

ISSUE 150 SEPTEMBER 2010

THE NORTH & WEST MELBOURNE NEWS IS PRODUCED BY VOLUNTEERS AT THE CENTRE

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The Centre: Connecting Community in North and West Melbourne Inc. 58 Errol Street North Melbourne 3051 Phone 03 9328 1126

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The North and West Melbourne News is a quarterly publication produced by volunteers from North and West Melbourne and the inner city. It is now in its 32nd year of production. Readers' contributions are welcomed. Where relevant the *News* may seek alternative opinions in the interests of balance. Contributors' opinions are their own, however, and the *News* takes no responsibility for them. We reserve the right to edit or omit articles considered unsuitable or when space is limited.

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The *News* welcomes new volunteers. If you have skills in writing, drawing, photography, archiving, subediting and proofreading, computer technology or design and layout, please consider joining the team.

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(Advertisers Wednesday 3 November)

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Next planning meeting: Tuesday 5 October 6.00pm
at The Centre, 58 Errol Street, North Melbourne

New contributors welcome

Website: www.centre.org.au

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Help us to fill the gaps in our delivery network. The *News* is published four times a year and delivery takes about one-and-a-half hours per issue. It helps if you have a trolley or pram, as a bundle of newspapers can be quite heavy.

To volunteer please contact Helen Lew Ton
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- Those without a Children's Services qualification
- Those who already have a Children's Services qualification but are not working
- Those who want to work in childcare centres but would benefit from Family Day Care experience

**FOR ENQUIRIES CALL 9326 7447
or visit us at Ground Floor, 33 Alfred Street
North Melbourne**

**A small reminder about used stamps**

Don't forget to drop your used postage stamps into The Centre at 58 Errol Street. This is another way to recycle and also provides much-needed funds for charities.

If you don't have time to tear them off the envelopes, just bag them up and I'll tear them off for you.

Marian Mooney

North Melbourne Book Group 2010

Meets third Wednesday of every month at 7.30pm
ALL WELCOME

15 September	Reunion	by Andrea Goldsmith
20 October	The Tall Man	by Chloe Hooper
17 November	Brooklyn	by Colm Toibin

Please contact Heather on 9658 9702 for more details
North Melbourne Library, 66 Errol Street, North Melbourne

North loses another identity in the death of Marie Owen

Marie was the subject of an article in the September 2008 edition of the *News*. Many readers remembered her well and will be sad to learn that Marie died on 27 June this year. She was barely six months short of her 90th birthday.

The whole Owen family were well known in North Melbourne, with a strong attachment to St Michael's Church and Primary School, which all the children attended.

For a short time at the end of her life Marie was cared for at Hope Aged Care in Brunswick — the furthest location from central Melbourne that she had ever lived in. When visitors were fewer than at her West Parkville home, she blamed that on her being so far away — Marie always had a sharp wit and great sense of humour!

She was farewelled at St Michael's, with the church packed and loving words spoken by her children, grandchildren and friends. We shall all enjoy our memories of Marie, another North Melbourne identity.

Bethia Stevenson

Arriving and Thriving revisited

We all carry our history around with us. The history of our lives, where we are from and where we are now.

In 1999 the people captured by Natasha Stellmach's camera were in North Melbourne and West Melbourne. This is the story of how they got there.

First exhibited at Axiom Gallery in West Melbourne, *Understanding Our Place: Arriving and Thriving in North and West Melbourne* is getting a repeat showing 11 years on.

Wednesday 1 to Thursday 30 September 2010
Mon–Thur 8.00am–7.45pm, Fri 8.00am–5.45pm
Sat 10.00am–4.45pm, Sun 12.00pm–4.45pm
(closed public holidays)

The Gallery @ City Library
253 Flinders Lane, Melbourne 3000
T: 9658 9500
melbournelibraryservice.com.au

**CREATING TIMOR-LESTE****An Exhibition of New Photographs
by Jorge de Araujo**

This is the first major photographic exhibition in Australia featuring images of Timor-Leste by an East Timorese photographer. The works portray the vibrancy, tenacity and vision of a people dedicated to creating a new nation. Parkville resident Jorge de Araujo is an artist active in social and cultural issues, who uses art to inspire social change.

EXHIBITION DATES: 25 August to 1 November 2010
Atrium Gallery, Level 35
Sofitel Melbourne On Collins
25 Collins Street, Melbourne 3000

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COMMUNITY

Community with good intentions...

What do you imagine when you hear the term "cohousing"? If you are like any other red blooded Australian, thoughts of a dreadlocked, barefooted, hippy compound may spring to mind. But to Anthony Kidd, cohousing enthusiast, this means something very different. "Cohousing is not a philosophy. It's not a religion. It's not a lifestyle. It's a way to live with people, rather than in the anonymity and uniformity of suburbia" says Anthony.

The idea of "community" in Australia has become somewhat disenfranchised over the past decade. With crime rates increasing, people are becoming increasingly shut off from society. More and more, we are shying away from our neighbours. The concept of "borrowing a cup of sugar" is becoming a paradigm of the past. These cohousing-communities offer a reconnection with a more egalitarian culture and way of living.

The concept of Cohousing was first conceived in Denmark in the early 1960's. The intention was to create a more supportive living environment for the resident families, particularly for the first "working-mothers". When women initially entered the workforce,



A cohousing estate Photo: courtesy Athina Koutouleas

juggling of household chores surrounding cooking, cleaning and children became more difficult. By cooperating with their neighbours, these tasks were more manageable and efficient. Years on and the concept has travelled all over Europe and is widespread throughout the rest of the world, with more than 113 operating communities now in full swing in the United States. Further to this, around 10% of all new housing in Denmark is designed along the cohousing principles.

The unique layouts out of these communities offer an innovative and proficient use of space. "Cohousing takes suburbia and turns it inside out" says Anthony. The cohousing

model places all residential parking along the periphery of the common ground, leaving the centre areas free for neighbourhood interaction. This design encourages people to intermingle rather than avoid each other. In turn this builds a level of trust between neighbours, which is often not possible to achieve in traditional suburbia.

There are many benefits gained from this form of cooperative living. For one, shared common areas and facilities (such as laundry, kitchen, and guest rooms) mean that these housing structures are (on average) more environmentally friendly than its traditional suburban counterparts. "Studies show that cohousers use 20–30% less resources than regular suburban households" explains Anthony. Not to mention the economic advantages with "the cost of living in cohousing up to 20% cheaper than living in a conventional house".

Residents have the option of being involved in communal meals, meetings and other social gatherings. One example is the advantage of sharing common meals where cooking is a shared amongst locals. "Cooking once every 3 months for 40 people

is much less effort than cooking twice a week for one", explains Anthony.

Cohousing is resident built and managed therefore the nature of the establishment is entirely up to the group. This includes issues such as rubbish disposal, maintenance and development of common facilities (such as tool shed, music rooms, swimming pool etc) and environmentally sustainable structures that include solar power panels and water tanks.

Ideally an intentional community occupies residents from varied demographics, such as young families, single professionals, and the retired or elderly. The combination of skill sets and life experiences helps build a multifaceted, dynamic community, as well as maintaining the day-to-day functionality of common areas.

Anthony believes the time for cohousing is now. "The traditional Australian suburb is neither socially nor environmentally sustainable, cohousing is the mainstream solution to these problems", he says.

Athina Koutouleas

Regular information sessions are being held in Victoria through the Cohousing Australia organisation. If you would like to get involved or for further details please visit: www.cohousing.org.au

Big Australia, big North Melbourne



After all, we are a relatively young economy and given the proverbial 'flogging' endured recently in the shape of political reform and economic crisis, we have come out with a fairly shiny coat and an untroubled set of horseshoes with world-leading low inflation, very low debt and a growing economy.

The upcoming election has led to bureaucratic banter and slogans being thrown around like playdough in a kindergarten, not to mention the political playground bullying that has been so wickedly amusing over the past weeks leading up to the ballot. (With all the hoo-ha it's no wonder we mere mortals get caught up in the semantics of our politicians.)

One notion (which prompted me to write this article) was Julia Gillard's mission to prevent the development of a 'Big Australia'. That concept led me to examine who we were as a population and how we could get 'bigger'. What are we comprised of in terms of ethnicity, age, immigration, family structure and so on? So I set out to uncover a more subterranean comprehension of the North Melbourne people (or North-bournians, as I enjoy being referred to) and how a Big Australia could translate to a Big North Melbourne.

According to the 2006 census, of the 9962 people reportedly residing in North Melbourne's precinct, 49 per cent were within the ages of 25 and 54. The next-largest group comprised those aged 15 to 24 (23.7%). Over 60% had never been married, 40% were born overseas and the median salary was \$423 per week.

So what does all this mean? At a quick glance it may be speculated that the majority of North-bournians were young, single, of ethnic background and not earning very much. And while that is a fairly accurate description of people in my demographic, it's not the whole picture.

Almost half of all household dwellings were occupied by families with children (around 27%) and single parents with children (20%). If one child from each family went on to produce one additional child of their own, we would have an extra 4981 residents to accommodate over the next 20 years. While some North-bournians may move to an outer suburb, an exponential increase in the local population is a very real possibility.

Now for a closer look at immigration: over the five years recorded in the 2006 census, 2737 people migrated to the North Melbourne area from overseas.

For the most part, these residents came from China, Malaysia, New Zealand and the United Kingdom. If immigration continued at this rate, our population could grow to a whopping 21,000 within the next 20 years. And that's without including the previously predicted 4981 newborn, so a very different North Melbourne perspective begins to emerge.

Of course, these figures are based on the notion that immigration and family growth will continue the same trend as recorded over the past 10 years. While this does not take into account all the variables that may alter this trend, it can be (very casually) extrapolated that a 150% increase in our humble neighbourhood's population may occur in the not-so-distant future.

So, does this imply that North Melbourne as we know it will turn into a buzzing Bangkok inner-city metropolis? The simple answer is no. This rate of population growth is not sustainable for most societies with similar employment and physical land constraints. And while high-density living solves one part of the equation, there is still a glass ceiling on local workforce, trades and services.

In short, we are growing and it appears will continue to grow, but unless successive governments take the matter seriously it may not be sustainable.

Athina Koutouleas

DO YOU KNOW SOMEONE IN NEED?

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Oznam House provides crisis supported accommodation for homeless men over the age of 18 years with complex needs.

We aim to provide a safe, secure and supportive environment enabling residents to actively address the issues that have resulted in them becoming homeless.

If you know someone who is homeless, in crisis and needs assistance please call SVDP Housing Services on Tel: (03) 9300 2977 1800 618 468 (toll free)



St Vincent de Paul
Aged Care & Community Services

QUÝ VỊ CÓ BIẾT AI ĐANG GẶP KHÓ KHĂN KHÔNG?

Nhà Oznam, ở North Melbourne

Cung cấp chỗ ở cho nam giới vô gia cư ở Melbourne từ năm 1953

Nhà Oznam cung cấp chỗ ở có hỗ trợ khẩn hoảng cho nam giới vô gia cư trên 18 tuổi có các nhu cầu phức tạp.

Chúng tôi nhằm cung cấp một môi trường an toàn, bảo đảm và có tính giúp đỡ giúp người cư trú giải quyết hiệu quả các vấn đề dẫn đến tình trạng vô gia cư.

Nếu quý vị biết ai đó đang bị vô gia cư, trong cơn khẩn hoảng và cần được giúp đỡ xin vui lòng gọi cho Các dịch vụ Nhà ở SVDP theo Số điện thoại: (03) 9300 2977 1800 618 468 (số điện thoại miễn phí)



St Vincent de Paul
Aged Care & Community Services

Keep pets warm when it is cold

Grey skies and wind that takes your breath away or crisp blue skies and the gentle touch of the distant sun warming my black polo-neck. I love Melbourne in the winter. I can see the vapour in the air from my breath as I cycle in the mornings now. The people I pass in the street are bundled into their warm woollies even when it's really not all that cold compared to other places on the globe. We do like to embrace winter here. And we always include our pets in our winter mollycoddling. Some of us cook special food for the whole clan, human and animal alike. Special bedding is made or purchased and heaters are left on for the pets while the humans are out. Some put jackets on their pets and others let their pets' fur grow long. Look at all those ridiculous and yes, I'll admit it, sometimes gorgeous little jackets and hoodies on our dogs! Not all of us have the need to clothe our pets but there are plenty of other ways to protect and nurture your best mates through the cooler months.

We need to be aware of the increased need for shelter for outdoor pets. Make sure that they can always get out of the wind and rain and always have somewhere warm to sleep. These measures may seem obvious but can fail depending on how we put them into practice. A kennel placed in the shade of a tree where it was cool, moist and facing the breeze in summer may be poorly placed to provide protection from the rain and wind during winter. Go outside in a thin jumper and crawl around at your pets' level or just sit still on their outdoor bedding. Is it breezy? Is it damp? Do you quickly go numb or are you comfortably protected from the elements? Does your pet actually use

the shelter provided or are they missing out by trying to get closer to you in the house? You need to accommodate their psychological needs as well as their physical comforts within the limits of your back yard. Bedding raised off the ground is warmer than blankets placed straight onto the concrete. Cold winds can whistle under doorways into sheds and around trees and through bushes onto verandas. Metal and concrete barriers radiate cold. Wood is much warmer as a barrier. Translucent plastic lets sun through and can amplify heat during the day. Hiding places warmed by the sun for a greater portion of the day will retain more of their heat at night.

Owners also need to be aware of the health risks faced by indoor pets over winter. Cats are dedicated sleepers and can be especially reluctant to leave their cosy hidey hole to go to the toilet when it's cold out. This puts them at much higher risk of FLUTD (Feline Lower Urinary Tract Disease) which can lead to blockage of the urethra, quickly resulting in severe illness as toxins build up in the blood. Cats can die due to bladder rupture and toxæmia. FLUTD is most common in sedentary overweight cats. Garfield is not a good role model! Fat cats are not cute. They are unhealthy.

Flea control is often overlooked in winter due to the misconception that there is nowhere warm for them to continue breeding. However in heated houses with more soft furnishings and blankets, fleas thrive during winter just as well as over summer. Cats, dogs, rabbits and ferrets are all prone to flea infestations which must be actively prevented. Top spot flea control products, frequent washing of bedding and vacuuming of both floor coverings and fur-



Sage, the kitten put herself to bed; all tucked up nice and tight

Photo: courtesy Lort Smith Animal Hospital

nishings and grooming all assist with flea control. The latter is particularly important if you have a long haired pet whose coat grows out during winter.

Weight gain and loss of fitness is a risk for animals just as it is for humans during winter. Winter feeding with too many casseroles, or eating as a way to pass the time while not exercising enough, play a part in the development of obesity related health issues such as heart disease, diabetes, arthritis, and liver disease.

Providing a healthy life for your pet is a delicate balancing act. By all means spoil your pet but make those snacks and sleepy cuddle sessions on the couch a very small part of the daily routine. Make the effort to create a daily adventure. On busy days this might be in the form of a treasure hunt around the house. Remembering that pets love their toys and that the treasure need not be food! If your pet is very food focused try dabbing a little food on the outside of a few washable toys and make a scent trail. Enlist the help of a few kids and make some toys

and play equipment. Cats and rabbits love to climb and chase. My kitten, Sage, loves to chase a tipped over see-through laundry basket with a little ball inside it. Geoffrey, one of our resident cats at Lort Smith, has a carpeted wall which he races up and down chasing shadows and laser pointer dots. If you have a little more time up your sleeve then take your adventure outdoors. Go to the beach or follow a river. Many beaches are open to dogs over the winter months. It's a very exciting place to be on a cold blustery day but beware of fish hooks and other fishing debris and be respectful of wildlife. Or if you are heading into the city, consider a café-crawl on foot. Good for both of you and delicious too. Choose a route that takes you via parks and gardens from café to café but watch what you eat!

Rug up folks and get outside with your pets this winter.

Sasha Herbert,

Deputy Head Vet, Lort Smith Animal Hospital
Reproduced with permission from Probian Magazine, Winter edition 2010

MANCUSO

If you are in need of a bit of a pick-me-up, Mancuso is the place to go. This inner-city retreat allows clients to enjoy a range of services from haircuts and colours to facials, massage, manicures and body treatments.

The Japanese-style spa treatment area uses all-natural products, while the staff are some of the best stylists, masseurs, beauticians and naturopaths in Melbourne. Mancuso also has a country day spa in the Metcalfe Valley for the perfect getaway.

For further information visit

www.mancuso.com.au

317 Victoria Street
West Melbourne
VIC 3003
Tel: (03) 9329 4004



SEPTEMBER 2 – OCTOBER 9
Kirrily Hammond, Songs of Solitude
Andrew Seward, Show

OCTOBER 14 – NOVEMBER 13
Girringun, Jiman and Bagu
Alexandra Gillespie, Insulate the Future

NOVEMBER 18 – DECEMBER 11
Theo Strasser, Luminance
Christina Wood, The Portrait Project
Purdie Wood, La Virgin e La Serpiente

Kirrily Hammond, *Dandelion III*, 2009, charcoal on paper, 30x25cm

170-174 Abbotsford St, North Melbourne, (between Queensberry and Victoria sts)
9329 1860, 0425 809 328, Director: Marita Smith, Tuesday – Friday 11 – 6, Saturday 11 – 5

www.gallerysmith.com.au

GALLERYSMITH



North & West Melbourne Association

Yet another significant planning issue ...

West Melbourne has been jolted into the reality of planning politics in the twenty-first century with apparent official support from both the State Government and the Melbourne City Council for a ten storey development on the Zagame site in King Street.



An artist's impression of the proposed development on the Zagame site
Photo: courtesy NWMA

The proposal is for the current luxury car dealership to be replaced by a 10 storey project incorporating 259 units, with frontages to Roden, King and Stanley Streets.

If approved, this project establishes a precedent for high rise redevelopment of West Melbourne and North Melbourne at heights and shapes that were not possible under previous planning regimes.

It opens the way for intrusive and inefficient built form, akin to that in Docklands and Southbank, which contributes nothing to the overall standards of amenity for inner city residents.

Around thirty local residents from the Roden Street vicinity attended a briefing meeting in the Zagame showroom on Monday 26 July 2010. Hosted by the Zagame Family and their advisors, the meeting outlined the details of their application for the residential development of their very large 5000m site (remembering that, of course, very large sites mean very large developments).

Because the project is more than 25,000 square metres in size, the planning application has been made to the Victorian Department of Planning rather than to the City of Melbourne Council.

The project features 259 units:

- 119 one bedroom units
- 118 two bedroom units
- 8 three bedroom units
- 14 multi-storey units facing the streets

The boundary units are the only part of the development which conform with the current Design and Development Overlay (DDO) over this area, in that they are not more than 14 metres (4 stories) in height.

The main body of units forms part of a ten storey 'boomerang' spine that stretches from close to the Roden and King Streets corner to the middle of the site on the south west boundary (allowing for a 5m setback) and then parallel with that boundary toward Stanley Street. It should also be noted that the orientation of the high rise does not utilise the northerly aspect in an efficient way.

It is this ten storey development that is of most concern to the residents. It is in close proximity to low rise historic terrace housing and is utterly out of kilter with the heights that have traditionally been part of this area.

There are other immediate issues with the development. These include:

Planning authorities' encouragement

The developers stated - and we have no reason to challenge their statement - that they were strongly encouraged, by both the Council and the Victorian Government

Department, to develop this site to *at least* this level of density and height. Thus it appears that both our State Government and our Council are working against us as residents.

Residents' concerns

The developers apparently believe that residents' objections are based purely on their loss of lines of sight toward the city. Of course our concerns are broader than that:

- privacy and overlooking (though this did not appear to be taken seriously by the developers at the meeting)
- the shadows cast by these towers will deny broad areas to the south access to the sun (from our perspective, designers seem to thrive in a planning environment that stipulates all shadow diagrams should be done at the equinox, which ignores significant overshadowing through the winter months around the June solstice). This project shows a commendable commitment to using solar energy on the rooftops; however, other sites' access to solar energy will be disadvantaged through the shadowing, unless buildings on these sites also rise up ever-higher
- 259 new units and their residents and vehicles will create substantial congestion on the streets, particularly since there is no plan to provide sufficient car parking on site for each unit
- lines of sight will be lost - not just to the city, but through the neighbourhood
- aesthetics are a serious and legitimate issue.

On encountering some resistance to their plan at the 26 July meeting, the developers:

- threatened to ignore the residents and proceed forthwith, with the support of the Department of Planning and the Council
- declared they were under no obligation to brief residents
- did not concede that the proposal could have benefitted from consulting with residents before preparing the plans
- when questioned, stated that they would not compromise on height.

Where to now?

The developers have agreed to provide information to all participants who provided their email and postal addresses about where they could access a copy of the plans.

What can you do?

Whether you have lived here for many years or have just moved to the area, one thing you probably enjoy is the 'liveable' quality of the built environment. This did not happen by chance. Residents, and in particular the North & West Melbourne Association, have worked tirelessly to maintain the amenity. This has meant concerted efforts on a number of campaigns as well as general vigilance.

On this particular development, we have a list of email addresses that form the basis of future communication.

We are working to:

- clarify our right to object and the process we must follow with the Department of Planning
- try to work with the Department to make transparent the Minister's process for taking a decision, in terms of how and where the decision is made and the criteria on which it is based
- gauge the appetite in our local community for action on this issue - planning and attending public protest meetings, lodging objections, writing to those who can influence the decision, contributing funds ...

Email the Association at:

<info@nwma.org.au> if you would like to get involved, indicating how you would like to participate and, if applicable, what you are prepared to contribute.

Madeleine Scully

About the Association

Monthly meetings are held upstairs in the North Melbourne Library commencing at 7.30pm. Upcoming meeting dates are:

Tuesday 21 September

Tuesday 19 October

Tuesday 16 November

letters to the editor

Resident anger at King St development

Resident says NO to high-rise

It would seem that the vigorous state/local government and developer push for increased population density in the inner city is leading to the wholesale sanctioning of High-rise buildings without due consideration for heritage, local character, aesthetics or citizen rights.

North and West Melbourne residents and businesses are outraged at the massive development Zagame have proposed for their King, Roden and Stanley Street site on the fringe of the CBD, particularly the 10 storey boomerang shaped apartment block in close proximity to historic Victorian terrace housing and low rise commercial buildings.

This ugly, intrusive tower will dominate our skyline, reduce local amenity, cause overshadowing and increase traffic congestion as well as competition for the limited parking spaces currently available.

How can such a monstrous development be considered part of "sustainable city"?

Hands off West Melbourne, greedy developers and politicians... We don't want another Docklands wasteland on our doorstep.

Name and address supplied

Objection to construction at the Zagame site, King St West Melbourne.

I write to object to the proposed development at King Street West Melbourne, for the following reasons:

The design is totally out of character with the area and will have a significant negative impact on the "Victorian" style of architecture of North and West Melbourne.

It will overshadow many existing homes in the area, reducing sunlight to areas which receive nominal amounts of sunlight now.

There will be significant visual impact in an area of outstanding history & landscape.

The proposed 10 story building will obstruct views of the city skyline from my home.

Increase the strain on already tight street car parking in the area

Increase noise pollution during and after the construction

Create a significant traffic hazard in the area during construction phase

The development lacks a formal Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)

I also object to the proposal because the potential extra 500 plus people living in this type of "extreme high density" development will increase pressure on the existing residents of this area due to the very large footprint size, building height, and location of this project, with its significant effects in terms of visual intrusion and potential noise impacts. I believe the quality of life of residents in West Melbourne will be adversely affected.

Please limit the development height on the site to 3 stories and require full car parking facilities onsite for all residents and visitors.

Name and Address supplied

Proposed Residential Tower at 577 King Street, West Melbourne

In 2005 the City of Melbourne adopted the West Melbourne Structure Plan, a very reasonable document setting out the vision for development in the area over 13 chapters. Search the City's web site and you will easily find it.

It contemplates development and change, but in a manner sensitive to history, location, topography, infrastructure and community needs.

Now, at 577 King Street, West Melbourne (known as the Zagame site), in an area planned with a maximum height of 4 stories, developers are proposing a 10 storey 250 unit residential tower development, spanning a site between two streets.

Development in the area is inevitable, but the West Melbourne Structure Plan set a guide that all thought they could rely on.

Are our planning processes so degraded that adhoc applications may be granted against considered planning visions? Let's hope not, and to be sure raise our voices now against such greed and madness.

Name and Address supplied

GET OUT OF THE DIET TRAP

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Book in for your appointment today

Rebekah Scholes

Errol Street Medical Centre
Level 1
65-67 Errol St North Melbourne

Phone: 9329 7011





North Melbourne Rotary news update

The greatest equine adventure in the world

A very unassuming young lady named Alisa Vermay visited our Rotary Club for breakfast at the Radisson on the 16 July. She stood in for our scheduled speaker who had defaulted, and spoke briefly to our assembled members. We immediately perceived how impressive she was when she outlined her equine career and the reason for her visit to our gathering. She is seeking sponsorship for her proposed adventure to take part in the Mongol Derby in August 2010.

She outlined her career, informing us that her grandfather was a jockey, her mother a trainer and that she had grown up with race horses. When Alisa turned seventeen she knew already knew that she too had the passion to become a trainer. She has ridden track-work at Flemington Racecourse, the home of the famous Melbourne Cup, for the previous eight years. In that time she rode and worked for some great trainers and people. To name a few, 'The Legend' himself Bart Cummings for approximately four years, Lloyd Williams, the very astute Steve McKinnon, Dean Lawson, Steve Richards, Patrick Payne and John Hawkes. Alisa was also fortunate enough to have rode horses such as God's Own, Wonderful

World, Swick, Sirmione, Empires Choice, Faumacino, Dao Dao, and Real Saga.

Riding horses of this calibre gave her the opportunity to travel to Brisbane in 2007 for a very successful Brisbane Carnival, riding for Bart Cummings.

Following this was a stint in Singapore, where she worked at the Singapore Turf Club, Kranji. Here Alisa rode track-work for six months and had the great pleasure of riding the 2009 Singapore Horse of the Year, Jolie's Shinju.

She endeavoured to travel overseas to broaden her experience and create exposure before seeking to obtain a trainer's licence. Having been lucky enough to make connections within the racing industry in several other countries, Alisa has opened up further opportunities for work in England, Ireland, Dubai, France and the USA.

Alisa proudly represented Australia in the second running of the Mongol Derby, an equine adventure raising money for charities Mercy Corps and Agronomes Veterinaires Sans Frontieres (AVSF).

The Mongol Derby is based on Chinggis Khan's horseback postal system which relied on a network of horse stations (Morin Urtuu) mile after mile across the Mongolian steppe. With only ten days to cover the 1000km course, this is not a test of speed but of the rider's and horse's skill and endurance. The



President Stephen Ralph (left) with Alisa Vermay and Andrew Georgiou

Photo: courtesy North Melbourne Rotary

race commenced on 7 August and concluded on the 18 August, 2010.

"Why take on an adventure such as this you may be asking yourself?" Alisa asked the group. "I consider myself to have the experience and the riding ability to deal with an adventure such as the Mongol Derby. I understand that this will not be easy and will require focus and discipline, not only through the ten days that the race is held over, but also for the time and effort that is required to support myself and prepare myself."

"My team name for this adventure is "Empower" which means to give power to oneself and others. With power we have control of our lives; we have energy and are full of strength through good and bad times. The possibility of empowerment for yourself and the people around you is to live with no regret or sorrow. Live life to the fullest, push yourself out of your "comfort zone" and be the best that we can be!"

With a costly entry fee of \$10,000, Alisa raised the money by working two jobs and sacrificing the usual indulgences of young women her age. Alisa's determination and confident manner so impressed our members, the club donated \$500 without hesitation. All of her personal survival, safety clothing and equipment were supplied by Kathmandu at their cost.

Alisa epitomises the interesting and wide spectrum of speakers who are invited to address the North Melbourne Rotary Club's weekly breakfasts at The Radisson on Flagstaff on Friday mornings.

Conrad Cunningham

If you know anyone who represents a specific interest group or concept, ring Christine Koehn who is the Program Coordinator for the club on <chrisk101@iinet.net.au> or 0402 108 105. Alternatively our Friends of Rotary or Full membership can be discussed with Cheryl Dorgan on 0417 576 367.

New hair, new life

New local salon Kapar Hair Artistry promotes customer service as its prime specialty. Sited at 61 Errol Street, between Di Petta's Pizza and Westpac Bank, proprietor Ali Kapar ensures his team listen to their customers' wishes.

Numbering five, these hairdressers span the gamut of both age and specialty. "We range from veteran Pino, who looks after men's cuts, styles and shaves, through 18 year old apprentice Jenet, who's just starting her career, but we're extremely happy with both her work and her attitude," explains Ali.

"Natasha is a qualified stylist who specialises in presentation for big events like weddings and the like, while our other Jeanette — different spelling, same enthusiasm — is an expert colour technician. Jeanette attends all the courses available, so she's on top of the latest styles and applications, both locally and internationally."

As a personal testament, both Js use won-

derfully dedicated, caring hands to wash and condition one's ever-so-messy hair, before styling it ever-so-casually to impress even the hubby when he returns from his long workday.

Kapar Hair Artistry uses L'Oréal products exclusively. "We chose L'Oréal because it has a large range that suits everybody's requirements," says Ali.

Ali should also promote his own extensive professional talent: this salon's namesake trained in his native Turkey from the age of just 13 years. After eight years mastering hairdressing's fundamentals at home, he moved to Saudi Arabia for nearly another six years specialising in local hair customs and designs.

On arrival in Australia during 2004, Ali retrained for local qualification, this followed by several years with a North Essendon salon, where he continued his specialty of styling to suit the individual.

"It's really fulfilling doing total makeovers to fit a person's lifestyle, age and character," he smiles.

A good number of his dedicated North Essendon patrons have followed Ali across to Errol Street, "which is also good for North Melbourne", he acknowledges. "While here, they have lunch and do business with shops in the area, which is good for other traders as well.

"We're expecting a surge of business, especially for Melbourne Cup Week, because we're known already for up-styling and that's needed when wearing racing's millinery," he says.

Having recently applied for Australian citizenship, Ali hopes to celebrate both his own salon and a new local identity by Christmas time. "We love North Melbourne," he says. "It has a great client mix of all ages and incomes. There's also a superb cultural mix, which is exciting. North Melbourne is truly alive and we love being here!"

Katrina Kincade-Sharkey



It's all smiles, style and expertise at Kapar
Photo: David Apostol

KAPAR HAIR ARTISTRY

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Full colour & partial foils \$125
Full colour & full foils \$195

OPENING HOURS

Monday & Tuesday 8.30-5.30
Wednesday & Thursday 8.30-8.30
Friday 9.00-9.00
Saturday 8.00-4.00



NMLL students
Le Nguyen,
Mirsada Huremovic
and Sam Pham
compare knitting
styles

Photo: courtesy
Knit-a-Square



We Love Knitting!

Every Thursday between 12:00 pm and 1:00 pm you can see a stream of women; young and old, Christian and Muslim, Asian, African and Australian walking with a spring in their step to North Melbourne Language and Learning (NMLL). When you enter the room you will hear the click clack of knitting needles and see a group of very busy women; some practising their English, some sharing knitting stories, but all working in the joint endeavour that will make a small positive difference in a child's life. The difference is a warm winter blanket. The finished knitted squares are sent to Johannesburg in South Africa where they are sewn into rugs by volunteers who distribute them to AIDS orphans.

For six months Thursday lunchtimes have been a time where NMLL adult students and volunteers from the North Melbourne community meet to knit 20cm x 20cm squares for the charity Knit-a-Square. To date the group has knitted over 200 squares—that means eight beautiful pure wool blankets.

Knit-a-Square was started three years ago by Kalai and Cressida McDonald and their extended family of keen knitters. What started out as one family trying to make a difference has turned into a homespun revolution. Originally from Zimbabwe, part of the family migrated to Australia and part to Johannesburg in South Africa. The girls' Great Aunt Ronda was aware of the plight of thousands of AIDS orphans not far from her home in Johannesburg. Three years later Knit-a-Square has mobilised more than 3000 people knitting in fifteen countries around

the world. The charity also coordinates volunteers from the Soweto Comfort Club to distribute clothing, food parcels and the precious blankets to children in need.

NMLL has been working with the Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) communities of North Melbourne for more than twenty years. We teach accredited and pre accredited English, vocation and computer courses with a focus on connecting our students with the broader community. We nurture the development of life skills around issues of study and employability skills, health, parenting skills, civic education and recreational opportunities that will enable a person and their family to succeed and enjoy life in Australia.

There are lots of opportunities to volunteer at NMLL. Come along and help us in one of the following areas: gardening group, singing group, Baby Book Borrow library, English classroom support, administration support, I.T. support, management committee and special events and excursions.

Natalie Warren

Come and join us every Thursday
12:00-1:00pm

Bring along your #5mm knitting needles
(wool supplied)
North Melbourne Community Centre
49-53 Buncle Street North Melbourne
Phone 9326 7447
Email <nwarren@nml.org.au>
www.nml.org.au/knit-a-square.com.au

Ramadan — A Time for Faith, Family and Friends

Ramadan is the month of the calendar where Muslims fast from dawn until sunset. Fasting is said to encourage Muslims to be reflective about patience, humility and spirituality and it is a time to fast for the sake of Allah and to offer more prayers than usual. During Ramadan, Muslims ask forgiveness for past sins, pray for guidance, help in refraining from everyday evils and try to purify themselves through self-restraint and good deeds. As compared to the solar calendar, the dates of Ramadan vary, moving backwards about ten days each year depending on the moon. This year Ramadan started on the 11 August and will finish with the festival of Eid on 9 September.

At North Melbourne Language and Learning 65% of students are Muslim. The largest groups are from the Horn of Africa from Somalia, Ethiopia and Eritrea, however, there are also Muslim students from Turkey, Bosnia, Malaysia and Sudan.

When talking to a group of students about what Ramadan and Eid means to them Sadiya Hebo, originally from Ethiopia, said that it was a 'happy and very social time where there was lots of visiting of family and friends.' 'You had to book people in early as there were so many people to visit and visit you'. Much like Christmas time, Eid is a time where children are excited because of the special food and anticipation of receiving presents of new clothes or toys.

Kedija Ibrahim loves the rituals of Ramadan, saying it 'wasn't difficult to fast, that she looked forward to it and was used to it because she has been doing it since she was seven'. Originally from Eritrea, Kedija said 'it was a very friendly time to share food or do something nice for a neighbour and to think of less well off people and give money to charity'.

Halima Ahmed said 'Ramadan was a special time of the year where her family spent a happy time together over mealtimes'. Halima, who came to Australia from Eritrea, said she 'liked it when all the family got up very early, well before sunrise, to have breakfast and then pray together, and then again at the end of the day they would all go to the local mosque and pray together again.'

She said it brought them close as a family. During Eid, Halima loves to bake sweets, biscuits and cakes — all favourites with her and her neighbour's children.

Aisha Hersi loves to cook the Somali specialty, Sambusa, during the Eid Festival. They are small triangular pastries stuffed with mince meat, garlic, chilli, coriander and spices — a favourite with young and old. When Sambusas were mentioned, Deeka Hassan, Amina Adolahi and Fatiya Siraj all said they were Eritrean favourites too. "You need hundreds in your fridge to cope with demand," said Fatiya.

According to Nadifo Hashi and Fatima Ali, the fasting and extra praying during Ramadan made you feel happy and strong. All the women said that the way they celebrated Ramadan in Australia was the same way as in their country of origin.

All the women are looking forward to celebrating Eid at the end of Ramadan. Like other years, the oval next to the Flemington Community Centre in Mount Alexander Road will be the place to be. This year's festival event will start at 12.30pm on Saturday, 18 September and brings together the broad Muslim community as well a community wide celebration open to people of all faiths.

Natalie Warren

North Melbourne Language & Learning
Community Development Worker
<nwarren@nml.org.au> Phone: 9326 7447

North Melbourne Language & Learning

Introduction to Computers

Short Course – 8 weeks
Starts October

This course is ideal for those who have little or no experience with computers, and will cover a range of topics:

Computer Basics:

- Turning a computer on and off
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Classes are adapted to the needs and interests of learners

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Cost: \$150

Don't miss this opportunity to study with your local Neighborhood House and trusted Registered Training Organisation, NMLL.

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We extend an invitation to join us for breakfast

Call Stephen Ralph on 0417 397 714



North Melbourne Rotary Club

Meet at the Radisson on Flagstaff Gardens Hotel
Conference Room, Level 1, 380 William Street, Melbourne
(Melway map 2F B1)
Fridays @ 7.30am for 7.45

Observing Ramadan



Children and their families enjoying Eid celebrations

Photo: courtesy JSS

About Ramadan

Ramadan is a holy month in the Islamic calendar. During this month, muslims fast from dawn to sunset. Fasting involves abstinence from food, water, smoking, sexual intercourse and bad language. At the end of a Ramadan day, muslims break their fasting with a special Ramadan feast as members of a family or with friends or even with strangers. Fasting Ramadan is one of the pillars of the Islamic faith. Fasting Ramadan is obligatory for all muslims except kids, pregnant women and those who are unwell. Ramadan concludes after thirty days with the festival of Eid.

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2011

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EVENTS #6-9

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MORE INFORMATION FROM:
THE CENTRE
58 Errol Street T: 9328 1126 E: admin@centre.org.au



Feast of fashion and beauty at fashion night

Mademoiselles set a brand new edgy side in the beauty world by incorporating the business of Beauty Therapy with a Fashion Show. Leading the evening was Peggy Lekkas, owner of Mademoiselles Beauty Parlour. A selection of music by Eric Manousakis set the right mood for the gala evening, from funky genres to soothing African background rhythms. He also incorporated a complementing laser/light show which set the right pace for the fashion show.

The night began with a talk on the latest skin care applications, in particular, skin needling. This is a cosmetic device that stimulates collagen, increases cell regeneration and reduces the appearance of large pores, scar tissue and cellulite giving long lasting results.

Skintitut is a remarkably effective results-orientated skincare range, designed to strengthen your skin's resistance and give you a healthier smoother and youthful complexion. Skintitut is an all-Australian made product.

"All smart women are now seeking a more healthy, natural approach to make-up", says Ms Lekkas. That is why she has sourced Youngblood, the world's premier mineral cosmetic. From the moment you brush it on you will notice a silky natural finish unlike any other mineral make up. It is incredibly easy to use and is suitable for all ages. Youngblood caters for even the most sensitive or problem skin types as it allows your skin to breathe, won't clog pores or cause irritation.

There was also a live spray tan demon-

stration, finished in less than two minutes. Tuscan Tan uses 100% sugar derived natural bronzers, enabling the skin's own tones to take on a healthier glowing tan.

Mademoiselles offers all skin treatments from IPL hair reduction, skin health treatments to lash extensions and specialises in Brazilian waxing.

Come in and sample beauty products and make-up at our brand new skin bar.

Christina Labelexie

Mademoiselles - 41 Errol street North Melbourne. Phone (03) 9329 8886

Pictures: David Apostol



Bronwyn Pike

STATE MEMBER FOR MELBOURNE

New Electorate Office: 146-148 Peel Street, North Melbourne, 3051
Phone: 9328 4637 Fax: 9326 8747 Web: www.bronwynpike.com

Victoria takes leading role in tackling climate change

The Victorian Government's climate change white paper has set the state an ambitious target to cut greenhouse gas emissions by at least 20% by 2020. And with the introduction of the *Climate Change Bill 2010* to parliament, the white paper now has legislative backing.

Achieving the 20 per cent target will require a transformation in the way we generate and use electricity. The actions outlined in the Victorian Climate Change White Paper will drive that change. As well as the reduction target, the white paper commits to a saving of 28 million tonnes of emissions by 2020 from brown coal-fired generators, equivalent to closing two units of the Hazelwood Power Station. It will also implement a plan to raise energy efficiency in Victorian homes, and put the state on track to generate 5% of its electricity from solar energy by 2020.

Following consultation with community and industry, the Government will release a White Paper Implementation Plan later this year. Over \$329 million in new funds has been ear-marked to implement the plan, on top of \$322 million already committed over the past eight months for climate change and renewable energy programs.

The white paper is an important step forward for Victoria, and these actions will also create more job opportunities. Initiatives under this plan, such as a new Clean Business Fund to help our businesses improve their efficiency, will put Victorian businesses ahead of the game in a low carbon economy.

While discussions have already commenced with Hazelwood's stakeholders regarding their commitment to a staged closure of the power station, we are not taking any chances. The climate change bill Premier Brumby recently introduced to parliament gives us reserve powers to regulate emissions from existing brown coal-fired generators even if a negotiated phase down can't be achieved.

The Victorian Government is committed to leading the way in tackling climate change. We must look ahead and make some bold decisions if we are to meet this challenge and reduce our emissions. All Victorians, be it Government, business or households, share this responsibility and I'm proud to be part of a team willing to do our part in making Victoria the sustainable state.

For more information on how you can reduce your carbon footprint, visit: www.climatechange.vic.gov.au

Bronwyn Pike MP
Member for Melbourne
Minister for Education, Skills and Workforce Participation
www.bronwynpike.com

Fresh from the Farmers Market

It's been nearly a year and the North Melbourne Farmers Market has continued with its strong community spirit and authentic quality stallholders. The Market may be a little cosier than other suburban Farmers' Markets (with around 30 stalls), yet shoppers are still given a great choice of some of Victoria's authentic producers & growers, including organic vegetables from the Mornington Peninsula, hormone-free beef and lamb from Little Creek, freshly baked bread, olive oil, wine, and much more.

Organizer Warren James enjoys running the North Melbourne Farmers Market: "The area is just so community minded and it definitely shows in the support we receive. It's great to see people catching up at the market and heaps of kids running around. I think everyone should have the opportunity to have a farmers market close by".

All proceeds from the gold-coin-entry go towards North Melbourne Primary School's Stephanie Alexander garden program.

The North Melbourne Farmers Market is held on the first Sunday of every month. The next market will be held on Sunday, October 3 from 9am-1pm at the North Melbourne Primary School, North Melbourne. For further information visit: <www.inseasonmarkets.com.au> or phone 9528 4985.



Making his MARC

Brian Cox enjoyed the view from the second floor of the Kangaroos' plush new facility on Friday afternoon, August 27. Both the suburb of North Melbourne and the football club hold many memories for 'Coxy', the man behind MARC (Melbourne Alcohol Recovery Centre), but his observations have changed dramatically over the years.

"I grew up around the corner and we used to knock around here a lot. I remember watching greyhound races here. I remember sleeping in the cattle yards up there at Flemington, and I remember getting picked up by the police around here," Cox recalled.

With seemingly boundless energy, Cox speaks with a brutal honesty that disarms those around him. He openly admits to once being a "hopeless, fall-down, useless drunk" and is happy to talk about his time locked up in most of the jails throughout Australia.

Cox has experienced first-hand the effects of alcoholism and he has been exposed to the damage it has caused to those around him. Many he has helped bury and countless others he has tried to help, but in vain.

Over 20 years ago Cox's journey out from the dark abyss began with the stark realisation that if he didn't stop drinking, his days were numbered. He gave up the drink and immediately started helping others. He looked after people in his housing commission flat and worked tirelessly to get them sober. "The only way I could stay sober was to help other people. If I didn't have that to put my energy too, I'd be dead, there are no two ways about it."

He quickly outgrew his flat and moved to a bigger house after taking on more responsibility and more cases. Soon he expanded further and acquired more houses, later developing a reputation among police and in the courts as being a positive and stabilising influence. Ironically, the rough and tumble former truckie, who had more than a few brushes with the law, now receives funding from the Justice Department.

Cox is a man on a mission. "We

preach total abstinence, which is different from the government strategy of harm-minimisation." MARC residents are often released from jail or referred from other service providers. All its houses are alcohol-free and residents undertake a 12-step program. "I'm not saying people shouldn't drink; I'm saying that we (MARC residents) shouldn't drink, because we can't handle it."

North Melbourne midfielder Andrew Swallow became a MARC ambassador after hearing Cox share his experiences with the Roos' playing group in 2008. Like many of his teammates, Swallow was taken aback by what he heard and sought the opportunity to get involved.

"One of the biggest eye-openers was the amount of people who seem to have normal lives, but are struggling with alcoholism," Swallow said. "Regardless of their profession and how much money they have, if they are athletes, doctors, lawyers or running successful businesses, there are people out there who are affected by it. With such a young group it's invaluable for our players to hear that message from someone like Coxy who has lived it first-hand. Everyone is susceptible to making the wrong choices sometimes and no-one is bullet-proof."

Eight MARC residents joined Swallow and Cox at Arden Street on August 27 for a tour, strength and conditioning talk, and a preview of the round 22 game against Melbourne. The partnership, while still in its early stages, is progressing well.

"To have an AFL club actually take an interest in us and give us this opportunity ... we are just so thankful," said Cox. "If we didn't have this (MARC), we aren't sure where we'd be ... in fact we'd probably be dead. We are growing, we are helping people all the time but this problem is absolutely rife in the community and we need support, we need funding and we need the public to get behind us."

John Murphy
North Melbourne Football Club



A community enterprise hub with a neighbourhood house heart

How things can change. This time last year The Centre was reeling from a dramatic reduction in our core funding. However twelve months later, we are steaming ahead, and developing a whole new approach to how we meet community needs and bringing people together.

The Centre will always have as its heart a neighbourhood house, with delicious community lunches, adventurous outings to fabulous places, and community learning programs for people with all kinds of interests. What's new is that we now have the opportunity and challenge to grow our other programs into sustainable community enterprises that will eventually be self funding, involving many partners and loads of creativity.

Visitors to The Centre will also notice some new faces. Recently we said goodbye to staff members Dianne Schmidtke and Celeste O'Keefe, both of whom have moved to other positions, thankfully close by. We welcome in Robbie Cotterill, who has come to us from Farnham Street Neighbourhood House as the new Coordinator of Community Learning Programs, and Frances McMillan as the new Coordinator of the Global Homework Program. Frances is an experienced teacher who has recently returned from working with disadvantaged children in Brazil. And then there's Michael Burville, who will work with this newspaper one day a week to help it grow as a sustainable community business, taking some of the pressure off the loyal and dedicated volunteers who bring you every edition on time and jam packed with goodness. Please come in and meet the crew.

The Bates
Director

Invisible Australians

As I sit in front of the television, eating very old, leftover chocolate Easter eggs and contemplating the blank computer screen in front of me my mind turns to the thousands of Australians who tonight have nowhere to call their home. There is the mum and her kids trying to find somewhere safe to park their car in which they will sleep for the night, the young man who is desperately trying to find a couch to rest on whilst fighting his pride at having to ask for help again, the couple who is coasting through the CBD trying to find somewhere safe and perhaps even out of the weather to sleep it rough for the night as well as the approximately 105,000 other Australian who will tonight and every other night have nowhere to call home. As I continue to ponder I am astonished that in this day and age of golden parachutes, multimillion dollar sports salaries and stimulus packages that 1 in every 200 Australians are homeless. Aren't we supposed to be the 'lucky country', one of the most developed — and yet right in our own back yard people are being deprived of one of their fundamental human rights as laid down by the United Nations. The fact is that the homeless are largely invisible at best or at worst, and often more commonly, thought of as the masters of their own ill-fate or even being homeless by choice.

For many today their only contact with those who are homeless is either through articles such as these or with the occasional person sleeping rough or asking for money on the street. Largely the stereotype is of a middle age 'white' man with some sort of mental health or substance abuse problem — but in reality Australia's homeless are quite different. A quick look at the statistics on homelessness shows that almost half of our homeless are in fact women, the majority of which are accompanied by children, 23% of the homeless are children and of every 42 Australian children under 4, one has experienced homelessness. The reality is that anyone can find themselves homeless. In fact our very own former prime minister Mr Kevin Rudd disclosed his own experiences with homelessness which found him, his mother and siblings sleeping in their car after the death of their father and their subsequent eviction from their Queensland farm.

So what causes homelessness?

Homelessness is the result of a failure of public systems to provide a safety net for the most vulnerable people in our communities; for the child fleeing from sexual abuse that slips through the cracks in child protective services, the wife fleeing from domestic violence who cannot find a bed in the too few refuges, the man who finds himself suddenly unemployed or the disabled or mentally ill that can not afford to pay their ever increasing rent. Add to this one of the toughest private rental markets in history, an ever decreasing pool of affordable homes for low wage earners and a chronic shortage of public housing and you create "the perfect storm" for homelessness. But whilst the causes are complex the solutions are known and 'relatively' simple. As Matthew Cox, community service group manager for the Red Cross, said in his article for The Age in July people with even the most complex of issues that are given access to secure accommodation, bundled with the right kinds of support and sustained for a reasonable period of time can be housed and develop a productive focus for their life.

So why are we getting our proverbial behinds spanked in this war on homelessness? Well because until recently there has been no war. A largely taboo subject, homelessness has often been swept under the carpet by many governments. That is until 2008 when it was brought into the limelight by then Prime Minister, Rudd, who not only commissioned a white paper on the issue but followed this up with a pledge to halve the number of homeless people and provide accommodation for all those sleeping rough by 2020, a promise which will cost a whopping \$4.9 billion dollars over 5 years so bad has the problem become. And as you wonder how on earth can we afford to do this now, as we attempt to recover from the dreaded Global Financial Crisis, well the reality is that it will cost us much more to let homelessness persist than to end it. It has been estimated that it costs the community between \$60,000 and \$250,000 dollars a year for every homeless person. This includes not only any money or support that they may claim directly but also any dealings with hospital emergency wards, ambulance services, police, prisons and other such public services that they use or become involved with. If you do the maths, using the lowest estimates, this means that over 5 years it will cost the community \$31.5 billion just to do nothing about our homeless!

The facts are plain — for many our country is not so lucky in fact it is down right horrible. The realities of homelessness are often violence, rape, fear, loneliness, hunger, illness, exclusion and death. If you are anything like me your mind will be spinning as the problem seems so large and you are but one person. What can one person do? The answer is lots!! You can give your time or money to homeless services, a list of which you will find at the bottom of this article, you can write to or visit your MP asking them to act on homelessness, you can tell others about the issue and get them in on the act (remember the more letters or visits MPs receive the more likely they are to act), but most importantly you can act towards countering the cycle of exclusion experienced by so many who are homeless or marginalised by simply saying hello and smiling instead of sidestepping or averting your gaze.

As I take a breath and realise that I have once again ruined my diet with an entire packet of chocolate — my mind once again turns to the reality of my life versus those who are homeless. Tonight my worries may include having a husband steal my sheets or a sore stomach from too much chocolate but 105,000 people in the country I love, many of whom live in my own suburb, will be cold, uncomfortable, unsafe, hungry and largely invisible. With the state election looming we have the opportunity to ensure that this issue stays in the limelight and to let all those who find themselves without a home tonight know that we see them and we will not let them stay invisible for ever!

Anna Walmsley

Anna Walmsley is a Project worker for the Homelessness Action Group — a community organisation working in the North and West Melbourne areas trying to create an inclusive and harmonious community for all, but in particular for those who are homeless or marginalised. If you have any questions about homelessness or would like to get involved with the group please contact Anna on: <anna.walmsley@svdp-vic.org.au>

ERROL STREET ROAD CLOSURE

Road Closure Notification for Sunday, 24 October

Errol Street will be closed to all traffic from 1:00am until 11:30pm for the Spring Fling Street Festival. Streets that will be affected by this closure are: Errol Street at Victoria Street and Queensberry Street, Raglan Street at Leveson Street, Trafalgar Place at Leveson Street, George Johnson Lane and Little Errol Street at Leveson Street, Errol Place at Errol Street, Victoria Court at Errol Street and Webb Lane at Errol Street.

Residents and Traders located in the affected streets will have restricted access until 9:30am at which time the precinct will be shut down to all cars.

Restricted access will be reopened to Traders and Residents within the precinct after 6pm or until it is safe to do so. The traffic management plan will also affect the operation of the number 57 Tram.

For more information closer to the Festival Day please visit Yarra Trams at <<http://www.metlinkmelbourne.com.au/route/view/887>>

For further inquiries about the traffic management plan please contact The Centre on (03) 9328 1126 or visit <www.springfling.org.au>

ERROL STREET ROAD CLOSURE



Festival t-shirt order form

Spring Fling Street Festival. Errol Street, North Melbourne

Sunday 24 October From 12 noon - 5pm

Meet Ardie the Elephant!

Ardie represents the importance of strength and balance.

Elephants are renowned for their concern for their community and each other.



T-shirt Order form

Please indicate the quantity against the style and size

T-shirt	Price	S	M	L	XL	XXL	Total qty
Mens grey	\$20 each						
Mens light blue	\$20 each						
Womens grey	\$20 each						
Womens light blue	\$20 each						
Youth grey	\$15 each						N/A
Youth light blue	\$15 each						N/A

Amount due

Payment

Your name							
Cheque	You are welcome to come in and pay by cash or make cheques payable to The Centre						
Credit card	Please tick <input type="checkbox"/> Visa <input type="checkbox"/> Mastercard <input type="checkbox"/>						
Card number							
Expiry date							
Name of cardholder							
Signature of cardholder							
Date							

Thank you for your support. Please return this form to The Centre, 58 Errol Street, North Melbourne, 3051. Collect your t-shirt/s from The Centre from Monday October 18. Spring Fling supports live-animal-free circuses.

Get off to a new start this Spring

ENROL in one of the GREAT PROGRAMS

now available at The Centre

The Centre is running some great programs in 4th Term, and there are still some places available if you're quick!

- Calligraphy
- Little Aid (First Aid for Mum's with babies)
- Yoga — all levels
- Pilates style excercise
- Ebay Tricks
- Computer basics
- Freelance writing



<www.centre.org.au>



The Centre, 58 Errol Street North Melbourne

To enrol phone 9328 1126

or pick up a brochure at The Centre
58 Errol Street, North Melbourne

Spring Fling 10

street festival

Sunday 24 October 2010 – 12 noon to 5pm

Spring Fling Activities

Run, climb, jump and vault

Australian Parkour Association



Where: North Melbourne Football Club
204 – 206 Arden Street North Melbourne.
Sessions will be held outdoors in almost all weather!

Cost: Free

Ages: 5 – 105

School holiday sessions

Tues 21 Sep 2.00pm – 4.00pm (ages 5 – 25)
Wed 22 Sep 2.00pm – 4.00pm (ages 5 – 25)
Tues 28 Sep 2.00pm – 4.00pm (ages 25 – 105)

Spring Fling Street Festival sessions

Sun 24 Oct 12.15pm – 1.15pm (ages 5 – 105)
Sun 24 Oct 1.30pm – 2.30pm (ages 5 – 105)
Sun 24 Oct 2.45pm – 3.45pm (ages 5 – 105)
Sun 24 Oct 4.00pm – 5.00pm (ages 5 – 105)

Learn how to overcome physical and mental obstacles in your path by using your body and mind to run, climb, jump and vault. Please wear supportive close-toed shoes and loose clothing that doesn't restrict your movement. Spaces limited – *registration is essential*.

For more information about Parkour and other workshops and classes in Melbourne visit:

[<www.melbourneparkour.com.au>](http://www.melbourneparkour.com.au)

Juggling, hula hoops and more

Fun Fit

Where: North Melbourne Football Club
204 – 206 Arden Street North Melbourne

Cost: Free

Ages: 8 – 14

School holiday sessions

Tues 21 Sep 2.00pm – 4.00pm (ages 5 – 25)
Wed 22 Sep 2.00pm – 4.00pm (ages 5 – 25)
Tues 28 Sep 2.00pm – 4.00pm (ages 25 – 105)

Please wear loose clothing that doesn't restrict your movement. Spaces limited – *registration is essential*.

Don't miss Juggling & Hula Hoop sessions at Spring Fling Street Festival on Sunday 24 October from 12 noon – 5pm.

For all things Spring Fling visit [<www.springfling.org.au>](http://www.springfling.org.au)



THE CENTRE

Spring Fling 10

street festival

Sunday
24 October 2010

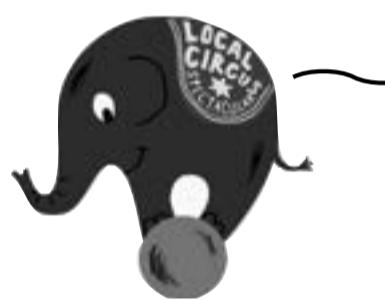
12 noon to 5pm

what the spring fling totems represent



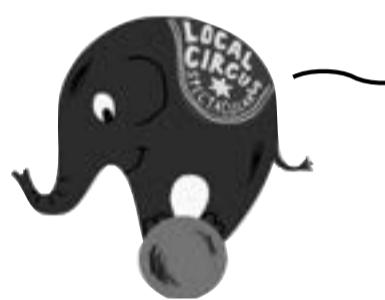
Bunjil the Eagle

represents the traditional Wurundjeri People of North and West Melbourne.



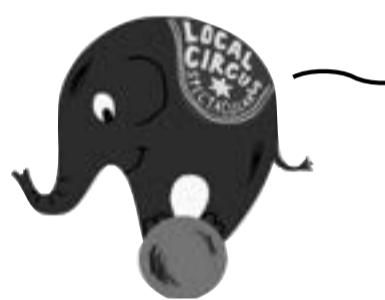
Waa the crow

represents the traditional Boon Wurrung People of North and West Melbourne.



Roo the Kangaroo

represents the more contemporary people of North and West Melbourne.



Ardie the Elephant

represents the importance of strength and balance. Elephants are renowned for their concern for their community and each other.

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SUNDAY 24TH OCTOBER 10 - 5 pm \$2 entry

SPRING FLING 10
street festival

WWW.NORTHMELBOURNEMARKET.COM

How to get to the festival

Please avoid driving your vehicle to Spring Fling. Instead, walk, ride or take public transport. It helps us manage congestion and of course, our future.

Errol Street will be closed to traffic and trams between Queensberry Street and Victoria Street on the festival day. Special mention to the good folk from Yarra Trams for getting people to/from and around the Errol Street road closure for the festival day. Yarra Trams will provide a bus service to connect the number 57 tram.

If you would like to travel by tram take route number 59, 55 or 57. If you would like to travel by bus take route 402. If you would like to travel by train North Melbourne, Flagstaff, Macauley and Flemington Bridge Stations are close by.

For information about wheelchair accessible taxi ranks, safe taxi ranks, night rider bus and links to the public transport services visit: [<www.springfling.org.au>](http://www.springfling.org.au)

“The Club” — a last hurrah from St Joseph’s

At 8 o’clock on a Friday night, in St. Joseph’s College Hall, Coach Chris Talbot blows his whistle and rushes to the front of the audience. He gives the audience a ‘pep talk’ involving instructions to turn off our phones, and telling us about St. Joseph’s rich history of productions and variety nights. A sense of history sets in — that *The Club* would truly be St. Joey’s last hurrah on stage.

Across three nights from July 29 to 31, 2009, St. Joseph’s presented its last ever stage production, David Williamson’s *The Club*, directed by Brendan Tollit. The story follows the internal machinations of a declining football club. To heighten the parallels between the fictional ‘Club’ and St. Joseph’s, the club was named the ‘St. Joseph’s Joeys’. The show was tailored for its audience, and there was much guffawing to be had at the likes of names such as Gatt, McKerrell, and Crippsy being exchanged amidst the performance. Contemporary references to Kevin Sheedy, Eddie ‘Everywhere’ McGuire and even Master Chef’s Matt Preston were thrown in, making it evident that a lot of work had been done to ensure the best response from the audience. And the audience lapped it up.

Each actor nailed Williamson’s matchless depiction of Aussie ocker humour effortlessly. Josh, Naim, Jaydn, Neville, Brendan and Steve all played their roles like professionals, and I was gobsmacked by the quality of their performances. These days, St. Joseph’s is not as notable for its reputation in the field of drama, and the participating students are to my knowledge not your usual ‘drama kids’. But they could have fooled me. Across the board, their delivery of lines and comedic timing were exceptional. Mr. Box’s Jock was particularly enchanting — every utterance of ‘bastard’ was delivered with assured comedic conviction and resulted in uproarious laughter from the audience. However, it was Steve Pitros’ portrayal of disillusioned, allegedly incestuous footballer Geoff that was the standout for me, with a surprising, whimsical and nuanced performance.

The hard work of all the players to pull off such amazing performances must not be discounted. How they managed to merely remember their lines, let alone deliver them so convincingly and with such gusto, amidst the demands of the Year 12 VCE schedule, is a great achievement. Coupled with Mr. Tollit’s flawless direction, SJCM’s rendi-



tion of *The Club* proved to be an outstanding production. Brendan, Joshua, Naim, Jaydn, Steve and Neville all did a great service to the legacy of our school. The conclusion of

the performance left me, and doubtless the others around me, so intensely proud to witness and experience St. Joseph’s last hurrah.

Michaelle Tomolo

A colourful week at MTC



Earlier this year, I was told by my drama teacher, Ms Bosnic, that she had chosen me to take part in a life-changing program run by the MTC (Melbourne Theatre Company). It was her third time sending a student there, and the 12th (or 9th, depending on who you talk to) year that the course had run. It ran during the last week of the holidays between terms 2 and 3, Monday to Friday, from 9.30 to 4.30.

On the first day, it started off like a normal school day would. Everybody met in the foyer and sat and talked. The roll was called and we made our way into the theatre, where we did some getting-to-know-each-other activities. There was one ritual, though, that stood out among the rest, which was that every day, before any activities took place, we ran across the floor with wet rags. This was called ‘cleaning the floor’.

The second day was very different. Instead of the foyer, a few people went into the cafe next door to have a coffee. These people were Kees Walker, Yuri Calil, Heather Cox, Nathan Dowler-Stewart and myself. We were known as ‘The Morning Crew’. Every morning we would do this, and play a few card games, while we waited for the theatre to open so that we could go in.

The most fun part of the week, I thought, was the ‘Graffiti wall’, which was a piece of paper, blu-tacked to the wall, on which we were to write quotes, encouraging mes-

sages and, for me, the colours of the week. I see the world in different colours, you see, and every day the colour changed, whether it was a tiny bit or a lot. Monday was orange, and, by the time Friday came by, it was pure white.

The best thing about the colours was the fact that nobody annoyed me about it. They all thought that it was really cool, instead of really weird, like most people would think. And everybody there added their own little bit of colour to the main one.

Andrew Gray (one of the teachers I guess you’d call him), was very enthusiastic about everything. He really got us going. One thing he said to get us going was “Give me the finger!” at which we would all turn around, waving our rude finger in the air at him.

The experience overall was life-changing, and I must admit that I want to do it again. We are all planning a reunion for later in the year, which may or may not include another flash mob, of which the first was performed on the way to *Tosca*, one of two shows that we saw as part of the course, the other being *Dead Man’s Cell Phone*.

I very much enjoyed the course, and if anybody reading this is lucky enough to participate in it, then I can guarantee that it will change both your life and your perspective forever.

Vivian Michell, Year 9

book reviews

Boy Toy by Barry Lyga

Every time a teacher sleeps with a student, it is splashed across the cover of whichever trashy newspaper you care to look at. People vocally criticise the teacher for abusing their power, but no-one seems to even consider what effect this would have on the student. Barry Lyga’s novel ‘Boy Toy’ is an exception to this. It is an open and honest account of a subject few other authors would dare to approach. The story is told mostly from the present day, about how main character Josh is dealing with the after effects of the trauma many years later, but it also has numerous flashbacks to show how the situation developed in the first place. Like all Barry Lyga’s novels, Boy Toy is told in a simple, direct style, making it easy to read, and accessible for anyone who is willing to face the emotional material within.

Lock and Key by Sarah Dessen

Lock and Key is the story of 17 year old Ruby Cooper, who is sent to live with her estranged sister after social services realise her alcoholic mother has left town. Ruby is a capable, intelligent girl, who has learnt to fend for herself quite well over the years, at least in the familiar lower class world that she and her mother inhabit. When she moves in with her older sister, she not only has to deal with living with someone who is effectively a complete stranger, but also the high class society in which her sister and new husband live. ‘Lock and Key’ is a fun story with a range of interesting and diverse characters. It is fantastic because it is light hearted, but is at the same time a book that can really make you think.

Little Brother by Cory Doctorow

Nineteen Eighty-Four for the new generation, Cory Doctorow’s novel ‘Little Brother’ is a study of what would happen if the government took full advantage of its potential powers in the case of a terrorist situation. Main character Marcus, a not-quite-average kid, suffers from a case of wrong place at the wrong time during a terrorist attack on San Francisco, and gets a first-hand experience of what being a terrorist suspect is like. Even after that ordeal, he is shocked and horrified at the changes his society undergoes, and the liberties the government takes away, all in the name of protecting his ‘freedoms’. The power of this book is that it is all so very possible. At no point does it feel over the top, or dramatic, or even preachy. Instead it is a very real ‘what if...’ of things that could easily happen today. What makes it especially interesting though is the way that Marcus and the rest of his tech-savvy friends handle the situation. Instead of just trusting the government like his parents do, the teenagers in this book come up with ways to protect their freedoms and peacefully protest the actions of the government — which do not always draw peaceful responses. At the same time, they are still just being teenagers, dealing with the same issues normal teenagers do, such as family, changing friendship dynamics, and sex. Thought-provoking, yet very fun and easy to read, I would highly recommend this book both to teens and adults.

Nicole Canal

HISTORY

Burke and Wills – 150 years celebration

When Burke and Wills rode away from the Royal Society building on the edge of what is now the city of Melbourne, there was not a lot of today's North Melbourne for them to pass through. A letter to The Age written in the 1930s recalls that the party went along Shiel Street. The year was 1860. Melbourne itself was twenty-five years old and the Colony of Victoria, whose separation from New South Wales had been celebrated with a ball in a North Melbourne building, was nine. What there was of present day North Melbourne was contained within the area bounded by Flemington Road and Royal Park to the north, and to the southwest by swamp lands and the Blue Lake, both of which disappeared altogether in the next few years. Hotham Hill and the land between today's Dryburgh Street and the Moonee Ponds creek did not yet have any streets or houses. The Mattingley and Buncle families were residents and Hotham was already a place to be in the ebullient Melbourne of the Gold Rush era.

On the afternoon of August 21, nineteen men set out on the expedition. Some were dismissed on the way; others died; one came back alive. Of the six wagons that were to carry gear and provisions, two broke down before they got to Essendon on the evening of the first day. Some lucky people were able to help by taking away provisions that could no longer be carried to the inland, including (according to one family's anecdote) flour and firewood.

Many of us grew up believing that Burke and Wills had starved to death, but they



The plaque at left was laid as part of the 150th anniversary celebrations and marks the departure point of the Burke and Wills expedition. It can be found in Royal Park next to the Burke and Wills memorial cairn.

Photo: Janet Graham

to the Melbourne General Cemetery in the January of 1863.

Robert O'Hara Burke, son of a Protestant Irish family from County Galway and the appointed leader of the expedition, had already served in the cavalry of the Austrian army and the Irish Mounted Constabulary before arriving in the Colony of Victoria. As Superintendent of Police in Castlemaine, Burke was familiar with the roads taken by so many hopeful gold seekers to the Mount Alexander goldfield. One local, Margaret Hogan (herself of another Galway family, some of whom lived for a time in Hotham), was fond in her later old age of telling her grandchildren (of whom I am one) that she had served Burke with beer. He was, she said, a man of charm and a great dancer.

In these ways, Burke's second-in-command William John Wills did not compare favourably. Wills was a doctor's son and immigrant from Devon in the south of England. Margaret, who was about eight when she saw him, always said he was dour. On arrival in Victoria as a boy, Wills had been a shepherd. As a young man, he studied surveying with Professor Georg Neumayer at the Melbourne observatory. Neumayer, one of the expedition's organisers, had great confidence in his former student who was heading off to find out whether there was a sea in the centre of Australia.

So important has the story been that some spoke of their leaving as a major event in their lives. For example, a notice in The Hobart Mercury of January 7.1937, headed

SAW BURKE AND WILLS, states that Mr. Patrick Blake, of Maryborough, 'who as a child saw the start of the ill-fated Burke and Wills expedition', had died aged 82 years. The whole affair has been variously commemorated over the years. Nearly a hundred years ago, The Argus of August 2 1918 described celebration plans: "Arrangements by the Early Pioneers' Association for celebrating, on the afternoon of Wednesday August 20 the 53rd anniversary of the departure of Burke and Wills from Melbourne on the then unfortunate mission to explore Central Australia are almost completed. The proceedings will begin at a quarter past 2 o'clock. The Lord Mayor (Councillor Hennessy) will preside and give an address. The Federal Treasurer (Sir John Forrest) will take part in the demonstration. The Secretary (Mr. W Smithers Gadd) is anxious to send invitations to the relations of the late explorers. The Early Pioneers' Association have taken the Temperance Hall for Wednesday evening August 20, when Professor Baldwin Spencer will give a lecture entitled "Across Australia" profusely illustrated by lantern slides and moving pictures." This year marks the 150th anniversary of their departure.

Lorna Hannan



The Hotham History Project Inc is a group of residents and friends of North and West Melbourne who are interested in exploring the history of this fascinating old part of Melbourne.

Committee meetings and activities are held on the fourth Tuesday of the month at the North Melbourne Library. Occasional historical walks and other events are also conducted on Saturday afternoons.

See www.hothamhistory.org.au for our events and publications.

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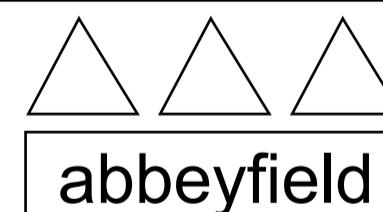
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Supported Accommodation North Melbourne

The Abbeyfield Society is a non-profit organisation which provides supported accommodation for older men and women with limited income in a number of locations in Victoria.

The North Melbourne House is conveniently located close to public transport, hospitals and other facilities. It provides a small number of bed-sitting rooms all with en-suite facilities. All meals are provided.

Abbeyfield is the perfect answer for older people who want to remain independent but who wish for increased wellbeing through support, companionship and security. Abbeyfield gives older people an alternative to living alone and to facing an uncertain housing market.

For enquiries and applications please call The Abbeyfield Society (North West Melbourne) Inc on **9329 9220**

NW & MN Ads 9328 1126

SPORT & HEALTH

Season 2010 – 2011 at the North Melbourne Pool

Summer is fast approaching which means so are the school holidays. The school holidays are a great time to get the activity ideas rolling to keep your family entertained and cool over the summer break. What better way to do this than by taking

NMRC AQUATIC FACILITY

(03) 9658 9666

1 Macaulay Road North Melbourne

Aquatic facilities are open from 1 October 2010 – 30 April 2011

OPENING HOURS:**PEAK SEASON**

1 November 2010 – 31 March, 2011

Monday to Friday: 6am – 8pm

Saturday and Sunday: 9am – 7pm

SHOULDER SEASON

1 October – 31 October 2010 and

1 April – 30 April 2011

Monday to Friday:

6am – 9am and 4pm – 7pm

Saturday and Sunday:

9am – 7pm

advantage of the aquatic facility at the North Melbourne Recreation Centre (NMRC) which commences its 2010–2011 season on Friday 1 October 2010.

The NMRC is the ideal summer watering hole to escape the heat and entertain the children for hours on end. It's summer fun for the whole family with plenty on offer during the school holidays. Events for the 2010–2011 summer include our second annual 'DJ by the pool' event which will be held in January, a dive-in movie screening in early February and weekly public inflatable sessions across the school holidays. Make the NMRC your first port of call to entertain the kids this summer.

Not only does the centre provide an array of fun events and activities for children and the whole family, it also provides aquatic education to ensure that your child has the skills to be safe in the water. Term 4 enrolments are now open for weekday and weekend classes for children aged 3 years and up. This engaging and supportive 'learn to swim' program is offered to children aged 3 years through to adults and caters for all abilities from the complete beginner with no water experience, to the competent swimmer looking to refine their technique in a squad environment.

Aquatic education participants move



The outdoor pool on the corner of Arden Street and Macaulay Road, North Melbourne

Photo: courtesy North Melbourne Recreation Centre

swimming outside lesson times is free during and between terms when you re-enrol.

So bring your family to the NMRC for some summer holiday fun!

Briony Williamson

How's your macula?

If you're reading this without too much difficulty, your macula is probably pretty healthy. But one in seven people over the age of 50 is affected in some way by macular degeneration (MD), which afflicts the central part of the vision-processing retina. MD — also known as Age Related Macular Degeneration or 'AMD', causes progressive macular damage resulting in loss of central vision. Peripheral vision is not usually affected.

There are two types of MD: the dry form, which results in a gradual loss of central vision, and the wet form, which is characterised by a sudden loss of vision caused by abnormal blood vessels growing in the retina.

MD is thought to be caused by genetic and environmental factors. People over the age of 50 are particularly at risk, though the risk is higher for those who smoke and who have a family history of MD.

Symptoms may include one or more of the following:

- Difficulty with reading or any other activity that requires fine vision;
- Distortion, where straight lines appear wavy or bent;
- Distinguishing faces becomes a problem; and
- Dark patches or empty spaces appear in the centre of your vision.

The need for increased illumination, sen-

sitivity to glare, decreased night vision, and poor colour sensitivity may also indicate there is something wrong.

Treatments are available, but options are dependent on the stage and type of the disease. Current treatments aim to keep the best vision for as long as possible and in some cases may provide visual improvement, but there is presently no cure. Early detection is vital in saving sight and in its early stages MD can be detected in an eye test before any visual symptoms occur. However, prevention is always better than cure. To help prevent the onset of macular degeneration, keep in mind the following:

- Have your eyes tested and make sure the macular is checked;
- Don't smoke;
- Maintain a healthy lifestyle, control your

weight, and exercise regularly;

- Eat a healthy, well-balanced diet. Limit your intake of fats, eat fish two or three times a week, eat dark green leafy vegetables and fresh fruit daily, and eat a handful of nuts each week;
- Consider taking a zinc and antioxidant supplement; and
- Provide adequate protection for your eyes from sunlight exposure, especially when young.

Tom Kramer

Support is available for people with varying degrees of vision loss. You can also contact the Macular Degeneration Foundation on 1800 111 709 or through <www.mdfoundation.com.au>.

Time for a cuppa...

With the growing interest in tea, people are definitely consuming it more — and with good reason too. Not only does tea have less caffeine than coffee, but it also has many powerful antioxidants as well, making each cup packed full of health benefits.

The antioxidants found in all types of tea are great and they definitely play a part in boosting your immune system. This helps you ward off infections and other nasties. Tea can also help natural weight loss as well as helping to promote younger looking skin.

There are four major types of tea categories: White, Green, Oolong and Black.

White and Green tea are said to be quite powerful as they offer stronger antioxidants than the other types. Although White tea is still fairly 'new', there is no doubt that Green tea is very popular, especially in China and Japan. Sencha is a common type of Green tea.

Oolong tea is a cross between Black

and Green tea. Apparently Oolong is helpful in aiding with weight loss as well as decreasing the progress of wrinkles and aging of your skin.

Black tea is by far the most common and is often enjoyed with milk, lemon, honey or sugar. The most popular brews are usually: English Breakfast, Earl Grey and Irish Breakfast.

An important thing to note is that even though White tea and Green tea are said to have more antioxidants per cup, you definitely shouldn't rule out Black tea. In fact the difference in the amounts of antioxidants per cup of Green tea as opposed to Black tea isn't all that much. So if you are a Black tea enthusiast and love your English Breakfast then nothing should stop you from enjoying a nice hot cup of tea.

Have a cup of tea. You'll feel so much better!

Patricia Lew

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Channelling sport to help others



Triumph as Michael Gregory succeeds in his cross channel swim

Photos: courtesy Michael Gregory

It's not everyone who gets the chance to combine a passion for sport with an altruistic desire to improve the lot of others, but local man Michael Gregory has done just that.

Extreme-sports enthusiast Michael, 47, swam the English Channel last month in the remarkable time of 12 hours and 50 minutes.

As he approached the French coast at Cap Gris Nez, near Calais, Michael was battling severe pain and distracting himself by counting the strokes of his good arm. His three support team members jumped off the escort boat into the water to swim the last 200 metres with him, but "they didn't know

that my left arm was completely useless and hurting me terribly", he recalled.

Then, just as he had imagined it, "the sand came up from the depths to meet me. Before long I was standing triumphantly on the sandy beach with my hands held high, and falling — tennis champ style — flat on my back, exclaiming 'I did it!'"

Although his trip was entirely self-funded, in the months leading up to this heroic feat Michael encouraged friends and the general public to sponsor him by donating to Oxygen Youth Health (OYH), an organisation aiming to assist young people struggling with mental-health issues.



Asked why this charity was his chosen fundraiser, before his departure for the UK in late July Michael told the *News* of his former work as a psychiatric nurse in a clinical research unit at Royal Park Hospital (before it was supplanted by the Commonwealth Games village/Parkville Gardens).

During that time he worked with the inspirational Professor Pat McGorry, current Australian of the Year and OYH's founder.

"The move from custodial and institutionalised care and towards normalising mental illness and investigating and expanding our understanding in 'first time' presentations of psychiatric problems formed a foundation for the work of OYH," Michael explained.

One in four Australians aged between 12 and 24 have mental-health disorders. Failure to recognise and treat these illnesses during adolescence or early adulthood often has lasting adverse effects on a young person's physical, social and educational development.

Even seasoned endurance athletes cannot take the English Channel lightly. Thirty-four kilometres at its narrowest point and with a summer water temperature of 14 to 18 degrees, the risk of hypothermia and fatigue, as well as the unpredictable weather, make crossing the Channel a daunting prospect. So why do it?

"The Channel was something I've always wanted to do," Michael replied. "As an open-water swimmer it is the holy grail of swims."

Now a medical services consultant, Michael has lived in North and West Melbourne for the past 17 years and loves the area. He said the North Melbourne Pool was very helpful in his training regimen — although the 400 tumble turns notched up in a 10-kilometre session made him feel dizzy!

After the pool closed at the end of April, Michael changed venue to Middle Brighton Baths for 15-kilometre 'easy' swims and sprint training while stepping up the frequency and intensity of his open-water swims, these usually two-hours-plus.

Carbohydrate-loading became a serious matter, too, with Michael highly appreciative of The Hot Poppy's cooked breakfasts. He also ramped up his intake of such delicacies as pizzas, burgers and donuts — "you name it, I eat it" — all in the interests of producing fat stores to combat hypothermia.

"You are fit enough," coach John Van Wisse told him, "just not fat enough."

By 10 July he was tipping the scales at 100 kilograms "despite swimming over 50 kilometres in the past six days". But according to personal trainer Matt McPhail, of Equilibrium Health & Fitness, the tall-statured Michael still had a fit and healthy appearance at this weight.

The completion of a six-hour swim is a requirement of the Channel Swimming and Piloting Federation for anyone attempting a solo crossing of the English Channel. Michael had accomplished his qualifying

swim without difficulty in May, plying non-stop between the Port Melbourne and Kerferd Road piers in calm water and under a clear sky.

Channel-swimming is a highly organised business. There is seemingly a never-ending queue of nervous hopefuls holed up in the sleepy port of Dover awaiting their turn to confront the deep. The federation appoints an official observer to accompany each swimmer, ensuring that he or she abides by the rules and does in fact swim the distance.

The dress code permits a one-or two-piece textile swimsuit, goggles, earplugs and a single uninsulated latex or silicone bathing cap, but no wetsuit or below-the-knee costume and, of course, no flippers. Swimmers may cover their bodies in grease to keep out the cold, so Michael's preparation was lanoline and vaseline.

Each swimmer is allocated a support boat; Michael's boat was the *Gallivant*, piloted by Mike Oram. Channel swimmers do not swim in a 'cage' as there are no predatory fish.

Michael languished a fortnight in Dover, dividing his time between socialising with other Channel aspirants, both novice and veteran, swimming in the harbour and resting at the guesthouse, where his window was frequently buffeted by wild weather. By this time his wife, Melissa, and his brother Dominic had joined him from Australia.

The go-ahead came unexpectedly on the evening of Sunday 8 August, when John Van Wisse, also escorted by the *Gallivant*, decided to abandon the third leg of his planned triple crossing because of injury. Pilot Mike Oram's words "Do you want to swim tonight?" brought the Gregory camp's nerves to fever pitch.

The upside was that Michael's other brothers were able to stay on as part of his support team. Luke and John, who had driven up with their father, Jack, from their base in Spain, had been on the point of leaving.

Ninety minutes later Dom, Luke and Melissa boarded the *Gallivant* with Michael and headed for Samphire Hoe, the starting point. John stayed behind in Dover to follow the boat's progress via the online tracker and relay Facebook messages of support to the team.

For the next nearly 13 hours it was Melissa's job to keep Michael's energy levels up with half-hourly feeds of GU carbohydrate gel, sports drinks, instant soup, fruit and warm chocolate — the last was the least helpful, mostly ending up feeding the fish. Dom and Luke ran around the boat, keeping Michael in view and shouting constant encouragement.

At the end of his epic journey Michael was full of praise for his dedicated team. "I've no doubt that without the support of Dom, Luke and Melissa I would not have been successful on the day," he wrote later from the UK. "No one does it alone."

And what next for our glutton for punishment? A week after his Channel triumph Michael had shed 3.3 kilos, 2.5 of them during the swim. Equally at home on dry land, he was hoping to lose a further five to eight kilos before the Berlin marathon at the end of September.

Contemplating his tenth marathon in four years, Michael quipped: "I need to start running ... and I don't want to break anything once I get going!"

Janet Graham

(Postscript)

Midway through August, Michael's fund for Oxygen Youth Health stood at about \$9000. To help him reach his target of \$25,000 go to http://www.mycause.com.au/mycause/raise_money/fundraise.php?id=4454 and click on *Donate to this Cause*. Donations are fully tax-deductible.

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POLITICS & ENVIRONMENT

Local candidates for November state elections

As the state election is quickly approaching, having information at your fingertips to inform you about candidates and party issues is key to making the right choice on the day. The candidates were asked to explain how they plan to improve the electorate in five key areas: education, hospitals, public transport, environment and water, and culture, sport and the arts. — Jennifer Boyce

Greens candidate



— Brian Walters

— walters@flagstaff.net.au
— (03) 9600 1422

Education

Victoria spends the least of any state per student on education. Catching up to the national average would reduce class sizes. We need new schools where population density requires them, including Docklands.

Hospitals

A vibrant city needs hospitals but subject to proper planning — with

good public transport services, and not carved out of parkland. The Greens advocate better investment in preventative and holistic health, to relieve the pressure on hospitals.

Public Transport

Save the huge cost of freeways by creating a fast and efficient public transport system. End the failed privatisation experiment. Run trains and trams every 5 minutes in peak hour and every 10 minutes at other times. Our 24-hour city needs 24-hour public transport.

Environment and water

We can convert Melbourne to renewable energy with leadership from

government. We should protect our parks from commercial encroachments and harvest storm water for use in them. We don't need the desalination plant because there are cheaper and better alternatives.

Culture, Sports and Arts

Live music doesn't cause violence. We should encourage our arts and music scene at every level. Sport would be enhanced if we removed its sponsorship by the alcohol and gambling industries.

Labor candidate



— Bronwyn Pike

— www.bronwynpike.com

Education

Labor will continue to provide schools in Melbourne with the latest infrastructure and technology, increasing accessibility and quality learning from early childhood to tertiary level studies.

Health

Labor will continue to invest in preventative health, world class hospitals, innovative research and increase funding to further reduce

waiting times for elective surgery and in emergency departments across the seat of Melbourne.

Public Transport

Labor's Transport Plan will provide people in Melbourne with accessible and reliable public transport along with a stronger emphasis on the environment by promoting alternative modes of transport and vehicle technology.

Environment and Water

Labor is committed to delivering at least a 20 % reduction in emissions by 2020 by investing in solar and renewable

energies, alternative water sources, industrial and residential conservation of resources, and the staged closure of Hazelwood.

Culture, Sports and Arts

Labor will continue to foster and develop Melbourne's vibrant arts scene and our proud multicultural identity. We will further invest in Victoria's sport and recreation from grassroots to elite level.

Liberal candidate



— Luke Martin

— luke.martin@vic.liberal.org.au
— 0402 194 310

Education

We will restore funding stripped from local Catholic schools by the Brumby Government, make Victorian teachers the highest paid in Australia, and empower principals to combat school violence.

Hospitals

In 2011 the Coalition will establish a dedicated motorcycle paramedic unit for inner Melbourne and establish a \$1 billion Health Infrastructure Fund to improve public hospitals.

Public Transport

The Coalition will make the train network safer by putting Police Protective Services Officers on every train station in Melbourne after 6.00 pm.

Environment and Water

The Coalition is committed to a long-term, sustainable water solution. I support initiatives such as recycling, storm-water capture and water tanks.

Culture, Sports and Arts

The Coalition will continue to ensure Melbourne remains the cultural, sporting and arts capital of Australia. We will restore funding to the Victorian College of the Arts.

Polling for the seat of Melbourne will be held on:

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 27
Polling booths will open at 8am and close 6pm.

Voting is compulsory for all registered voters. Registered voters failing to vote either by attending a polling booth on election day or by lodging an early vote or postal vote face a fine of \$60.

For more information go to:
[<www.vec.vic.gov.au>](http://www.vec.vic.gov.au)

We're drowning in spin about saving water.

The Brumby government tells you to save water and you do your bit because you care. But the Brumby government is not doing its bit, because it continues to allow the logging of Victoria's native forests - our precious water storages.

Logging our native forests costs us billions of litres of water every year.

Saving our native forests will save water. And from 2010, Victoria has enough plantation wood to meet our needs and create jobs.

Tell Premier Brumby to stop wasting water & protect Victoria's native forests.

Visit: www.wilderness.org.au/victoria



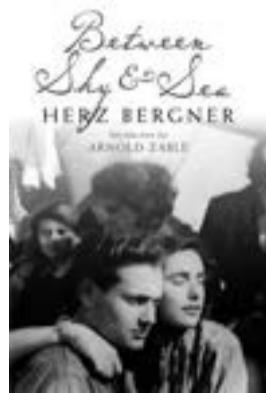
twitter.com/TWSvictoria



facebook.com/thewildernesssocietyvictoria

Refugees: past and present

Book Review



To purchase a copy of *Between Sky & Sea* go to www.textpublishing.com.au or visit your favourite bookstore

Between Sky & Sea tells the haunting tale of a group of refugees 'thrown together on board a dilapidated freighter charting a course for Australia. Fleeing terrible scenes of destruction, they are bound by a deep sense of loss and the uncertainty of their fate.'

No, this is not a story of recent migrants;

it is a re-release of a book first published in 1946. The refugees are Jewish, but the story has changed little. One could read this book and substitute the Jewish refugees with refugees from Afghanistan, Sri Lanka, or Sudan. This tale is as relevant today as it was when it was written.

As the Federal Government continues to grapple with the complex matter of refugees, it is often difficult to compose a view that is both strong and compassionate. In *Between Sky & Sea*, author Herz Bergner brilliantly paints a picture of the lives behind the politics. He demonstrates to the reader that the human side of this complicated subject is anything but simple, which makes the reader consider that the political side shouldn't be simple either.

With the federal election just completed, Gillard and Abbott's election stances on refugees were clear cut. One could easily take their stances and place them neatly in a diagram under the headings 'offshore processing,' 'temporary visa,' 'sending boats

back,' 'documentation,' and 'suspend processing' just as *The Age* did on 7 July 2010. These are easy ways to deal with refugees, but Bergner challenges the reader to see beyond the red tape and view this as a matter of humanity.

To see a refugee is to see someone who has been forced to move to another country from invasion, oppression, persecution or war. Refugees are not criminals; they are simply trying to start over again. Make a new home. Make a living. Live a life free from constant fear of violence or death.

The next time the media or politicians attempt to scare us into thinking that refugees are a problem that needs to be swiftly and simply dealt with imagine what it would be like to be forced from your home. Imagine war, famine, and destruction in what you call your neighbourhood, state and country. Imagine trying to pick up the pieces of your shattered life and trying to start over. How would you want to be treated?

Jennifer Boyce

**SUSTAINABILITY ST.
IT'S A VILLAGE OUT THERE**

Go Green at Spring Fling

Spring Fling is just around the corner. Come visit North Melbourne Sustainability Street's booth on October 24 to:

- purchase fresh potted herbs
- compost all food scraps, paper plates and paper serviettes
- register for our free monthly e-newsletter and go in the draw to win one of four books on environmental sustainability
- get details about upcoming workshops
- talk with Sustainability Street members about its activities and broader environmental issues.

Protect your environment by recycling household goods

**SUSTAINABILITY ST.
IT'S A VILLAGE OUT THERE**

We are fortunate to have a good council recycling program in North and West Melbourne for paper, glass, hard plastics and metals. There are many other items which can be reused or recycled.

Books

Bookshelves full of books you've read, enjoyed and finished with? Oznam Community Centre needs novels – airport books, thrillers, and biographies in particular.

Clothes Hangers

Wire coat hangers a plague in your life? Drop them off at Happy Hanger in Errol Street, and they'll either reuse them or pass them on to people setting up house in the area.

Corks and Aluminum Screw Tops

The elephants at Melbourne Zoo have already benefited from the proceeds of cork recycling with funds raised contributing to the new enclosure, an ultrasound machine and shade cloth. Corks can be dropped off at either zoo entrance or at any Dan Murphy's. Both accept aluminum screw tops and plastic wine stoppers.

Computers and Related Paraphernalia

Computerbank in Victoria Street, West Melbourne refurbishes computers and related items and sells them cheaply to people who need them. The website is very clear about the kinds of items they can refurbish, what they can recycle, the charges for the recycling service and what they can't help with.

Electrical Goods and Furniture

The Brotherhood of St Laurence will collect furniture and white goods including newer TVs. Call their booking line, and they will ask a few questions to determine that they can use what you have to offer and arrange a pick up. St Vinnie's works along the same lines. Food St Alban's Op Shop in Melrose Street takes donations of food for its food bank, so if your garden is overproducing give them a call. They also take non-perishable food items.

Glasses (spectacles)

Andrew Harris in Errol Street will accept your old glasses. They are used to provide glasses for people with low incomes.

Women's and Children's Clothing

Macauley Services for Women, including Regina Coeli, supports women experiencing domestic violence and homelessness.

Clothing for women and children, bedding (sheets, quilts, blankets, pillows) and toiletries are always needed. Call to arrange a donation.

Men's and Women's Clothing

Oznam Community Centre welcomes donations of clothing, particularly socks. The Salvos store in Errol Street will take anything clean and saleable including electrical goods (but not TVs). St Alban's Op Shop in Melrose Street takes donations of anything saleable.

Mobile phones and international calling cards

The Asylum Seeker Resource Centre can pass on working mobile phones with chargers to people who need them. Alternatively, old phones can be dropped off for recycling in the Mobile Muster container at the Post Office in Errol Street or for other nearby spots, check the Mobile Muster website.

Rags and Clothes in Poor Condition

If you have clothes that are too dirty or torn to be worn, there are collection bins in the car park on Curzon Street behind the Errol Street shops.

Toiletries, bed linen and blankets

The Asylum Seeker Resource Centre and Macauley Community Services for Women need toiletries such as toothpaste, shampoo and nappies. Both of those organizations and Oznam Community Centre also need bed linen and blankets.

TVs and CRT monitors

Nobody wants old TVs or CRT monitors. They can be taken to the Dynon Road Recycling Depot where for a fee they will be recycled. I have also had a great deal of success putting things out on the street with a 'free' sign, but you need to be careful you aren't causing a hazard or mess. An online way to do this is to use www.ozrecycle.com, a website that posts items available for free. You can also hold a garage sale or put it up for sale online with www.tradingpost.com.au or www.eBay.com.au.

There are two important aspects to donations that may not be immediately obvious. The first is that donating items that are not in good condition and not saleable or usable is a drain on the resources of agencies and

charities. It costs money to sort, handle, transport, store or dispose of items. Many organizations have limited storage space and that is why they ask you to call first.

The second is that when a community has been devastated, one of the best things to do is to support local businesses and buy items as close to the end use as possible. So rather than donate stuff, have a garage sale and donate the money!

A final word on the quality of your donations. People who find themselves in a position of needing to rely on donations often have little left but their dignity. It is therefore particularly precious. Please consider whether your donation will contribute to a sense of wellbeing. If not put it in the box in the Cuzron Street car park.

If you have any tips for other items or organisations please let me know at [doone@gonzo.com.au](mailto:<doone@gonzo.com.au>), and I'll pass them onto the *North and West Melbourne News* for future publication.

Doone Clifton

OUTLETS THAT MAY TAKE YOUR ITEMS TO REUSE

Contact details Asylum Seeker Resource Centre (03) 9326 6066 For details of urgent needs look up www.asrc.org.au/make-donation/donations-kind/.

Brotherhood of St Laurence 1300 366 283

Computerbank
www.computerbank.org.au

Macauley Services for Women
(03) 9261 2050

Mobile Muster http://www.mobilemuster.com.au/Where_to_hand_em_in

Oznam Community Centre Please call Virginia or Rebecca on (03) 9329 6733

Ozcycle (formerly Freecycle)
www.ozrecycle.com St Alban's Op Shop (Melrose Street) (03) 9329 9885

Vinnie's (St Vincent de Paul)
1800 621 349

Bronwyn Pike, please protect OUR water supply.

Scientific research shows clearfell logging in Melbourne's water catchments significantly reduces the water available to city residents and increases the risk of a devastating bushfire.

Across Melbourne, 15 Councils have passed resolutions calling on the Victorian State Government to ban catchment logging. This includes the Melbourne and Yarra City Councils which cover Ms Pike's electorate. Water not woodchips!



Travel with a conscience



Founder Fred Hyde with Mary-Ann Hess

All photos courtesy Felicity Jack

The greeting 'Asalam Walekum' meaning 'Peace be with you' and the reply 'Walekum Asalam' meaning 'Unto you also peace,' is the greeting exchanged in Bangladesh. On a recent trip I was constantly reminded of the importance of religion in the daily life of the mainly Sunni Muslim population, being woken early with the Azan - call to prayer - which occurs five times throughout the day. One of my enduring memories is a young boy in an orphanage we were visiting in Char Fasson chant the Azan in a, clear, confident and resonating voice. He looked around eight years old but it is impossible to make an accurate guess when boys have been undernourished, as was the case for many of these orphanage boys. Religion is a constant in a land where life and livelihood is so precarious.

Char Fasson is a smallish town on Bhola island. Travel from the country's capital Dhaka is by an overnight ferry followed by a two hour ride in a minibus — some of it well surfaced but about two thirds riddled with pot-holes — with horn blaring to warn pedestrians, cyclists, rickshaws, goats, dogs and chickens to clear the road. In 1970 Char Fasson, although several miles inland, was hit by a cyclone that devastated the area and killed between 300,000 and 500,000 people. In 1972 UNICEF established an orphanage to look after some of the children who lost their parents but it did not provide funding to its continue long term operation. It currently cares for 100 young boys from 6 to 18, of whom 20 are accommodated in the local community, the other 80 housed in

two smallish huts, two to a bed. The main building, steel and concrete, is crumbling and unsafe for the boys to sleep in. It is used as the administrative office and cowshed for the few cows which provide the orphanage with a small income — the milk is sold in the town, to the detriment of the boys' diet. The Government Social Welfare Department gives limited funding to the institution and have suggested that it close, but when the staff consulted the boys about the future of their home they wanted it to continue — hardly surprising when there is nowhere else for them to live. The boys attend school locally and receive additional tuition through two teachers employed by the orphanage. I was impressed by the work that the limited staff do to assist these boys given the limitations of finance. I sensed a real commitment to help these boys, and the fact that the Director is one of the boys who grew up in the orphanage during the 1970s is a testament to its success.

This was my second trip to Bangladesh. My first visit was with Oxfam in 2003, studying community development. It was an incredible experience so I was thrilled when North Melbourne residents Mary-Anne and Lew Hess invited me to go on a second visit. Mary-Anne was born and brought up in Bangladesh but came to live in Melbourne when she and Lew married in 1994. Lew, a social worker, had been working in Bangladesh for several years before his marriage and he now works with Foundation House (for survivors of torture). In recent years Lew and Mary-Anne have been involved in taking groups of students to Bangladesh to study community development. Mary-Anne is deeply involved in many community development projects in her birth country, but she also helps many Bangladeshis who struggle with their translocation to Australia. Mary-Anne, aided by Lew, is indefatigable in her practical and emotional support for people who are so incredibly disadvantaged.

The main purpose of our visit to Char Fasson was to visit an Australian project building schools for local communities, Cooperation in Development. The funding comes from schools and families

in Australia, and land is donated by local Bangladeshi communities who also set up a parent committee to assist the school building process and subsequent running. Since the project was started in 1992 by an Australian from Queensland, Fred Hyde, 40 schools have opened and another three are in the pipeline, together with a major project to build a vocational training centre and a teacher training college. Fred, now 89, still spends several months every year coordinating the project. The wet season brings construction work to a halt, and Fred relies on a local project manager and project supervisor to manage the running of the schools during this period.

We visited a school at Char Horish that is supported by Foundation House. It is reached by a log bridge across a small river but Mary-Anne and I were too nervous to attempt the crossing so were ferried across the river in a small boat. The school caters for both Muslim and Hindu families and there is no religious discrimination. Members of the parents committee joined us for a brief discussion. Only one of the fathers had received an education, up to grade five. He was the only one to have visited Dhaka.

Mary-Anne comes from Khulna, reached

by bus from Dhaka (about eight hours, which includes a ferry crossing of the Padma River) or train (about 11 hours as the distance is almost twice that of the road, enabling the train to cross the China/Bangladesh Friendship Bridge. Mary-Anne's grandparents were rich landlords in a village about 45 minutes by road from Khulna, and her family continues a tradition of assisting the poor and needy of the community. I visited many families suffering from hardship and poverty — particularly poor health or disability and unemployment. But there was much emphasis on education, and parents give this a high priority although school fees are relatively high.

The needs are so universal and so stark that it is difficult to decide how to help. I made a commitment to raise money for the Char Fasson orphanage to enable them to erect a third shed to reduce the over-crowding. The gratitude of the staff and management has been overwhelming.

Felicity Jack

The website for the orphanage is <<http://charfassonchildrensfund.org>>. For further information please contact me <felicity.jack@gmail.com>.



Students going home from school



Students and parents at Char Horish school



Boys at Char Fasson Orphanage

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NORTH & WEST MELBOURNE NEWS
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A taste of the outback in North Melbourne



Mark Olive

Photo: courtesy Black Olive

From the age of eight, Mark Olive knew that he wanted to be a chef.

Even at that age, happily ensconced in the kitchen with his mother and aunties, he was fussy about food presentation and knew how he wanted to put it all together.

"I remember washing and drying the lettuce, de-seeding the tomatoes and cucumbers, and arranging it all exactly as I wanted it," says Mark.

Those hours spent watching, helping and learning from his mother and aunties inspired Mark to pursue a career in cooking, and like many great chefs, he was driven by a passion for food. But for him it's not just about the flavours and ingredients, it's also about the heart and soul and how food brings people together. Sitting around the table, talking and eating, that's where the gold is for Mark.

Since completing his training in Woollongong and Sydney 30 years ago, Mark's career has taken him all over the world. From health departments and Jewish kitchens to glitzy hotel restaurants in Vegas and Rio, his experience spans the globe.

He eventually discovered another passion, this time for film, and it was while he was studying film and TV production in Melbourne in the 1990s that he came up with the idea of making a TV show about food. Inspired by the likes of Jamie Oliver, Mark's idea was to introduce indigenous Australian food to the world. The result was the Outback Café, a phenomenally successful TV show that has aired in 31 countries and sparked a curiosity about indigenous food in millions of viewers worldwide. Last screened in 2008, a new series is planned for next year, and it's the desire to balance his passions that led Mark to open a catering company.

Black Olive Catering is essentially a Monday to Friday operation, although weekend events can be catered for by arrangement. Established in Victoria Street 12 months ago, Black Olive is a 100 per cent indigenous caterer.

It's a roomy open space ideal for functions and launches, and Mark has plans to open a tapas bar there later this year. The food is best described as European meets indigenous in a contemporary style, and the dishes bear that out, with an array of tantalising creations such as tandoori crocodile, emu and rocket on rye, and lemon myrtle barramundi.

Mark's interests extend to an involvement in the Outback Pride range of indigenous herbs, spices, sauces and dressings, which feature in his TV show. This enterprise was set up to promote the Australian native food industry and provide indigenous Australians with jobs and training in horticulture and food production.

He's also a keen promoter of indigenous meats such as crocodile and kangaroo. Recognising the export potential of these lean and protein-packed meats, Mark believes that if the meat industry can overcome the 'Skippy factor' by coming up with a palatable name for the meat, then the ability to compete with beef and lamb will increase.

An article about a chef wouldn't be complete without a reference to Masterchef, and yes, Mark was invited to appear in the first season but was overseas at the time. He will be a guest on New Zealand Masterchef when it comes to Melbourne later this year.

When asked how he sees his future, one word sums it up — busy. Business expansion, TV shows and overseas travel, it's all going on. After our interview he's off to regional Victoria visiting schools, introducing a new generation to the joys of cooking outback style — which thanks to Black Olive Catering, can now be found in our own backyard.

Suzie Luddon

Black Olive Catering
Ground Floor, 480 Victoria St,
North Melbourne
Ph: 9329 3337
<www.blackolive.net.au>



The Black Olive lounge bar

Photo: courtesy Black Olive

"Chocolate is fun!"

Innovative colour mixes and a major 'opening up' of its dining area have drawn praise and increased custom from Fräus crêpes & chocolat's clientele.

"And that was at least half the reason we updated our shop's style," says joint proprietor Alex Marciano.

Alex and younger sister Sonia opened their creperie at 345 Victoria Street, West Melbourne, around the corner from Errol, early in 2004. It was reopened to great acclaim mid-2010 after the premises were gutted for redevelopment.

"Fräus — a combination of Fr(en)ch and Aus(tralian) — is our chocolate brand, so we wanted to highlight its varieties in the forefront of the business," says Sonia.

"Yes," agrees big sister Alex. "We created our deluxe premium drinking chocolate's 23 flavours here before they were refined and packed in Italy, so we wanted to showcase the Fräus brand."

And that they've done. "We've moved the cooking from the shop floor to a former kitchen out back, which allows us to display our extensive range of superb chocolates beneath a glass-topped bar showcase," says Alex, proudly.

Some six metres in length, the bar is Fräus' shop counter, housing its new coffee machine and daily fresh cakes and patisseries. The creperie's massive walls now display gigantic chocolate images, these against a white brick background. On the opposite black wall is a kaleidoscopic compilation of several dozen boxes of their hot chocolate varieties. Reaching up four metres, those

former art-gallery walls are brought back to earth by simple new furnishings set on glossy timber floors, with the Victoria Street glass facade now clear.

Fräus Creperie Pty Ltd is a family business. Their father, Sergio, and brother Marco operate its wholesale warehouse, while the girls run their redeveloped retail outlet. And run they do: these sisters' lithe bodies put paid to any fears of body-weight danger from consuming their produce.

"We've always been highly conscious that a growing number of people are choosing not to eat gluten — and some are not able to because they're gluten-intolerant — so we strictly use gluten-free buckwheat in all of our galettes," Alex stresses.

These women should know. "We've been in the restaurant business all our lives," Sonia explains. "We started work on our school holidays as serving staff in the family business ... we were born into the game!"

Alex smiles: "People are rapt when we tell them about our gluten-free products, especially with so many varieties of drinking chocolate."

But for addicts like me, ingredient compositions mean little besides luxurious flavours derived from the finest quality international cocoas. Tastes range from classic, hazelnut and tiramisu, through nougat, apple and cinnamon, zabaione and the more adventurous chilli flavour, to gianduia, coconut, pistachio and vanilla, with a dozen other scrumptious varieties thrown in. Agh, they're glorious!

Fräus' new internal courtyard now caters



The new face of Fräus

Photo: David Apostol

for small private functions. "We comfortably seat up to 30 for events like birthdays, office parties, group luncheons, even horse-racing and Christmas functions," says Sonia, adopting her marketing mode. "We've prepared a range of Christmas hampers for chocoholics, prices ranging from \$49, but these can be individualised to order ... and please order soon so you don't miss out!"

"Our range of luscious drinking chocolates can also be taken to enjoy at home

— we have them in 250g boxes, which provide 10 serves for heating in your saucepan or microwave," she gleams, "cos chocolate is fun!"

Katrina Kincaide-Sharkey

Fraus' Trading hours are:
Mon–Thurs 7.30am – 4.00pm
Friday 7.30am – 10.00pm
Saturday 9.00am – 10.00pm
Sunday 9.00am – 9.00pm

SPRING FLING 10



North Melbourne Football Club and
North Melbourne Recreation Centre

Arts House Meat Market

N

Queensberry Street

The Centre Stage

Yarra Trams Treasure Tracker starting point

North Melbourne Football Club Home Turf

Queen Victoria
Market presents
local cooking
demonstrations

On day workshops and activities

Errol Place



Errol Street

Victoria Street

North Melbourne Town Hall Arts House

George Johnson Lane

North Melbourne Library

Need assistance?
visit *The Centre*
58 Errol Street

Thread Den
presents the
North
Melbourne
Market from
10am

Raglan Street

North Melbourne

Webbs Lane

Victoria St Stage

Queen Victoria Market

Correct at time of printing. Map not to scale

Lot's more! www.springfling.org.au