health benefits of Tai Chi

Councillor assaulted amid rising CBD crime

WORDS BY *Brendan Rees*
SAFETY & SECURITY

A City of Melbourne councillor has sounded the alarm over a rise in crime after he was assaulted outside his CBD shop.

Cr Jason Chang said a man, whom he described as drug-affected and “rough looking”, filled up a bag of alcohol before fleeing his Japanese grocery store and restaurant Calia Emporium on Lonsdale St at around 5pm on May 20.

He said the shop alarm went off and he and other good Samaritans chased the man on the street.

The incident, which was captured on CCTV, showed Cr Chang and others pinning down the man outside the store before he got away.

“We were involved in a scuffle and that’s when I was injured slightly as he tried to escape,” Cr Chang said after he sustained a sprained and swollen arm.

He said drug affected thieves had been repeatedly targeting his store and declared “enough is enough”.

“This happens so much, the same people doing it over and over again,” he said. “We can’t just stand by and let injustice or let people break the law.”

“I think the safety of everyone else is the most important thing, these people just can’t get away with doing it over and over again.”

After posting his assault to social media, Cr Chang said he had been “inundated with local businesses saying it [crime] happens on a daily basis”.

“I’ve had people say they’ve had their delivery scooters stolen from in front of their stores;

people just rob them,” he said.

“They don’t even bother calling the police now because they say nothing will happen.”

Cr Chang said he recognised the man entering his shop and stealing on previous occasions, and feared crime would escalate.

“This needs to be addressed immediately. Businesses are already suffering; we’re trying to attract business to the CBD but how can we do that when theft is so rampant?”

It comes after a briefing from Melbourne East Police to CBD resident group EastEnders in May, where residents were told crime in the central city had increased.

Residents 3000 president Rafael Camillo also voiced his concerns after he was verbally abused while walking with his husband in the CBD at around 4pm on May 22.

He said two men that appeared affected began hurling homophobic abuse at them and “calling us names out of the blue”.

“I didn’t know what to do but it makes me very angry. You feel weak and there’s nothing you can do,” he said, after they were told “you should be ashamed”.

“It’s not the first time, it’s constant,” he said, adding he was also abused for wearing a mask during lockdown.

He feared authorities were “unable to fix this problem” and questioned how “we will feel safe?”

“In Melbourne, I don’t feel secure anymore. We need to protect our community.”

CBD restaurant owner Gideon Sanusi said he felt “insecure” after thieves stole his delivery scooter on Lonsdale St in April.

“We parked it out the front of the Emporium store because we were delivering food to our customers,” he said.

After viewing CCTV, he said, “It was locked in the bike rack but the guy just came up with a bolt cutter and started opening bikes and scooters.”

“We thought we would’ve been safe with everyone around,” he added when the incident happened at around 2pm.

Another trader on Lonsdale St said drug and alcohol affected people loitered regularly around the front of their shop.

Ratepayers Victoria president Dean Hurlston said authorities had a responsibility to make public spaces safe for everyone, and “inspire confidence” in returning people to the CBD.

“We need to create the best conditions for traders to deliver people back to the city and to help employers who are investing in millions trying to get their employees to feel safe to go back to the city,” he said.

“The CBD and inner Melbourne should be fundamentally safe. What is the City of Melbourne and other councils doing to put that first?”

In a statement, police said it was investigating the theft at Cr Chang’s shop.

“Investigators have been told an unknown man stole drinks from a store before taking off on foot about 4.50pm,” it said.

“A male staff member ran after the man and a scuffle ensued before the offender ran off.” “Melbourne East uniform police are investigating the incident and it remains ongoing.”

Cr Chang said he would meet with local police and council officers “to see what we can do in the future to mitigate this”.

“I think awareness is a key issue we need to create. I think a lot of businesses are suffering the same issue if not more and kept silent,” he said ●



▲ Cr Jason Chang at his Calia Emporium store.

“

I think the safety of everyone else is the most important thing, these people just can’t get away with doing it over and over again.

”

“Milestone moment”: Yarra pool a step closer

WORDS BY *David Schout*
PLANNING

A swimmable pool on the Yarra River’s Northbank is a step closer after the City of Melbourne committed to “formally assessing” the ambitious project.

After endorsing draft plans for the 4km “Greenline”, Lord Mayor Sally Capp said it was “the appropriate time” to properly explore the pool proposal, which includes plans for a lap pool, kids pool and wetlands at Enterprize Park next to Melbourne Aquarium.

The project has been pushed for a number of years by community-led group Yarra Pools, with support from architects, designers and business owners determined to prove it as a viable vision for Melbourne.

President Felicity Watson said the council’s decision not only vindicated the group’s body of work, but the project’s merit.

“I think this decision really does justify all the work that we’ve undertaken,” she told *CBD News*.

“But it also goes to show that the work we’ve undertaken has shown that it is a credible plan. We’ve always been really interested in ensuring it’s something that’s achievable, and something that does fit within the strategic lens of local and state government. So, a lot of work has gone into that, and a lot of pro bono support by experts. What we really feel is that we have put together a credible case.”

Inspired by successful urban river swimming projects both globally and in Australia, the idea of a “swimmable Yarra” was first flagged in 2016.

However, to date, Yarra Pools had yet to make significant headway on proposals to the City of Melbourne.

Ms Watson said the May 4 decision was a “milestone” for the project, and had been positively received.

“It’s a project that people are really

excited about. It ticks so many boxes — it has the potential to be transformative for Melbourne. So there were lots of happy people that have been involved in Yarra Pools, either at the moment or in the past because it’s definitely been a collective effort.”

Both the council and Yarra Pools believed the river’s Northbank was under-utilised and in need of reform.

The primary goal of the Greenline project (details on page 7) was to activate that stretch of the river, via a 4km green trail from Birrarung Marr to the Bolte Bridge.

The council now believed a pool could be part of that activation.

It resolved to “formally assess the merits of a project put forward by the community-led Yarra Pools association, to determine the feasibility of incorporating a swimmable Yarra project into the Greenline project in future, in this or another precinct”.

Despite confidence in the project, Ms Watson said it “definitely does



▲ The council has committed to exploring plans for a pool on the Yarra River’s Northbank.

need to go through that next level of rigour and assessment”.

She said open-air swimming was not only a healthy pastime, but provided an opportunity “to connect with the culture and history of place”.

“I think it’s something that’s really lacking in Melbourne. I lived in Sydney for a long time and there’s a whole culture of open-air swimming in Sydney — there are lots of

open-air pools in the city. There’s Bondi Icebergs, there’s lots of ocean pools as well. And I think that’s something that’s really missing from the Melbourne landscape. I know some people say it’s a climate-based thing, but there are pools in northern Europe that are incredibly popular.”

The council committed to assessing the viability of the Yarra Pools plan in the “short term” ●

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*for eligible businesses. Please see website for details.



Melbourne Men's Shed is back!

WORDS BY *Brendan Rees*
COMMUNITY

After a tumultuous year, Melbourne's CBD "shedders" are glad to be back on the tools and enjoying some comradery.

The Melbourne Men's Shed has been a hive of activity after the pandemic forced the shed's closure last year.

"To them, it's a joy, you can see it in their faces, and for me, that's all I want from the guys. I feel like I've achieved something," shed chairman Andrew Stefanetti said of the volunteers.

"A lot of them come from not just the CBD; they come from all over Melbourne. It's the only shed in the world which is located in the CBD of any city."

The Melbourne Men's Shed is one of many local groups that exists because of the generosity of members – and their contributions were recognised when volunteers were celebrated during National Volunteer Week from May 17 to 23.

Mr Stefanetti, 75, said he was proud to lead his team. "We make access for anyone to come to our shed. They love coming here," he said.

He said the shed had been reopening "bit by bit" with members gradually resuming their projects since December.

"Some of our activities and all the things that we were doing nearly 18 months ago we had to put a hold on and now we're going back again," he said.

However, he said one of the challenges was supporting members whose mental health had suffered after experiencing loneliness or isolation during last year's lockdown.

"The problem is not opening, it's the people that come there. I've got to make sure they're all physically and mentally in the same place," he said.

"When they came back a lot of them went down the slippery slope. Now we've got to get it back again."

He said it was vital they looked after each other and spoke openly about their feelings.

"We've got a day's session where we turn around and talk around the table, and we get everyone to open up."

But Mr Stefanetti understood the limitations of his role. "As a leader, I've got to say, 'Am I doing the right thing by them or am I doing the wrong?' They ask me for guidance and I can say I can only guide you and can't tell you," he said.

In the meantime, he was happy to see people come from far and wide to share stories, saying the group was more than just a Men's Shed.

"I put it down to a community centre that helps out," he said.

From weekly walks around the city to cooking classes (which are currently on hold because of social distancing), group chats, woodwork projects and more, Mr Stefanetti said there was something for everyone.

He said the shed was also an opportunity for people of all ages, genders and abilities to share others' company and connect over a cuppa.

He said the shed had about 85 members and was "growing", but because of its COVID-safe plan, they were limited to 15 people indoors.

"It's an open club, open house in a sense. We learn from each other, we do things, we fix things, we give advice."

Since its inception in 2013, the shed has given members a sense of belonging – with people coming from all walks of life and not always with a background in carpentry.

"It's the atmosphere when you walk into the place that makes it a place," Mr Stefanetti said.

He said the men were currently revitalising some old bedside tables donated by a Melbourne hotel at the start of the year.



▲ The "shedders" are back!

Photo by John Tadigiri.



"When people want some sort of community project, we look at it and we ask the members, and if they have time we build it for them."



"They said, 'We're upgrading all our rooms; we've got a lot of furniture here if you'd like to pick it up and do whatever you want with it,'" he said.

When he visited staff members, Mr Stefanetti said he was impressed to discover the furniture was solid timber.

"We revitalise them, paint them, fix them, and put them together for the guys to do something. They can sell them or take them home themselves."

The group also has a collection of handmade wooden toys from last year that are ready to be donated to the Royal Children's Hospital. But sadly, delivery has been postponed because of the pandemic.

In other projects, members have been making possum boxes for Wildlife Victoria, while also opening its doors to the Parkville Men's Shed to spend time in their workshop with their first excursion taking place on May 4, which was hailed a "roaring success".

The Parkville Men's Shed, which was launched by the Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre earlier this year, is the first shed at a Victorian hospital to offer support and social activities to patients.

Patients from Peter Mac have also been visiting Melbourne's Men's Shed once a week to escape and enjoy the members' company.

Mr Stefanetti said he hoped the City of Melbourne and the state government continued to support their shed through funding, maintaining that it was "not just old men retired going there for a cup of coffee".

He said new members were always welcome, with benefits including enhanced self-esteem and improved wellbeing ●

For more information:
melbournemensshed.org

Scaling buildings at new heights

WORDS BY *Jack Hayes*
LOCAL NEWS

A CBD resident awoke to a scaly surprise, finding a baby spotted python, otherwise known as the "cat eater", in their thirteenth-floor apartment during the early hours of April 20.

It isn't known how the snake got there, who it belongs to and if there were further reptiles in hiding, after investigations by the building's manager came to no clear conclusion.

The resident, who wished to remain unnamed, came across the uninvited house guest in her bedroom at 1am when she decided to call for help.

"I just googled 'snake removalist' and they came in about 45 minutes. They explained it was definitely someone's pet. These snakes are native to Queensland, so there is no way it made its way here by itself," she said.

"I spoke to my building manager and he called around the building to find out if anyone was missing the snake. No one came forward, potentially because the owner did not have a licence."

It is an offence in Victoria to have a spotted python as a pet without a Basic Wildlife Licence, with maximum penalties associated with taking and, or being in possession of unlawfully taken protected wildlife ranging from \$7750 to \$37,000 and/or six to 24 months imprisonment.

Licensed snake catcher Raymond Hoser reluctantly got out of bed and made the 40-minute drive to remove the slippery trespasser.

Mr Hoser said that he thought the snake was an escaped pet as it was non-venomous and while it was possible a larger snake had laid eggs that had hatched in the building, Mr Hoser said that was unlikely.

"This is not the first time a snake has turned up in the middle of the CBD. I get about six a year in and around the CBD, including a red-bellied black snake at McDonald's, South Melbourne on Melbourne Cup day last year," Mr Hoser said.

"I also found a tiger snake at a backpackers lodge in Queen St a year earlier – it is rare for a snake to turn up in a high-rise apartment." "The last one to turn up in a high-rise apartment or similar was a tiger snake that had stowed away in luggage that turned up at the Salvo apartments, Ringwood."

Mr Hoser said pythons could grow large and the big ones were known to frequently eat cats, hence their name "cat eaters".

The spotted python must by law be handed in to a state government representative where they will make



▲ The snake found in the CBD in April.

This is not the first time a snake has turned up in the middle of the CBD. I get about six a year in and around the CBD, including a red-bellied black snake at McDonald's, South Melbourne on Melbourne Cup day last year.



a considered assessment as to what to do with the snake after making all proper enquiries.

Every year in Melbourne there is a spike in calls for pythons in the April and May period, turning up in suburban homes, with Mr Hoser averaging about five to 10 a season.

All are handed in to the government. Some are kept by zoos or otherwise re-homed and unfortunately some are euthanised due to biosecurity or other risks.

In the unlikely event you find a scaly escapee in your apartment, you can call Mr Hoser on 0412 777 211 or head to the link below ●

For more information:
snakebusters.com.au

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Council supports office tower at “sleazy” corner

WORDS BY *David Schout*
PLANNING

New plans for a 20-storey office tower at an “unloved” CBD intersection have been endorsed by the City of Melbourne.

The proposed development, on the site of the heritage-listed Kilkenny Inn and former Goldfingers strip club, would pay “a lot more dignity” to the 1915-built pub than previous plans according to councillors.

New plans submitted to Minister for Planning Richard Wynne for the \$100m development at the corner of King and Lonsdale streets were “high quality”, according to planning chair Cr Nicholas Reece, and would contribute to the transformation of the precinct.

“The site is located at a very important intersection in our city,” Cr Reece said at the May 18 Future Melbourne Committee meeting.

“For many years I would say that was known as an intersection of sleaze here in Melbourne but in the past couple of years we’ve seen some really exciting applications coming forward and I think over the next couple of years, probably led by this landmark development dare I say, we’re going to see a real transformation of this intersection and this whole precinct.”

The development would retain the front portion of the Kilkenny Inn and include retail outlets on ground and first levels, with office levels above.

The office building is proposed to be set back seven metres from the Kilkenny Inn facade, which allowed the 106-year-old pub to be “appreciated in three dimensions” according to Cr Reece.

Deputy planning chair Cr Rohan Leppert said the three-storey brick hotel would now be more visible and given greater respect.

“[It] now has a much more significant setback and is treated with a lot more dignity than it perhaps was in the first iteration of the plans.”

Previous plans submitted in 2019 were described by Melbourne Heritage Action president Tristan Davies as “yet another example of facadism”, but said the new plans represented a “great improvement”.

“It’s great to see that the new



heritage guidelines are really being brought to the forefront in terms of planning matters like this.”

The City of Melbourne recently completed the most comprehensive review of heritage buildings within the Hoddle Grid since the 1990s.

The Hoddle Grid Heritage Review recommends 137 new individual places and five precincts to be protected in the Melbourne planning scheme.

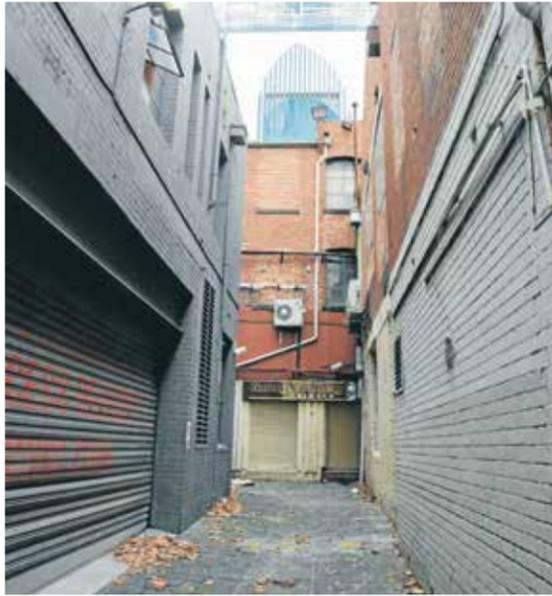
However, the 1929-built Paramount House — one of many “exchange” centres set up by American film companies around Australia in the 1920s and responsible for the distribution and marketing of films — will be demolished as part of the works.

Despite the improved plans Mr Davies said this was “fairly needless”, and was overall disappointed about the plight of another heritage CBD hotel.

“It’s a bit of a shame to see one more pub in Melbourne’s CBD permanently disappear after quite a number have gone in recent years to developments.”

Simon Haussegger from the development’s architects Cox Architecture said: “For us, this is really an exercise in revitalisation of a corner of the city we fell has been unloved for some time.”

The plans are now before the Minister for Planning for approval ●



▲ Goldfinger Men’s Club has closed to make way for an office tower.



▲ Max Gibson manager of Melbourne City Backpackers.



▲ Paul Castan at the Golden Age.

King St struggles with its identity

WORDS BY *Rhonda Dredge*
COMMUNITY

A prominent strip club on the corner of King and Lonsdale streets closed in January to make way for a 20-storey office tower.

The Goldfinger Club promised double the girls and double the fun on its Facebook page.

Is its demise a sign that King St is having a post-COVID identity crisis?

Next door to the former strip club is the sales office for a flashy apartment block called the Melbourne Grand and other projects are going up across King St.

Some are worried that the council is allowing development to run rampant in the west end of the city while protecting the more salubrious east end.

“Men’s clubs are not really at risk,” Max Gibson, the manager of Melbourne City Backpackers said. “Another one just opened up next door.”

The hostel is on the strip of cafes, bars, nightclubs and pubs between Bourke and Lonsdale streets and the strip still seems to be trading thanks to some adaptations to the times.

The hostel stayed open during the pandemic for international students and nearby hotels are reporting that night clubbers from the suburbs are now their main customer base.

“We’re 30 to 40 per cent full during the week and fully booked during the weekend,” the concierge at the Melbourne Hotel in Little Bourke St said.

“People come from interstate and the suburbs for a night out.”

There’s a construction site across the street from the Melbourne Hotel blasting it with noise every time the door opens and the hotel’s café is closed but that doesn’t stop the punters from lining up at the night club next door, the concierge said.

It’s a similar story at the Hotel Sofia, an old-fashioned

pub across the road from the former strip club, which is doing some trade despite the pressure.

“It’s pretty patchy. If I didn’t own the building I wouldn’t be in business,” Paul Castan said, who’s been on the strip for 26 years. “Our biggest break is Saturday night. People come to the nightclubs.”

Mr Castan claims to sell the best parmas in the Southern Hemisphere at the Golden Age, the pub next door to the hotel, even if he has to do the cooking himself. “All our dishes are organic,” he said, proudly pointing at the “full menu”.

Paul doesn’t like the men’s clubs himself because of the exploitation of women but he’d never speak against them. He’s mates with the owner of the Men’s Gallery on the corner.

There’s a pride in the architecture of this low-rise strip that could be at risk if too many tall buildings go up.

“It’s very urban in King St, more urban than the other side of the city where fast shopping dominates,” Mr Gibson said. “The buildings are a lot older, more historic.”

Melbourne City Backpackers closed one of its three hostels but kept the King St one open with just 20 residents. The hostel normally holds 140.

“We had to,” Max said. “We had students staying here. Ones from Europe got chartered flights back. They’re mostly from South America.”

He said that a lot of hostels closed, including the Travellers Hostel next door. “It’s sad what happened. We survived. I had to let lots of staff go. It’s been tough.”

At least the Kilkenny Inn will be preserved at street level in the proposed office development plan which went before council for comment on May 18. “When I first came here they had a magic cook,” Mr Castan said. “Asian/Western.”

He feels like they’ve been taken over by the apartments. “There’s Central Equity at the back then the Far East and the Carlton Ritz. I welcome an office tower. We need that. People in apartments don’t come here. They don’t appreciate a pub.” ●

First of its kind veteran wellbeing hub launched in the CBD

VETERANS

The Vivian Bullwinkel Veterans and Families Wellbeing Centre, an initiative of Melbourne Legacy, was opened on Swanston St in April, providing crucial support to veterans and their families.

The centre will offer the veteran community access to vital care from specialist staff and essential support services including counselling, advocacy, case management and referral pathways.

The launch of The Vivian Bullwinkel Veterans and Families Wellbeing Centre marks the significant coming together of two of Victoria’s largest veteran support services with Melbourne Legacy and Victorian RSL collaborating to offer a holistic service for veterans and their families. The partnership establishes a platform for further combined service assistances from the two major Victorian ex-service organisations.

Joel Sardi served in the Australian Army for five years, and in 2014 he sustained a devastating injury that resulted on him becoming a C5



quadruplegic.

Joel said the centre would be vital in ensuring he and his family were provided ongoing, holistic care.

“When I was discharged from the army, I was immediately separated from the incredible support network and amazing friendships I had established over the previous five years,” he said.

“The wellbeing centre is going to be a place where I know I am always welcome to bring my

family and we will be taken care of no matter what. I look at the wellbeing centre as my new battalion.”

Melbourne Legacy will rely heavily on the pivotal support of its donors in order to ensure the centre continues to grow and offer the community specialised care and trained staff they so heavily rely on.

“We are proud to be offering a safe haven for veterans and their families in the Melbourne

CBD. The Vivian Bullwinkel Centre will provide them with the support and care they need, in one location. But we cannot continue the service our veteran community needs without the help of donors to fund this initiative well into the future,” Melbourne Legacy president Hugh Robertson said.

The wellbeing centre has been named in honour of an ordinary Australian who did extraordinary things. Vivian Bullwinkel was an Australian Army nurse during the Second World War and the lone survivor of the Bangka Island Massacre. She dedicated her life to nursing and honouring those killed on Bangka Island.

Vivian was a compassionate woman that exemplified the ANZAC spirit and embodied the care and support the centre hopes to offer the veteran community.

The centre’s launch in April unveiled a portrait of Vivian Bullwinkel by artist George Petrou OAM, which was also attended by Minister for Veterans Shaun Leane and RSL president Dr Rob Webster.

The wellbeing centre is located at Legacy House, level 3, 293 Swanston St ●

New CBD bars given go-ahead

WORDS BY *David Schout*
PLANNING

As CBD nightlife continues to bounce back from COVID-19, new bars on Lonsdale St and Bourke St have received a thumbs-up from the City of Melbourne.

The council granted HQ Group, which also owns Arbory Afloat on the Yarra River, permission to launch two new bars as part of its soon-to-open four-level hospitality venue at 270 Lonsdale St.

The new venture, which will feature independent drinking and eating venues on each level, was given the green light to operate separate bars on both the rooftop and lower floors.

Under the planning permit amendment, the rooftop bar can host up to 125 patrons and remain open until 1am, while the 200-patron bar on the ground and first floor can stay open until 3am.

HQ group has spent recent years renovating the heritage-listed building, which was once home to cigarette manufacturer Sniders and Abrahams.

Council planning chair Cr Nicholas Reece said he had faith the venue, which sits opposite the Melbourne Emporium shopping centre, would be appropriately managed.

“This is a venue that would be run by the current owners of Arbory and Arbory Afloat, who I must say have done as exceptional job with that

venue on the Yarra River,” he said at an April 20 Future Melbourne Committee meeting.

Objections to the application were received from residents on the adjacent Drewery Lane, in particular regarding the amenity impacts of patrons leaving the venue post-1am.

As a result, the council recommended venue management filtered departing patrons onto Lonsdale St (rather than Drewery Lane) at this time.

“This will not unreasonably burden the applicant and will reduce the likelihood of disturbance to residents,” the officers’ report said.

Meanwhile, the council has also approved a small-scale bar at the top end of Bourke St.

The “relatively modest” bar next door to the former Palace Theatre will operate as a combined bar and bottle shop, and can remain open until 1am.

It too received 18 objections and the applicant, Lino Scidone — owner of Southbank restaurant La Camera — agreed to reduce patron numbers from 150 to 120.

Deputy planning chair Cr Rohan Leppert said while he “empathised” with objectors, the council had little reason to deny the permit.

“The policy that we have in our planning scheme about [bar] uses in this category really say that you’ve got to make a strong case for post-1am permitted use. But up to 1am for a small venue like this, fully enclosed, there really isn’t an issue,” he said at a May 4 Future Melbourne Committee meeting.

“

This is a venue that would be run by the current owners of Arbory and Arbory Afloat, who I must say have done as exceptional job with that venue on the Yarra River

”

“So, whilst I understand the concerns of objectors ... this is something that is 100 per cent supported by our policy framework.”

The council said that no bottles or other waste material could be removed from the site between 9pm and 7am to reduce noise.

Cr Leppert said it was imperative for new bars to coexist harmoniously.

▼ 270 Lonsdale St.



▲ 32-38 Bourke St.

“I’m sure the message is heard loud and clear that it is the easiest path to being a good citizen is by keeping those bottles quiet, by ensuring patrons leave as quietly as possible, and I very much hope that like many other well-managed venues in this part of town, this will be an addition.” ●

Wesley Place comes alive

WORDS BY *Ellen Blake*
DEVELOPMENT

Wesley Place, Lonsdale St’s newest lifestyle precinct, is now open to the public.

Standing at 130 - 150 Lonsdale St, Wesley Place includes public green space, office towers and retail and culinary offerings.

Developed by Charter Hall, Wesley Place is one of only four green spaces in Melbourne’s CBD.

The Wesley Place urban park recently hosted an event as part of the City of Melbourne’s Melbourne Knowledge Week series, becoming the first outdoor hub in the festival’s history.

Charter Hall Victorian regional portfolio manager Nicole Ward said the revitalised precinct provided world-class offerings for the CBD community.

“Wesley Place is the perfect place to meet, connect, imagine and recharge,” Ms Ward said.

The Wesley Place development included a comprehensive restoration of the bluestone Wesley Church and outbuildings, including the Manse, Caretaker’s Cottage, Schoolhouse and Nicholas Hall.

The redevelopment of Wesley Place honoured the original neo-gothic architecture of the complex, first designed by renowned architect Joseph Reed in the mid-19th century.

To coincide with the precinct’s opening, Melbourne coffee connoisseurs Axil Coffee



Roasters have opened a new cafe in the heritage Manse building.

The Manse building, first erected in 1859, has previously been used as a minister’s residence, the home of the Wesley Central Missionary’s programs and housed the offices of the *Big Issue* magazine.

Axil Coffee Roasters managing director Dave Makin said Wesley Place “ticked all our boxes” for a new location.

“The revitalisation of the precinct is one of the most exciting new developments in Melbourne, with historic buildings and a new public green space at the front door of our new Manse café. All up it delivers a one-of-a-kind setting,” Mr Makin said ●

For more information:
wesleyplace.com.au



City of Melbourne BOWLS Club is pennant champion!

SPORT

The City of Melbourne BOWLS Club (CoMBC) cleaned up at the 2020/2021 Midweek Metropolitan Pennant Championships awarded by Bowls Victoria, by claiming victory in its four eligible grand finals last month.

This season the CoMBC submitted teams in Divisions 3 and 5 of the Midweek Metropolitan Pennant, with each team winning two Grand Finals, in both their sections and divisions.

The Division 3, Section 2 team played Flemington/Kensington at Moonee Ponds on a superbly presented green. At game’s end CoMBC was successful in beating their opponents by 13 points (64 to 51), while its other team, Division 5, Section 2, played Moonee Valley at the Aberfeldie Bowls Club.

After the completion of 21 ends by each of the teams, CoMBC won by 11 points, in what was a close and hard-fought game for the entire day.

Each of these Division 3 and five teams will move up a division for the 2021/22 Midweek Pennant season.

“We should be so proud of the efforts of all players for all our members,” Chair of the CoMBC Robert Barker said.

Two Metropolitan Divisional grand finals

The CoMBC division 5 team ventured to Bundoora RSL Bowls Club to take on Werribee.

Melbourne’s three skippers, Colin Ham, Jack Ainsaar and Laurie Garmston won their rinks, taking out the spoils as Division 5 grand final winners.

The Division 3 grand final against Edithvale took CoMBC to the Hawthorn rinks of the MCC Bowls Club. The game was tight, the wind was variable, but CoMBC managed to win two rinks.

At the conclusion of all ends CoMBC was able to beat Edithvale by 13 points (70 to 57) taking out the Division 3 crown.

Winning club seeks new players

CoMBC is seeking to expand its membership to enter new teams in the midweek divisions. The club will provide new playing members, both male and female, the opportunity to use the skills taught at training sessions by their accredited coaches, with members located throughout Southbank, Docklands, the CBD and various inner-city suburbs.

The City of Melbourne BOWLS Club is located at Flagstaff Gardens at the Corner of William and Dudley streets in West Melbourne ●

For more information:
citybowls.org

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Your City of Melbourne community update

DELIVERING FOR THE COMMUNITY – OUR NEW COUNCIL PLAN

After a year of significant disruption, the City of Melbourne has been working closely with the community to deliver the services and support that people need now, while developing a plan that reflects the community's aspirations and priorities for Melbourne's future.

In May, the Melbourne City Council – the Lord Mayor, the Deputy Lord Mayor and nine councillors – endorsed the draft Council Plan 2021-25, which sets out what Council will achieve during its four-year term to further the community's vision for Melbourne.

This four-year plan is delivered in yearly increments – the first of which is the Budget 2021-22 – which details the Council's funded activities for the coming financial year. This draft Budget was also endorsed by Council in May, and both plans are now available for the community to review and provide feedback.

Planning for the future

The draft Council Plan brings together recent community insights to help us preserve and progress the city in six key areas:

- 1 Economy of the future**
Building a strong and adaptive city economy and a sustainable future city.
- 2 Melbourne's unique identity and place**
Celebrating the places, people and cultures that make this a vibrant and creative city.
- 3 Safety and wellbeing**
Ensuring everyone feels safe and included as they participate in community life.

- 4 Access and affordability**
Reducing inequality by ensuring access to housing, core services and information.
- 5 Climate and biodiversity emergency**
Acting immediately to reduce our emissions and waste, and adapt to climate change.
- 6 Aboriginal Melbourne**
Ensuring that First Peoples' culture, lore, knowledge, and heritage enrich the city's growth and development.

These six key areas will be brought to life with initiatives such as support to help businesses adapt and thrive, infrastructure and capital works projects, improvements to recreation facilities and more. As always, we will continue to deliver all council services including waste and recycling collection, library and community services, maternal and child health services and many more.

The Council Plan will be a "living document" and Council will report to the community on progress made, as well as any adjustments needed to meet our targets or adapt to new circumstances.

It's time to have your say

You are encouraged to provide feedback on the draft Council Plan and draft Budget. Visit participate.melbourne.vic.gov.au/council-plan-and-budget to review the plans and share your thoughts. Feedback can be provided until midnight on Tuesday 15 June.

Following Councillor consideration of public feedback on the draft plans, they will be presented to the Council meeting on 29 June 2021 for adoption.

A HEALTHY CITY FOR ALL

As part of the Council Plan, every four years we include an approach for how we will support our city's health and wellbeing. A liveable city is a healthy city and, since the last plan was created in 2017, Melbourne has gone through immense change. Last year we completed an extensive review that highlighted key issues for health and wellbeing. In March this year we asked Melburnians to help us rank these topics and share whether anything was missed.

This feedback, along with data and insights, has shaped the focus areas for our Health and Wellbeing Plan: public health and safety, housing and homelessness, and mental wellbeing. These topics have been integrated into the draft Council Plan 2021 – 25, and are the ongoing focus of many services and programs we provide to the community.



A LONG-TERM VISION

Also included in the Council Plan is the Community Vision – your 10-year vision for the city.

In March and April of this year, we heard from more than 1400 people who live, work, study, visit or own a business in the municipality, to prioritise the community aspirations that were most important to them. Their insights informed the Community Vision, which is a refresh of Future Melbourne 2026, our existing 10-year vision for the city that was released in 2016.

Overall, the community's aspirations were for a city that:

- is healthy and safe
- considers climate change in everything that we do
- is inclusive, accessible and affordable.

Over our annual, four-year and ten-year plans, we will work closely with the community, and partner with other levels of government, as well as the public and private sectors to realise this vision.



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Your City of Melbourne community update



BUDGET INVESTS IN STRONGER ECONOMY

A rates discount, a boost for recreational facilities, job creation through capital works and a new recycling program are highlights of the City of Melbourne's draft Budget 2021-22.

After helping to steer the city through tough times, the City of Melbourne has a detailed plan to lead Melbourne's recovery from the global pandemic.

The \$789.9 million city-shaping budget puts people first and delivers essential services and programs to rebuild and strengthen the local economy.

Record infrastructure spending of \$244.7 million will create jobs now and set the city up for future generations, while a \$21.5 million investment in events will attract people back to the city and boost business across the municipality.

Economic recovery

The City of Melbourne has achieved a \$31 million turnaround since delivering a \$57.4 million deficit in last year's COVID-19 recovery budget, with a forecast deficit of \$26.2 million for 2021-22.

We've stepped up to support our business community as it faces the toughest trading conditions in decades.

We are proud of our response to COVID-19 – and we believe the city is emerging in better shape because of our economic stimulus support and fast action to deliver inventive programs like expanded outdoor dining.

We're focused on drawing more people in, bringing back the buzz and making sure the city remains a great place to live, work, visit and do business.

Our core services remain a priority – these include waste and recycling services, keeping the streets clean, and providing community services such as libraries, maternal and child health support, childcare, and support for older people.

In addition, the draft Budget includes significant progress on city-shaping projects. We're working to progress Greenline which will deliver one of the biggest transformations of the city since the opening of Fed Square in 2002. We want the Yarra River's Northbank to become one of the city's premier destinations for workers, residents and visitors.

The Queen Victoria Market precinct renewal is well underway and the Brens Pavilion in Royal Park is to be upgraded. We're also investing more than \$10 million in the Kensington Community Recreation Centre redevelopment, which is due for completion in 2022.

Reducing waste and cleaning the city

We will invest more than \$50 million to get rid of waste, scrub the city clean, remove graffiti, and improve lighting and safety.

Our bread-and-butter operations are essential to keeping our city running smoothly – we collected 45,000 tonnes of waste and recycling last year, which included more than 10,000 mattresses and five million cigarette butts.

For the first time we're introducing a food and organic waste collection, which will reduce landfill and create compost that can be used on our parks and gardens.

Keeping rates low

After delivering a recovery budget last year that included a freeze on rate increases, this year we are continuing to keep rates low.

In recognition of the ongoing impacts of COVID-19, and to support businesses and the community during the city's recovery, we have made the unprecedented decision to absorb this year's 1.5 per cent rate increase by applying a rates discount. The City of Melbourne will surrender \$4.8 million in rates revenue by applying the rates discount.

To have your say on the draft Budget, visit participate.melbourne.vic.gov.au/council-plan-and-budget

Feedback on the draft Budget 2021-22, draft Council Plan 2021-2025 and draft Revenue and Rating Plan can be provided on Participate Melbourne until midnight on Tuesday 15 June.

Following Councillor consideration of public feedback on the draft plans, they will be presented to the Council meeting on 29 June 2021 for adoption.

FAST FACTS

- Total draft Budget 2021-22: \$789.9 million
- Record infrastructure investment: \$244.7 million
- Rates discount: \$4.8 million surrendered in revenue
- Deficit: \$26.2 million
- Return to surplus: 2022-23
- Borrowings: \$147.7 million.

Information and events in this publication are current at the time of printing. Subsequent changes may occur.

KEEP IN TOUCH

To stay connected with all the latest news from the City of Melbourne, follow us on social media and subscribe to *Melbourne* magazine online at magazine.melbourne.vic.gov.au

You can also join conversations to influence plans for your neighbourhood through Participate Melbourne at participate.melbourne.vic.gov.au

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Ground broken at 555 Collins

WORDS BY *Brendan Rees*
BUILDING

Building has begun of Amazon's new \$1.5 billion corporate headquarters in the CBD in a major boost to the city's economy.

The first stage of 555 Collins Street, developed by Charter Hall, will see a \$750 million premium-grade office tower constructed at the corner of Collins and King streets.

To mark the occasion, a ceremonial event attended by Lord Mayor Sally Capp and Victorian treasurer Tim Pallas was held last month which saw the first pouring of precinct's foundations take place.

The project is the largest commercial development in Melbourne's CBD to begin construction in 2021.

Cr Capp said the project, expected to generate 1500 jobs, was a "sign of confidence in our city's economic future".

"Our city's economic recovery is strengthening and this project will be a catalyst for further investment in this area of the CBD," she said.

The first 48,000 sqm office tower will occupy the corner of Collins and King streets and will be followed by a 32,000 sqm tower during stage two works.

Designed by COX Architecture and Gensler, the towers will accommodate up to 7500 new CBD workers with stage one works expected to be completed by early 2023.

Smart Building technology in the buildings will monitor air quality and feature touchless amenities to support enhanced health, hygiene, and wellness.

The ground plane will also provide a premium food and beverage hub as well as a health and wellbeing space for tenants.

CEO of Charter Hall David Harrison said it was a "landmark development", that would add vibrancy and a state-of-the-art, future-ready workplace to Melbourne's CBD.

"Charter Hall is proud to be moving construction forward onsite at 555 Collins St, to continue to develop our portfolio of high-quality assets for our investors and tenant customers, while creating more jobs for Victorians," he said.

Mr Pallas also welcomed the development, saying it was a sign of the city's resilience in coming out of the COVID-19 turnaround.

"This is significant for Melbourne and incredible news for jobs and our highly skilled workforce," he said.

"This investment will contribute billions of dollars to the Victorian tech economy in the next 10 years and cement our position as the home of innovation in the nation."

Amazon Web Services managing director for Australia and New Zealand, Adam Beavis expressed his excitement for the project saying it would reinvigorate Melbourne's CBD by "strengthening our local presence in the Victorian economy".

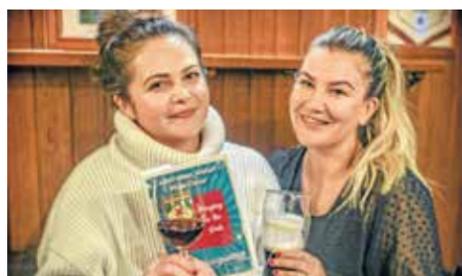


"Melbourne has a rich community of innovators, and we are looking forward to bringing Amazon's growing local workforce to 555 Collins Street so we can continue to invent and innovate on behalf of customers across our Amazon and AWS businesses in Australia," he said.

Mr Beavis added that the precinct would have a six-star green rating and built under a carbon-neutral framework, "which will contribute to helping us reach our goal of net-zero carbon emissions by 2040".

Residents 3000 president Rafael Camillo said it was an exciting development.

"Anything that's going to bring jobs and more residents to the city is always welcomed," he said ●



Singing in the Pub with the Australian Welsh Male Choir

COMMUNITY

The Australian Welsh Male Choir is adding its voice to the revival of arts and culture in the CBD post-COVID with the return of its monthly Wednesday meet-ups at the Charles Dickens Tavern.

CBD News photographer John Tadigiri captured the joyous scenes of the choir "singing in the pub" at the corner of Collins and Elizabeth streets on Wednesday, May 19, which takes place on the second last Wednesday every month at 7pm.

The choir is inviting new members to join and everyone is welcome – especially tenors, baritones and basses.

So, whether you've been singing all your life, or whether you are interested in giving it a go for the first time, come along and join the choir in a very welcoming and informal setting!

Music will be provided to all guests on the night, and food and drinks will be at bar prices.

When not singing at the Charles Dickens Tavern every second last Wednesday of the month, the choir is rehearsing on Wednesday evenings at 7pm at the Welsh Church at 329 Latrobe St and visitors again are most welcome.

There is no need to register with the choir, but booking with the pub is recommended to ensure that it doesn't exceed venue capacity. Call 03 9654 1821 ●

Plans submitted for A'Beckett St

WORDS BY *Brendan Rees*
PLANNING

Plans for a \$4.45m "stacked vertical village" tower featuring shops and restaurants in the CBD will soon be considered by City of Melbourne.

Developers have applied to bulldoze a three-storey art-deco commercial building at 41-45 A'Beckett St to make way for an eight-storey tower with an "egg crate-like texture", and "box-like tenancies".

Located opposite RMIT University and Melbourne Central, the proposed 40-metre building aims to "provide a social beacon for the young and effervescent locals".

Under the plans, the new precinct will feature painted wayfinding artwork on the exterior, terraces, signage tabs to indicate tenancy, and a facade predominantly clear-glazed.

"The composition of the building is as a series of single-, double-, and triple-height boxes, to express the individual tenancies, stacked into an ad-hoc composition with a sliding dynamic," the application said.

An application to the council proposes the building will be a "social hub; a vertical village of retail, entertainment, and hospitality uses".

The existing building, also known as Wilder House with steel windows, dates from the pre-war era.

The plans submitted by Craig Tan Architects for owners Longriver Group say the new building will be targeted to the local demographic, particularly youths and the Asian demographic.

It said there had been a "dramatic increase in the youthful and upwardly mobile Asian demographic in the area, driven by the influx of international students prior to the pandemic".

It also noted the area will be a "prime oasis" with basketball courts at RMIT also mooted to be developed with a 120-metre-high university tower.

"Once quite low lying, with small two-storey light industrial warehouses, the area to the north of the CBD between Elizabeth and Swanston streets is now dominated by tall residential towers with a characteristic lack of podium setbacks," the report stated.

"The changing nature of this area is defining a new precinct within Melbourne, one that is akin to a contemporary 'Asia town'."

"The proposal at 41-45 A'Beckett responds to this emerging neighbourhood, in a positive and energised fashion."

Six floors are proposed with a single basement consisting of nine bicycle spaces for staff.



▲ A render of the proposal for 41-45 A'Beckett St.

However, there will be no car parking under the plans, and the site will be limited to six bicycle parking spaces on A'Beckett Street.

The application has so far attracted two comments from the public, citing concerns a lack of bicycle parking will "force visitors to crowd the neighbouring building's parking".

Bicycle Network spokesman Alexander Miller said it was important the council considered the plans carefully to allow enough bike and car parking spaces in the area.

"If there's no bike parking outside a really busy area then people might often park their bike [elsewhere] which the council doesn't like either," he said.

"What we observe is that a lot of bicycle hoops that the City of Melbourne installs ... a lot of them are often quite full, especially during the day."

"It seems the way we're tracking there will be less people driving into the city."

"I'm not too sure how many there are around that A'Beckett precinct or oversubscribed but that's something the council needs to look at."

Mr Miller added people also needed to safely secure their bikes and access buildings easily ●

New 80 Collins precinct emerges

BUSINESS

Following a staggered opening amid COVID-19 lockdowns in Victoria last year, the retail and dining precinct at 80 Collins St has emerged as an exciting new offering at the "Paris End" of the CBD.

Celebrating a range of new openings with a new Melbourne Food & Wine Festival event series in June, the precinct is part of Dexus's new mixed-use development completed last year.

With many of its tenants experiencing staggered openings amid last year's COVID lockdowns, the precinct has quickly sprung to life in 2021 with a new network of laneways featuring a range of brands, restaurants, cafes and bars.

With CBD visitation increasing day by day, the new precinct is playing a central role in reinvigorating Melbourne's vibrant heart. And in June, Eating 80 Collins, in partnership with the Melbourne Food & Wine Festival, will feature three "Light Up the Night" experiences on June 2, and a coveted "Lunch Illuminated" experience on June 5.

Designer Sener Besim will present his first ever large-scale sculptural work, *Light the Way*, to be installed in each of the three laneways at 80 Collins, visible from Collins, Exhibition and Little Collins streets. Taking inspiration from one of Sener's iconic pieces of jewellery, the public design installation will light the way to winter for the month of June. The six, 2.4-metre-high works are inspired by the geometric patterns used in Ottoman heritage and architectural shapes, a major influence across all Sener's work.

Nine food and drink destinations are now open, including Farmer's Daughters, Handpicked Cellar Door, Nick & Nora's, La Madonna and Ingresso, Maverick, Bowls Baby, People's Coffee and Upstate Coffee. This is alongside six fashion, jewellery and footwear stores, including stores for Saint Laurent, Golden Goose and FEIT, as well as Mulberry, Georg Jensen and Sener Besim's eponymous concept store, Sener Besim. The Lucas Group's restaurant Society and eating house Yakimono are set to open in July and August. More retail and dining destinations are still to be announced ●

For more information:
80collins.com.au

Citizens continue calls for climate action

WORDS BY *Brendan Rees*
PROTEST

Thousands of school students took part in a rally in the CBD in May demanding urgent action on climate change from the federal government.

Around 20,000 people gathered at Treasury Gardens on May 21 to protest for a new approach to clean renewable energy.

Students skipped school to attend the rally with unions, parents, teachers, university students and scientists also in attendance.

Many held homemade signs and shouted slogans including "Stand up, fight back", and "Hey ho, ScoMo's got to go".

Organised by the School Strike 4 Climate, the event was one of 50 marches held across the nation calling on the government to #FundOurFutureNotGas.

The crowd was met by a strong police presence including members of the Public Order Response Team, however attendees rallied peacefully.

Protesters also checked in via a QR system and wore masks in a bid to remain COVID safe.

Several roads were blocked off when a march was held in the city at around 3pm.

Organiser Anj Sharma, 17, from Hunting Tower School in Mount Waverley, led the crowd in an inspiring speech, as she urged Federal Treasurer Josh Frydenberg to "fund our future and not gas".

"We know that action won't change the world. We know that this strike won't solve all of the world's problems," she said.

"But we also know that despite being young, we are powerful and we can take action and we can influence the actions of our parliament."

Ms Sharma, who was born in Delhi, India before arriving in Australia when she was 10 months old, said she owed her passion for climate justice to her family in India who had experienced firsthand the impacts of the "climate crisis".

"Some of my family also live in a tiny village which does not have the infrastructure to withstand the natural disasters that they are constantly ravaged by," she said, adding that the



monsoon season had impacted their income, food, and livelihood.

"Living in Australia we're so privileged to be able to say that most of us are not on the frontlines of the climate crisis," she said.

Joining Anj on a loudspeaker was Ella Simons, a year 9 student who travelled from NSW, who said she was "terrified" of the future "that our leaders are leaving with us".

"We need an immediate transition to renewable energy now. We are striking for the right of every single person to live," she said which attracted huge cheers from the crowd.

Following speeches and a performance by a student band, the gathering marched down Spring St towards LaTrobe St and into the city.

Among them was grandmother of two Kathy Kozlowski, 75, from Abbotsford.

"I think it's so important that we do something about stopping our use of fossil fuels within the next 10 years," she told *CBD News*.

"Anything we can do to get people aware of it and to change people's minds is really important."

One of the event's organisers Stephanie Liaw, a year 12 student at Presbyterian Ladies' College, said she saw it as her responsibility to have her voice heard and "make a difference",

saying "enough is enough".

"It's time for the government to prioritise our futures and our people over the profits of select multinational corporations and the fossil fuel lobby. Our message to the government is simple: do better," she said.

This sentiment was echoed by Francesca Smith, 18, of NSW, who called for an end to the fossil fuel industry.

"These corporations manipulate and coerce locals in their claim for secure jobs and threaten the environment," she told the crowd.

Meredith Peace, Victorian branch president of the Victorian Education Union, said she was supportive of the students striking from school to fight for their future.

"Certainly, it's appropriate," she said, adding climate change would "without a doubt have a dramatic impact on their futures".

"It's not good enough and if it means they miss a day at school to come out and campaign then I think that is important."

PhD student Jemma Moir-Meyer from the Walter and Eliza Hall Institute of medical research at Melbourne University said, "I think it's important that we generate the momentum at the ground level convince our lawmakers and policymakers that we really need to change the direction of our investments."

"We want to see faster climate action because we're almost exceeding the 1.5 degrees warming that we've set our targets on."

Deb James, president of the Victorian Trades Hall Council, said it was important to "fight for what is right".

"Just as young people will experience the worst of climate change ... it is workers that will be on the frontline against bushfires, storms, droughts, and heatwaves," she said.

"The Liberal Morrison Government should be investing in huge projects like Star of the South - which would be Australia's first offshore wind project ... and could generate some 20 per cent of our energy needs.

Mum Alexia Huth of Preston, who marched with her nine-year-old son, said, "I feel like it's really important for parents to support students who are the ones who are going to bear the brunt of the climate change in the future." ●

Council focus on food and organics waste

SUSTAINABILITY

The City of Melbourne will roll out a new food and organics bin service in a bid to reduce the amount of waste heading to landfill.

Kitchen caddies for collecting food scraps and a new lime-green wheelie bin will be delivered to 9000 homes as part of the new service starting in June.

Under the plan, all food and organic waste will be placed in the green waste bin. Once collected it will be diverted from landfill and turned into mulch to use in parks and gardens.

The new \$1 million service will be provided at no additional cost to residents with the 120-litre food and garden organics and 120-litre landfill bins to be collected weekly.

To reduce odours and amenity issues, participating properties will move to a fortnightly collection of 240-litre recycling bins.

Residents will also be given a roll of 52 compostable bin liners to help keep their new bin free of odours, which will be supplied for free on an ongoing basis.

Those living in houses and single-storey apartment blocks will be part of the initial phase of the roll-out, while multi-storey buildings will be included in the next stage.

Lord Mayor Sally Capp said the initial 9000 properties will help council gather data on how to address the challenge of organic collection in high-rise apartments from 2022.

She said the roll-out was a practical way to encourage residents to become more sustainable.

"Food and garden waste make up almost 50 per cent of the waste sent to landfill by our residents - and that creates emissions that contribute to climate change," she said.

The council has allocated \$5.2 million in the draft Annual Plan and Budget 2021-22 as part of the next stage of the project.

This includes expanding to other low-rise apartment buildings while it investigates options for high-rise buildings.

The council's environment portfolio chair Cr Rohan Leppert welcomed the initiative, saying food waste would be put "to good use" ●

HISTORY

Jungle atmosphere in the heart of Melbourne

When I first saw this atmospheric image of the Old National Herbarium at Melbourne's Botanic Gardens, I was taken back to a time in the 1970s when I was fortunate enough to visit the ancient city of Palenque on Mexico's Yucatan Peninsula early one morning as the ruins emerged out of a heavy jungle mist. I was blown away by the magical atmosphere I happened upon among the thick tropical vegetation.

There are no early morning mists or tropical jungles here, but the sense of mystery exuding from the ivy-clad facade of the Old Herbarium's portico is palpable, leading one to wonder what treasures lie inside. The ivy is dormant, virtually leafless, adding to the feeling that this is a long-abandoned building.

The photograph, part of the Royal Historical Society's images collection, was taken in 1933 and represents one of the last images of the Old National Herbarium, built in 1860 in the Melbourne of the time's signature bluestone, with walls cleverly packed with seaweed for insulation.

It was located in the King's Domain on a site chosen by Governor Charles La Trobe in 1845. Towards the end of its life, the Shrine of Remembrance emerged on a nearby site, with the foundation stone laid in November 1927. The Shrine was completed in 1934, so it appeared just as the Old Herbarium disappeared from the landscape.

There are two men standing under the portico at the front of the building. One is J.W. Audas, who at the time of the photograph was

senior assistant botanist and the go-to person for plant collectors around Victoria. He was a great collector of specimens himself and travelled widely throughout Victoria, writing prolifically about his botanical excursions. On his left is his assistant Patrick Francis (Frank) Morris, who later became the Gardens' senior botanical officer. Morris was also a keen collector, with a special interest in grasses. Like his boss, he spent much of his leisure time collecting specimens. Audas retired in 1937 after working at the Herbarium for 40 years. Morris retired in January 1961 after 48 years.

Greeted by the *Argus* newspaper as "one of the most interesting and important features connected with the Botanic Gardens" in 1861, the Old Herbarium was lamented as an "unsightly building" by 1933, just before it was demolished. By then it was run down, understaffed and too small for its burgeoning collection. Rescue came in 1934 in the form of a new building, the gift of philanthropist and confectioner Sir Macpherson Robertson. And so, the Herbarium moved from its original site to where it sits still, near Gate F at the corner of Dallas Brooks Drive and Birdwood Avenue.

Today, 175 years after the Royal Botanic Gardens (including the Herbarium) was founded by Government Botanist and first director of the Gardens Baron Sir Ferdinand Von Mueller, the Herbarium houses more than 1.5 million dried plant, algae and fungi specimens. As well, it is one of the participating bodies in the Australasian Virtual Herbarium which houses an amazing collection of more than eight



million specimens.

Extended in 1988, a revisioning of the Herbarium's future is now underway as part of the Gardens' 20-year masterplan, including restoration of the 1934 building and the development of an underground herbarium ●



Dr. Cheryl Griffin
ROYAL HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF VICTORIA

An investment simply too compelling not to pursue

“

Welcome to the 10th article of our 12-part series which will attempt to explore the role that housing can and should play within Australian society and why it is important to our economy that we house all Australians, rich or poor.

”

This series intends to draw on a range of perspectives centred around housing and homelessness. We will hear a range of views from business, the not-for-profit sector and hopefully government, as to why they believe housing is an important social and economic building block for Australia's future prosperity.

This month we have asked Mario Biasin, co-founder of Metricon Homes, Australia's largest builder, to share his thoughts around why the objective around housing all Australians is important, especially given his early beginnings as a migrant to Australia...

I have been involved in the residential building industry for more than four decades, playing a part in building homes for tens of thousands of Australians through Metricon Homes. With my co-founder George Kline, we had a clear vision when we started building back in 1976 – we wanted to build good-quality homes for Australian families at an affordable price. Both of us, as child migrants to Australia, were acutely aware of the role a home plays in anchoring people, giving them a sense of belonging.

I can clearly remember the moment I first became aware of homelessness in Australia and how it impacts people in a devastating way. I was in Sydney for a work trip about 30 years ago and saw rough sleepers – a sight I'd not witnessed in Melbourne. This started my thinking about how the construction sector could contribute to alleviating housing distress.

When I reflect on how the property sector has changed over time, and the impacts on homelessness, the biggest change from my perspective has been the price of land relative to construction costs. Around 45 years ago, the price of building a home was around twice as much as the land. This has shifted dramatically. Land now costs at least 50 per cent more than the home in most capital cities, while land prices in regional areas have also increased yet perhaps not at the same rate. Relatively, construction costs have decreased. Numerous efficiencies in the construction process – from raw material prices to different building practices – have significantly reduced the cost of building a house. Land prices have increased disproportionately within this equation. This has resulted in home ownership and even fair rental prices being unattainable for many Australians.

Active participants in the home building sector have a role to play in the solutions. Government, industry, corporates, funders and the community sector have the capacity to

collaborate to rethink how to provide more affordable housing solutions for the many people and families who are in desperate need of a safe roof over their heads. More intensive support for victims of domestic violence and those suffering mental health challenges will no doubt play a role too.

When I consider ways that our government, both state and national, could support better outcomes for those at risk of homelessness, two key opportunities come to mind. Firstly, government and councils own land in regional and metropolitan areas that is often well located and in close proximity to amenities. Could this land be better utilised as blended social, affordable and private market housing? Is some top-down urgency now warranted to drive activity in this area?

Secondly, the Victorian government has made an unprecedented commitment to enhancing social housing stock with the \$5.3 billion Big Housing Build. Could this approach be used as a blueprint by other states to supercharge the development of social housing? Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute (AHURI) research reports that \$1 invested in last-resort housing generates \$2.70 of benefit to the community during the subsequent 20-year period, including health cost savings, improved quality of life and reduced crime costs, among others. Additional value would likely be achieved with secure tenure. Furthermore, as well as benefiting those in need of housing support, it would also stimulate economic activity and jobs. Is the business and social rationale of this investment simply too compelling not to pursue?

As a business, Metricon has stayed true to its original vision to provide quality homes for Australians from all walks of life. In 2018 we responded to the increasing challenge of homelessness by creating a division of our organisation purely focused on building

social, affordable and accessible housing. Called EveryOne, this business unit is part of our social responsibility to the broader community. EveryOne taps into Metricon's expertise to deliver well designed and competitively priced homes for government and community housing association clients, tailored for the tenants they support.

I'm proud to play a small role in unburdening more Australians from the stress of finding a safe and affordable home, one where they feel they belong. I also look forward to continuing the conversation about how we can collaborate to ensure that homelessness is significantly reduced.

I hope you found the above perspective by Mario interesting and insightful. While what was said may not align with our view of the world, we all need to listen and digest what is said by others in order to find common ground. This is why we are focusing on the fact that the provision of shelter is a fundamental human need (not human right) and without that need being met, we have unintended social and economic consequences that will span generations.

As I said in my first article, doing nothing is NOT AN OPTION! We need to act and we need to act now. All of us need to be part of the solution so please feel free to write to me with your thoughts: info@housingallaustralians.com.au



Rob Pradolin

FORMER GENERAL MANAGER AT FRASERS PROPERTY AUSTRALIA AND FOUNDER OF HOUSING ALL AUSTRALIANS (HAA)

INFO@HOUSINGALLAUSTRALIANS.COM.AU

TRADER PROFILE

A family affair at QVM

For the Caiafa family, the Queen Victoria Market holds a very special place in their history.

WORDS BY Rachael Fleury

M & G Caiafa, or “the corner bread shop”, as its customers fondly know it, is a family-run business that was started 47 years ago by Michael Caiafa Snr and his wife, Grace Caiafa.

The shop is now run mainly by the four Caiafa children, with Michael Caiafa Jnr overseeing many of the day-to-day operations.

Mr Caiafa said both his parents had long associations with Queen Victoria Market before becoming stallholders.

“Dad grew up on Capel St, North Melbourne, a couple of streets over from the market, and Mum started working at the market as a teenager at the stall opposite,” Mr Caiafa said.

Both of his parents moved to Melbourne as children from the same village in Foggia, Italy. However, they didn't meet until they were in Melbourne, in their early 20s.

“I think my father might have proposed two or three times before my mother said yes,” Mr Caiafa said with a wry smile before adding, “my mother was very beautiful”.

When the M&G Caiafa site became available, Mrs Caiafa knew she wanted to take the lease up on the stall and convinced her new husband of the idea.

“For the first three or four years, Dad was still doing fruit deliveries for other businesses in the market, and Mum worked another job as well, just so they could make the shop work.”

Sadly, Mr Caiafa's mother died in 1995, when he was just thirteen after she developed a brain tumour.

“Deep down, we all work for Mum. It makes

us so happy to do this for her. The shop was her baby, and this is her legacy,” he said.

Mr Caiafa describes the store as a “one-stop-shop” for baked goods. They sell an array of different breads, including the Noisette and Irrewarra range.

“The evolution of bread in Melbourne is phenomenal. Sourdough used to be a hippy thing, and now there are so many companies doing artisan breads and so many breads to choose from,” Mr Caiafa said.

The shop also sells fresh pizza bases, tortillas, handmade chocolates, a selection of nut butters, all made on-site, including peanut, pistachio, cashew and macadamia butter.

“We're a big food family, and our customers know that if we don't like it, we won't sell it,” Mr Caiafa said.

Mr Caiafa visited France in 2012 and said he was “blown away” by the bakeries and what they were doing in smaller shops.

“Now we get products from Noisette and bake them in our oven in small batches, so we bring out freshly baked croissants for our customers throughout the day,” Mr Caiafa said.

M & G Caiafa has recently expanded its range to include Elwood Sourdough and quiches and pasties from another local Melbourne brand, Too Good Bakers.

“The Elwood Sourdough range is made by an old school baker from his commercial kitchen at his home in Elwood, Mr Caiafa said.

The range has amusing names, including “The Sheila” – their version of the French baguette and “Tipsy”, a loaf packed full of champagne-soaked Australian raisins, coated with



a champagne and orange zest glaze and edible flowers.

Mr Caiafa said he loves working at the market because of the incredible food on offer and the great community of traders. He also loves the wide variety of people he talks to every day.

“We've got customers that we've had for more than 40 years, and they become like family,” Mr Caiafa said.

Gwyn and Sue Owen have been shopping at Queen Victoria Market since 1973. These days they come twice a week, on Thursdays, to buy their food and on Sundays to meet their children for coffee and doughnuts.

“We've known many of the marketers over the years, but M & G Caiafa is always a welcoming store to go to. We knew the parents, and now we know all their children too,” Mr Owen said.

Mr Caiafa said the family shop would keep evolving with international food trends and that his father, who is still working in the shop, wants to make it to 50 years of working there before he retires.

“The market is a very special place for us, and I feel sorry for people who only shop at supermarkets and think that's okay,” Mr Caiafa laughed.

“They're missing out on the fresh, real food that you can get at an affordable price at the market.”

For more information:
mgcaifa.com.au

Bringing Melbourne back better than ever

Young, driven and full of ambition for reviving Melbourne from the pandemic – newly elected councillor Roshena Campbell is passionate about creating a better city than the one we had before COVID struck.

The 36-year-old barrister and mother of three could be easily forgiven for already having enough on her plate, but her desire to help the city's struggling small businesses recover from last year's lockdowns was too great to ignore.

As chair of the council's city activation portfolio, the first-time councillor has wasted no time in leading that recovery and she told *CBD News* she believed a better CBD than the one we had before awaited.

"I think coming out of COVID we might actually have a better CBD – that's my real hope," she said.

"There are fantastic opportunities for Melbourne to reinvent itself as an innovation hub. We are an ideal destination for start-ups to begin their businesses and for businesses to grow."

"For so long, so many of those start-ups and innovative businesses have been priced out of the CBD. I think there's a real opportunity for them to come back into the heart of the city."

"Why can't we be another Silicon Valley where the people with the great ideas have the conditions to be able to bring them to life? I don't see any reason why not."

Cr Campbell has practiced law for more than 10 years in a career which has seen her act in a number of Royal Commissions and represent some of Australia's largest companies, as well as state and local government bodies.

And while she might be a new councillor, she's no stranger to the political scene. A



member of the Liberal Party with a long history of campaigning, she has been politically active since the age of 18.

But having been elected as the second councillor on Lord Mayor Sally Capp's ticket in last year's elections, she said nothing could have prepared her for a "COVID campaign" as conventional campaign methods were thrown out the window.

However, despite the challenges forced upon all candidates running for Town Hall, she said Team Capp's "clear plan to come back from COVID" had resonated with residents and businesses, as well as her own ambition for running.

"I think anyone who runs for council only does it if they're passionate about something. I made the decision to run between the two lockdowns and walking the streets of Melbourne broke my heart because my parents had a background in small business," Cr Campbell said.

"I know that for people that run a small business, it's their whole lives."

While a firm believer that councils should primarily "stick to their patch" of roads, rates and rubbish, she said she wanted this council to be ambitious in fulfilling the needs of its ratepayers by ensuring Melbourne came back strongly from COVID.

With a diverse range of opinions represented on council, she said she was very confident that the newly elected team of councillors was both "energised" and "unified" in its passion to do just that.

"We've got some great plans at the council around what we're going to do with those vacant shopfronts, both in terms of bringing in new businesses, bringing in creatives and I think that we're starting to feel that vibrancy coming back to Melbourne. I think we're definitely on the right path," she said.

While she asked *CBD News* not to hold her Sydneysider roots against her, having lived, worked and studied in the City of Melbourne since relocating as a 20-year-old, we think she's

done enough to earn an honourable pardon!

As a Fitzroy resident and former CBD resident, she is a strong advocate for the "15-minute lifestyle" that the city offers and, similar to her desire to drive business to the city, she is keen to encourage more residents to move in.

"The beauty of city living is that the way people think about dashing between meetings, that's just how you lead your life. It's the fluidity around meeting all of your commitments that comes around from being right in the heart of things," she said.

"My children love the inner-city lifestyle; they love the fact that their playground is Carlton Gardens. They love the fact that the museum is not just a once a year come into the city thing, it's something they do every week. It's their backyard."

"I actually think in terms of raising kids, people say it's cramped in the city, but I don't think it is. Your world just becomes bigger and there's a great sense of community."

As Melbourne continues its recovery from COVID, she said it was important for the council to make doing business in the city involve as little red tape as possible.

"As a council need to do all we can to try to alleviate all of that uncertainty. Obviously, we have no control over border closures, but we can take steps to make it easier for businesses to trade," she said.

"We know that businesses have enough on their plates ... we want dealing with the City of Melbourne to be as easy as possible."

"I think the visibility of the hardship businesses suffered is so apparent to everybody; to visitors, to the people who've returned, but I am starting to see those green shoots." ●



Sean Car

EDITOR

SEAN@HYPERLOCALNEWS.COM.AU

METRO TUNNEL

Metro Tunnel magic is a sight for sore eyes

There's more to the Metro Tunnel than meets the eye – at least going by the project's latest striking idea to support businesses in Melbourne's CBD.

The Flinders Quarter Augmented Art Walk is an exhibition with a difference, using augmented reality (AR) to reveal the city's laneways from a new perspective.

Anyone with a smartphone can wend their way around this self-guided tour of eye-catching work, which runs from May 18 to July 2. Artworks are both indoors (located at participating businesses and visible during opening hours) and outdoors.

Each of the 12 specially commissioned artworks are brought to life through digital animation and sound on mobile devices via the free EyeJack app (for iPhone and Android).

First rolled out in 2019, the Art Walk was cancelled due to COVID last year – but it's back again as part of a push to support businesses in the centre of town.

The artworks have been commissioned from established local artists for this feast of the senses, displayed throughout the Flinders Quarter in the CBD's south, located between Swanston, Elizabeth, Flinders and Collins streets. (The main tour follows Degraves St, Flinders Lane, Campbell Arcade and Flinders/

Swanston streets.)

More than 2500 people used the AR element of the Art Walk in 2019, and this year there's even more incentive to get involved as the Art Walk takes the form of a treasure hunt.

Visitors will be taken on a journey across the precinct to unlock each artwork, one leading to the next. Anyone who finds all 12 artwork "treasures" will be entered into the draw for a major prize package, including a signed print of one of the artworks and a night at the DoubleTree Hilton.

Every entry also has the chance to win instant prizes such as food and drink offers from participating Flinders Quarter businesses.

The printed Art Walk map is available from participating Flinders Quarter businesses, Metro Tunnel HQ (125-133 Swanston St), and the Melbourne Visitor Hub (90-130 Swanston St).

EyeJack can be downloaded for iPhone through the App Store or Android through the Google Play Store and attendees can share their experience on social media by tagging #FlindersQuarter and #MetroTunnel.

Participating businesses include: Clementine's, 7 Degraves Street; Journal Cafe, 253 Flinders Lane; Alpha Barbers, Scott Alley; Bared Men's Shoes, 11 Manchester Lane; Flinders Lane Gallery, Level 1, Nicholas Building; Little Mandarin Yoga Studio, Level 2, Nicholas Building; Dangerfield, 224 Flinders St; DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel, 270 Flinders St; and two artworks in Campbell Arcade. Several



more artworks are dotted around the precinct.

When the Metro Tunnel Project opens in 2025, it will create a new end-to-end line from Sunbury in the west to Cranbourne/Pakenham

in the east. It will feature a new line with five underground stations – the new Town Hall Station will be the nearest to the Flinders Quarter ●

Women's public safety in vertical villages



The dangers lurking in public places are told to women from a young age. The advice is that these risks should be managed by adapting behaviour and/or restricting engagement accordingly.



But what if these public spaces are part of our "home"?

For vertical villages, this can mean both outside and inside our complexes.

In terms of outside, it is the case that many vertical villages have "privately owned but publicly accessible" external areas – such as gardens, access corridors and pathways. The result of developers' deals, this now means that many of our complexes have – and are responsible for (and that's a topic for another time!) – areas surrounding our abodes, which are open to the public right up to our entrance doors. This often sees women quickly passing through these spaces, keys in hand, ready for quick entry or use as a weapon!

As regards inside spaces, we refer to these as our common areas, which are a building's shared amenities such as foyers, lifts, pools, gyms, etc. Many women already know that there are times to avoid using these facilities, especially if short stays operate in the building.

Here's the thing.

There may not currently be many incidents reported. But that does not mean our vertical village's public or common spaces are seen as "safe" or "welcoming".

Often times it means that women have removed themselves from visiting these areas or using a facility. This was a finding of the Free To Be project where King St wasn't identified

as an area where young women didn't feel safe – because they didn't go there.

But more than this.

As one neighbour put it "I don't want 'safe' to mean that I made it into my apartment okay. I want to feel entitled to use our facilities and outside areas ..."

So, what to do?

Borrowing unashamedly from the UN Women's "Safe Cities and Safe Public Spaces for Women and Girls", some actions could include:

- Survey residents' safety perceptions. Many buildings now have systems that support online surveys, but care must be taken with the design of the questions. The focus should be hyperlocal (i.e. not general safety questions) and opportunity given to provide nuanced responses (i.e. not just yes/no).
- Capacity build. It is the case that some who manage our buildings will not be sufficiently aware of gender safety issues (and there are many more issues than mentioned here). Attention must be given to developing building-specific strategies and processes, including ongoing monitoring.
- Partner. Connect with groups and authorities that are responsible for and/

or have skills in gender safety. This could include neighbouring buildings that share similar challenges.

- Promote women's and girls' use of public/common spaces. Actively support transformative activities that show how the spaces can be respectfully utilised.

Perceptions of safety influence how our vertical village spaces will be used and who can use them. These perceptions rest upon not only the physical aspects of these spaces, but also our memories of our experiences in these areas. A negative history of, for instance, encountering intoxicated groups in our public spaces will not be immediately remedied by improvements to lighting.

However, we have a moment now, when women's safety is top of mind and there is an opportunity for us to unlock women participation in improving our vertical village's public spaces – shaping them in ways that signal that women actually belong here ●



Dr Janette Corcoran

APARTMENT LIVING EXPERT

LEARN MORE ON FACEBOOK.COM/
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WE LIVE HERE

Yes, yes, yes, Minister!

We have had three Ministers for Consumer Affairs since We Live Here started its advocacy role representing apartment owners and residents five years ago.

Ms Jane Garrett, who introduced the short-stay legislation into Parliament in May 2016 had the first gig, followed by Ms Marlene Kairouz one month later, and now we have Ms Melissa Horne since last year.

The longest tenure was enjoyed by Ms Kairouz, who resigned suddenly in 2016, leaving an appalling legacy of poor decisions on short-stays.

Let's look on the bright side. What's better than canvassing seemingly intractable problems faced by apartment dwellers? The solutions of course! And good things come in threes.

We have a three-part plan to present to the third Minister for Consumer Affairs, Melissa Horne, to solve a trio of enduring issues related to short-stays.

Without adequate short-stay regulation, Victoria is one of the most backward jurisdictions in Australia and indeed the world. Can our new Minister learn from the precedents established in so many cities, states and countries around the globe? It's a serious question, and we query both the will and the capacity.

Across the Murray, the country's largest state government has listened to residents and introduced reasonable regulations that are sadly lacking in Victoria. The NSW government has expressly recognised that short-stays can damage the fabric of a community if the market is left to run amok. Similar change is possible and overdue in Victoria.

So here is our three-point plan...

1. Review – make it happen

We Live Here was instrumental in having a formal review mandated for the *Short-stay (Accommodation) Act 2018*.

In State Parliament four months ago, Greens MLC Dr Samantha Ratnam asked about the review, promised for 2020 and seemingly forgotten. Labor MLC Mr Leane sought some whispered advice from his minders before confirming the review "will start this year".

Mr Leane admitted at least one negative impact of short-stays: "I think the main concern is hiring out your place for people having big parties when other people are trying to live their lives around it."

Remember that at the height of COVID restrictions, short-stays were banned and we had a brief respite from the worst excesses. As we emerge from COVID, the short-stay issues are returning to apartment buildings with a vengeance, escalating to knife attacks and bashings. Under the current legislation we have the ludicrous situation where, to be given a chance of insultingly paltry redress, residents would need to report three stabbing incidents in a 28-day period!

We live in a different world now, and a review is entirely appropriate. Even post-vaccination, we know we will still be faced with danger. New COVID variants will be released into our community. This government's track record in hotel quarantine management is sorry proof that we cannot rely on it to manage potentially infectious travellers in short-stay apartments.

During the COVID restrictions, we contacted the Health Department to ask about infection control protocols for short-stays. The response was astonishing – they told us to ask Airbnb! Who is running this state?

On top of the critical COVID issue, we should be concerned about the safety and security of our residents – we have lost our "most liveable city" status courtesy of the government's servile deference to the commercial short-stay industry.

This flimsy legislation suffers the most ignominious of indictments: it is demonstrably useless. In the three years since its enactment,

there have been NO instances where an apartment building or resident has been awarded a remedy or recompense by VCAT. Zero successful cases recorded and zero penalties imposed. Double donuts!

Ms Horne, please ensure the review is genuine and allow advocacy groups including We Live Here to participate meaningfully.

We Live Here, with a supporter base including more than 350 buildings throughout Melbourne, is a voice for reason. We believe there is a place for all the stakeholders including the tourism industry, commercial short-stay operators, platforms such as Airbnb and Stayz. For a level playing field, residents must also have an equal voice.

2. Regulations – adopt proven solutions

One extremely simple improvement is requiring short-stay operators to register. This could be readily implemented with manifold benefits, including delivering basic data on a notoriously opaque industry.

Mandatory registration, along with regulating how many days an apartment can be let as a short stay, has been adopted by countless jurisdictions, such as these:

- Amsterdam: 30 to 90 days per year limits
- Barcelona: A\$1.2 million fines
- Berlin: fines, 60 to 90 days per year limits
- Paris: A\$20 million fines
- San Francisco: A\$1500 fines, 90 days per year limit
- Santa Monica: owner must live on the property, 14 per cent guest tax
- UK: 90 to 140 days per year limit

Even some afflicted Victorian municipalities have assumed the role of controlling the burgeoning short-stay industry in the vacuum of authority created by the state government's laxity. Mornington, Frankston, and Yarra Valley councils have enacted local by-laws to protect residents.

3. Rules – allow communities to decide

Another signal example of intelligence from NSW is the legislation that allows individual buildings to enact special rules, known as by-laws, to manage short-stays. This is true self-determination, the essence and intrinsic intention of most owners' corporation legislation.

To be effective such a framework needs to be sufficiently nuanced to prevent manipulation by proxy farming. While a little more involved, there are no insuperable obstacles to drafting good legislation that suits Victoria.

As a framework for special rules, the *Owners' Corporation Act* needs to be rewritten in clear and unambiguous language. The problems pursuant to the Supreme Court decision by Riordan in 2016 must be addressed. If concomitant changes to planning laws are deemed necessary, so be it.

Campaign donations

As a not-for-profit organisation, donations from individuals and buildings keep our campaigns going. To register as a supporter of We Live Here or to donate, please visit welivehere.net. We Live Here does not accept donations from commercial tourism interests ●



Barbara Francis & Rus Littleton

EMAIL
CAMPAIGN@WELIVEHERE.NET
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Inside a studio eyrie

When it comes to creating a studio, most artists find a rustic back shed or share an old warehouse with others and work in an enclosed kind of way at ground level.

WORDS BY Rhonda Dredge

Gaye Paterson has done the reverse and set up a studio with an overwhelming view of the city.

Studio Nova is a corner apartment on the seventh floor on Elizabeth St.

The view of the post office clock through the window is a fierce reminder of city life, of Melbourne's establishment and those not as lucky.

Gaye works with issues such as asylum seekers and tackles large questions but she does it with the constraint of a printmaker.

An artist needs a medium to get her point across and it won't necessarily be visible in the studio where just a few prints are on display. Her finished woodblocks and etchings are on Instagram, Facebook and blogs.

There's something special and more intimate about actually visiting an artist's studio and getting a briefing on her working methods while keeping an eye on the sky.

Gaye said she had a brilliant teacher at East Sydney Tech when she first took up the craft many years ago and his teachings still drove her.

"He taught us so well," she said. "He got you invested. Most students don't even know which

ink to use and why when they leave college."

In pride of place in her apartment studio is a huge Hilton tooling printing press, just one of 10 made in Melbourne, which had to be squeezed in through the door.

A press defines the work of a printmaker, allowing her to simplify her message by creating beautifully consistent surfaces and overlaps that are impossible to do by hand.

The process is very exacting. The paper needs just the right amount of dampness. "You feel the dampness of the paper with your cheek," she said, passing on some of her teacher's commandments to her own students.

Then excess ink has to be wiped off the plate with a cloth and it has to be just right.

Printmaking is a hands-on thing, she says. "You have to know chapter and verse how it's done. Then you can be free with your concepts."

A set of three woodblocks on the wall has been printed on black paper with black ink in Geneva but the ink looks silver.

This is one of the techniques she has invented. She said that more people these days were going back to woodblocks. Less are doing etchings. She likes to keep up with trends.

Gaye lived in the apartment for a while after



▲ Gaye Paterson at work above Elizabeth St.

moving back from Europe where the printmaking culture is strong then began transforming the standard set-up into something unique.

Printmaking can get messy if you don't keep materials under control so you need a workable space for them.

In the racks overhanging the kitchen bench where plates are usually displayed she keeps her completed prints.

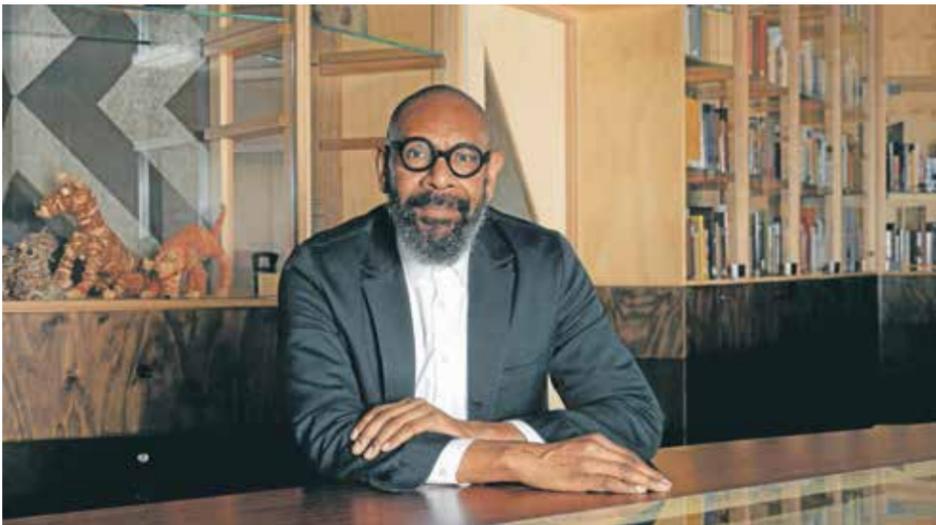
She took the doors off the wardrobe in the

bedroom to store her special Magnani paper. And her inks are in the overhead cupboards in the kitchen.

Work that she has made in her CBD eyrie has been shown at the major prizes such as the Mornington Peninsula Works on Paper, Burnie Print Prize and Megalo Print Studio in Canberra.

Gaye has a show coming up at Tacit Galleries in Collingwood later in the year ●

ABORIGINAL MELBOURNE



Celebrating National Reconciliation Week

WORDS BY Ellen Blake

The Koorie Heritage Trust is marking this year's National Reconciliation Week by partnering with the National Gallery of Victoria.

Koorie Heritage Trust chief executive Tom Mosby said National Reconciliation Week, which runs from 27 May to 3 June, offered an opportunity for the broader community to reconcile with Indigenous Australians and the injustices of the past.

"It's about acknowledging the past and the reasons why the community faces some of the issues it does, such as a gap in education and health outcomes," Mr Mosby said.

"It's about understanding and trying to bridge the gap."

The centrepiece of the Koorie Heritage Trust's Reconciliation Week program is *The Rivers Sing* artwork, which has been commissioned for Melbourne's new winter arts festival RISING.

The large-scale sonic artwork was composed by acclaimed Yorta Yorta/Yuin opera singer Deborah Cheetham AO, with artists Thomas Supple and Byron J. Scullin.

The piece will be performed at sunrise and sunset along Birrarung Marr from May 26 to June 6.

In the six-week lead-up to its performance, *The Rivers Sing* has travelled along the Birrarung and Maribyrnong rivers collecting and layering the voices of singers for the work.

The work aims to unite the urban environment with the landscape of the ancient meeting place.

Alongside *The Rivers Sing* piece, the Koorie Heritage Trust will also host artist conversations and cast a projection onto Federation Square throughout the week.

The theme of National Reconciliation Week for 2021 is "More than a word. Reconciliation takes action", which urges people to focus on taking action to achieve equality between indigenous and non-indigenous people.

Mr Mosby said too often the onus of reconciliation was put onto the indigenous community.

"It's up to non-indigenous people to actually do the work and put reconciliation into action," Mr Mosby said.

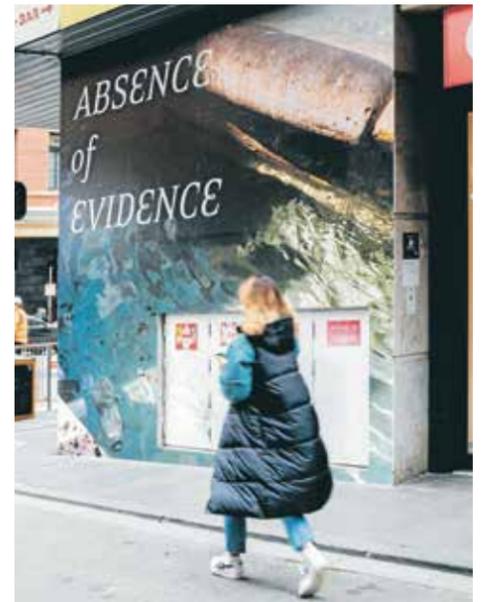
This year marks 20 years since Reconciliation Australia was established in 2001 ●

For more information:
korieheritagetrust.com.au

STREET ART

The reflection of an augmented city

There was a time when talking to yourself in public meant that you were crazy. Now when I'm at the lights or on a tram it seems normal.



That's because of mobiles and the way people have no boundaries with the lengths that they go to, to stay connected or disconnected, depending on your perspective. I guess it must be good for crazy people now as they can just put an ear plug in and blend in with all the "connected" people.

As the people walk aimlessly around the city ignoring the beauty, art and culture and causing chaos along the way they often miss the many things that makes Melbourne great. This month one such event celebrates walking around and looking at the phone.

The Flinders Quarter Augmented Art Walk is back on. Twelve artists have worked to create an artwork on the walls of the city around the Flinders Lane area. It's pretty cool when you're looking through your phone and the artworks come to life in an animated and interesting way. And if you have a family or are into treasure hunts then it has been turned into a game. I went on the hunt and found most of the works. They are not always in spaces that you would expect. It is an awesome way to activate the city and give artists an opportunity. I love the idea.

The only problem I have with it is that the work is printed and not original. This is a major problem that I have with much of the art going up in the city at the moment. The empty shops and particularly the Metro Tunnel art activations and the art trams all tend to be printed. This takes the art out of context and

often ending up as a weird untextured version of an original painting that is awesome. I feel the artists should be given a public canvas and trust with which to create a new and more permanent artwork for the city. The printing seems like a cheaper, easier, and more ephemeral way to activate ugly and troublesome areas.

Although I suspect for Flinders Quarter, the printed versions may be a necessary result of the technology. I did at times have trouble distinguishing which was art and which was advertising. However, as soon as I put the phone up to the artwork that all went away. As the artworks transformed into awesome and interesting sound and digital pieces.

I love this project and think it could be expanded into many formats; creating a second secret city that can only be view through your telephone.

The Flinders Quarter project is well worth getting down to check out. Spend a fun couple of hours finding the artwork and engaging with the city in a new and interesting way ●



Adrian Doyle

ADRIAN DOYLE IS THE BLENDER STUDIOS

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Walking the path to a better neighbourhood

Walking. It was one of the simplest and most joyful pleasures that many of us enjoyed during even the hardest moments of lockdown.

For that one hour each day, the fleet-footed among us chose to run. Others joined the packs of two-wheeled enthusiasts on our upgraded bike paths.

However, the slowest transport mode gifted many of us with new perspectives of our neighbourhood. Although the empty streets were a sobering sight, being unhurried helped us notice details that we'd overlooked before. A new mural here. Someone's flourishing plant array there. Like flâneuses and flâneurs, that French species of pedestrian, we took time to just amble and keenly observe.

As we emerged from hard lockdown, it was also walking that brought many of us together. We appreciated the company of slowly unmasking faces that we were finally travelling alongside, enough to recognise, more often than we did before. And we valued not only how easy, but also how pleasurable it was to meander our way through this neighbourhood that is a walker's paradise.

Walkability lies at the heart of the 20-minute neighbourhood concept, which has officially been a council and state government goal for almost a decade now. The 20-minute neighbourhood has everything one needs within a 20-minute stroll – or within around 800 metres. Jobs, affordable housing, healthy food, green spaces, local businesses, recreation, medical care, and public transportation are all ideally connected by a range of safe, green and visually appealing streetscapes.

It's worth revisiting the 20-minute neighbourhood concept and other defining ideas as we consider the kind of city we hope to help build and live in post-COVID. Bourke Street Mall's 1978 pedestrianisation and Swanston Street Walk's inauguration in 1992 are but two. Each of these initiatives simultaneously improved walkability and liveability by giving us more reasons to wander and explore on foot. Nowadays, we can't imagine either street being any other way.

Similar happenings are occurring now as our "little" streets are pedestrianised, trees are planted, and footpaths widened. Like the landmark changes of the past, there will be some opposition and barriers to negotiate as a community, alongside government and businesses. But maintaining our collective focus on improving walkability will pay off, by attracting future generations of city dwellers and ensuring Melbourne remains an inspiration for innovation and liveability here and abroad.

Although there are elements of our 20-minute neighbourhood that we can't change as residents, there are other aspects that we can and should continue to help improve. The 1837 Hoddle Grid has hardwired laneways and little streets into our neighbourhood, for the better. But the quality and local nature of services and amenities along our path can always be improved through feedback and better design. Our council has quite rightly acknowledged that "cities with a strong design culture are



underpinned by an engaged and demanding public with high expectations for design quality". A city and its streets should be co-designed by its main users: its residents. And the best urban designers are most certainly walkers.

How we are allowed to walk, stop and engage with our environment and each other has vital implications for how connected we feel to our places and communities. The city's unique layout, buildings, footpaths and interfaces are the hardware that provides the fabric for our socialisation, our sense of attachment to places and to neighbours. Noticing how the built environment affects us is an important step towards understanding how to improve it. Ensuring that our city's design remains pedestrian-centred, working for all ages and all abilities is key to attracting new residents from among the thousands of visitors and workers that we welcome to the CBD each day.

So, what can you do to improve this 20-minute neighbourhood and its design? Perhaps

you should begin by walking. Slowly, more often, with eyes and imaginations fully awake, and in the company of others. You could do so in a Residents 3000 walking group. Or you could start one in your own building or block. Sociologist and urbanist Richard Sennett defines the city as "a human settlement in which strangers are likely to meet". Walking, then – as Sennett might say – is a shared opportunity to turn mere collections of buildings into genuine dwellings. So, walk on, residents. Walk on together ●



Dan Ong
RESIDENTS 3000 MELBOURNE
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Nature Therapy

“What about me?”

Rising Festival
Birrarung Marr

SALVOS

Helping our fellow humans

Beneath the City of Melbourne FOMO ads and the public decorations from various quarters that, "The city is back, baby!", the pain and scars caused by the ravaging of COVID-19 remains highly visible.

One in every four shopfronts in the CBD remains vacant. Foot traffic is, at best, spasmodic and mainstream media and social media commentators regularly refer to overflowing bins, rubbish strewn across the city and increased graffiti attacks as a sign that the city has far from recovered from the desolation imposed on it by the global pandemic.

But the one thing that has really caught my attention is the ongoing commentary that homelessness, particularly rough sleeping, is on the rise in the city.

It actually isn't. In June 2018, the City of Melbourne conducted a street count and found that there were 242 rough sleepers in the CBD. Last week, City of Melbourne officers indicated that there are

currently 75 rough sleepers in the city. Our anecdotal evidence would support this.

So why the disparity in perception and reality? Is it simply because there are far less people accessing the city, hence rough sleepers are now far more obvious.

The other line of commentary that I have found interesting states that we should just get people somewhere to stay. "It's only 75 people. Surely it can't be that hard."

On the surface, this commentary makes sense but when you dig a little deeper, you find that the issue of homelessness is far more complex.

Throughout the pandemic, the Victorian Government provided free hotel accommodation for those sleeping rough. Hundreds took up the offer, however, 30 to 40 remained on the streets despite us heading into a cold Melbourne winter and the city being in the grip of a global pandemic. There was an assumption that those people were offered accommodation, refused it, so agencies should focus their efforts

elsewhere. However, when you have a conversation with this group of 30 to 40, you discover very quickly that homelessness is a by-product of something deeper. Their homelessness has occurred because of complex mental health issues, addictions, family violence or unresolved trauma. So, when we talk about resolving homelessness by simply providing more roofs over people's heads, we need to understand that surely, we are kidding ourselves.

It's important to note that no government or agency in the world talks about ending "homelessness". The word used is always, "homelessness". This is deliberate, intentional and strategic. There is a global acknowledgment that people do not just need a roof over their heads. Rather, for people to be fully human, they need a home which is safe and secure. They also need a place where they can retreat, rest, recover and recreate. And importantly, it needs to be a place where they can access the supports that they need to help them address the drivers for their homelessness. It also needs to be support that will help them heal and once again become productive members of the community.

A key part of that support must include

opportunities to build and rebuild connection with others and to become part of supportive communities.

People that are homeless are not simply an inconvenience to the housed or just another statistic.

They are human beings, just like the rest of us.

As such, we must, as a community, do all we can to help them feel and be just that – human beings – no matter what the cost.

If you would like to support the work of The Salvation Army in the City of Melbourne please donate via the following link: digit-aldoorknock.salvationarmy.org.au/t/melbourne-salvos-project-614 ●



Major Brendan Nottle

COMMANDING OFFICER OF THE SALVATION ARMY MELBOURNE - PROJECT 614

BRENDAN.NOTTLE@SALVATIONARMY.ORG.AU

CRITIC



▲ Jan van Schaik with the Lady Nelson at Sarah Scout Gallery.

Releasing the spirit of LEGO

WORDS BY Rhonda Dredge

CBD resident Jan van Schaik makes his own sculptural toys out of LEGO and exhibits them around the world.

He gave a talk at Sara Scout Gallery in May prior to the Venice Biennale of Architecture.

His *Lost Tablets* will be featured in the online version of the prestigious show.

Mr van Schaik is a well-known figure in CBD art circles. He organises art talks in the city and collects.

He's pictured above with *Lady Nelson*, one of his mysterious LEGO creations named after a lost ship.

The name appears to be a furphy for it is the construction of these A4-sized sculptures and the sourcing of LEGO pieces that really counts in this thought-provoking demonstration of upcycling.

The LEGO company does not make it easy to accumulate one colour, releasing just a few of each in its building sets.

As an architect, Jan is familiar with columns, arches and pediments and uses these in his restrained approach to construction.

"I'm trained to look at them," he said. "The built philosophy. I can speak it because it's a language I've been using for decades."

But what about the *Lady Nelson*? Does he know what happened to it? "Look it up on Google," he said.

There's a thing about creation ... the work seems to be directing the moves. Some pieces took months.



Jan had no final shape in mind. The pieces seemed to be controlling his hands.



"It feels like I'm not actually making them," he said. "They're making themselves." Perhaps he's playing with the idea of Michelangelo's conceit that the artwork is already in the stone.

Many of the latest generation of makers have been won over by the elaborate pre-designed creatures off series such as Ninjago.

But the more basic building block sets are stored in lost play rooms all over the world, leading to a strong recycling ethic. Jan bought his first lot of yellow in an op shop in Colac.

"Many of these come from the *Friends* sets for girls," he said. "There's a worldwide shortage of pink. I'm contributing to that."

Afficionados appreciate the constructions out of one colour. They most elegantly display form. Jan has built 74 ghost ships. This is his first major exhibition.

The works are for sale for \$3500, a price that has shock value for some.

losttablets.com ●

MUSIC

Jack Ladder live

The marquee lights were blazing away at the Forum Theatre on Flinders St on Thursday, May 6.

Jack Ladder was in town to celebrate the 10th anniversary of his pivotal third album, *Hurtsville*. The anniversary reissue vinyl album is in great record stores in Melbourne via Endless Recordings.

Jack Ladder, the baritone singer-guitarist-songwriter-musician Americans believe to be from Melbourne because of his style in singing and presenting his music, was in prime form. People in the audience were wearing special *Hurtsville* truckers caps, black with teal writing. This was Ladder's audience. The musicians who recorded the original *Hurtsville* material had reassembled and their Captain Jack Ladder delivered the goods.

They played the heart wrenching, beautiful, sulphurous, ecstatic songs from the album. One of the highlights was the crowd pleaser *Giving Up The Giving Up*. The songs contain intriguing often provocative narratives, like a Charles Bukowski poem. Then there's the subtle abstract poetics of Scott Walker in the mixture. Some Iggy Pop, Lou Reed in the flavouring. Done with great panache, wit, verve and style. Spice it up with Jack Nitzschke atmospheric build ups, and the Silver Jews and you approach the Dreamlanders world.

After the *Hurtsville* album had been played through at the start of the show, the band then proceeded to play some choice selections from the Jack Ladder catalogue. *Come On Back This Way* and *Reputation Amputation* got the crowd moving.

There's an undeniable chemistry at play with in this band. Kirin J Callinan, the guitarist is most theatrical, wearing a Nephilim long coat and a black hat. In motion he has the striking, flowing moves of a Samurai warrior, a musical creature from a Leigh Chalker universe. Very Robert Mitchum. His guitar playing punctuates and emphasises the narrative drive of Ladder's material. Very staccato flourishing. A most unique artist. He has a crazy looking guitar that looks like he got from a garage sale in St Paul.

Mr Experience on the bass guitar is Donny Benet, who is rock solid, in the pocket and very '70s groove in his creative input into the making of *Hurtsville* acknowledged by Jack Ladder. The genius of Jack Ladder is that he has a couple of larger than life musicians to his left and right on stage. At the finale, Kirin threw his guitar high into the air and caught it on the way back to Earth.

It was a great show, hail the 21st century Melbourne musician Jack Ladder who lit up the Forum Theatre stage.

Inspired by the sophisticated Minneapolis funk sound, Melbourne band Lake Minnetonka launch its latest album *House Arrest* at the Night Cat on Saturday, June 5. With its electrifying live show, this is one not to be missed. This is Lake Minnetonka's second album and it is super-excited to bring to its fans a Minneapolis flavoured dance party featuring on vocals Chantal Mitvalsky, Petra Elliott and Henry Manetta. *House Arrest*, recorded in both Melbourne and Minneapolis, includes musical appearances from Dr Fink, St Paul Peterson, Horatio Luna and Pasobionics!

Lake Minnetonka also highlights the brilliant keyboard skills of Adam Rudegair. Rudegair is also involved in the Bowie Project, reinterpretations of David Bowie's work and the Bayou Tapestry. This is sophisticated music from the Melbourne soul jazz funk universe. Explore the infinite, passionate, hypnotic depths of Lake Minnetonka's sonic palette.

JOTHI will be kicking off the night. This is a PBS Presents event, and tickets are now on sale. 3PBS are a pillar in the Melbourne music world, and their Radiothon is happening until May 31.

Chris Smith, guitar maker extraordinaire, brilliant musician will be launching his album *Second Hand Smoke* as part of the RISING Arts Festival at Max Watts, Swanston St, on Sunday, June 6. Smith delivered one of the best albums of 2020 during Lockdown 2.0. Better known for his sonic forays into minimalist guitar relay territories inspired by Steve Reich, Phillip Glass, Roy Montgomery, the brilliant album *Second Hand Smoke* sees Chris Smith emerging into the sunlight with a surprising musical offering where his signature overdriven guitar drenched atmospherics were reined in and a Tex Mex, south of the border slide blues guitar feel appears in the mix, with deadpan, laconic southern drawl vocals. Something along the lines of Stan Ridgway, Andy Prieboy, Tom Waits after a conversation with a Priest.

Compelling material. The animation film to *Second Hand Smoke*, the title track, is superb.

The performance will be one of two halves, the first half featuring the Chris Smith guitar noise maestro and the second half, Chris Smith with a full band featuring the *Second Hand Smoke* material. It will be a case of watching Dr Jekyll morph into Mr Hyde or vice versa. Also playing that night are Geelong's Lost Animal and OV Pain, a darkwave duo from Dunedin, New Zealand ●



Chris Mineral

MINERALSANDS@HOTMAIL.COM

Pet's Corner

City living is a walk in the park



Sebastian has been forming a growing bond during the past seven to eight months as his relationship blossoms with his partner's golden retriever, April.



WORDS BY *Matt Harvey*

Sebastian said April was a big walker and loved going for lengthy walks every day.

"I'll take her for a walk every day, if not in the park then in our uni they have a big park, it's like a big garden and you can take her for a walk. We usually take her in the mornings or late at night," he said.

Living in the CBD is no problem for 11-year-old April. Aside from taking big walks she loves spending time among people.

"She loves attention. When you try to pat her, she doesn't care. [She's] like 'I know I am beautiful, just do it,'" he said.

"She loves people as well, that's why I take her to the park. She'll enjoy a run and then she gets obsessed with a person, so then I have to take her away." While we talk April is fascinated by the comings and

goings of the park, stoically she watches and eventually attempts to engage with a much smaller dog out for a walk.

"She's a quiet dog, she doesn't bark at other dogs, she loves the small dogs, she goes crazy and she wants to play with them all the time," Sebastian said.

The hustle and bustle of city life, visiting people in the park, walks, checking out the local dog community, seem a great match for the "really relaxed" retriever.

Though Sebastian seems to enjoy getting to know April and find the amount of attention that works for the three of them.

"When my partner and I cuddle each other she just wants attention she'll come over and be like 'come on, pat me,'" he said.

"She's pure, honest, friendly, she doesn't try to fight or anything like that." ●

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HERITAGE

The definition of heritage, and why it matters

Discussions surrounding definitions of heritage have progressed massively in recent years, with social heritage, as opposed to purely architectural significance, brought to the forefront fantastically by the ongoing Hoddle Grid Heritage Review.

But are we still missing the true value of "social" heritage when the debate remains simply about how much of a building's structure is allowed to be demolished?

At the time of writing, the City of Melbourne had just given support for an office development above the old Kilkenny Inn pub on the corner of King and Lonsdale streets, ending the site's use as a pub of various kinds since at least 1915. While the endorsed plans do retain more of the building fabric than developers had previously wanted, having originally made plans for facadism, the former pub will essentially operate as a shell for an office tower in the near future. This is instead of continuing with communal social heritage only made possible by a complete building with all the idiosyncratic interior features that entails.

This follows on from the recent closure of the nearby Metropolitan Hotel to again be "facaded" for offices, the Greater Western Hotel potentially soon also being "facaded", the Elms

Family Hotel and Palace Theatres both also lost besides facades, not to mention the total demolition of the Duke of Kent Hotel, Theosophical building and theatre and other places full of social heritage in recent years.

The Elms Family Hotel in particular remains an empty shell that in a better outcome could have regained its interior charm and began operation again as an historic pub, creating an historic drinking precinct with the Little Lon distillery behind. But sadly, it still sits as a literal shell of its past.

Lost in the debate among planners, consultants and politicians over the fate of many of these places, even when social heritage was discussed and admitted, is the present and future social heritage of these places. Is a battle over an historic CBD pub really won if eight metres of depth of the structure is kept rather than two simple front walls, essentially creating a bigger window dressing for new developments?

When we lose all future possibility of that pub having future social significance in the making, big or small, personal or society wide, what do a few metres of depth really mean? ●



Tristan Davies
PRESIDENT
MELBOURNE HERITAGE ACTION
CONTACT:TRISTANDAVIES@GMAIL.COM

Sentia: a balanced approach to early learning

WORDS BY Jack Hayes

Sitting on the northern banks of the Yarra, nestled between the Melbourne Aquarium, the Immigration Museum and Enterprize Park, you'll find Sentia Early Learning: an oasis of industry-leading early childhood education.

As a single, privately owned service, Sentia provides a tailored and balanced values-based model, designed around the needs of their children, parents and educators.

With 15 years of experience, Sentia boasts one of the most sought-after views in the CBD with views across the Yarra providing a bright and positive environment where children can explore, bond, and imagine.

For Sentia Early Learning centre director Angela Hunt, the recently refurbished indoor and outdoor spaces offer the perfect canvas for a child's development, empowering them to make decisions regarding their play, learning and social interactions.

"We pride ourselves on the environment we have created for our children and educators. But they are just a space, without the people," Ms Hunt said.

"We focus and treasure our relationships with families. It can be the case, if we have a family's first child, second child or even third child, we can have up to a 10-year relationship with them. We become a part of their family which is a real privilege for us."

Sentia follows the Early Years Learning Framework (EYLF) from birth to five years including a fully funded three and four-year-old kindergarten program run by a qualified kindergarten teacher. Each child's learning development is documented by the curriculum plan, their visual portfolios, reflection journals, newsletters, and projects on display.

The two-level centre has the capacity for 124 children across seven rooms, with a recently installed commercial kitchen and fully qualified full-time chef preparing meals across the day.



"We worked with local suppliers, too, at the Queen Victoria Market to ensure ingredients are fresh. Everyone knows when food tastes best when it's prepared from fresh ingredients and prepared with love," Ms Hunt said.

"We also offer a takeaway meal service for our families. They just jump on our website, order their family meal and when they pick up their children, they pick up their dinner; it is about helping our families balance their busy lives."

Ms Hunt said although Sentia followed the EYLF, her team had curated a program that extracted the best of all teaching philosophies such as the Reggio Emilia approach, which sees the environment as a third teacher, as well as using elements of Steiner and Montessori in their educating.



One would be forgiven for taking a lull in capacity during 2020 due to a global pandemic as a time to rest, but for Ms Hunt and her team this period was spent refining their approach and developing their own "Sentia Family Framework".

"We are the first childcare that I know of in Victoria that has the 'happy or not' technology for children and parents. We provide them with a screen to select from a number of options, then we analyse the results after that and alter our program where needed," Ms Hunt said.

"It allows us to ensure the children, their families and our educators are as happy as they can be."

"Our team is the heart of Sentia and our relationships are a real point of difference with us. I did calculations recently and the average tenure is four-and-a-half years. That is unheard of in childcare."

According to Ms Hunt, children at Sentia are instilled with a sense of agency the moment they first walk, crawl or are rolled through their doors.

So much so, the refurbishment of its enormous rooftop playground was co-designed with a landscape architect and their room two

with children.

Sentia's program features a mixture of indoor and outdoor learning, as well as weekly incursions, and excursions throughout Melbourne.

"We have a great partnership with the Immigration Museum which sees our children visit for bilingual language time, and although they can't always understand when the *Hungry Little Caterpillar* is being spoken in Mandarin, they love the sound and flow of it," Ms Hunt said.

"We make sure children of all backgrounds and cultures are considered and catered for in our program through our teaching, menu and other resources."

"We are also inclusive of children with additional needs to ensure all children are welcomed. We understand it can be challenging, but that is where our training and expertise coming into play, so that no child is left behind." ●

For more information, visit sentia.vic.edu.au

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WORDS BY Jack Hayes

For Platform Plumbing director Ben Wong and his team of young and dynamic, highly-skilled professional plumbers, that is exactly what they pride themselves on doing.

Born out of a necessity to solve the plumbing issues regularly faced by Melbourne householders and commercial property managers, Platform Plumbing provides a consistently high level of work and customer service for all your plumbing repair and maintenance needs.

After founding the business in early 2017, Mr

Wong has grown his close-knit business to a team of five committed professionals, servicing Melbourne's central city and south-east.

"We pride ourselves on our quality of work. As a result, we get a lot of our work through referred business, which for a small business like ours, has been crucial," Mr Wong said.

"We have a small team of plumbers who are connected with one another throughout the day, to ensure we can provide a high quality of service to our customers."

According to Mr Wong, a large portion of his calls to residents in strata buildings are in

relation to issues with their tempering valve.

"When an apartment gets to four or five years old, the water temperature can fluctuate up and down. The reason that happens is because these buildings are on ring mains and all of them have a tempering valve installed," Mr Wong said.

"After a while they become defective, generally between four and 10 years, resulting in your water changing from hot to cold without you doing anything. Not exactly something you want while having a shower."

"Every call we have had after putting an ad in the *CBD News* has been in relation to this

issue. We have been able to help quite of a lot of people."

Mr Wong and his team have built such a connection and understanding of their market that their customer's calls are met with a level of experience that can almost always identify the issue at hand, and if they can't fix it themselves, they will find a solution or someone who can.

The team at Platform Plumbing are acknowledged experts in leak detection and repair, preventative maintenance, hot water systems, gas fitting, sewers and storm water, Colorbond roofing and emergency 24-hour, seven days a week, call outs.

"We are a small company who want to build a personal relationship with our customers and us, as people, want to genuinely get your problem fixed. It is about a human interaction," Mr Wong said.

"Whether you are a homeowner in Toorak or in the outer suburbs, our prices don't change, we want to remain consistent for customers and I think they appreciate that."

"The value we provide people is that we have full time employees who have spent a lot of time training and ensuring we can provide a quality service for them. You're not contacting a call centre and being diverted to a recruitment agency or huge company that don't worry you or your home." ●

For more information, visit platformplumbing.com.au or call 0448 140 517

街景改善 观众受益

随着Exhibition街新街景的改善，中央商务区(CBD)东端的剧院区域将成为“美丽的林荫大道”。

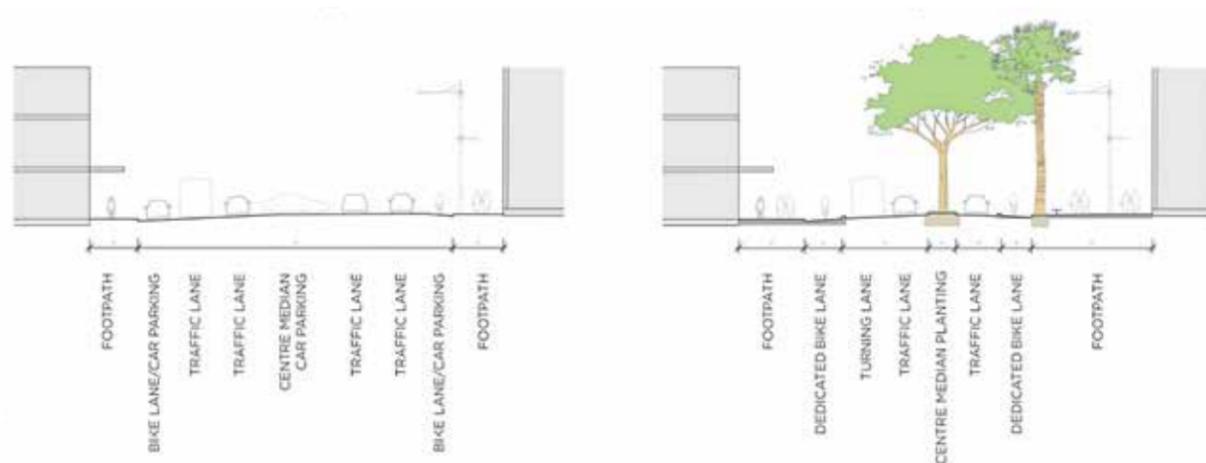
墨尔本市政议员批准了在女王剧院和喜剧剧院外拓宽人行道、种植新树和改善街道设施的计划。

这个Exhibition街项目旨在改善剧院观众看完表演后，在Little Bourke街和Lonsdale街之间的体验。

在对此街道进行更广泛地改进后，市政还将在Bourke街和Little Lonsdale街之间安装新的受保护自行车道，这被称为本市从北到南“弥补缺失”的受保护自行车道。

三年前发起这个升级项目的市政议员Rohan Leppert表示，此举“非常令人兴奋”。他在5月18日的未来墨尔本委员会会议上说：“这不仅仅是一个让骑车者和行人更安全的项目，当然无疑会做到这一点。”

“这实际上也是一个使剧院区和Exhibition街上许多商家店面有一个非常不同空间体验的项目。”



Leppert议员表示，项目完成后，演出散场后的拥堵现象将得到缓解，有利于附近的商家。

“人行道的扩建、新树木的种植将把Exhibition街的那一部分变成最美丽的林荫大道，把目前在剧院演出期间很难进出的地方，变成一个让人流连忘返的地方，一个让人享受的地方，尤其是对邻近的酒店业务更是受益良多。”

主要利益相关方包括女王剧院和喜剧剧院以及Rydges酒店、万豪酒店和The Elephant and Wheelbarrow酒吧的反馈都是积极的。

Leppert议员说：“我认为，一个项目中带有‘自行车’这个词，能有这么多利益相关者的支持反馈是非同寻常的。这可不是一件小事。”

市政承诺评估 拟建雅拉泳池

在墨尔本市政承诺“正式评估”这一雄心勃勃的项目后，有望在雅拉河北岸建造游泳池更近了一步。

墨尔本市政承诺“正式评估”在雅拉河北岸建造游泳池，这一雄心勃勃的项目。

市长Sally Capp在批准了4公里长的“绿带”计划草案后说，现在是“适当时机”来探索游泳池提案，包括在墨尔本水族馆旁的Enterprize公园修建泳道游泳池、儿童游泳池和湿地的计划。

该项目由社区的Yarra Pools团体推动了多年，得到了建筑师、设计师和企业主的支持，他们决心证明这是墨尔本的一个可行愿景。

Felicity Watson会长说，市政的决定不仅证明了该团体的工作，而且还证明了该项目的价值。

她告诉本报说：“我认为这个决定确实证明了我们所做的工作是正确的。”

“同时这也表明我们所作的工作是一个可信的计划。我们对此一直非常感兴趣，确保该计划是可实现的，并且确实符合地方政府和州政府的战略视角。所以，已经对此做了很多工作，专家们也提供了许多无偿支持。我们真正感到已经做出了一个可靠的方案。”

受全球和澳大利亚成功的城市河道游泳项目的启发，“可游泳的亚拉河”概念于2016年首次提出。

但是，迄今为止Yarra Pools尚未在墨尔本市政的提案方面取得重大进展。



Watson女士表示，5月4日的决定是该项目的一个“里程碑”，并得到了积极的响应。

“这是一个让人非常兴奋的项目。有这么多的优点，有潜力为墨尔本市带来转变。”

因此有很多人乐意参与了我们的团体，无论是现在还是过去，这绝对是一个集体的努力。”

市政府和Yarra Pools团体都认为雅拉河的北岸未被充分利用，需要改革。



市区新酒吧获批

随着CBD夜生活从COVID疫情中继续恢复，墨尔本市政批准了Lonsdale街和Bourke街上的新酒吧申请。

获批的申请者HQ Group公司，同时还拥有雅拉河上的Arbory Afloat酒吧，而这次获准的两个新酒吧，作为其在Lonsdale街270号即将开业的四层酒店建筑的一部分。

这个新经营项目将在每个楼层设有独立的餐饮场所，并获准在屋顶和较低楼层经营独立的酒吧。

根据规划许可修正案，屋顶酒吧最多可容纳125位顾客，可以营业至凌晨1点，而底层和一楼可容纳200位顾客的酒吧可以营业至凌晨3点。

HQ Group公司最近几年一直在翻新这座列入历史遗产名录的建筑，这里曾经是卷烟制造商Sniders和Abrahams的所在地。

市政规划主管Nicholas Reece议员表示，他相信位于墨尔本Emporium购物中心对面的场地将得到适当地管理。

他在4月20日举行的未来墨尔本委员会会议上说：“这是一个将由Arbory和Arbory Afloat的现任经营者来经营这个场所，我认为在雅拉河上的那个场所他们经营得非常

出色。”

邻近的Drewery巷居民对该申请提出了反对意见，特别是担心顾客在凌晨1点后离开酒吧时对市容的影响。

对于这一点，市政建议酒吧管理人员在凌晨一点后让顾客从Lonsdale街上离开（而不是Drewery巷）。

市政报告指出：“这不会给申请人造成不合理的负担，并将减少对当地居民的干扰。”

与此同时，市政还批准了位于Bourke街顶端的一个小型酒吧。

在前Palace剧院隔壁有一个“相对适中”的酒吧将作为一个酒吧和售酒店的综合体，并且可以一直营业至凌晨1点。

这项申请也收到了18份反对意见，该申请人南岸餐馆La Camera的老板Lino Scidone同意将顾客人数限制从150个减少到120个。

市政规划主管Rohan Leppert议员说，虽然他“同情”反对者，但市政没有理由拒绝批准该申请。

户外用餐可以持久

由于墨尔本市政同意继续保持户外用餐，在人行道、巷道和“停车位”上的弹出式户外用餐将成为这个城市永久的固定设施。

从7月1日起，市政将引入一个新的补贴费用结构，确保这一举措得以持续。

考虑到最近Jobkeeper工资补贴的结束以及国际学生和游客返回的延迟，路边停车位新用途的费用在第一年补贴75%，第二年补贴50%。

市政主管该项目的议员Roshena Campbell表示，她相信逐步收回费用并不代表不成比例的成本负担。

她说：“我非常重视商家的反馈，包括他们愿意开始支付户外用餐和使用停车位的费用。”

“因此，在我们考虑到这个计划的未来时，很显然时候将接力棒从市政传递给商家了。我对此完全有信心，这将是一个积极的发展。”

从去年10月到今年3月，州政府和市政府在此联合项目上耗资了770万澳元，主要是用于在路边停车位上安装和维护户外用餐设施，加上预计的停车费和罚款。

然而，从7月1日起，户外咖啡馆许可费用将被重新引入，同时对延伸的户外用餐区实行新的分期收费结构。

此举得到了澳大利亚场地公司(Venue Co)的大力支持，该公司在中央商务区经营着11家酒馆和酒吧，包括Duke of Wellington和The Crafty Squire。

董事总经理Paul Waterson表示，该公司是澳大利亚第二大酒吧运营商，已经从该计划中获得了“大量”收益。

这不仅增加了顾客流量和收入，还增加了行业与市政之间、以及运营商本身之间的善意。

Waterson先生支持分期收费计划。

What's on: June 2021



RISING - MAY 26 TO JUNE 6
 Various locations throughout the city
 RISING, Melbourne's new festival of the night, is a major cultural event for the Asia Pacific Region created by a diverse team of local, national and international artists and curators.
rising.melbourne



SATURDAYS @ DEGRAVES ST
 Degraives St traders hit the street!
 Businesses operating along the CBD's iconic Degraives St bring their products out from their shops to the street. The event runs all day - weather permitting.
 For more information contact Melanie:
info@clementines.com.au

THIRD TUESDAY OF MONTH @ 10AM
 EastEnders meet-ups, Quest on Lonsdale
 Representing residents living in the CBD's eastern quadrant, EastEnders have returned to monthly meetings in person at Quest on Lonsdale St. For more information contact president Stan Capp:
eastendersinc@gmail.com

TUESDAYS VIA ZOOM @ 7.40AM
 Rotary Club of Central Melbourne
 Due to the necessity to remain out of public spaces where possible, Rotary continues its Zoom breakfast meetings until a decision is made to return to face-to-face meetings.
rotaryclubcentralmelbourne.org.au

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

WALKING WITH NEIGHBOURS - LAST THURSDAY OF EACH MONTH
 Residents 3000 hosts monthly walks around the CBD and surrounding areas each month on Thursday evenings at 6pm. For meeting times and information contact:
walks@residents3000.com.au



LANEWAY LEARNING
 Cheap, fun classes in anything and everything. Weekday evenings in cafes, bars and other spaces around Melbourne. Classes usually have about 20 people to keep it friendly.
melbourne.lanewaylearning.com



NEIGHBOURHOOD GARDEN CLUB SECOND SUNDAY OF EACH MONTH
 Hosted by Residents 3000, come at 4pm for one hour at Green Room, L1 Central House, Baptist Place Laneway and enjoy a range of different gardening activities with your neighbours.
gardenclub@residents3000.com.au

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“From the first time I met Gina Donazzan I felt I was working with a genuine, honest and experienced person and she did not disappoint with the passing of time. Her knowledge in her niche market is excellent and I felt she managed to get me the best price. I’ve had a lot of experience with estate agents and I would certainly place Gina right up there with the best. Thank you for making the journey a breeze.”
- Vendor, April 2021

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