

CBD NEWS

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Puzzles & Trivia P21



Lighting up the CBD's streets after dark
Photo by Rachel Litwin

Disco laneways, late-night salsa parties and a moon lantern festival are set to take over the CBD's streets from May 1 to October 31 as part of the City of Melbourne and the Victorian Government's Dusk 'til Dawn Activation Grants program. *Full story on page 5.*

With Docklands at capacity, is it time for a CBD primary school?

After Docklands Primary School hit capacity just two years after opening, should the Department of Education explore opening a vertical primary school in the CBD?

WORDS BY *David Schout*
EDUCATION

The latest Census data from 2021 revealed that there were more than 500 primary school-aged children who live in the CBD.

Further, there were 697 children aged 0 to 4 who also reside in postcode 3000.

But for most of the hundreds of parents weighing up where to send their kids once they reach Prep age, despite living in the densest part of the state, there are no options within walking distance.

The demand, however, is certainly there.

In nearby Docklands, it was clear from the outset that the 525-student school would take little time to hit capacity, a parent told sister publication *Docklands News* last month.

"It was apparent to the school community on our first day," Mary Masters said.

"One hundred and ten preps enrolled, and we all thought 'what, what do you mean? Is there going to be 110 preps every year?' And yes, there has been."

The Department of Education has since admitted that "strong demand has exceeded forecasted needs for Docklands Primary School", and it has now been forced to move classes into empty retail space at The District Docklands shopping centre

from July, to the disappointment of many in the school community.

So, is a CBD-based primary school something that should be weighed up by the State Government?

Katie Roberts-Hull, a former primary school teacher who has worked in education policy for the past 10 years, believes they should.

"There's so many kids that live in postcode 3000 that don't have a school there," she told *CBD News*.

"There's a lot of school-aged kids that are going to be looking for a school ... it would match up to the planning professionals' plans, which I believe is to keep growing residences in the CBD. That would mean there's going to be even more school-aged kids living there over the next decade."

"The fact that Docklands built up so quickly is representative of how many families are there. Docklands is a great school, and it would be really exciting to see another school in the CBD."

It is something that has been tried before.

Melbourne City School, an initiative of Eltham College for Prep to Year 8 students, opened in 2010 at the corner of King and Little Collins streets.

However by the end of 2012 the school was closed, according to Eltham College, as it "could not attract

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Pedestrians, drivers confused in CBD "shared zones"

WORDS BY *David Schout*
TRANSPORT

Pedestrians are generally hesitant crossing the road despite having right of way in CBD "shared zones", a review has found.

The review revealed people are generally confused by pedestrian priority areas on "little streets", and suggested more should be done to favour those on foot.

During COVID-19 lockdowns in September 2020, the City of Melbourne cut speed limits from 40km/h to 20km/h and gave pedestrians right of way on Flinders Lane, and on Little Collins, Little Bourke and Little Lonsdale streets.

The move had been flagged in the council's 10-year transport strategy (released in 2019), but the need to accommodate social distancing on skinny CBD footpaths

hastened the move.

In November 2022 consultant Stantec began a review on all four "little" streets during morning, evening and night-time periods to assess how the shared zones were working.

"It was found that for the most part, pedestrians and drivers were unaware of the priority rules within the shared zone," the review, which went before councillors on April 4, revealed.

"Pedestrians generally waited for cars to pass before crossing the street, and drivers were rarely observed yielding to pedestrians."

Shared zones include signs, road stencils, speed humps and planter boxes, however these weren't enough to create a sense of confidence in those walking, according to the review.

One exception was on Flinders Lane at the corner of

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Push to double fine for out-of-hours construction breaches

One local councillor said it was an “open secret” some developers were happy to cop current fines, and it was time to make penalties a genuine financial deterrent.

WORDS BY *David Schout*
 PLANNING

A City of Melbourne councillor has proposed doubling the maximum fine of \$2000 for construction companies that continue to work beyond permitted hours.

Cr Rohan Leppert said larger companies considered daily fines a “cost of doing business” and weren’t deterred by the current figure.

The current penalty unit for all offences across the City of Melbourne is \$100, and the maximum penalty units for out-of-hours construction offences is 20, or \$2000.

Cr Leppert argued that the \$100 penalty unit from 1989 was outdated and should be replaced by the newer definition, currently \$184.92 and expected to rise from July 1.

This would force developers to pay almost \$4000 in fines for starting work early or finishing late, which impacts on the livelihood of residents particularly in the CBD where large-scale construction often takes place within metres of residences.

Cr Leppert said the class of offence was now “so low” that it did not set “any meaningful financial deterrent against bad behaviour”.

“For some of the bigger construction sites around town it is an open secret that it is cheaper to build into the cost of doing development starting before the local law hours allow you to ... and cop the penalty, than it is to not do that,” he said.

“We need to take advantage of the new definition of a ‘penalty unit’ so that over time, our



▲ Fines for developers working outside permitted hours are capped at \$2000 daily. Photo: John Tadigiri.

local laws don’t continue to weaken in their financial deterrence effect against bad behaviour where those with spectacular capacity to pay, will have only increasing opportunity to do the wrong thing.”

At a March 28 meeting, councillors voted unanimously in favour of Cr Leppert’s motion that management bring forward a proposal to change the local laws.

In July 2020 councillors called on the state government to reform the fines for construction nuisances, however, to date the planning minister was yet to act on the request.

“This is all about making sure we’re not just allowing that flat rate of penalty, in the age of quite significant inflation, to result in companies just building the cost of non-compliance with local laws into the cost of doing business,” Cr Leppert said.

“That needs to stop, and hopefully one day we can get to the holy grail which is the minister helping rewrite the *Building Act* so we can actually put some real, meaningful penalties against bad behaviour by companies around the municipality.”

The issue came to a head in 2020 when, shortly after the onset of COVID-19, the City

of Melbourne allowed construction activity to take place from 6am to 8pm on weekdays as a way to “fast-track projects, save jobs and help limit the economic impact of COVID-19”.

The special exemption allowed job sites, usually bound by 7am to 7pm rules, extra time to offset the time lost to social distancing and other safety measures.

Normal 8am to 3pm rules on Saturdays were also been extended by three hours (from 7am to 5pm), giving the industry an additional 13 hours on site per week.

With it, the council saw a significant spike in complaints from locals, many of whom were bound to their homes for large periods of the day due to lockdown laws.

The City of Melbourne made the decision “under delegation” without going before councillors, a move criticised at the time by both planning chair and Deputy Lord Mayor Nicholas Reece, and Cr Leppert who said it was a “terrible, terrible policy”.

CBD resident Michael Munson and his young family were particularly impacted by the move, with their McKillop St building located within 50 metres of four construction sites during lockdowns.

While three of the projects had now been completed, the years-long experience took a toll.

“We took defensive action and installed secondary glazing to block the city out. This was the only way we could stay sane and live through the last of the lockdowns and the time after,” he told *CBD News* in April.

Mr Munson said for a number of years he had regularly written to the council detailing bad behaviour from developers, including out-of-hours breaches, and was not convinced local government had the teeth to make a material difference.

“I seriously doubt doubling the fines will have any affect at all — maybe a 10 or 20 times increase would work.”

He said only when the state government came down harder on construction companies would change ensue. ●

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Uncovering a piece of Melbourne magic

As a city that has built its identity on the unknown – hidden laneways, secret bars down alleys and upstairs, and a supposed series of tunnels underneath the city – Melbourne, and Melburnians, revel in the mystery.

WORDS BY *Jack Hayes*

It then should come as no surprise that you will find a room in the deep dark annals of the State Library of Victoria dedicated solely to the art and marvel of magic.

Well, not so much magic, but “conjuring”; the practice of illusion and deception for entertainment.

Sadly, this room doesn’t feature any trapdoors or revolving bookcases with secret passages.

As you would expect from a professional institution like the State Library, the room houses row upon row of meticulously ordered books, magazines, photographs and other magic memorabilia, all part of the legendary WG Alma Conjuring Collection.

William George Alma (1904–93) was an Australian magician as well as a fine craftsman and manufacturer of conjuring apparatus and props.

Alma acquired his first magic book when he was still a boy, *Magic made easy*, by David Devant.

It is still part of the collection, which also includes many rare and ephemeral materials, historical journals

from the late 19th and 20th centuries, and limited-edition publications by celebrated magicians such as Houdini, Professor Hoffman, Penn and Teller, Harry Blackstone, and Dai Vernon.

Senior librarian Dominique Dunstan is the library’s custodian of this collection.

Her encyclopaedic knowledge of Alma’s life and work is matched only by her contagious and ever-growing love for this collection.

“Mr Alma was a magician for more than 60 years. Coming from a magical family, his father was also a magician, he was absolutely passionate and devoted to his craft,” Ms Dunstan told *CBD News*.

“As he did not have any children this collection became his life’s work, it was his baby and legacy.”

“He developed a relationship with the State Library in the ‘70s and ‘80s, as he was looking for a home for this little legacy. It was here he built up a strong relationship with the library and various librarians, particularly Fran Alcock who was later one of the chief librarians, and also Jane Muscala.”

The collection contains around 2000 books on magic, 60 magazine titles, 1500 photographs, 300 posters, more than 400 detailed research files on individual magicians, and other artefacts, including small tricks and models.

According to Ms Dunstan, the collection has garnered interest from celebrated magicians and illusionists like David Copperfield, Teller and Constantino.

“People sometimes think of magic as some sort of child’s play, but this is a professional performer’s research collection,” Ms Dunstan said. “While there’s some of that [children’s] material, this is actually the secrets going behind the scenes, and all the stagecraft, the total nuts and bolts of the whole art, its history, how you do it, patter, stagecraft, how you build illusions, blueprints; everything like that.”

“It’s really unusual and really rich in that in that sort of sense because it’s come through this man’s life throughout the whole 20th century.”

Alma donated his life’s work to the Library in perpetuity, his bequest allowing researchers and librarians to grow the collection which now features magical artifacts dating back to the 16th century.

Members of the State Library can access the collection. If you’re lucky, you might just get a personal tour from Ms Dunstan herself. ●



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New Greenline designs revealed as Birrarung Marr works pushed back

WORDS BY *David Schout*
COUNCIL AFFAIRS

New designs for the \$300 million Greenline project have been revealed by the City of Melbourne, providing a clearer picture of the council's plan for the "city-shaping" trail.

Works at Birrarung Marr, which represents the start of the four-kilometre path that is set to run along the Yarra River's north bank to the Bolte Bridge, won't begin until late-2023 at the earliest, despite an earlier expectation that works would start in mid-2023.

The latest renders, from ASPECT Studios and landscape architecture group TCL, included more details surrounding proposed boardwalks, event spaces, wetlands, and cultural meeting places throughout the CBD and Docklands.

Perhaps most notably, the latest design ideas included the prospect of rooftop restaurants and cafes atop the CBD's Banana Alley Vaults, plus a linear park on Sandridge Bridge.

While the designs were subject to change and conditional upon approvals, they further emphasised the council's bid to revitalise what it views as a substandard part of the city.

Earlier draft plans for Greenline described Northbank — in contrast to its southern counterpart across the river — as of "poor quality", "lacking activity", "prone to safety and security issues", and an "overall underwhelming experience".

"[It] is currently the unattractive counterpart to the revitalised Southbank which features sunny, attractive, and generally well-maintained pedestrianised public spaces and active building frontages adjacent to a thriving Arts Precinct," it said.



It was not immediately clear why the timeline on "site one" works at Birrarung Marr had been pushed back and the council, which was yet to put a request for tender on the project, said it had "targeted" a late 2023 commencement.

The new designs were revealed as part of an update on the Greenline masterplan to councillors at the April 4 Future Melbourne Committee meeting.

From April 5, a six-week consultation period with the community and key stakeholders will commence, in which the council will gather information — both in-person at workshops, meetings and pop-ups, plus online at the Participate Melbourne webpage — to "further develop ideas and build a shared vision" for Greenline.

"Development of a shared vision is important given the technical complexity of the Greenline Project, community expectations, involvement of multiple stakeholders (property owners, managers and approval agencies) and the ongoing need to secure additional funding contributions," the update read. ●

Lighting up Melbourne's streets after dark

WORDS BY *Rafael Gerster*
EVENTS

Disco laneways, late-night salsa parties and a moon lantern festival are set to take over the CBD's streets this year, as part of the City of Melbourne and Victorian Government's Dusk 'til Dawn Activation Grants program.

The first tranche of the program will provide 10 activations with up to \$100,000 each to encourage more visitors to support the city's twilight and night-time traders.

Among the many highlights to be presented by these funding recipients are:

- Mambomania by The MBassy Dance – a weekly night-time salsa party where dancers weave through a digital art installation.
- Melbourne Shimmer Lane by Vee Agency – an immersive disco lane experience in Meyers Place.
- Moon Lantern Festival by Museum of Chinese Australian History – a rich and colourful traditional night-time celebration of Asian culture, dining and entertainment.
- Glow Comic Trails by Laneway Learning – a series of walking tours and workshops championing comic art by Melbourne artists.
- Maho Magic Bar in Chinatown by Broad Encounters Productions – an immersive magic show transporting audiences to neon-lit Tokyo, filled with mischief, laughter and cocktails.
- Community Capsule by Committee for Melbourne – a visual storytelling experience showcasing what it means to be Melburnian.

These activations will take place between May 1 and October 31 and will take over the night-time hours between 6pm and 6am.

The council's Night-time Economy Advisory Committee chair Penny Miles said the "uplift" of the activations would create "more reasons



for visitors to venture in or stay longer in the city after dark".

"The city is moving differently – night-time is the time to be in Melbourne," Ms Miles said.

According to the council, night-time activity was at 107 per cent of pre-pandemic levels in March, up almost 20 per cent compared to the same period last year.

The council's City Activation portfolio lead Cr Roshena Campbell said the Dusk 'til Dawn program would build on the momentum Melbourne had gained in the "night-time economy".

"We want to provide new reasons to visit our vibrant city and to link out late-night traders with the culture and creativity Melbourne is renowned for," Cr Campbell said. ●

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Get to know an international student: Devanyi Maru

When did you arrive in Melbourne?

I arrived in Melbourne on February 8, 2022.

What course are you studying?

I am doing Master of International Business at the University of Melbourne.

What are some cultural differences you have observed?

I am from India which is a culturally diverse country. I found major differences between the cuisines. Indian cuisine is more diverse and has many varieties of flavours and spices.

Also, in terms of social etiquette, in India we show respect to elders and there is a strong emphasis on hospitality and generosity. Whereas here in Australia, people are generally more informal and relaxed, with less emphasis on hierarchy and respect for authority.

However, I love the Aussie culture as well, as I find it something unique and valued.

What are your favourite places to visit in the city?

I love to visit the Yarra River, Federation Square, Melbourne Sky Deck, Sea Life Aquarium, and some popular clubs. ●

Deputy Lord Mayor visits China to build business and education relationships

WORDS BY *Brendan Rees*
COUNCIL AFFAIRS

Deputy Lord Mayor Nicholas Reece is visiting China to rebuild and strengthen business and cultural ties, while advocating for Melbourne as a “leading city for international students”.

Cr Reece’s trip from April 23 to 28 is the first time a local government representative in Australia has travelled to China since COVID-19, and recent years of, at times, escalating tensions between the two countries.

A focus of his visit will see him participate in a business delegation led by the Australia China Business Council, which will provide “unique opportunities to hear first-hand from Australian and Chinese officials about China’s new high-growth plans and opportunities to collaborate and invest in Australian businesses,” according to a City of Melbourne report.

Speaking to *CBD News* ahead of his trip, costed at \$15,900 and approved by councillors at their April 18 meeting, Cr Reece said he would be “reconnecting and recommitting” to relationships with civic and business leaders in Tianjin, Melbourne’s Sister City since 1980, as well as making tours in Hong Kong, Shenzhen, and Beijing.

“As a municipality we also have one of the strongest and longest historical and cultural connections to China,” he said.

“I will be meeting with many businesses that invest in Melbourne and encouraging them to continue to invest and do business in our city, creating jobs for Melburnians.”

Cr Reece will also take the time to meet with former Chinese students who attended the University of Melbourne, as well as visiting Tianjin’s Haileybury College campus in a bid to attract international students.

“Haileybury College is not just one of the best schools in Melbourne, it’s one of the best



▲ Cr Nicolas Reece with Carol Lin, an Australian student studying in China under the New Colombo Plan - a federal government initiative supporting students to study and undertake internships across the Indo-Pacific.

schools in Australia, and I look forward to visiting their campus in China and talking to the students and discussing opportunities for more visits and cultural exchanges between school students in China and the school students right here in Melbourne.”

Cr Reece made clear that he was not visiting China to talk about allegations of the country’s human rights matters, which had attracted global attention.

“I’m not the Prime Minister or Foreign Minister, I’m the Deputy Lord Mayor so I’m going to be focusing on people-to-people relationships, business-to-business relationships and city-to-city relationships, given the current strains that exist at a national level,” he said.

“These local links are more important than ever and that’s where I’m going to focus my energy where I think I can do the most good.”

“After years of border closures and lockdowns, we are able to travel again and so I want to get the message out there that Melbourne is the world’s most friendly city; we’re welcoming people, and we really look forward to seeing that relationship blossom again.”

Alongside 20 senior corporate leaders, Cr Reece will deliver a presentation on Melbourne’s “green economy opportunities”.

Cr Reece will prepare a report for the council within 60 days of his return from China.

Lord Mayor Sally Capp said: “These trips are absolutely an investment in opportunity, future investment, and good economic returns for our city.” ●



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Residents let down by airport rail delay

WORDS BY *Sean Car*
PLANNING

A recent announcement by the Victorian Government that the long-awaited fast rail link to Melbourne Airport would no longer meet its mooted 2029 completion date has left many in the community frustrated, and none more so than central city residents.

While Deputy Premier Jacinta Allan was reported in the media in April squaring the blame for the delays on the Commonwealth Government and Melbourne Airport's operators, many economists have pointed to interest rate rises and Victoria's budgetary deficits.

A State Government spokesperson told *CBD News* that since the former Turnbull Coalition Government announced funding for airport rail in 2018, the Victorian Government had worked closely with the Commonwealth to "develop the project including commencing early engineering works".

"Any decisions about Federal Government funding of infrastructure projects in Victoria is a matter for them," the spokesperson said.

"Just as all Victorians are facing cost of living challenges with rising interest rates and inflation, the Victorian Budget will also take into account current economic conditions."

Minister Allan told ABC Radio Melbourne in



▲ A concept of the new train station at Melbourne Airport.

April that it had been "challenging to negotiate with the airport about how the project will be delivered on the land that they lease from the Federal Government to run the airport".

"It's been slower than I would have liked," Minister Allan said.

While Melburnians have been left disappointed by the delay to a project which should have been completed decades ago, CBD residents living in high-rise settings, many without cars, are among some of the worst impacted by Melbourne not having a rail link to its airport.

With the Victorian Government and City of Melbourne advocating for more residents to

move to the central city post-COVID, CBD residents' group Residents 3000 said the airport link was needed "more than ever".

"Who wouldn't love to have a direct train line to the airport in their neighbourhood?" Residents 3000 president Rafael Camillo said.

"Everyone from tourists, businesses, visitors, and residents. People that are constantly using the airport or even working there could be calling the CBD home. The model of living in the CBD is to have everything at your doorstep, creating a more sustainable city."

"At the moment the city is also very congested by traffic and having less taxis driving from the airport could also help ameliorate this situation."

At present, the only ways residents can reach the airport is via private vehicle, Uber, taxi or Skybus – a situation Mr Camillo described as "insane" for a city which considers itself one of the world's most liveable.

"The rail link to the airport is already way overdue. We urgently suggest that state and federal governments get their priorities in place and simply make it happen."

"We have the longest tram network in the world but not a rail line to the airport; it's hard to believe that we are still even discussing this."

The State Government said that despite the delays, work was continuing at Suburban Rail Loop airport sites. ●



Pedestrians, drivers confused in CBD "shared zones"

Continued from page 1.

Degraves St, where "pedestrians were observed confidently crossing the street without yielding to cars".

This was largely due to the fact that the road is raised to footpath level, which made transition across the street "accessible and seamless".

Cr Rohan Leppert, who commissioned the Little Streets review, said it was now apparent that clear signage did not necessarily create pedestrian confidence.

"I think it's pretty clear to say that the findings in this report show what has been suspected by many, which is that although these are officially shared zones now ... because the streets don't look and feel like that is the case, most people, whether they're pedestrians or in a car or on a bike, don't necessarily know that it is a shared zone no matter how many signs you put in and no matter how pink the road is that you've painted," Cr Leppert said.

"The exception there is when the road is raised to meet the kerb and you've got a continuous crossover for pedestrians."

The review also found that while most streets had seen a reduction in traffic volumes and speeds, both were still high for what would constitute an effective shared zone.

It was suggested the council did more to further reduce both traffic speed and volume.

Notably, it concluded that motor vehicles remained the "biggest impediment" to fully functional shared zones on the little streets, and suggested restricting cars completely from certain blocks.

"[This] would dramatically increase the space available to people walking and make for a more attractive and inviting environment," the review noted.

"Pedestrianising at least one segment of each little street would also prevent the street from being used for through-traffic, reducing traffic volumes on other segments."

It suggested that lockable or rising bollards could be utilised if loading was required at certain times of the day, and reiterated the need to raise the carriageway to be level with the footpath.

Councillors endorsed the interventions identified in the review and sought Department of Transport and Planning approval to make the trial 20km/h speed limit in little streets permanent. ●

SALVOS

Let's continue Father Bob's legacy

The passing of Father Bob Maguire came as a shock to many. It is odd that the death of an 88-year-old would catch people by surprise. But Father Bob was one of those characters who appeared to be eternal. Without much thought, we assumed that he would be around forever.

Why is it that we assume that certain people will last forever? I think it is a hope that what they represent will be an ongoing constant in our world. It is because Father Bob, and others of his ilk, represent what is so desperately needed today.

Father Bob was renowned for occasionally butting heads with church hierarchy. Some elements of the church universal have demonstrated throughout history that they have capacity to focus on politics, power, prestige, and position. Father Bob consistently focused on people, particularly those that reside on the margins and are regarded as outsiders. Father Bob always made sure that the battlers knew

that Bob had their back.

Father Bob, with his "sleeves rolled up" version of Christianity, helped make religion accessible to ordinary Australians.

Organised religion is often known for what it stands against. Father Bob was known for who he stood with. The excluded always knew they were included by Father Bob. There was always a seat at Father Bob's table when the excluded weren't welcomed anywhere else.

The issue of exclusion is becoming more prevalent in Australia as economic uncertainty grips the nation. It is interesting to observe that some sections of our community focus on self-preservation rather than looking for opportunities to further the great Australian tradition of looking out for each other, especially during difficult times.

I have been shocked in recent days to hear a business manager refer to people that access The Salvation Army for support as, "Riff raff who should all be locked up". I have also heard another city resident describe the sight of people accessing Salvation Army services as, "disgusting", and that, "The Salvation Army and similar services should stop providing support to those that need it as it is attracting undesirables and they are messing up the amenity of the area".

Historically, Melbourne has always been known for who it stands for and who it stands



with. It has never been known for who or what it stands against. As we continue to head towards economic turbulence, let us not be tempted by the allure of self-preservation at the expense of caring for others. It was Socrates who was credited with the quote, "Society will be judged by the way it cares for its most vulnerable".

Let us do our bit to ensure that Melbourne always welcomes, embraces, accepts, and cares for the outsider, especially the most vulnerable. ●



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BINS BOOST CONFIDENCE FOR MEN LIVING WITH INCONTINENCE

A trial of free incontinence product disposal bins across the City of Melbourne has been expanded to three extra locations to make the service more accessible to the community.

The bins are now located in the men's and all-gender toilets at the following Council-owned facilities:

- Carlton Baths
- City Library
- Fawkner Park Senior Citizens Centre
- Jean McKendry Neighbourhood Centre
- Kathleen Syme Community Centre
- Kensington Neighbourhood Centre
- Library at the Dock
- Melbourne Town Hall public toilets (on Collins Street)
- North Melbourne Community Centre.

Melbourne is the first capital city in Australia to install incontinence product disposal bins in Council-owned facilities.

The 12-month trial began in September as part of the BINS4Blokes men's health campaign, an awareness and advocacy campaign promoting the installation of incontinence bins in public toilets.

The City of Melbourne is an inclusive and accessible city and we want people who experience incontinence to have access to the facilities so they can feel confident to get out and about.

In launching the trial, Councillor Jamal Hakim said it's important more people have access to proper disposal bins for their incontinence products - particularly given many instances of incontinence can be much better managed with the right resources.

"With the proper facilities to dispose products, we hope those living with incontinence can continue getting out and about, and doing what they love when they're here in the City of Melbourne," Cr Hakim said.

"The trial will not only showcase a practical solution for those living with incontinence, but importantly, raise awareness and facilitate a much-needed conversation on the topic."

The bin trial runs until the end of September.

For more information, visit melbourne.vic.gov.au/bins4blokes



HOW TO GET YOUR FLU VACCINE

With a significant flu season predicted this year, we are now taking bookings for flu vaccinations through our new online booking management program VaxApp.

Bookings are now available for our community sessions, individual appointments and for the first time, on-site workplace immunisations.

Influenza vaccination significantly reduces the risk of contracting influenza and passing the virus to family, colleagues and friends.

For more information and to book, visit melbourne.vic.gov.au/flu vaccine

Calls to enforce e-scooter safety in the CBD and surrounds reiterated after trial extended

WORDS BY *Brendan Rees*
TRANSPORT

CBD residents and pedestrian safety advocates are hoping that the state government's extension of the electric scooter hire scheme will see safety issues such as illegal footpath riding addressed.

Minister for Roads Melissa Horne announced in March a six-month extension to the trial, which was launched in January last year and has seen 3.7 million short trips in Melbourne through scooter hire companies Lime and Neuron.

Private scooters were previously classified as unregistered vehicles, with their use in public spaces attracting a \$925 fine, but this ban was lifted when the changes came into effect from April 5.

Under the trial's extension, e-scooters will be permitted on roads with a speed limit of 60km/h or less, up from the 50km/h limit that was in place. They can be ridden on roads, in bicycle lanes, on bicycle paths or separated and shared paths, but will remain illegal on footpaths.

The minimum age of riders will also be lowered from 18 to 16 but all riders must still wear a helmet and adhere to the same blood alcohol content and drug use restrictions as motorists.

Riders cannot consume alcohol while travelling on an e-scooter. E-scooters cannot travel above 20km/h, while devices capable of travelling faster than 25km/h are not classified as e-scooters and are still illegal.

East Enders residents' group president Dr Stan Capp said while he supported a more sustainable mode of transport that reduced carbon emissions and provided an alternative to cars and motorbikes, the enforcement of e-scooter rules needed to be made a priority or



the trial "would be a waste of time".

"I think there are legitimate reasons why residents are concerned about e-scooters that don't obey the law," he said.

This included policing illegal footpath riding and ensuring insurance policies were in place so that third parties, such as pedestrians, were covered if they were struck by a rider using a footpath or not wearing a helmet.

Dr Capp said he also hoped the laws around e-scooters "would be widely publicised in an

intensive education program".

"The caveat is: comply with the rules and then enforce the rules," he said, adding if there was no means of enforcement "then it becomes a pointless trial because we know it won't work".

"I'm not sure why you need another six months to work that out."

Dr Capp also said that after reporting illegal behaviour, "I was advised that there were no resources available to follow up and for me to complain to the City of Melbourne".

Victoria Police Assistant Commissioner for Road Policing, Glenn Weir, said Victoria Police's role in the e-scooter trial "has always been about enforcement, and this doesn't change".

"We will continue to enforce the e-scooter rules in line with the extended trial," he said.

"The extended trial will help us to understand further how both hire and privately owned e-scooters can be used safely."

Mr Weir added Victoria Police had advocated its position regarding e-scooters in conjunction with other road safety partners, "however, we respect the decision of government".

Victoria Walks executive officer Ben Rossiter said while their organisation supported different modes of transport to move around the city, it "has repeatedly called for measures including investment in more separated bike lanes that would reduce the rampant use of e-scooters on footpaths, as well as e-scooter rider insurance to cover walkers being hit on footpaths".

The state government said further work would be carried out during the trial extension to understand product safety standards, rider education and if any changes to penalties were needed.

Government data from the trial showed about 400 tonnes of carbon had been saved through e-scooter use, with riders hiring e-scooters mainly for leisure, social events, commuting and visits to cafes. ●



QVM celebrates all the goodness that comes with a new season

WORDS BY *Kaylah-Joelle Baker*
EVENTS

For the first weekend of May, Queen Victoria Market is celebrating everything that makes the new season unique with an Autumn Harvest Festival.

The new event will take place from 9am to 4pm on Saturday, May 6 and Sunday, May 7, and will centre around in-season produce and goods on offer from various different stall holders.

Free 25-minute cooking workshops for the little ones will also take place over the weekend and will make use of produce that can be found at the market.

The first day will see children make apple cookies, while on the second day they will be creating fun and healthy owl crackers.

Visitors of the market can also learn more about shopping and living more sustainably through the zero-waste living workshop, the using food scraps for creative recipes workshop, and the beeswax for reducing plastic workshop.

Live music and roving entertainment will overtake the market, and a number of food trucks, such as Bigger than Texas, Pies and Pavlovas, and Famous Sandwich, will be on site with mouth-watering dishes for the cooler weather.

For the first of what is expected to be a successful festival, a mini animal farm will also be awaiting visitors of all ages. ●



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Police renew appeal on decades-long sexual assault



Victoria Police has appealed for new information to help crack a 40-year-long mystery surrounding a sexual assault that occurred in the CBD.

WORDS BY *Brendan Rees*
CRIME

The woman, whose identity has been protected, was walking to her car after finishing work at her second job at a bar in the CBD at midnight on May 6, 1982, when she was attacked by a man.

The then 21-year-old had walked through the CBD to Swanston St and then onto Batman Ave where she intended to catch a tram from a stop where the Princes Bridge now stands.

But after missing the tram, she decided to continue walking to her car that was parked on the banks of the Yarra River.

Across the road from the tram stop, the victim recalled seeing a young man leaning up against a bluestone wall and looking down at the river. She also saw a man wearing a white suit and carrying a briefcase at the tram stop that night.

While walking to her car, she heard noises behind her which she initially thought were rain drops falling on the ground, however she noticed a man (who had been looking at the water) was about 100 metres behind her.

Fearing the man was following her, she began walking faster to get back to her car but was attacked from behind.

“He grabbed hold of her neck, and she dropped her shoes and bag on the ground before struggling with the man,” according to a Victoria Police statement.

“The man pulled her towards the banks of the river, knocking her backwards to the ground. He choked the woman, before sexually assaulting her.”

Police said the man told her, “I know where you live, and I’m going to come and kill you if you tell anyone”.

He also told the victim his name was Stephen before walking back along the river towards the city.

Investigators have been unable to confirm if the man’s actual name was Stephen.

The matter was reported to police at the time but despite a significant investigation over the decades, no arrests have been made.

In March this year, detectives from the Sexual Crimes Squad’s historical investigations team renewed an appeal for information in the hope it would lead to a breakthrough.

The attacker was described as around 16 to 18 years old, about 190cm tall, with brown hair and stubble on his face, possibly a goatee.

His hair was styled up, and he was wearing a watch that had a round face with a light on it and numbers that were raised.

Detective Inspector Mark Burnett, from the Sexual Crimes Squad, said it was “as important as ever” that the person responsible for the incident was brought to justice.

“This was a brutal and opportunistic attack which had enduring effects on the life of a young woman who had just been trying to get home from work – something everybody should be able to do safely,” he said.

“Historical investigations are unique in that updates to science, methodology and legislation allow us to progress a case in a way that may not have been possible at the time of the incident, so receiving information even 40 years later can still make an enormous difference.”



“I absolutely believe that with the right information, it can be solved.”



“As we always say – people’s circumstances can change over time, and this appeal might be the prompt needed to help close a terrible chapter in someone’s life. If you know something, now is the time to do the right thing and come forward.”

Anyone with information is asked to contact Crime Stoppers on 1800 333 000 or submit a confidential crime report at crimestoppers.com.au ●

Tobacconists raided in CBD, Carlton for selling illegal items

WORDS BY *Brendan Rees*
CRIME

Ice pipes, nicotine vapes, and counterfeit cigarettes are among thousands of items seized by police after allegedly illegally being sold at tobacco shops in the CBD and Carlton.

Police executed two warrants at tobacconists on Lygon St and Collins St following concerns at risk youth were buying “products freely displayed within the stores”.

The warrants, which were carried out during April 16 to 21, resulted in police seizing 1530 nitrous oxide cannisters, also known as “nangs”, as well as 873 counterfeit cigarettes, 560 bongs, and 21 ice pipes.

Other drug paraphernalia seized included 45 suboxone sachets, 1200ml of methadone, 2737 nicotine vapes, and 57 vape refills.

Victoria Police said owners of the tobacconists were not present during the time of the warrants, and the Melbourne West Neighbourhood Policing team would continue to investigate.

Nitrous oxide is a colourless gas that is commonly used for sedation and pain relief but is also used by people to feel intoxicated or high.

In Victoria, it is an offence to supply these substances for human consumption, specifically if it is known or suspected that the person intends to consume the substance.

According to Victoria Police, retailers and suppliers are required to conduct business activity, in relation to the sale of nitrous oxide, in a responsible manner.

The unlawful supply of nitrous oxide for human consumption can attract fines of more than \$8000, as well as up to two years imprisonment.

Melbourne West Neighbourhood Policing Sergeant Matt Jerabek said the sale of illegal items “often generate anti-social and further criminal offending to an area, so we are confident this will make a positive impact on community safety”.

“Items such as nangs, methadone and drug paraphernalia can be extremely risky when sold to a vulnerable young person, exposing them to serious health risks and the increased likelihood of further drug use, crime and anti-social behaviour,” he said. ●

Goddess celebrates cinema’s leading women throughout the ages

WORDS BY *Georgie Atkins*
ARTS & CULTURE

The fiercest women to have graced the screen are being celebrated in ACMI’s new world-premiere exhibition, a spectacle that no film-lover will want to miss.

Open from April 5 until October 1, *Goddess: Power, Glamour, Rebellion* explores the complex history and changing representations of women across 120 years of film. With a focus on Hollywood, Bollywood and Asian cinema, the exhibition is set to be a triumphant ode to the goddesses who have fought convention on and off the screen.

Goddess will feature never-before-seen costumes, props, sketches, movie memorabilia and interactive experiences that shine a spotlight on cinema’s most revolutionary women. Viewers can expect to see some of their favourite moments in cinema encapsulated in the exhibition, from Marlene Dietrich’s iconic white tuxedo and Michelle Yeoh’s fight-ready outfits from *Crouching Tiger, Hidden Dragon* (2000) to the trailblazing work of Pam Grier.

Backed by the Victorian Government, *Goddess* is the latest instalment of the Melbourne Winter Masterpiece series, aiming



to boost tourism and economic activity during the colder months.

According to Victoria’s Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events and Creative Industries Steve Dimonopoulos, the exclusive exhibition is “set to attract thousands of visitors to our city”, adding that the increase in tourism “will deliver a major boost to local businesses including cafés, bars, hotels and retail shops”.

Established by the state government in 2004, the initiative has been responsible for some of the most popular exhibitions in Melbourne, including *Disney: The Magic of Animation*, *David Bowie Is...* and *Tim Burton: The Exhibition*.

Goddess opened on April 5 and featured a keynote speech from two-time Oscar winner Geena Davis, who is also the exhibition’s lead ambassador. The speech was delivered at the *Being Seen on Screen: The Importance of Representation* conference presented by ACMI, in partnership with the Geena Davis Institute on Gender in Media.

Until October 1, *Goddess* will run an extensive program of events, including curator tours, talks, workshops and film screenings. The exhibition will also see the *Goddess Nights* after-dark experience come to life, featuring an impressive lineup of DJs and performers.

“We’re the major events and creative capital of Australia so there’s nowhere better to host *Goddess*,” Mr Dimonopoulos said.

“It’s fierce, it’s fun and it showcases the iconic women who have influenced screen culture throughout the ages.”

Goddess is set to tour overseas following its run at ACMI. ●

For more information:
acmi.net.au





Flinders Lane Gallery

Situated within the beautiful Nicholas Building, FLG is the perfect destination for anyone looking for a relaxed yet inspiring encounter with art. Showcasing the work of over 40 contemporary and Indigenous artists the gallery presents a dynamic program of exhibitions and boasts an inviting, light filled showroom featuring the latest works from our stockroom.

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City of Melbourne councillors unanimously back Voice to Parliament “yes” vote

City of Melbourne councillors have unanimously backed the “yes” campaign in the lead up to a vote on the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice to Parliament.

WORDS BY *David Schout*
COUNCIL AFFAIRS



The move saw it become the first capital city council to “adopt a firm position on the Voice” according to Lord Mayor Sally Capp, ahead of Australia’s first referendum since 1999 later this year.

A motion from the Lord Mayor affirmed the council’s support for the 2017 Uluru Statement from the Heart and the “yes” campaign for constitutional recognition.

It also committed to ensuring locals were as best informed as possible ahead of the significant vote.

“It’s important to affirm that the City of Melbourne is supportive of the principles of the Uluru Statement from the Heart and the ‘yes’ campaign in particular as we go into the referendum,” Cr Capp said at the March 21 Future Melbourne Committee meeting.

“Referendums don’t happen very often, it’s important that we’re all involved ... from my perspective, this referendum is one of the most critical in our lifetime.”

The Lord Mayor said that despite being an Australia-wide issue, local councils — as the closest level of government to the people — had an important role to play in ensuring “informed participation”.

“As many other councils have done, [we have]

an obligation and responsibility that we have a practical role to play in what is a national debate and a national government-led reform,” she said.

“But our practical role over the coming months is to help ensure that our community is engaged, connected, and informed about every aspect of the debate. It’s an important role that we can play, so people participate in this very significant discussion — that’s got to be the first hurdle.”

Community engagement would include the sharing of information through public meetings and opportunities for discussion, speeches, social media, and other communications.

Following the meeting, Deputy Lord Mayor Nicholas Reece was questioned on 3AW radio how the council could support the yes vote before it had (at the time) seen the final wording of the constitutional amendment and question.

However, Cr Reece said councillors were supporting a “principle”, and the technical wording of the question was being used to “confuse and scare” Australians.

The wording was confirmed by Prime Minister Anthony Albanese two days after the meeting, but the final wording is now the subject of a federal parliamentary inquiry which isn’t due to report until May.

The council motion also noted that there was a “diversity of opinions” both “inside and outside Aboriginal communities” on the proposed Voice to Parliament.

“We acknowledge that the entire Aboriginal community is not unified in its position, as it wouldn’t be on any position in any community,” deputy chair of the council’s Aboriginal Melbourne portfolio Cr Dr Olivia Ball said.

However, Cr Dr Ball said there was a “strong majority and some very strong leading voices” within the community.

A fortnight after all City of Melbourne councillors confirmed their support for the voice, Federal Opposition leader Peter Dutton said his party would actively campaign against it.

Instead of a constitutionally enshrined voice, Mr Dutton proposed a legislated model focusing on local and regional (rather than national) voices, and symbolic constitutional recognition of Indigenous people.

However both of these have been rejected by Indigenous communities and the Uluru statement from the heart.

A total of 44 nationwide referendums have been held in Australia’s history, and only eight have been carried.

The last referendum was held in 1999, when almost 55 per cent of voters rejected the chance to become a republic.

In the same way that it is compulsory to vote in a general election, voting in a referendum is compulsory for those on the electoral roll. ●



David Schout
JOURNALIST
DAVID@HYPERLOCALNEWS.COM.AU



▲ *Katie Roberts-Hull believes the state government should explore a primary school in the CBD.*

With Docklands at capacity, is it time for a CBD primary school?

Continued from page 1.

enrolments in the numbers needed to be financially viable”.

In 2017, elite private school Haileybury College opened a 10-storey vertical school one block north of the CBD in West Melbourne, directly opposite Flagstaff Gardens.

The high-fee-paying school is, however, not an option for many parents.

Primary school enrolments for families living in the CBD are currently split into two.

Those residing west of Queen St have been designated Docklands Primary as their “local school” by the state government. This means children “must be offered a place when seeking enrolment”.

Carlton Gardens Primary School is the designated school for those living east of Queen St.

Ms Roberts-Hull said that while there were distinct challenges with vertical schools, it was nothing that hasn’t been overcome elsewhere.

“In an ideal world you’d have a park next to the school, like Haileybury does with Flagstaff Gardens,” she said.

“[Otherwise] you have to be a bit creative with outdoor space. Some schools use their rooftops as garden areas ... lots of cities around the world have examples of schools like that.” ●

Schizy Inc.’s Mojo Festival of the Arts rejects stereotypes of complex mental health

WORDS BY *Helena Morgan*
ARTS & CULTURE



Schizy Inc. is holding the Mojo Festival of the Arts for World Schizophrenia Day on May 21 at Ross House in the CBD, showcasing stand-up comedy, music and spoken word performances from more than 20 artists.

Schizy (Skit-zy) Inc. is a lived experience-led arts and community organisation for people living with complex mental health such as schizophrenia, bipolar and depression.

The organisation is based at Ross House and conducts workshops in fields such as story-arts, illustration, film, stand-up comedy, writing and visual arts. The Mojo Festival of the Arts then acts as a platform for people to perform their material.

Schizy Inc. was born from the experiences of its founder, Heidi Everett. Ms Everett, the recipient of the Victorian Government Disability Volunteer Award and the Melbourne FRINGE Access and Inclusion Award, was involved in psycho-rehab groups, which are gathering spaces for those discharged from psych wards.

A self-proclaimed “goer and doer”, Ms Everett said while she had participated in activities such as walking, cooking and playing music, something had been missing.

“They were wonderful for psycho-rehab but they didn’t necessarily provide intellectual stimulation,” she said.

She resents the stereotype that people with complex trauma and mental illnesses do not possess the capability to be witty and subversive with artistic expression.

“People in psych wards are generally very smart and funny, but this isn’t honoured post-discharge,” she said.

Ms Everett said the “dual reality” she was living motivated her to establish Schizy Inc. as a place where people could rely on creative modes for self-expression.

“I was a psych patient unable to cook an egg but playing gigs and winning awards, I had nothing that brought the two worlds together,” she said.

Ms Everett recognised a gap in the market for psycho-social rehabilitation groups focused on creative self-expression and independent socialisation.

While playing gigs with lived-experience artists, Ms

Everett developed the idea for a jam session for World Schizophrenia Day. She held a jam session at the 303 Club in Northcote, and invited lived-experience musicians from the United States, Canada, Wales, Northern Ireland and New Zealand to perform *One Love* by reggae musician Bob Marley.

The jam developed into a committee, and Schizy Inc. emerged shortly after, with the City of Melbourne funding the first Mojo Festival of the Arts for World Schizophrenia Day.

Ms Everett said the organisation was also indebted to the kindness of Writers Victoria, which allowed Schizy Inc. to use its offices while they found their feet.

In 2021, with assistance from Creative Victoria, Schizy Inc. opened Australia’s first lived-experience-led art studio at Abbotsford Convent for creatives with schizophrenia and related mental health illnesses.

Although Ms Everett recognises the importance of art therapy, she was eager for Schizy Inc. to avoid this form of remediation.

“Our workshops aim to counter cliched representations of schizophrenia and instead mentor people to become content makers” Ms Everett said.

Schizy Inc. is driven by a long-term aspiration to open a lived-experience-led healing farm. But for now, the organisation continues to function with an emphasis on fun and enjoyment.

The Mojo Festival of the Arts is on Sunday May 21 at the Trades Hall in Carlton from 3pm to 6pm. The entry fee is \$10,

For more information: schizy.org ●

LAW

Reverse mortgages ... a saviour or a curse?

Like many things it depends on your circumstances! However, they should be looked at with a great deal of caution and professional advice should be sought at the outset.

WORDS BY *Peter Neville*
NEVILLE & CO (NEVILLE.COM.AU)

A reverse mortgage allows homeowners to access the equity in their homes without selling the property. In Victoria, a reverse mortgage may be an option for retirees who want to supplement their retirement income, pay off debts, fund home renovations, travel or who may wish to buy a more expensive property but do not have the necessary cash.

Unlike a traditional mortgage, where the homeowner makes monthly payments to the lender, with a reverse mortgage, the lender makes payments to the homeowner. The loan is typically repaid when the homeowner sells the property, moves out permanently, or passes away. The amount of the loan depends on the value of the property, the age of the homeowner, and the interest rate. They do not require monthly payments. Homeowners can choose to

receive the loan as a lump sum, a line of credit, or as regular payments.

However, there is always a catch and reverse mortgages should be looked at very carefully. In some cases, it may make better financial sense to take out an ordinary mortgage and use part of it to fund the repayments.

There are many factors to consider including life expectancy and the ability to find a lender who is effectively prepared to lend on the assets not income. The loan will continue to accrue interest until it is repaid, which can reduce the amount of equity that the homeowner has in the property.

You are, therefore, paying interest on interest and interest rates and fees on reverse mortgages are typically higher than traditional mortgages.

It may be a consideration for retirees who are cash-poor but asset-rich. It can also provide a source of income for retirees who do not have other sources of income, such as a pension or retirement savings.

To qualify for a reverse mortgage in Victoria, Australia, homeowners must be at least 60 years old and own their property outright or have a small mortgage balance that can be paid off with the proceeds from the reverse mortgage.

Our firm is more than happy to assist you.

Disclaimer: This is general information and cannot be relied upon as legal advice. Before you contemplate a reverse mortgage, you must consult your professional advisers. ●

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Your City of Melbourne community update



AMBITIOUS WATER PROJECT TO SAVE 60 MILLION LITRES

We're drought-proofing Princes Park for future generations

It's home to the Carlton Football Club, local cricket and bowls clubs and a favourite for families, and now Princes Park is set to become home to our city's next ambitious stormwater harvesting project.

The Princes Park Stormwater Harvesting Project will see excess stormwater harvested from Moonee Ponds Creek and used to irrigate the green open spaces, significant trees and playing fields at the 38.6 hectare site in Carlton North.

Not only will it save more than 60 million litres of drinking water each year, but the system will help future-proof the community's recreational spaces and premier sporting facilities against drought.

The health of Moonee Ponds Creek will also be improved with pollution, litter and sediment removed along with the excess water.

The stormwater harvesting system, including storage tanks and treatment system, will be housed underground with a pump station located alongside existing pump infrastructure in Royal Park.

During a heavy rain event, excess water will be collected and pass through a pollutant trap where litter and large pollution is removed, and then through a chamber to remove coarse sediment.

The treated stormwater will then be transferred to underground storage tanks at McPherson Field in Royal Park.

These tanks will be able to hold five million litres of water to make the most of major rainfall events and store water for drier periods.

The water will be pumped into an underground irrigation tank in Princes Park via a UV disinfection system, removing any pathogens before the water is used to maintain the park's ovals and gardens.

As our climate changes, intense rainfall, flooding, extreme heat events and drought are becoming more common in Melbourne. This project is part of our climate and biodiversity emergency response and will enable us to adapt to the impacts of climate change and improve water quality and green spaces.

The \$7 million Princes Park Stormwater Harvesting Project is supported by the Victorian Government's Integrated Water Management Grant Program.

Design work for the project has begun following community consultation, with construction set to begin later this year and be complete by 2025.

Measures will be in place to minimise disruption to sporting clubs and park users during this time.

To learn more about this project, visit participate.melbourne.vic.gov.au/princes-park-stormwater-harvesting-project/project-overview

BENEFITS OF THE PROJECT

- More than 60 million litres of alternate water will be collected each year for Princes Park, saving precious drinking water. That's the equivalent of 24 Olympic swimming pools.
- Litter and up to 20,000 kilograms of sediment and 200 kilograms of nitrogen will be removed from Moonee Ponds Creek each year.
- Soil moisture will be replenished through more sustainable management of the natural water cycle.
- We're helping drought-proof Princes Park by ensuring it can source 80 per cent of its water needs via alternative sources.

DID YOU KNOW?

We have six stormwater harvesting systems that capture and store 230 million litres of rainwater each year which is used to keep our parks, gardens and trees lush and green.

Birrarung Marr, Royal Park, Queen Victoria and Alexandra gardens, Fitzroy Gardens, Darling Street, and Lincoln and University squares are all kept green and lush thanks to harvested stormwater.

Currently 23 per cent of our water use is from stormwater and rainwater harvesting.



Underground storage tanks like this one at Lincoln Square will collect stormwater to ensure Princes Park remains green and lush

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 News* at

news.melbourne.vic.gov.au

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NOT TO WATER IT DOWN, BUT RAIN IS THE KEY TO OUR BIG GREEN CITY

Water is essential for improving liveability in Melbourne, keeping our green spaces healthy and cooling the city. Learn how we're creating a more sustainable water system for the city.



We are introducing permeable surfaces to our streetscapes to capture rainwater for reuse

Melbourne's four seasons in one day may dampen the spirits of some, but the truth is our much-maligned wet weather is actually the key to ensuring our city stays cooler and greener in the face of climate change.

Each year enough rain falls in our municipality to fill about 8000 Olympic swimming pools.

Of this rain, a little over half is collected on sealed surfaces, such as roofs and roads.

Which means, more than 10,000 million litres of stormwater literally washes down the drain, taking with it litter and pollution.

So at the City of Melbourne, we're doing everything we can to collect more of it, clean it and store it for irrigation.

Because by 2050, demand for water to maintain our parks and growing urban forest will double.

And while we have been fortunate to have healthy rainfall; we remember the Millenium Drought when we experienced rainfall 14 per cent below average.

This saw our world-renowned parks and gardens significantly impacted, turning to dust and trees suffering from lack of water – not just during the drought but for a decade after.

So we're prioritising water sensitive urban design, especially using stormwater runoff to support our precious trees and gardens.

Historically, cities were designed to be impermeable, and that's the thinking we're now challenging.

Bourke Street Mall, for example, is a traditional streetscape. Rain falls and runs straight off the pavement, into the drain and out into Port Phillip Bay. It's a waste. So we're trying to find more ways to capture and reuse it in a more sustainable way.

This includes introducing permeable surfaces, rather than letting it literally drain away.

We have developed six stormwater harvesting systems across the city collectively storing and supplying an average 230 million litres per year.

Our greening projects across the city are kept green with stormwater, including our raingardens and tree pits, as well as underground soil trenches that increase soil moisture for trees.

We're also encouraging partnerships with private buildings and developers, helping them intercept rainwater from rooftops to irrigate their plants.

Our city's renewal areas are low-lying and flooding is a major challenge.

So we're designing and delivering lush and cool streetscapes that carry out a flood management role.

For instance, in Fishermans Bend, the largest urban renewal project in Australia, we are part of the team implementing the largest water-sensitive urban design project.

The flood management approach will reduce flood risk by increasing permeability, retaining water in the landscape, and capturing water for later use.

These are just some of the elements of our Water Sensitive Urban Design approach.

WATER USE TARGETS

We've set a goal that by 2030, 50 per cent of all council's water use will be sourced from alternative sources - stormwater or recycled water - rather than drinking water.

We want to see 20 per cent of all water use across the municipality sourced from alternative water sources.

To learn more, visit urbanwater.melbourne.vic.gov.au

Meet Melbourne's water guru

When Mohammad Kharouf started as the City of Melbourne's water management expert, he started without a blueprint.

"No one else had ever held a job like this in the municipality," Mohammad said.

"I still remember the excitement when the interview panel said it would be up to me to shape the role."

Australia had just lived through the Millenium Drought, and Mohammad's job was to help Melbourne improve its water management and prepare for future extreme weather events.

At that time, we'd just installed a new central irrigation control system, but its programming needed some finessing.

"No one knew me, so it took some convincing to let them hand over the reins to change the programming," Mohammad said.

With so many of Melbourne's gardens heritage-listed, Mohammad was given access to control irrigation at Kings Domain - which has fewer water-sensitive plants - as a pilot.

"Before coming to Melbourne I'd been managing water and irrigation in Riyadh - the capital and largest city of Saudi Arabia - so I knew I was up to the challenge.

"But everyone was understandably a little wary - our city's water is such a precious commodity."

Fast forward three months, and Mohammad had halved water use in Kings Domain through careful and expert water management, and our plants were flourishing.

"I've been here ever since. It will be 10 years in October."

Mohammad has spent that time building a more refined central irrigation and water management system, and expanding its reach into every City of Melbourne neighbourhood.

Today, Melbourne boasts world-leading water management infrastructure that helps us understand how much water to apply and when.

"Our central system takes into account rainfall in the area and monitors moisture through soil probes hidden throughout our parks and garden beds.

"We also have access to satellite imagery that provides important information on the health of Melbourne's precious plants."

But for Mohammad, nothing beats a site visit.

"The virtual data we can collect is second-to-none, but one of my favourite parts of this job is going out and seeing the plants and gardens thriving in real-time."

Mohammad and our Parks and City Greening team are the careful caretakers of 230 hectares of irrigated space across the city.

"We really care about Melbourne's water, and use every drop sustainably to keep our city green for current and future residents, workers, students and visitors.

"I never take for granted the legacy I've been able to build here over the past decade.

"A lot of what I do is balancing water use behind-the-scenes - monitoring rain and soil sensors, adjusting for seasonal differences and carefully finessing the central control system.

"But the plants don't lie. If they're healthy, then all that hidden work is paying off."

Mohammad works closely with the Climate Change and City Resilience team to use harvested storm water to irrigate our big green city, and enhance drought resistance.

We're now home to six stormwater harvesting systems, that can hold 30 million litres of captured rainwater. Each year we harvest up to 200 million litres of rainwater for irrigation use.

"Hopefully Melbourne will never again experience a drought event like the one that created my role all those years ago," Mohammad said.

"But we are now in a better position to adapt and prepare for extreme climate conditions, and we are proud to keep building this capacity."

Check out Mohammad's work the next time you're enjoying our city's greenery.



Mohammad Kharouf inspects the city's plants and gardens to check they're receiving sufficient water.

PROPERTY & REAL ESTATE

How would I describe the inner-city apartment market right now? In a word, **RESILIENT**, and here's why ...

“According to PropTrack, while the median sale price in the CBD has remained steady, in neighbouring Docklands it's increased by 5.9 per cent to \$635,000 and the feedback we're receiving from buyers right now is that affordability is driving demand.”

”

WORDS BY *Baden Lucas*
LUCAS REAL ESTATE

During the past three months, Lucas Real Estate has received 3599 enquiries from prospective buyers and tenants, and the vast majority of them are attracted to apartment living for these three key reasons.

- **Location, location** – one of the biggest strengths of the CBD, Docklands and Southbank is the location. Buyers and tenants are looking for apartments in convenient, central locations with amenities such as shops, restaurants and public transport.
- **Affordability** – the rental market has been driven by migration and price volatility, with prices recovering and exceeding pre-pandemic levels. Lucas leases more than 10 properties per week and currently it's taking just 12 days for us to find our newest residents. This demand in the rental market has driven a lot more demand from first-home buyers looking to escape the rental market and who are recognising the incredible value for money our inner-city market commands
- **Low-maintenance living** – another factor that makes inner-city apartments attractive to buyers is the low-maintenance lifestyle they offer. Living in the heart of the city means having access to an array of cultural and entertainment options, as well as a vibrant and diverse community.

The first three months of 2023 have started with a real sense of positivity in our marketplace, with urgency from buyers looking to settle quickly. Our quarter to date has seen Lucas's average time to sell drop to 40 days, from 55 inner-city apartment sales with an average settlement period of 44 days.

The most significant impact to our market is interest rates, but how does this impact buyers in the real world?



Well, aside from repayments being higher, the additional challenge that buyers are experiencing is that their loan approval amounts are shifting monthly.

Where a prospective buyer may have been approved in January to spend \$700,000 – experiencing two rate rises in a month will reduce their borrowing power to \$650,000.

According to the Australia Bureau of Statistics, home loan financing has dropped by 35.1 per cent since a high in February 2022. Still, the overall appeal and affordability in the inner-city apartment market have meant strong demand, and volume remains high.

Finally, Lucas was honoured to be recognised for sixth year running as Agency of the Year in both rentals and sales in Docklands, as well as finishing Top 10 in Rentals in Victoria. Thank you, to all our rental providers, tenants, vendors, and buyers – I look forward to updating you at the halfway point for 2023. ●

“Remarkably resilient”: Development pipeline strong in CBD

Building permit applications have surged across Melbourne, with the CBD remaining the “hottest property market” according to the City of Melbourne.

WORDS BY *David Schout*

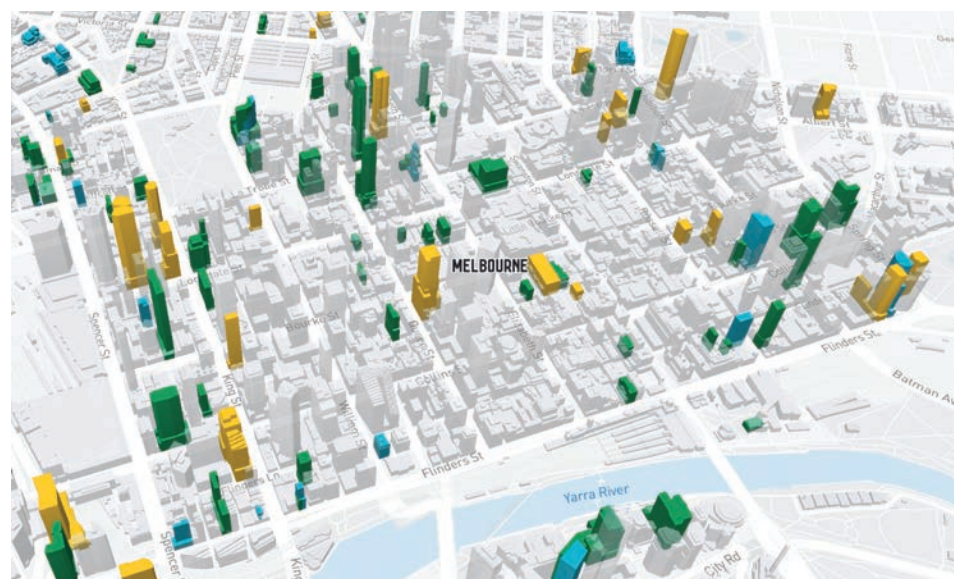
Across the municipality, permits totalling almost \$420 million were approved in March alone as the council recorded two consecutive months where planning application numbers were the highest they have been since June 2021.

The latest data was proof that developers and big businesses were “still spending big dollars to invest in our economic recovery”, Acting Lord Mayor Nicholas Reece said.

A recent report from the Property Council of Australia also revealed that demand for office space had remained steady, with an increase in vacancy rates of 0.9 per cent accounted for entirely by new supply coming to market.

“This is indicative of strong fundamentals underpinning CBD developments,” the Property Council's Victorian executive director Cath Evans told *CBD News*.

“The Melbourne CBD has proven to be remarkably resilient over the last few years, weathering all manner of challenges while also



retaining many of the things that make it an attractive place to work and live.”

In April, Melbourne overtook Sydney as Australia's most populous city, a mantle it last held over 100 years ago.

Council forecasts show that by 2041 the number of people living in the City of Melbourne is expected to double and reach more than 300,000, while the number of jobs was forecast to increase by 41 per cent and reach more than 650,000.

Urban renewal areas like Fishermans Bend and Arden will absorb some of this growth, but Ms Evans said the CBD remained crucial.

“

The Melbourne CBD has proven to be remarkably resilient over the last few years ...

”

“With Victoria's population set to grow substantially over the next decade, more than a million more people will require a place to work, with many of them likely to be employed by CBD-based organisations. This growth will require continued investment in both office and residential stock in and around the central city.”

Cr Reece said while the strong pipeline of works was a positive for the city, it was crucial decision-makers were committed to good design outcomes.

“It's never been more important to champion design excellence and sustainability. We're working hard to help make sure that developments look great, are environmentally sustainable, and stand the test of time.”

The City of Melbourne assesses planning applications with a gross floor area of less than 25,000 square metres, with any project exceeding this figure requiring a state government permit.

It said most new council-decided applications in February were to establish new small businesses, “proving that cafes, retail and hospitality are all getting back on their feet in our CBD” according to the Acting Lord Mayor.

The council also announced that its investment body established in 2020, Invest Melbourne, was currently working across more than 120 projects and opportunities.

The body, which offers investment assistance covering market entry, networking, and government assistance has, among others, helped launch the new Shane Delia-backed Bar Jayda on Bond St. ●

How to curb vacancy rates and make Melbourne “the world’s most workable city”

Australia’s CBD office vacancy rate crept up by half a percentage point over the past six months to 12.5 per cent, however there are positive signals for some capital markets including Brisbane, Hobart and Darwin.

WORDS BY *Paul Jones*



But while the tide is turning in some regions, Property Council of Australia research has revealed that the supply of both existing and new office space in Melbourne continues to outpace demand, keeping vacancy figures stubbornly high at a nation-leading 13.8 per cent.

This percentage represents a whopping 636,000sqm of unoccupied workplace, much of which is old and outdated B-grade office stock.

When considering this, and the increasing influence of the work-from-home era in the corporate arena, the onus to entice city workers from their homes back into the office lies with employers and asset owners, especially those that occupy or own B-grade properties.

Further industry analysis released by the Property Council of Australia revealed that vacancies at lower- or B-grade office stock reached 17.4 per cent in July 2022, whereas vacancies in premium office product sat significantly lower in the wake of Melbourne’s lockdowns.

As such, this indicates a significant opportunity for asset owners and developers to overhaul B-grade office properties and transform them into attractive, amenity-packed workplaces

that cater to staff expectations around what a modern workplace should deliver, as well as tap into the ever-evolving environmental, social and governance requirements of the new-world workforce.

With daily desk space needs reducing across the board, office owners and employers occupying B-grade buildings are placing great emphasis on introducing wellness areas and more group workshop and breakout spaces into unused office space.

They are also integrating more social amenity like worker lounges, coffee carts, snack bars and even cocktail bar facilities into the workplace, in an effort to tap into our social fibres and reconnect staff in-person while they spend time in the workplace. ●

Continue reading:



STRATA

How can you make your apartment more sustainable?

Properties are increasingly being built with sustainability front of mind. Solar panels and recycled water systems are used to make them more energy efficient.



WORDS BY *The Knight*
OWNERS’ CORPORATION MANAGERS

For properties without these built-in features, owners still have plenty of options to achieve sustainability success. Parque Apartments on St Kilda Rd was awarded a sustainability grant for a community garden by The Knight, which was used to install planter boxes to grow a variety of herbs (pictured). This is a great way for residents to exercise their green thumb and reduce their property’s food and packaging waste.

Owners’ corporations (OCs) are increasingly coming together to commit to sustainable living.

Some top initiatives include:

- Like Parque, your OC can start a communal garden to provide health and wellbeing benefits. Residents can access fresh food and green space while also reducing food and packaging waste within the property. If there is no area in your common property, look at a low-cost alternative inside your home and choose herbs that thrive best indoors.
- Install energy efficient lights. Switching to LED lighting is one of the lowest cost, highest benefit actions you can take. They use less energy than other types of light bulbs and can last more than 10 years. You could speak with your committee about changing to LED lighting in common areas too, this could have the added benefit of reducing your OC levies.

- Choose energy-efficient appliances. Home appliances and equipment use an average of 25 per cent of household energy. Keep an eye on the energy star rating labels on the outside of appliances. It’s worth paying the extra cost for a more energy-efficient model as it will cost you less to run.
- Get to know the waste management options at your property. If you have communal recycling bins, understand what can go in them, and check if there are dedicated green waste bins also. You could even suggest your committee install signage in the bin areas to educate fellow residents. With so many people in apartments, it takes everyone playing their part to prevent unnecessary waste.
- Switch from gas heating to a split system air conditioner, these can also be used in summer to cool your home. Installing ceiling fans are also a low-cost way to cool your home and can be used in reverse during winter to push hot air down into living spaces. And in communal areas, your OC can investigate replacing gas-fired boilers with VRF air conditioning systems or air-sourced heat pumps.

The Knight is Climate Active-certified as a carbon neutral organisation that has made its internal practices more sustainable and assists clients in their journey. If you are looking for an OC manager with a sustainability focus, get in touch with The Knight team at newbusiness@theknight.com.au ●

Hi property owners...

How do you know if your property is short-stay ready?



Download our Short-Stay Guide for owners by scanning the code:



Our Partnering Listing Platforms:



THE HOPKINS GROUP



The CBD Rhythm

City Gallery's working collection moves to Town Hall



City Gallery Collection has moved from 602 Little Bourke St, where the City of Melbourne's Make Room project will now reside, and has returned to its cultural home at Town Hall.



WORDS BY *Kaylah-Joelle Baker*



The moving of the art and heritage store collection back into its cultural home is something the Lord Mayor Sally Capp said she was "absolutely delighted" about, and from May 16 it will be open to the public for the first time.

"I'm so appreciative to our [arts and heritage] team for really looking across the assets that we have at the City of Melbourne to see how we can really continue to obtain highest and best use for the various activities that we have under way," Cr Capp said.

"The chance to welcome more members

of the public into this fantastic building [Melbourne Town Hall], for them to be able to interact with this incredible and extensive collection was one of the absolute bonuses that came from our Make Room project."

Due to the move, level four of Town Hall has now gone from a "relatively under-utilised space" to a floor for inquisitive and curious minds.

Showcased in the City Gallery Collection are more than 13,000 items of artworks, relics, and



artefacts collected from, and representative of, 188 years of Melbourne's history.

Speaking on various pieces, Cr Capp added, "who we are today and who we want to be in the future is very much at the heart of this working collection."

Notable exhibits include a brick from 1837 which was one of the first used to build a house on the corner of Queen and Bourke streets; placards people had dumped following demonstrations; works from leading Indigenous artists, and Australia's biggest photo album of potholes.

"You can also see maquettes of sculptures that represent the outdoor art collection we have around the city – more than 170 pieces are located around the city and so you can identify some of your favourites here and go out into your neighbourhood to find them," Cr Capp said.

"I believe this collection has something for everybody. It is going to give such a unique perspective and for those that are the more curious, I encourage you to come and deeply look around ... you'll be amazed at what you can find."

To get a snippet into Melbourne's past, present and future, enjoy a public tour from Tuesday, May 16. ●

For more information:
citycollection.melbourne.vic.gov.au/city-gallery

THE TAP PACK brings their A game to Comedy Theatre

After a successful few years tapping their way around London's West End, USA, Europe, and Asia, Australian sensation THE TAP PACK are celebrating 10 years of entertainment with a return home.

WORDS BY *Kaylah-Joelle Baker*



From April 28 to 30, THE TAP PACK will be performing at the Comedy Theatre, where they will be singing, dancing, and joking their way into the hearts of city residents and visitors, before continuing on their Australian tour.

"The show is pure entertainment," THE TAP PACK producer Kym Halpin said.

"We can't wait to thrill and delight audiences with this feel-good show. Before COVID hit, the show was selling out in all corners of the globe, so after a difficult few years we are very excited to finally be able to bring THE TAP PACK back to Australia's largest cities and best theatres."

The world-class entertaining group was formed in March 2013 by Jordan Pollard, Jesse Rasmussen and Thomas J Egan, and director and co-creator Nigel Turner-Carroll.

Today, the group consists of its original creators, with the addition of Ben Brown, and Thomas McGuane who will be in the Melbourne and Canberra shows, before Mark Hill steps in for the Sydney and Brisbane shows.

While inspired by the legendary Rat Pack band, which contained notable members Frank Sinatra, Dean Martin and Sammy Davis Jr, Mr Pollard said that, rather than impersonating, they were focused on being themselves, adding that the group described itself as the Australian version of Rat Pack, "with a lot of Aussie larrikinism" thrown in.

And while the name would correctly indicate

the dance style of tap is included, the performance is much more, with a creative mix of "chat, banter, songs, and comedy" as well, to continue to surprise the audience.

"The show is always evolving and always really spontaneous because we invite the audience in," Mr Pollard told *CBD News*.

"We have always tried to make it better over the 10 years, and now all the best bits that we have found work all over the world are in the new show, so audiences should expect the latest and greatest version of it."

A highlight of the show will also be the eclectic mix of tunes, with everything from the classics like Frank Sinatra's *Come Fly with Me*, to some of the most popular songs from Bruno Mars, Ed Sheeran, Michael Buble, and Beyonce.

"If you like music, then come see the show, and if you like having a boogie, you are going to enjoy it ... it has a bit of everything for everyone," Mr Pollard said.

As someone who grew up dancing in Melbourne and fell in love with tap, Mr Pollard said he hoped audience members could really feel the excitement and enthusiasm the crew had for their passion. ●

For more information:
thetappack.com

CRITIC

A subtle study of character

The German Film Festival opened in the first week of May at the Kino and a good three weeks of storytelling are on the agenda.

WORDS BY *Rhonda Dredge*



Director of the festival for Palace Cinemas Bettina Kinski has been working on the program for a year.

Film-makers approach marketing in a different way to those reading the blurbs.

"You don't want to give too much away," she said. "Using terms such as 'Coming of Age' give people an idea of what to expect."

For example, a film about a teacher caught up in a series of student thefts turns from a drama into a thriller.

Viewers attuned to subtle stories might not care about such a distinction, preferring to know that novice teacher Carla Nowak is an idealist and that her quest is difficult.

"The more she tries to do everything right, the closer the young teacher, and others, come to breaking point," the blurb warns.

The Teachers' Lounge is the centrepiece to a festival containing 33 films, all on first release in Australia and not on any streaming platforms.

The movie has received seven nominations in the German film industry awards, to be announced on May 12, and Kinski is clearly pleased with her choices.

Even a movie such as *Love Thing*, which she calls a "rom com", sounds original, with the media hounding a movie star who takes shelter in a small feminist LGBTQI+ theatre on the verge of bankruptcy.

Or take *Lost Transport* about a fleeing Dutch

couple and a Red Army sniper who find themselves in a village marked by mistrust, despair, and resentment and "must learn to adapt and find compassion".

There is a focus on female directors in the program, a trend that is also being explored at the *Goddess* festival currently running at ACMI.

Females have always been stars in the movies, but the storytelling is now more biased towards characters' subjectivities with curators at ACMI rewriting blurbs to accentuate this point.

Kinski said this more subjective style was not necessarily the impact of female directors but comes under the rubric of character studies.

She said the blurbs for the festival were written by an in-house team at Palace who watch the movies and read promotional material.

"We're proud that 12 out of 33 films are directed by women. The film industry in general is quite male directed."

German Film Festival, Kino Cinema, until May 24. ●



The CBD Rhythm

A DEDICATED SECTION FOR ARTS & CULTURE IN OUR CITY. TO BE FEATURED, EMAIL:

[KAYLAH@HYPERLOCALNEWS.COM.AU](mailto:kaylah@hyperlocalnews.com.au)



Dorsett opens its first Melbourne hotel

Renowned international hotel brand, Dorsett Hotels, has marked another step into the Australian market with the opening of Dorsett Melbourne.

WORDS BY *Jack Hayes*

Located at 615 Little Lonsdale St at the western end of the CBD, Dorsett Melbourne is a key component of West Side Place, a \$2.4b development by Far East Consortium.

With a combination of residential apartments, accommodation and retail space, West Side Place precinct has added a vibrance to the heart of the CBD by attracting both local Melbournians and travellers alike.

According to Dorsett Hospitality International, Australian CEO Andrew Jessop, “Dorsett Hospitality International is proud to be opening a new hotel in Australia’s cultural capital”. “Off the back of the success of our first Australian opening on the Gold Coast, it was a natural next step to look towards Melbourne which has seen an incredible bounce back in tourism since COVID-19,” he said.

“We look forward to continuing to grow our global footprint and to add to the Melbourne community.”

Dorsett Melbourne comprises 316 guest rooms over eight levels, designed by award-winning architect Cottee Parker.

Rooms and suites include pet-friendly rooms for that “perfect” getaway and family rooms where the littlest guests can have their own memorable moment in a themed room.

Dorsett Melbourne’s general manager Natalie Bussenschutt said, “we are delighted to welcome Dorsett Melbourne, the second Dorsett hotel into Australia, expanding the brand’s global footprint.”

“At Dorsett Melbourne, our guests will enjoy our intuitively designed social spaces, the Club Lounge, and beautifully appointed guest rooms and suites, including pet-friendly and family rooms,” Ms Bussenschutt said.

“Our caring and vibrant team look forward to welcoming you and sharing our local

knowledge for an authentic Melbourne experience complimented by a memorable hotel stay.”

The Dorsett Melbourne Club Lounge is an exclusive area where guests can work, dine, or relax with signature amenities included, such as private check-in/out, two hours of complimentary meeting space, and a pressing service, along with food and beverage service throughout the day and evening.

Modern conference rooms are suitably matched for small- to medium-sized events; each featuring natural light with the latest in technology to meet the changing needs of meetings including hybrid connections.

Executive chef Julio Martinez of Dining Concepts has designed an array of delectable menus across Dorsett Melbourne’s food and beverage facilities. Mr Martinez has designed all menus with sustainability front of mind, specialising in local ingredients from Victoria.

Port Bistro offers breakfast daily, with a sumptuous seafood menu available for dinner on select evenings from May.

Port Bistro also offers a private dining space for special occasions in addition to outdoor dining.

Jin Bar offers a relaxed ambience to enjoy a signature cocktail with a tailored menu that celebrates the historical gold rush of Victoria with Jin translating to “gold” in Mandarin.

The Lobby Lounge is perfect for a cheeky pre-dinner drink before heading out to explore Melbourne, or for a nightcap before sliding into Dorsett Melbourne’s comfortable Sealy beds for a blissful night’s sleep.

All Dorsett Hotels are proud to incorporate five key attributes that are adapted to each new hotel site. They include city convenience, social connectivity, priceless guest delights, active wellness, and creating a positive impact on the local community.

Hotel amenities include an indoor heated pool, complete with a day-bed area, spa, sauna, steam room, wellness room, and a gymnasium with the latest in Techno-Gym equipment. ●

For more information:
dorsethotels.com/dorsett-melbourne

CommVision: Increasing communication in residential buildings and communities

If you live in the City of Melbourne, it’s more than likely that you’re one of the 80 per cent who live in a high-rise apartment. But how well are you currently notified of critical issues and important updates affecting your immediate community?

WORDS BY *Sean Car*

While mailbox drops and printed notices in the foyer are among the most common methods in which strata communities are kept up to speed by their owners’ corporation (OC) and building managers, these measures lack immediacy and are too often prone to be missed, as well as not being environmentally friendly.

In today’s ever-evolving technological landscape, these measures have become increasingly antiquated in the face of fast and permanent communications solutions.

Despite many other developed countries around the world adopting this sort of sustainable technology in high-rise settings for many years, Australia has yet to fully embrace these simple, efficient, and cost-effective solutions, particularly in residential buildings. That is, perhaps, until now ...

Having dedicated much of his career to the body corporate sector in Australia and overseas, Alex L. Smith founded CommVision in 2014 with a simple mission in mind; to utilise today’s technology in ensuring residents are kept fully informed (in real time) of everything that’s going on in their building, and local community.

How? Through the provision of digital signage, media screens (digital noticeboards) installed in lifts, lobbies mailrooms, or any other common area.

Through a centralised, fully integrated operating system, an OC and/or building manager is able to remotely share updates concerning everything from meetings, cleaning and maintenance to police, local council, news and weather instantaneously throughout the building.

With lift screens starting from as little as \$59 per month (with advertising) and \$123 per month (without advertising), Mr Smith told *CBD News* OCs now had the opportunity to evolve and make the transition to technology without breaking the bank.

“The technology was created to increase awareness and communication in residential and mixed-use developments to ensure that residents in these buildings are being provided up-to-date information at all times by those that are managing the site,” Mr Smith said.

“The Australian market is very behind with



technology. We haven’t adapted as quickly as other countries in terms of where we use this technology which ultimately makes us more efficient in our overall day-to-day operations.”

Having originally become involved with the technology while working on large-scale developments in Dubai, Mr Smith has since trialled and tested software from a range of the world’s leading signage companies.

The company partnered with Canada’s fastest growing indoor OOH media network, UB Media, which has enabled CommVision to increase its offering to provide touch screen ability in lifts, together with a bespoke management portal which enables managers to curate professional notices and schedule them in advance.

With some OCs resistant to advertising material in the buildings, CommVision has importantly split the content being published on the screens, which prevents important building notices from being overlaid with advertisements. It also offers two separate price structures (with and without advertising) which include the operating system, technical/customer support, insurances and warranty.

While the business model is focused strongly on community and not solely on advertising like its competition, Mr Smith said that being first to market had enabled the company to curate the best service offering available in the market, to suit the building and benefit its residents.

“I think the big ticket here is that committee members need to be open minded when it comes to advertising – it’s a word that people are scared of, but we should be calling it promotions; promoting local and national businesses, as ultimately it’s supporting and helping the community they live in,” he said.

“If a building doesn’t want advertising, we can facilitate that. But the focus should be more about providing a seamless communication platform that increases awareness in buildings at an affordable price, while at the same time promoting its local community.” ●

For more information:
commvision.com.au

Proudly representing the community in Melbourne’s CBD



Evan MULHOLLAND MP
 MEMBER FOR **NORTHERN METROPOLITAN REGION**

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- 🐦 @evmulholland



Favourite corners in our CBD

As a resident in the CBD, there is so much to love and there are wall-to-wall cultural and sporting events.

WORDS BY *Julia Roberts*
RESIDENTS 3000



▲ Fern gully and creek bed – Fitzroy Gardens.

Melbourne has most recently hosted a huge weekend with so much happening – crowds back for football, with stadiums filled at either end of town; the Grand Prix; the Melbourne International Garden Show, bringing a plethora of international visitors; the opening weekend of the International Comedy Festival.

We know that Melbourne is the hub of major events and festivals, bringing people to the city to be engaged, entertained and to celebrate, adding so much to our town and a welcome boost to the economy.

What about the quiet corners, and hidden gems the favourite places so familiar to CBD residents?

Alongside all that brings so many into the city there are small corners, hidden gems and spaces known and treasured by the locals – small coffee shops, quiet garden spaces and less travelled walking tracks.

A couple of our favourites ...

Heaven at the Hill serves coffee and home-made treats from a small caravan in the grounds of St Peters Eastern Hill.

Small hidden spaces in the Fitzroy Gardens – grab a coffee at the KereKere Green Cafe, and wander to the adjacent and somewhat hidden track that takes you off the main pathways, discover the hidden creek bed, the stream and fern gully, duckpond and waterfall. There

are plenty of benches to stop and take in the solitude and calm.

Agathe Patisserie is a popular destination in the South Melbourne Market, known for its long queues and mouth-watering French pastries.

Agathe Patisserie Petite is on our doorstep – a hole-in-the-wall space in the Royal Arcade. When wandering around the Arcade, it is so tiny it can easily be missed, but it is not to be missed by lovers of fine French pastries, croissants and baguettes. It's open Tuesday to Friday 8.30am to 3pm.

If you have a favourite corner, walk, restaurant, playground, we would love to hear and share in future articles.

Please send to send to info@residents3000.com.au

You are invited to our next Forum 3000 Thursday, May 11 at 6pm at the Kelvin Club. Meet your newly-elected state politicians and participate in a discussion about the liquor licence freeze after 1am. ●



▲ Heaven at the Hill – Melbourne's big little cafe, on the corner of Gisborne and Albert streets.

Beware of identity theft

I thought your city readers may like to be alerted to a disturbing incident that happened in Punch Lane in the early hours of Tuesday morning, April 18.

After being awoken by an unusual noise in the lane and on looking out of the window, I saw a man systemically, and very carefully, going through our recycling bin. He had already been through our neighbours' recycling bins.

He removed every paper item and carefully examined it, either putting it aside or placing it in the other waste bin. My husband asked him to desist but he continued, unperturbed.

There was no mess. If we had not seen him, we would not have known our bin had been rifled with.

He was well prepared, wearing a mask.

Victoria Police have suggested it could be a person engaged in identity theft and advised reporting on the Crime Stoppers website. They also suggested being very careful when disposing of any personal documentation. ●

Jenny Eltham
CBD



SEND YOUR LETTERS TO:
ADMIN@HYPERLOCALNEWS.COM.AU

For more information:
residents3000.com.au

METRO TUNNEL

Franklin St photographic exhibition brings some home truths

If Melbourne's impending winter isn't enough to remind you about the importance of a comfortable home, then a trip down Franklin St might do the trick.

A series of 26 photographic portraits, currently on display along the Metro Tunnel site fence, tells a powerful story about homemaking, and how it helps to build a haven and a sense of self.

Photographer Paul Dunn said he'd tried to capture the true meaning of home in each of the 26 portraits.

"We asked people to think about their connection to things [in their homes] which express their sense of themselves and their identity," he said.

"There were common things like books and photographs, as well as quirky things, and things that represented connection to family, loved ones, friends and cultural identity."

The portraits form part of *The Opening Doors – Renting for All Project*, created by disability advocacy group Action for More Independence and Dignity in Accommodation (AMIDA) and produced with the assistance of the Victorian Government.

"The project is really about raising awareness about people with disabilities, and their access to affordable housing and the capacity it gives them, and of course, all of us to create a home," Mr Dunn said. "It's really showing people's capacity to flourish when they have access to secure housing where they can have some sense of independence."



All of the people photographed are currently living with some form of disability, including prominent disability rights activist Kath Duncan.

"Kath is a very, very powerful advocate," he said. "But in her home, we saw another side of Kath, where we got a beautifully tender photograph of her standing in front of some old family photographs. It's one of my favourites in the exhibition."

The evocative photographs invite onlookers into the person's home in what Dunn hopes is a heart-warming experience.

"People are really proud of their home space, and what it gives them. That's the point of connection for people walking past and looking into the rooms we chose for the photographs. It's really about showing people's pride [in their homes]."

The *Home* series is one of the latest installations as part of the Metro Tunnel Project's Creative Program, which is helping keep Melbourne vibrant during construction of this city-shaping project.

For further information: metrotunnel.vic.gov.au. ●

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QVM Trader Profile

How one customer's fondness for organics made Garden Organics what it is today

Before the crack of dawn, at precisely 3.15am, Karen Birthisel and Fahna Ammett are awake and hunting down the best produce at their regular wholesale market for their Garden Organics stall at Queen Victoria Market (QVM).

WORDS BY *Kaylah-Joelle Baker*

As the business owner, Karen has been adamant about having fresh, premium quality, certified organic produce within her stall since she took over the business in 2002.

And, it was actually the previous owner's commitment to providing this same service that originally drew Karen into Garden Organics in the first place.

"The business was created and founded by a woman called Di Fyson in 1996, and I was one of Di's shoppers as I had a young family and decided to feed the children certified organics," she said.

"I was a bookkeeper at the time and ended up doing Di's bookkeeping, then in 2002 when she decided she wanted to sell the business I was at a point in my life where I was ready for a change."

While it would appear to be a drastic change, it was in fact a natural progression for Karen who spent her childhood growing vegetables and being "quite fond" of cooking with fresh produce.

Since taking over Garden Organics, she has not looked back.

"It's a lovely business to have and the interactions you have with customers has a real community feel to it, and everyone looks after each other and is helpful," she said.

"You see people that are expecting a child and decide to go organic, and then you see the children grow up and they also start shopping at the stall, it's quite a nice feeling and it's a good community to be in."

Reflecting on the gratitude she felt for the market, Fahna, who has been working at the Garden Organics with Karen since 2007, assists with filling up the truck three times a week with produce from certified organic growers and wholesale agents before bringing it back to QVM to set up the stall.

Time spent doing this over the years has meant both Karen and Fahna have become quite knowledgeable about everything they sell, and they are more than willing to pass on everything they know to their customers.

"Someone asked me today where my red onions were from and I could tell them the farm that grew them, because we have knowledge about everything we sell and their background," Karen said.

"If customers come into the shop and ask for



As the weather cools, customers can expect delicious plums and a wide range of heritage apples; including Cox's Orange Pippin apples, Elstar apples, Spartan apples, and Snow apples, to name a few.

"We carry a lot of apples you can't get from the supermarket, and they have a lot more of a complex flavour than what your normal Fuji or Pink Lady apple has," Karen said.

The cooler, wintry months also means good quality root vegetables are on offer, before spring brings broad beans and asparagus, and summer brings the crowd favourite stone fruits and berries.

"Each season will bring something new," Karen said. "And my focus, through each season, is on fresh premium quality certified organics." ●

help, we also have enough knowledge to assist them with what they need. We can recommend the best cooking apples or potatoes depending on what they are cooking, and what is exceptional that week."

The ability to have these conversations is what sets Garden Organics apart from your everyday conventional supermarkets, and it is something Karen is proud of.

For more information:
gardenorganics.com.au

STATE MP

Women should be able to breastfeed anywhere and everywhere

I've breastfed three babies. I've fed them in Parliament, in churches, in cafes, and even perched on the curb in cities where there was nowhere to sit. Anytime my babies were hungry, I fed them.



▲ State MP for Melbourne, Ellen Sandell, breastfeeding her son Luca in front of the Braestrail mural in Collingwood by artist Caroline Lejeune.

In fact, in 2017, I was the first woman to breastfeed in the Victorian Parliament in 15 years (!), after Kirstie Marshall was kicked out for doing so in 2003.

You might have heard that recently a woman was kicked out of the Victorian County Court for breastfeeding her baby. In recent years, women have been asked not to breastfeed in other public places, like public pools.

Women should be able to breastfeed their babies wherever and whenever they need to. Telling women they cannot breastfeed in a public place sends the message that women are not welcome in public spaces. This is not acceptable.

It's a biological fact that when babies need to feed they cannot wait. Delaying or skipping breastfeeding can also lead to serious health problems for the mother, like mastitis.

In Victoria, the Equal Opportunity Act 2010 protects pregnant and breastfeeding people in areas of public life, including work, schools, universities, shops, and rental properties. But there are loopholes and grey areas in the law that still allow people to be excluded from some public spaces, like the courts, simply for needing to breastfeed a baby. Grey areas mean that many in society still don't feel protected to

breastfeed in public spaces.

My Greens colleagues and I have called on the Victorian Government to amend the Equal Opportunity Act to explicitly prevent discrimination against breastfeeding in all public places, including public areas of courts.

If there is ever anything I can help you with, please get in touch at office@ellensandell.com. ●

Watch Ellen Sandell's speech in Parliament:



Ellen Sandell
STATE MP FOR MELBOURNE
OFFICE@ELLENSANDELL.COM

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An insight into architecture in Melbourne

Having held a deep passion for architecture from a very early age, Hani Akaoui has made a significant contribution to the development of buildings across Melbourne.

WORDS BY *Rafael Gerster*

When Mr Akaoui was a university student, he said he was aiming to become an electronic engineer “because of the technology and science behind it”.

But he soon decided that architecture was more inviting “because it touched all the fields rather than just one field in technology”.

Mr Akaoui’s switch to architecture as a key area of interest prompted him to establish an architectural partnership in the CBD called Skematics Architecture and Development Consultants in 1993.

Since its establishment on Bourke St, Skematics has formed a very close relationship with the hospitality industry in Melbourne and other parts of Australia.

“Our firm in the past 15 years have been specialising in developing and designing hotels, and the ones we have now received a permit for in New South Wales next to Parramatta, and another one we are applying for in Richmond,” Mr Akaoui said.

But Skematics has also been undertaking a variety of projects which are “different from hospitality”.

One project is a church in Mickleham in Victoria which has been “developing, expanding and adding”.

Another project is a waste-to-energy plant



which involves the collection of waste from domestic households, including food waste that is taken to a furnace and burnt.

Mr Akaoui has been making sure that these kinds of projects can adapt to environmentally friendly standards.

“In our design we are governed by regulations so that our projects are sustainable,” he said. “Typically, this goes into building permits these days which are governed by the National Construction Code and the Building Code of Australia.”

“There are guidelines to ensure whether the products are environmentally produced and whether the life of the building has minimal carbon footprint.”

Mr Akaoui has found the evolution of “computer system design” and “documentation” to be

crucial to Skematic’s projects.

“The way that the software has developed has been taken up to another level,” he said. “It has made our presentation of the design easier to understand by the client and a very important element is communicating the ideas first to the client and secondly to the builder.”

Mr Akaoui described the computer system design which Skematics uses as a “superb tool to change the worldwide picture to a large extent”.

Even though the COVID pandemic has had long-lasting impacts on many small businesses in Melbourne, Mr Akaoui has found that it ironically strengthened his business.

“Before COVID, because of the internet and information technology, there was already a remote coordination of disciplines between various consultants,” he said. “So, COVID came

“The way that the software has developed has been taken up to another level...”



in and arguably strengthened this method of operation.”

“Whatever our engineer is drawing could be in Sydney and we could be seeing what he’s drawing on our computers in Melbourne, and this was all before COVID,” Mr Akaoui said.

Mr Akaoui believes that the “social behaviours of staff and the social behaviours of clients and builders” are the only aspects of his business which have changed since the pandemic.

Skematics is located at 47 Bourke St and is open on weekdays between 9am and 5pm. ●

For more information:
skematics.com.au

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HISTORY

Odeon Theatre, 283 Bourke St

There had been a theatre on this Bourke St site since the Melba Theatre opened in 1911. That was during the era of the silent movies.



WORDS BY *Dr Cheryl Griffin*
ROYAL HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF VICTORIA

Then along came the “talkies” in the 1930s and the entertainment world was transformed. So was the theatre, rebuilt in Art Deco style and opening as the Liberty in 1938. It accommodated 900 cinema lovers and downstairs was the Times Theatre where you could watch cartoons and short films to your heart’s content. (Charlie Chaplin and Bugs Bunny were screening when this photograph was taken.)

Like a sleek ocean-going liner, the interior of this long, narrow cinema (it was only 17 seats across) featured blue-grey walls, rich red carpets, and American Beauty pink leather seats when it opened in November 1951 with a current box office success, *The Browning Version* starring Michael Redgrave and Jean Kent.

This image was taken around that time. A year earlier, a devastating fire had swept through the theatre, probably caused by a patron’s dropped cigarette (yes, those were the days when you could smoke in the cinema). Reels of film were rescued from the projection room, but nothing could save the venue.

A new theatre was built within the shell of the old one and a company called Simmie & Co won the contract to clean up the site and build the new cinema. It is one of a number of buildings constructed in Melbourne and

suburbs between 1924 and 1978 by Simmie & Co, master builders. They worked on a wide range of projects – factories, theatres, office blocks, houses, churches, hospitals. In the 1950s, the same era as this photograph was taken, they constructed the forecourt of the Shrine. Two decades earlier they had built the St Kilda Baths.

Cinemas were still major entertainment venues in the early 1950s. The Melbourne Olympic Games were five years into the future, and it was five years before the introduction of television, and still a time when people sought entertainment outside the home. The Odeon began its new life with a brief to show only British films, J. Arthur Rank films in particular.

This slender theatre, dwarfed by its neighbour the Leviathan building (corner Swanston and Bourke streets), closed in February 1978. It was demolished later that year to make way for the Centrepoint Mall.

In the same year, 1978, Simmie & Co closed its doors. This company of master builders began its life working in the Art Deco and Modernist styles and ended with the Brutalism of the 1960s and ‘70s. An exhibition featuring their work in both Canberra and Melbourne can be seen at the Drill Hall, home of the Royal Historical Society of Victoria, 239 A’Beckett St, Melbourne until June 30. ●



呼吁加强电动滑板车安全

中央商务区居民和行人安全倡导者希望州政府对电动滑板车试行计划的延长做出安全改善措施，尤其要解决在人行道上非法骑行的问题。

Brendan Rees

州道路部长Melissa Horne在3月份宣布了将电动滑板车试行计划延长六个月，该试行计划于去年1月启动，通过使用Lime和Neuron滑板车租赁公司，电动滑板车在墨尔本已有370万次的短途旅行。

私人滑板车以前归类为未注册车辆，在公共场所使用会受到925澳元罚款，但这项禁令在4月5日以后取消。

根据这次延长的试行计划，电动滑板车将允许在限速60公里/小时或更低的道路上行驶，而之前只能在限速50公里/小时以下的道路上行驶。电动滑板车可以在公路、自行车道、分开或共享的自行车道上行驶，但在人行道上行驶仍然是非法的。

电动滑板车骑手的最低年龄也将从18岁降至16岁，但所有骑手仍必须戴头盔，并遵守相应的血液酒精含量和药物使用限制。

骑电动滑板车的人不能喝酒。电动滑板车的行驶速度不能超过20公里/小时，而行驶速度超过25公里/小时的滑板车不属于电动滑板车，仍然是非法的。

居民组织East Enders主席Stan Capp博士表示，他支持这种更可持续的交通方式，减少碳排放，替代汽车和摩托车，但是需要优先考 电动滑板车规则的执行，否则这个试行计划“将是浪费时间”。

他指出：“我认为，居民对那些不遵守法律规则的电动滑板车骑手感到担忧是有正当理由的。”

市区共享区域街道的困惑

一项调查发现，尽管行人有权使用中央商务区的“共享区域”，但在过马路时还是有些困惑。

David Schout

调查显示，人们对“小街道”上的行人优先区域普遍感到困惑，建议应采取更多措施来帮助行人。

在2020年9月新冠疫情封锁期间，墨尔本市将车速限制从40公里/小时降至20公里/小时，优先考 行人在Flinders巷、Little Collins、Little Bourke和Little Lonsdale街道上的通行。

这一举措在市政议会的10年交通战略(2019年发布)中提出，在疫情期间，为了能在狭窄的CBD人行道上保持社交距离，从而加快了这一举措的执行。

2022年11月，咨询公司Stantec开始对所有四条“小”街道在早上、晚上和夜晚进行调查，以评估共享区域的运行情况。

在4月4日提交给市议员的调查指出，“调查发现，大多数情况下，行人和司机都不知道共享区域内的优先规则。”

“行人通常会等汽车过后再过马路，很少看到司机给行人让路。”



根据调查，共享区域都带有标志、路标、减速带和植物箱，然而这些都不足以给行人带来自信。

唯有一个例外是Flinders Lane上的Degraes街拐角处，在那里“可以看到行人自信地穿过街道，没有给汽车让路”。

“这在很大程度上是因为街道马路被修建成人行道的高度，这样行人就很容易穿过街道”。

墨尔本市区的夜间活动项目

墨尔本市政府和维多利亚州政府合作设立了一个“从黄昏到黎明”的城市夜间活动项目，作为其2亿澳元的墨尔本城市复兴基金的一部分。

Rafael Gerster

“从黄昏到黎明”项目有10次夜间活动，目的都是邀请居民和游客在夜间来探访墨尔本市中心。

这些夜间活动将在5月1日至10月31日，从晚上6点到早上6点之间进行。

市政府的夜间经济咨询委员会主席Penny Miles说，这个项目的“夜间活动”将创造“更多的理由让游客在天黑后到市区探访，并在在市区逗留更长时间”。

Miles女士说：“这座城市正在以不同的方式发展，夜晚是在墨尔本的最佳时间。”

根据市政府的数据，去年3月夜间活动是疫情之前水平的107%，比去年同期增长近20%。

市政的城市振兴组合负责人Roshena Campbell议员说，从“黄昏到黎明”的项目将使墨尔本市在“夜间经济”中获益。

Campbell女士说：“我们希望能提出新的理由让人们来参观我们充满活力的城市，并让深夜营业的商家与墨尔本闻名的文化和创造力联系起来。”

市长Sally Capp说“黄昏至黎明”项目



将“有助于 固墨尔本作为澳大利亚文化和夜间之都的地位”。

她说：“无论是在小巷里跳迪斯科，还是在灯光明亮的小巷里漫步，或者是在深夜的萨萨舞派对，天黑以后，每个人都可以在这座城市里享受一些东西。”



女王市场亚洲美食夜市

备受期待的维多利亚女王市场(QVM)的Hawker 88夜市终于回归，人们期待着开幕之夜，以及接下来的四周夜市，肯定是令人兴奋的。

Kaylah-Joelle Baker

受世界各地亚洲街头市场的启发，QVM夜市的美食专场将挂起灯笼，并提供摊位式长桌为人们共享美味佳肴。

为期五周的夜市美食专场于4月12日星期三以“品味亚洲之夜”开始，并同时举办众多有特色的文化表演和互动活动。

有传统的舞龙表演，还有中国、韩国、日本和越南的舞蹈表演，互动式的马来西亚和印度舞蹈表演，以及来自菲律宾灵魂歌手Karen Esco的特别亮相。

每周三晚上将围绕不同的主题，夜市中有20多个亚洲特色摊位，随时准备为游客提供正宗的街头食品和饮料。



每周主题包括：

4月19日星期三马来西亚榴莲之夜，届时将有马来西亚蛋糕制作工作坊、马来舞者、舞狮和DJ Sikandar举行庆祝水果之王榴莲的活动。

4月26日星期三的韩日之夜将包括K-pop舞蹈、跆拳道示范、韩国和日本鼓乐以及武士女孩的表演。

5月3日星期三的宝莱坞(Bollywood)之夜将是一个充满活力、色彩缤纷的宝莱坞舞蹈之夜，并将为游客提供一个学习有趣舞蹈风格的机会。

5月10日星期三的岛屿之夜是夜市的最后一个晚上，将有巴厘岛、越南、泰国和菲律宾的文化表演来庆祝亚洲的各个岛屿。

Hawker 88夜市从下午5点到晚上10点，地点在维多利亚女王市场的K棚到L棚，免费入场。

What's on: May 2023



FOURTH FRIDAY OF EACH MONTH, 10:30AM - 11AM

PRESCHOOL POP-UP LIBRARY

Share the wonder of books with your preschooler at this storytime with stories, songs, rhymes and activities.

Elizabeth St Pop-up Library

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THURSDAY, MAY 11, 6PM FOR A 6:30PM START

RESIDENTS 3000 EVENT

Following the results of the November 2022, Residents 3000 group is inviting people to meet the elected representatives and discuss the unfreezing liquor licence hours.

Kelvin Club, 14-20 Melbourne

EVERY WEDNESDAY, 12PM - 3:30PM START

CLASSICAL MOVIES CLUB

Come and join the free Classical Movies Club at Multicultural Hub, 506 Elizabeth St. Upcoming films: Two-Minute Warning, Sorry, Wrong Number, and Rogue Cop.

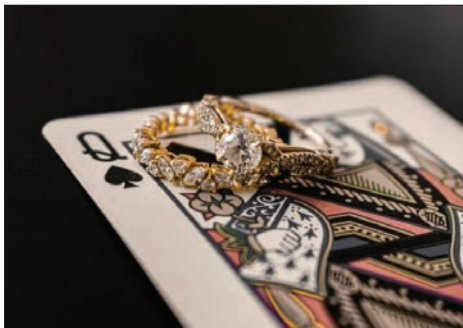
facebook.com/thewelloendoeduck or 0482 511 698.



3000 PLANTS NEIGHBOURHOOD GARDEN CLUB

Hosted by Residents 3000, enjoy a range of different gardening activities with your neighbours on the second Sunday afternoon every month at 1:30pm.

For more information, meeting times and location: residents3000.com.au



UNTIL MAY 27, 9AM - 4PM

MELBOURNE CRAFT FAIR

Enjoy a contemporary craft fair held at the Queen Victoria Market featuring some of the most creative artists and designers all in one place!

Shed D, Queen Victoria Market

THIRD TUESDAY OF MONTH @ 10AM

EASTENDERS MEET-UPS

Representing residents living in the CBD's eastern quadrant, EastEnders host monthly meetings at the Gorman Room, 27 Little Lonsdale St. For more information contact president Stan Capp.

eastendersinc@gmail.com



SATURDAY, MAY 6 AND SUNDAY, MAY 7

AUTUMN HARVEST FESTIVAL

Celebrate everything that makes the new season so unique. From workshops, to in-season produce and goods, food trucks, and live entertainment.

Queen Victoria Market

Photo: Jarryd Pentony



FROM TUESDAY, MAY 16

CITY GALLERY COLLECTION

The art and heritage store collection has moved back to its cultural home of Melbourne Town Hall. To get a snippet into Melbourne's past, present, and future, visit the City Gallery.

Photo: Tobias Titz

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