

Melrose group: sharing stories through art



Melrose artists at the exhibition opening with tutor Judith Young (second from right)

Photo: Nick Lucak

Sari Wawn

The Melrose Arts and Crafts Group meets at the Jean McKendry Neighbourhood Centre every Monday.

The group held their annual exhibition at Kensington Town Hall from 27 to 29 October. The exhibition featured paintings, including still life, landscapes, bird studies and abstracts. Acrylics, oils and watercolour were all represented, with painted silk scarves also on display.

Jewellery and a variety of knitted and crocheted items were on sale. The exhibition was well attended, and there were a good number of sales. But a fair proportion of the group's

works were not exhibited, as they ended up as gifts for friends.

The Melrose artists and craft-makers have come from all over the globe and from many different walks of life. Each piece tells a story based on the artist's own experience and it is the sharing of these stories that brings their work and the group together. As we paint we are strengthening the bonds of community that are at the heart of the Jean McKendry Centre.

As part of the Art for all Cultures program, Wiradjuri artist, tutor and mentor Judith Young and her daughter Lyn-Al have been sharing their cultural practices with the Melrose group. Judith builds our confidence by demonstrating her wide range of skills and ideas.

In Judith's words: "Through art we can share

and learn from each other about culture and family. I use storytelling to talk about how we apply our markings, symbols and stories in our art. The participants are then asked to apply their own stories and symbols ... This approach makes the transfer of skills and knowledge much more fluid and enjoyable as it creates an opportunity for them to tell their stories."

Artist Dr Joanne Sullivan has also tutored the group in *plein air* painting.

The group includes both beginners like me and experienced painters. The atmosphere is informal and there is plenty of space for more people to join in. As a newcomer, I have been inspired by working and sharing with the group, and impressed by their generosity.

On Mondays the main activity has been

painting, but members have also worked with beads and mosaics. Recently a doll-maker joined the group. During the year there have also been some birthday celebrations and a visit to the Werribee Rose Garden.

If you would like to find out more, you can contact Pat on 0403 443 021, or just call in on a Monday between 10.00am and 3.00pm when you can meet the group at work. On Mondays and Wednesdays between 10.00am and 3.00pm you will find centre stalwart Wyn Mackay, ready for a chat and a cup of coffee. The address is 91–111 Melrose Street, North Melbourne.

The Art for all Cultures program will continue in 2018 and is supported by the City of Melbourne.

NOTICEBOARD



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 39th 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 and advertisements considered unsuitable or when space is limited.

Articles should be submitted by email to nwmnews@centre.org.au. Please use minimal formatting and do not embed graphics in documents. Photographs should be sent separately as JPEGs.

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News subscriptions

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Advertisement sizes and rates

60 mm W x 92 mm H	\$75 plus GST
124 mm W x 92 mm H	\$150 plus GST
188 mm W x 92 mm H	\$225 plus GST
252 mm W x 92 mm H	\$300 plus GST

A charge of 25 per cent may be added for advertisements that require designing. For more information phone 9329 1627 or email Advertising.NWMN@outlook.com *Community announcements are published free of charge.*

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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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The Centre: Janet Graham
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www.centre.org.au

News distribution team for 2017

On behalf of the *North and West Melbourne News* team, I would like to thank the committed volunteers who have helped distribute the *News* to both the local community and commuters at North Melbourne Station during 2017. Without your support we wouldn't be able to continue producing this paper, which will be in its 40th year of production in 2018! A special thank-you to:

Laurence Angwin	Brianna Faye Lugg
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Katrina Kincade-Sharkey	Dan Tutas
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Pat Lightfoot	Tim Wodetzki

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North Melbourne Language and Learning
North Melbourne Library
The Centre: Connecting Community in North & West Melbourne

Dan Tutas
Distribution Coordinator

**IMPORTANT STREET FESTIVAL NOTIFICATION
NORTHSIDE COMMUNITY CHRISTMAS PICNIC
Road Closure Notification
Friday 8 December 2017 3.30pm – 11.00pm**

On Friday 8 December 2017, the following road closure will take place between 3.30pm and 11.00pm for the Northside Community Christmas Picnic:

- ☐ Errol Street closed to all traffic between Queensberry Street and Purcell Street.
- ☐ Traffic in Queensberry Street and Purcell Street will not be affected.
- ☐ All public transport in the area will operate as normal.

Residents and traders located in the affected portion of Errol Street will have no vehicle access between 3.30pm and 11.00pm. Access will be reopened to traders and residents within the precinct after 11.00pm or when it is safe to do so.

For further enquiries about the traffic management of this event please contact the North & West Melbourne Precinct Association on northwestmelbourneprecinct@gmail.com or the City of Melbourne Strategic Planning and Logistics Coordinator on 9658 9729.

This is a free, all-inclusive community event and everyone is invited to come along and join in the Christmas festivities.

We apologise for any inconvenience caused by the Northside Community Christmas Picnic and look forward to celebrating with you.

Kind regards
North & West Melbourne Precinct Association Inc

Christmas Services in North and West Melbourne



**St James Old Cathedral, Anglican
Corner King & Batman streets,
West Melbourne (opposite Flagstaff Gardens)**

Sunday 17 December 10.00am Nine Lessons and Carols with *The Old Cathedral Voices*
Sunday 24 December 10.00am Advent 4 Holy Communion;
11.00pm Christmas Eve Holy Communion
Monday 25 December 10.00am Christmas Day Holy Communion

**St Mary Star of the Sea, Catholic
Corner Victoria & Howard streets, West Melbourne**

Sunday 24 December 10.30am Mass (English); 12.00 noon Mass (Lithuanian); 6.30pm Christmas Vigil Mass; 11.30pm Carols followed by Solemn Midnight Mass
Monday 25 December 10.30am Mass of Christmas Day; 12.00 noon Mass (Lithuanian)
Saturday 30 December 12.30pm Mass (English); 6.30pm Vigil Mass
Sunday 31 December (The Holy Family) 10.30am Mass (English); 12.00 noon Mass (Lithuanian); 10.30pm New Year Eve Mass
Monday 1 January (Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God) 12.30pm Mass (English)
Saturday 6 January 12.30pm Mass (English); 6.30pm Vigil Mass
Sunday 7 January (Solemnity of the Epiphany) 10.30am Mass (English); 12.00 noon Mass (Lithuanian)
Monday 8 January (Feast of the Baptism of the Lord) 12.30pm Mass (English)
From Tuesday 9 January follow the normal St Mary's timetable

**St Mary's, Anglican
Corner Queensberry & Howard streets, North Melbourne**

Sunday 3 December 6.00pm Advent Evensong
Sunday 17 December 7.00pm Carol Service
Sunday 24 December 10.00am Eucharist; 4.00pm Kids' Christmas; 11.30pm Midnight Mass
Monday 25 December 9.00am Christmas Day Sung Eucharist

**St Michael's, Catholic
456 Dryburgh Street, North Melbourne**

Sunday 24 December 6.30pm Christmas Eve Mass
Monday 25 December 10.15am Christmas Day Mass

**Saints Peter and Paul, Ukrainian Catholic
35 Canning Street, North Melbourne (corner Canning & Dryburgh streets)**

Thursday 14 December 7.00pm Carols by Candlelight in the cathedral grounds
Sunday 24 December Divine Liturgy 8.00am (Ukrainian), 9.30am (Ukrainian), 11.30am (English)
Monday 25 December 10.00am Divine Liturgy (Ukrainian)
Saturday 6 January 5.00pm Great Compline
Sunday 7 January Ukrainian Christmas 8.00am (Ukrainian), 10.00am (Ukrainian/English)

**Uniting Church, Mark the Evangelist
51 Curzon Street, North Melbourne**

The congregation meets in the church hall, 4 Elm Street
Sunday 3 December 10.00am Eucharist Service
Sunday 10 December 10.00am Eucharist Service
Sunday 17 December 10.00am Eucharist Service
Sunday 24 December 10.00am Advent sequence of readings, Advent carols, choral pieces and Eucharist
Monday 25 December 9.30am Christmas Day Service with Eucharist
Services in January at the usual time of 10.00am

NORTH MELBOURNE LIBRARY EVENTS

Spanish Christmas Storytime, Tuesday 5 December, 10.30am
Summer Reading Club, 1 December to 31 January

Last Book Group meeting for 2017 ☐ 18 December
Favourite book this year / favourite book group book this year

North Melbourne Book Group titles for 2018
Group meets third Monday of every month at 6.00pm

15 January	<i>Wimmera</i>	Mark Brandi
19 February	<i>Tin Man</i>	Sarah Winman
19 March	<i>The Life to Come</i>	Michelle de Kretser
16 April	<i>Eleanor Oliphant is Completely Fine</i>	Gail Honeyman

All welcome ☐ no bookings required
Contact the library on 9658 9700 for enquiries
North Melbourne Library, 66 Errol Street, North Melbourne

COMMUNITY

Phonse Tobin Awards for community champions



Left to right: Rotary president Manjula Pragasam with Phonse Tobin awardees Anne Shepherd, Arshi Abdi, Hamdi Mohamed and George Te Whaiti

Photos: Neville Page

Neville Page and Stuart McArthur

Next year will mark the 25th anniversary of the Annual Phonse Tobin Awards, created in honour of Phonse Tobin, former member of the Rotary Club of North Melbourne and former president of the North Melbourne Football Club. The annual event recognises his contribution to the community of North Melbourne and continues his legacy by honouring volunteers who actively serve their community.

This year's awards, held on 12 October, were presented to four highly dedicated volunteers recommended to the club by sporting, cultural and educational organisations in the North Melbourne area.

Close to 100 guests attended the presentation this year. Among them were members and friends from the Rotary Club of Southbank who moved their meeting night to coincide with the event and continue a strong partnership between the two clubs.

Other attendees included our former district governor, Neville John, and the wife of the current district governor, Anne Frueh. Guest speaker for the night Peter Hollingworth spoke of his early days in North Melbourne as a parish priest, and how the area presented challenges to social inclusion as it does now. The awards were also attended by representatives of the nominating organisations and by Tobin Funerals, who sponsored the event.

North Melbourne Rotary would like to expand the event next year, by partnering with other Rotary clubs in our district that want to recognise people in their communities who make a difference. As the 25th year of the awards, it is sure to be an event to remember.

For further information, about nominating someone for future awards or just for information about the North Melbourne Rotary Club, please email secretary Neville Page at page@ghp.biz or president Manjula Pragasam at manjulapragasam108@gmail.com.

Awardees this year were:

Hamdi Mohamed
Volunteer at The Huddle



The Huddle is a program developed by North Melbourne Football Club (NMFC) in association with the Scanlon Foundation and the Australian Multicultural Foundation to improve social cohesion in the North Melbourne community by addressing the causes of disengagement among young people. With the support of over 200 volunteers, the club helps young people to build their lives and their identities and use football as an avenue for connecting communities.

Hamdi came to Australia in 2011 at the age of 15, sponsored by her sister, and is inspired to help young people overcome the challenges they face within their community.

Hamdi has provided administrative support for Indigenous programs run by The Huddle in Hume. She also volunteered in excursions to the beach and the Australian Open Tennis where she supervised younger participants, and generally lends a hand whenever needed. She currently provides invaluable support to the Careers Pathway Programs by helping out at reception and through informal tutoring, sharing her experience of looking for work

and her administrative and business skills with other students.

As half of the volunteers in The Huddle are under the age of 25, the partnerships that NMFC and Rotary can forge with leaders like Hamdi will help connect our organisations with the next generation of leaders.

George Te Whaiti (pronounced Te Fighy)
Volunteer at Hotham Mission

Hotham Mission provides community support for disadvantaged, vulnerable and marginalised people in and around North Melbourne, Flemington and Kensington.

George, formerly a resident of Ozanam House — emergency accommodation for men in crisis — has given back to the community by working collaboratively with services that provide support for those experiencing long-term homelessness in the North Melbourne area. He is also a much-loved member of this community and each week leads the music program at the centre, encouraging others to express themselves positively through music.

Originally from New Zealand, George knows what it's like to be homeless and what it's like to have to ask for help obtaining food. His passion is helping ensure that families can be looked after and be encouraged to find their way out of homelessness and poverty.

His role also involves inspecting donated fruit and vegetables, so that a level of dignity and respect is reflected in the quality of the food.

Arshi Abdi
Volunteer for Somali Women's Development Association

The Somali Women's Development Association Inc is a non-profit organisation formed in 2003. Based in Kensington, the organisation aims at creating positive change for Somali women and young people. By focusing on human rights through social development and

advocacy, the association's members promote multiculturalism and social cohesion. They offer support for women and young people 24 hours, seven days a week.



Arshi had been injured in Somalia and like many others came to Australia as a refugee. Moving to Australia is often a huge culture shock, which becomes even more complex for women when their male partners have difficulty in changing from a male-dominated society to one of equality.

Arshi's role at the association includes volunteering as treasurer.

Anne Shepherd
Retired child psychologist at Simonds College

A retired child psychologist, Anne Shepherd is the longest serving volunteer — since 2012 — at Simonds College. As a clinical psychologist she has worked with youths including those with specific learning disabilities, sometimes observing classroom behaviour in order to guide and advise teachers and students.

Anne contacted the school through Mercy Connect, which was started by the Mercy Sisters to recruit and train volunteers who work in Australian schools. At Simonds College, Anne's preference is to work with Year 7 and 8 students in humanities and English classes.

Improving Errol Street ... slowly but surely

Jack Lewis

Shoppers and visitors will be relieved that a new public toilet has at last been installed beside the men's urinal in the Errol Street shopping precinct.

This was one of several items recommended in a survey conducted by the North and West Melbourne Association at the Spring Fling Festival in October 2015 and shown on a site plan proposal. There is now a unisex toilet large enough to provide wheelchair access.

Another item on the 2015 survey was the need to improve safety for pedestrians crossing Errol Street. Respondents to the NWMA survey strongly (55 per cent) supported the need for the shopping precinct to be safer and more pedestrian friendly.

It is safer now that the white line markings have been improved in the central tramline area, and we look forward to the installation of 40 km/h signs in Errol Street with the rollout of the new speed limit.

What is really needed is a physical means of making speeding drivers aware that pedestrians have priority. This might be achieved by installing road humps, or alternatively a strip of textured roadway (perhaps made of bluestone blocks matching the gutters) located beside the pedestrian crossings at the Queensberry and Victoria Street ends of the Errol Street shopping precinct.

One of the shopkeepers' suggestions in the survey was implemented in September 2016, with Yarra Trams replacing the old uneven tramlines that produced loud screeching noises as trams negotiated the tight corners. However,

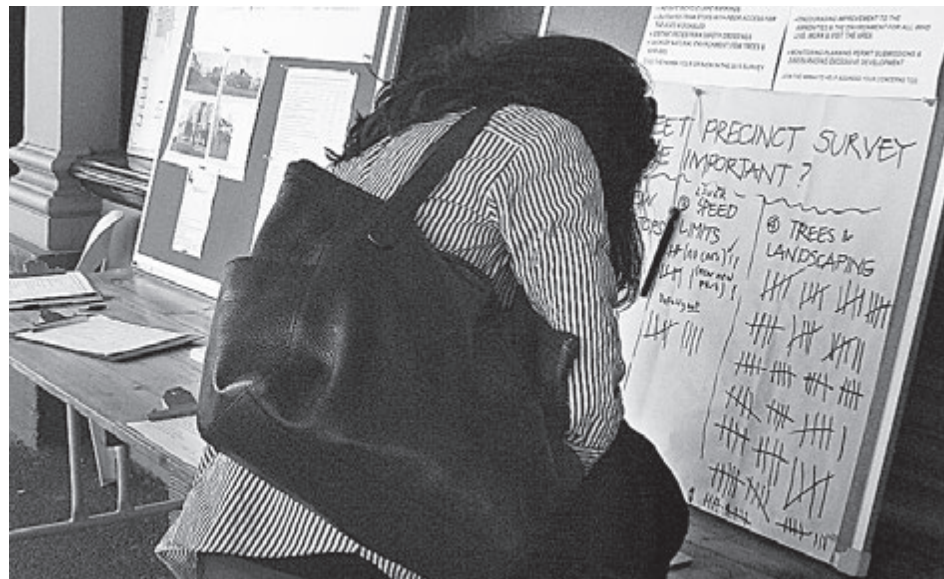
disabled access at the tram stops has not been introduced as exists in other shopping strips along Victoria Street in Abbotsford/Richmond and along High Street, Northcote. In the Association's survey 65 per cent of respondents supported this idea.

The highest priority item on the straw poll held at the 2015 Spring Fling, however, with 256 votes for 'trees and landscaping', was that trees be planted in our shopping area to provide shade in hot weather and a far more pleasant environment. This should occur at regular intervals on both sides of the road in Errol Street and in the parts of Victoria Street where they are lacking.

The trees could be located on the paving near the kerb where the verandas are missing and in the road area where the verandas extend out to the kerb. The loss of present car-parking space would be minimal. It would be most beneficial for the North and West Melbourne community and the many visitors to the area if the City of Melbourne's 'greening' policy were implemented here.

Also recommended was an improvement to the general street environment, which is currently dominated by dark bitumen paving. This applies particularly to the area around the Arts House, post office and library, where the paving could be extended.

Landscaping proposals should be developed including these and other improvements, presented to the community for feedback, and constructed as soon as possible after approval. Then we could catch up with the standard that has existed for decades in most other shopping precincts in the district!



The NWMA survey and straw poll at Spring Fling 2015

Photo: Janet Graham

VERY IMPRESSIVE

Hello all

I'm terribly naughty, completely missed my submission date. It's been a difficult time for me since my last column.

Our latest fairy godchild (Harlow Eden Laderman), whom I've had great difficulty not thinking about — absolutely no idea how her parents have been able to cope — had her memorial garden opened on 11/11/17 and I did want to include here more writing from her mum. Maybe next time. But here's my reaction to a friend of her parents naming a star after her.

A star. A star. A star.

Harlow is a star.

Harlow was always going to be a star in my life. Harlow is now a star in my life. Harlow is now a star in all our lives.

And Isy Laderman has *always* been a star of my life.

Glow. Glow. Glow. Twinkle. Went. Our Harlow.



27/08/17

A competition is underway to name the five new CBD stations. But with a review panel to avoid Silly Names.

Personally I like Boaty McBoatface. More attention being drawn to Arctic research by naming a boat thus cannot possibly be a bad thing. It's a good look in this sometimes annoyingly serious world.

(Today's news, 14/11/17: Sydney Harbour's addition to the fleet has been named Ferry McFerryface. Clearly there wasn't a review panel on that one.)

29/08/17

What's really caught my eye in today's media is two men in a boat in Western Australia who were visited by a friendly whale. They filmed the friendly whale and its antics for over an hour.

Makes me wonder how friendly they could've been before humans taught them to be wary and frightened of us. Oh what a world we've created.

15/11/17

Amazing marriage survey result!

7,817,247 for, 4,873,987 against. And now apparently same-sex marriage is to be legal by Christmas because PM Malcolm Turnbull has told MPs to "get on with the job".



Crowds all over Australia have celebrated this result, with Victoria second to the ACT with almost 65 per cent of eligible voters saying yes. A total of 61.6 per cent of the Australian people have said YES! to gays like me being able to marry. Congratulations to all of you who voted, on yes and no sides.

I've been in favour of gay marriage my entire life for many reasons. But a main one would be that the respect and rights that marriage can entail are crucial for my queer community. I know that I've lost far too many friends from their not having that sense of belonging and community.

Although Australia is now the 24th country to make this momentous change happen, the world has not fallen into societal collapse and/or zombie apocalypse. Clearly that's worth \$122 million.

To end, I'd like to quote the magnificent John Waters, repeated on a sign I made for a marriage rally seven years ago: "Marriage, it's not what I want. But I think it's worth fighting for." It was given to a teenage girl at the end of the rally in Federation Square.

Yours, Very Greer Impressive

ADAM BANDT MP

FEDERAL MEMBER FOR MELBOURNE

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Authorised by D. Lawson, 296 Brunswick St, Fitzroy VIC 3065.

North and West traders to 'sell' themselves

Katrina Kincade-Sharkey

Retailers in all sectors agree: markets need constant reminders of product quality and its ready availability. Buyers must be aware of their own 'needs', so sales remain comfortably repetitive for all in the trading chain.

But we consumers are a fickle lot, with constantly changing likes and those last-minute, desperate desires. You know what I mean: last season's styles/concepts/tastes (especially tastes!) in cameras or cars, in chardonnay or clothing, in cell phones or cinema, are so Old Hat, and those spectacles ... ugh!

We inner-Melburnians are incessantly 'trendy' in so many market spheres — just ask our shopkeepers, our restaurateurs, our hairdressers or greengrocers, even our hoteliers and petrol-station franchisees. Those people need to meet eternally changing markets of education and visual awareness, of health consciousness and other ad campaigns.

They need to meet this market head-on to have any hope of business survival.

North and West Melbourne Precinct Association members have traded here from just one month to 50 years' duration. Aged from 20 to 75 years they represent this region's glorious socio-economic mix, so fully comprehend our specific wants and needs.

That disparate NWMPA group uniformly agrees local traders are able to meet most consumption needs and desires, given the chance. Their common, quite critical problem is that much of their potential market doesn't know they exist.

Simon Goodrich, 37, runs Portable, a digital design and technology company "proudly born in Melbourne, Australia", to quote its web page, which continues: "For over a decade Portable has been at the forefront of design and technology, working with governments, businesses and entire organisations to drive change."

Now operating with 10 employees at the repurposed Tre-sur Knitting Mills in Collingwood, Goodrich's Portable began its design journey in his North Melbourne home studio, following his graduation with a Bachelor of Geomatic Engineering and Urban Planning from the University of Melbourne.

Goodrich has specialised in digital planning for 12 years. "We work with teams of people to specify root causes of problems for core purpose companies," he explains. "They may be local governments or not-for-profit bodies like the local Precinct Association. We'll do their website design and marketing campaign strategies undertaken in branding workshops, among other tools."

This young man is acutely controlled and deliberate in his care and concern for his home base: "I've lived here for 17 years and, person-

ally, I've always been very passionate about the North and West Melbourne area," as are most of our readers.

So Goodrich presented the Precinct Association's 30 October meeting at the North and West Melbourne Legion's clubrooms with his patent recognition that this area needs its own image, an atmosphere, a local identity to distinguish itself from wider Melbourne's other regions.

"There were 27 attendees — a number I'd like to see trebled or quadrupled to around 100 in a couple of years," he says. That's not so ambitious, given the several thousand businesses registered locally.

"Like I said, that disparate group came from a massive socio-economic cross, so they'd certainly 'talk to' most market sections, but North and West Melbourne does not have a distinct image when presenting itself to the outside world," he groans, rubbing his coffee cup.

"We're not Lygon, or Chapel and certainly not the CBD, yet we have aspects of all three — just no patent image," he recognises.

NWMPA engaged Portable to research and evaluate ideas from local residents and businesses about how they'd like this area portrayed. The designers are utilising images with a historical base — even pre-European settlement — along with integrated public housing, reflecting a French-village mentality, yet with wide, treed streets and easy access to the CBD.

They'll also utilise our 'true grit' image born



of this area's semi-industrial history, mixed with the friendly ambience of Queen Victoria Market and its 57 tram access, all heightened by this neighbourhood's comfortable 'walkability'.

"Of course, this region's progression was pivotal in the political consciousness, while the local arts awareness has always been celebrated in the Fringe Festival and at our local arts space, the Meat Market," he says, gently thumping the coffee table.

"That historic image was close to most people's hearts," he continues. "Our challenge now is to distil those images into a way to promote this area to the wider community."

Simon Goodrich says there's only a certain amount that the City of Melbourne and different State Government departments can do to promote this area, so the Precinct Association has to take charge. Let's wish them luck.

Precinct Association has a Christmas picnic!

Tatiana Echeverri

Once again the North and West Melbourne Precinct Association (NWMPA) is taking over a space to share with the community, this time to celebrate Christmas.

The Precinct Association conducts a growing calendar of events and promotional activities during the year for the benefit of the wider community. Among its aims are to provide local support and leadership for the area's businesses and foster relationships between them and local residents, while improving the everyday lifestyle and security of everyone who lives and works here.

In doing this it hopes to create a positive and forward-looking image of our community for visitors to the area.

Most recently, the NWMPA made an enormous contribution to the Spring Fling Street Festival as a major sponsor, providing a main stage for performers to entertain visitors throughout the day.

The next event in the schedule is a Christmas evening, an activity that aims to bring together members of the community of all ages and from different religious and cultural backgrounds to share and celebrate the end of the year.

On Friday 8 December our streets will come alive with Christmas cheer as the second NWMPA Christmas celebration takes place right in the heart of North and West Melbourne. Street entertainment will take off from 5.00pm ready to get you in the Christmas spirit.

Whether you bring a picnic and settle in with the family or pop by for some delicious takeaway options and a quick glimpse of the festivities, you're sure to have a merry time!

Event name:

Northside Community Christmas Picnic

Date: Friday 8 December

Time: 5.00pm – 10.00pm

Location: Errol Street between Queensberry Street and Purcell Street

Program overview

Family entertainment: Kids' performers, comedy and music

Santa Claus appearance: At the small entertainment area on the grass, Santa will tell a short Christmas story and hand out small gifts
Christmas carols: Errol's Angels Community Choir singing Christmas carols along Errol Street

Open-air cinema: Projecting a family movie with a Christmas theme

Local traders' activities and promotions: NWMPA members and other local businesses will conduct Christmas-themed activities and hand out giveaways

Music: Enjoy beats and tunes from some local buskers

Comedy: An MC will make sure the entertainment zings

Raffle: Take part in a Christmas raffle, with the proceeds donated to a local community charity

Find out more about the activities and entertainment in our social media and on the website at www.northwestmelbourne.com.au and bring the family and friends along for an evening full of fun.



The Precinct Music Stage at Spring Fling: 'That Gold Street Sound' with Ned on baritone sax

Photo: Jim Weatherill



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Abbeyfield House celebrates 20 years

Liz Clifford

The Abbeyfield House in Brougham Street recently celebrated 20 years since the first residents began to move in.

Abbeyfield houses were first founded in Britain after World War II, to provide affordable accommodation to independent older people, and the style of housing has spread internationally, arriving in Australia in 1981. Houses are managed by local volunteer committees, while a paid housekeeper provides meals.

The North Melbourne house is unique because it occupies the former Methodist church, which was no longer required and was in danger of becoming derelict. A group of concerned locals saw the opportunity to create a

much-needed housing option for older people and to save a historic landmark.

After considerable work and with support from Melbourne City Council, the State Government and philanthropic funds, the building was redeveloped to provide separate rooms for 10 residents, a kitchen, laundry and lounge rooms over three levels.

Since the house opened it has provided a home to some 36 people, one of whom has been living there since late 1997.

On Thursday 26 October the anniversary was celebrated with an afternoon tea at the house. We welcomed family and friends of residents, together with past and present staff and committee members, and were particularly pleased that two founding committee members, Mike Roche and Beth Stevenson, were able to join us.

Both Mike and Beth contributed to the

success of the house over many years, while also volunteering their services for other organisations.

Other special guests included the acting CEO of Abbeyfield Australia, Dimitri Kiriakoulacos, and John Lawrence from the board of Abbeyfield Australia.

Ellen Sandell, our State MP for Melbourne, attended the afternoon tea, met with residents and enjoyed a guided tour of the house by two of the residents.



From left, Beth Stevenson, Mike Roche and Ellen Sandell MP cutting the special cake

Photo: Ada Bombardieri

Liz Clifford is secretary of the Abbeyfield House committee.

‘Macaulay’ update

Rohan Leppert,
Greens Councillor for Melbourne

After five long years, new land use and built-form controls were approved for the north-west corner of North Melbourne in October by the Planning Minister.

Planning Scheme Amendment C190 (part 1) rezones industrial land to mixed uses and applies new height controls, ranging from 4–6 storeys along Melrose Street to 9–12 storeys west of Boundary Road. Height controls are coupled with significant setback requirements to facilitate welcoming streets.

While the endorsement of this amendment provides some certainty for all parties at last, the minister threw in two surprises.

The first is that the built-form controls have a two-year sunset clause, meaning that there will be another round of planning scheme amendment and public consultation processes. Though frustrating and a significant resourcing burden on Council and the community, this could be a good opportunity to improve the controls, particularly in relation to affordable housing.

The second surprise was a nasty one — Council’s request to rezone land abutting Moonee Ponds Creek to ‘public park and recreation’ was not approved. Some VicTrack land in Kensington on Stubbs Street remains ‘industrial’, meaning that plans for public access to and rejuvenation of the Moonee Ponds Creek remain elusive and difficult.

While development controls have been lifted, new and improved open space commensurate with the needs of a growing community is still clearly inadequate.

While Council can make improvement around the edges — such as the Kensington Station park I secured in the previous term of Council, or the Gardiner Reserve expansion that Councillor Oke and I have secured this term (shovels in the ground this financial year!) — the State Government needs to co-ordinate its ministries and agencies if Moonee Ponds Creek is going to be the vibrant and healthy open-space corridor that we, and future populations, need it to be.

I have written in more detail about the new planning controls and where to from here, available at www.tinyurl.com/MacaulayUpdate

Light Up! — an inclusive approach to church



Washing feet is a sensory, caring liturgical activity

Photo: St Mary’s Anglican Church

Josephine Snowden

In 2015 St Mary’s Anglican Church on Queensberry Street began a new service — Light Up! — designed to appeal to those with sensory and related challenges, for whom regular church services are often difficult. Light Up! took place at 3.00pm on one Sunday each month.

In 2017 we are pleased to report back to the community on how this initiative has developed.

At St Mary’s we have two traditional services every Sunday, one at 8.00am and one at 10.00am, the latter being a Sung Eucharist. Light Up! now runs at 10.00am on the first Sunday of every month, in tandem with the more formal service, in the relaxed, safe environment of our newly refurbished parish hall.

Light Up! is an adapted service of ‘Prayer, Praise and Proclamation’. This worship service focuses on calming sensory experiences for relaxation, prayerful meditation and reflection through the senses, including the sense of touch, colour and movement with inspirational music.

We use visual and auditory prompts to guide worshippers through the service, and try to meet the physical and sensory needs of all participants. We aim to be less reliant on language than more traditional services.

In 2015 Light Up! began with a focus on

children, but it has now evolved to give unconditional welcome to adults as well. Participation in this service is possible according to ability and desire, with children and adults equally valued. Younger worshippers are active in leading some parts of the service, which encourages relationship building and learning together across our differences in age and ability.

Light Up! finishes at 10.45am, so those who wish to receive communion have time to move across to the main church building. Some choose to stay behind for art and craft. Both congregations (Eucharist and Light Up!) meet for morning tea and our monthly parish community luncheon afterwards.

Light Up! is proud to share the 2016 vision of the Faith Communities Council of Victoria. We play our part in ensuring that people are not marginalised in worship through disability. Light Up! is a place where difference is embraced through the principles of justice, equality and love.

St Mary’s Anglican is on the corner of Howard and Queensberry streets, North Melbourne. For further information please contact lay minister Josephine Snowden at lightup@st-marys.org.au or visit us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/lightupatstmarys



Zone changes in Macaulay as approved by the Minister for Planning

Graphic: City of Melbourne

Hairdressing with heart at Children's Hospital

Kelly Eng

In our busy, stressful lives, insignificant things — a cold latte or a parking fine — can be infuriating. It's always helpful to get some perspective, and when it comes to getting perspective there's nothing like the thought of a seriously ill child.

Three years ago Malvern hairdresser Fiona Payet was given the opportunity to open a salon at the Royal Children's Hospital servicing staff, patients and the public. Her very first client was a paraplegic boy whose mother had to wheel him into Salon Royale on his bed.

From that moment, Fiona made the decision not to charge any patient, and her unfailing kindness has seen her help over 700 children.

She's supported hundreds of families along the way and has been with them through some tough times: seven-year-old Adam, who had weekly 'dates' with Fiona while undergoing two major heart operations; Audrey, whom Fiona treated to a surprise ride in a pink stretched Hummer after the patient underwent a heart transplant; and a teenage girl who enjoyed Fiona's pampering after she emerged from a coma following a traumatic car accident.

Fiona feels that working at the hospital has changed her. "It's a huge eye-opener to work in this environment," she says. "I used to have clients complain they needed more hairspray. The kids here are inspiring — they're so strong. They teach you not to sweat the small things."

It's easy to see that Fiona is a much-loved fixture at the hospital. She remembers everyone's name and her salon is a hub of activity. Passing staff members get Freddo Frogs, young patients say hello and Fiona talks to parents about how their children are progressing in their treatment.

Fiona's compassion extends to the many parents and carers too, some of whom are going through their hardest times. "They're amazing people — it can be so lonely for them staying here. I sit them down and I say 'I'm going to do your hair and I'm not taking no for an answer'."

Sadly, some of the children Fiona meets do not make it.

"I've been to funerals and that's tough. But it's a privilege to work here. I've been touched by so many kids and I feel like I've been put here for a reason.

"The kids might be sick but they're always



Fiona with patients in her salon at the Royal Children's Hospital

Photo: Kelly Eng

happy. I get a hug and a kiss, they write me cards, offer to sweep the floor and send me photos ... it all makes my day."

Salon Royale's Facebook page shows the many families that have benefited from Fiona's support and friendship.

Narelle writes: *Fiona you're an incredible woman. I don't know how Stacey would have coped with the effects of illness without your support and encouragement. You have the*

biggest heart of anyone I know, thank you for looking after the kids. We may be gone but you're not forgotten.

Fiona loves her job and hopes she can remain at the hospital for as long as possible so she can continue to support the kids, though it's not easy being a one-woman small-business owner.

"My aim is to keep my doors open as long as I can," she says.

You can support Fiona Payet in the following ways:

- Book an appointment with Fiona at Salon Royale, ground floor, Royal Children's Hospital, 50 Flemington Road, Parkville, on 9349 4362 or at www.salonroyale.com.au
- Contribute to Salon Royale's rent at www.gofundme.com/hairdresserwithheart
- Share this story so that Fiona's enormous contribution can be recognised.

Will the big Abbotsford Street public housing redevelopment deliver for its residents?

Dan Stubbs and John Mangan

Residents of Abbotsford Street public housing now earmarked for redevelopment are concerned that they will be forced to change their children's schools, that they may not be able to return, and that if they can return they will be faced with grossly inadequate parking.

Inner Melbourne Community Legal (IMCL), which provides assistance to the most vulnerable members of our community, has urged the Victorian Government to minimise disruption to the Abbotsford Street tenants and vigorously defend their interests in the development scheme.

The service urges the government to commit to at least maintaining the volume of public housing in the redevelopments.

When a public housing estate in Carlton was recently redeveloped, despite expectations that social housing would increase 10 per cent, the number of public housing tenants actually decreased by a third from 510 residents to 341. Similarly, a Kensington redevelopment in 2012 saw a 35 per cent decrease in the number of social housing properties from 694 to 444.

The service also urges the government to ensure that residents' children are able to continue their schooling without disruption. The Department of Health and Human Services has committed to paying reasonable relocation costs and giving existing tenants first priority to return once the redevelopment is complete, but it remains likely that tenants unable to find nearby accommodation will have to change their children's schools at least temporarily.

With the closest primary school, North Melbourne Primary in Errol Street, at capacity it may not be possible for the children to secure

places on their return to the neighbourhood.

Similar concerns exist regarding Abbotsford Street's local secondary school, University High, whose website states: "Those families that move out of our zone will be expected to relocate their children to their new neighbourhood school."

In a submission to the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, Inner Melbourne Legal argues that, with a social housing waiting list of over 50,000 applicants, questions should be asked about the wisdom of selling public housing land to developers.

"We note that the Carlton estate sales revenue was projected to make in excess of \$300 million for its developers — Australand," the submission says, urging the State Government to focus on meeting increasing demand for social housing.

IMCL cites Lucy as an example of a client they have assisted who lived in public housing

and had to wrestle with considerable fines due to limited car parking. Having dealt with serious family violence, homelessness and mental illness, all while caring for four children on her own, she found stable accommodation in public housing.

There was parking provided for tenants only, but often people who didn't live in the housing used their car park, forcing Lucy to park on the street and incur ever-increasing fines, which she struggled to pay from her Centrelink benefits. The legal service was able to assist her to get a street parking permit and go on a payment plan for her fines, but is understandably concerned about housing redevelopments that might increase pressure on parking.

Dan Stubbs is CEO of Inner Melbourne Community Legal. John Mangan is on its committee of management.



North and West Melbourne Association

NWMA 50th anniversary dinner

The Association celebrated its 50th year in grand style on 25 October with the help of two other local institutions. The City of Melbourne Bowls Club provided an excellent venue for the 55 NWMA members and friends who attended, and Amiconi Restaurant catered with a delicious three-course meal.

A highlight was the guest speaker, the Hon Richard Wynne, Planning Minister and Member for Richmond, who reminisced about North and West Melbourne's earlier days and some past political shenanigans. NWMA chair Kevin Chamberlin, who grew up in North Melbourne and Parkville, responded in similar vein.



Minister Richard Wynne addresses the Association's 50th anniversary dinner

A number of attendees also had memories going back to the 1950s and '60s and the talks sparked many lively conversations around the tables.

Guests also had a second opportunity to watch the rolling slide show of heritage photographer Graeme Butler's 1982–83 photos, this time on the Bowls Club's big screen. These, and the personal reflections supplied by NWMA members and superimposed on the images, prompted further discussion.

Spring Fling Festival 2017

The NWMA had another very successful day at Spring Fling, engaging festival-goers with plans and handouts on the major planning proposals in the pipeline affecting North and West Melbourne. The slide show of Graeme Butler's photos (see above) had its first screening on a monitor in the library window. This was another drawcard.

The Association's stall again had plants — mainly succulent cuttings — for sale, as well as packets of seeds, sprays of herbs and seed potatoes. There was a busy trade in the huge pile of donated second-hand books selling for 50 cents each. Proceeds will be shared between the Association and the North West Patch community garden venture.

Congratulations go to Michael Walker in his first year as The Centre's event manager for Spring Fling.

West Gate Tunnel Project (WGTP)

The WGTP Inquiry and Advisory Committee has completed its report and the Planning Minister and his department are now deliberating.

Even before the official hearing into this controversial project began, there were press reports that claims about the economic and traffic benefits had been distorted or misrepresented and the disadvantages ignored.

Arguments against the WGTP presented at the panel hearing include:

- The WGTP would compromise strategic planning for the E-Gate and Arden urban renewal sites. The proposed elevated Wurundjeri Way extension between Dynon Road and Dudley Street across the E-Gate site would expose West Melbourne to an unsightly road structure with probable decreased air quality and increased noise levels.
- Off-ramps at Dynon Road would see peak traffic conditions expand in parts of West Melbourne and North Melbourne to almost the whole day. As the City of Melbourne finalises its West Melbourne Structure Plan, the projected increase in vehicle numbers, such as 5000 more in Hawke Street, casts a cloud over the whole structure plan.
- The proposed network of overhead roads connecting CityLink over Moonee Ponds Creek would adversely affect the creek's health and biodiversity. The potential for this site as a linear park has been greatly exaggerated, for both wildlife and humans, as the site is isolated and public access would be limited.
- The huge elevated Footscray Road construction would create a physical and visual barrier to any links between future developments in this area.
- The proposed veloway is unattractive, unsafe for cyclists and subject to unhealthy vehicle emissions from the road above. With a width of 4 metres and no 'escape' route, there would be insufficient room for fast cyclists to overtake slower ones safely with riders travelling in both directions.
- Exit ramps beside the Maribyrnong River would compromise the open-space corridor that serves as a valuable walking, cycling and recreation area along this major waterway.

Abbotsford Street Estate renewal

Two inquiries into the Department of Health and Human Services' plan to upgrade nine public housing estates across Melbourne are taking place concurrently.

Planning Panels Victoria appointed a Social Housing Renewal Standing Advisory Committee to receive submissions and assess the proposals for all sites, including Abbotsford Street, North Melbourne. Meanwhile there is a Legislative Council Inquiry into the Public Housing Renewal Program, which has a wider scope and broader terms of reference than those for the Planning Panels Victoria hearings.

We believe the Abbotsford Street plans have been rushed, with poor notification to tenants and their neighbours, putting undue pressure on the community to respond. We further contend that this project should not proceed until the Parliamentary Inquiry has presented its report, due in March 2018.

The City of Melbourne's submission to the Standing Advisory Committee for Abbotsford Street upholds many of the community's objections, including:

- There should be significantly more open space and tree cover on the site.
- The "tower-and-podium morphology" to Abbotsford and Haines streets is out of context with street interfaces and the local neighbourhood.
- The suggested footprint and height (nine storeys) for the site denoted 'For Educational Purposes' are "inappropriate on this site for any use".



NWMA chair Kevin Chamberlin speaks at the dinner

Photos: Bridget Macwhirter

- It is misleading to show this triangular area as 'green'.
- The Development Plan Overlay (DPO) should have a preferred maximum height of five storeys across the entire site.
- The interface to Molesworth Street should have a maximum of three storeys, additional storeys being limited to two with a minimum setback of 10 metres.

The Association's submission, however, goes further, arguing that a lower height limit of 11 metres, or three storeys, should be imposed in accordance with the recent residential zoning for this area. Other concerns are discussed elsewhere in this edition of the *News*.

NWMA meetings and contact details

Association meetings take place on the third Tuesday of most months at the Bastow

Institute in Queensberry Street. We often have interesting guest speakers. This year there have been presentations from the City of Melbourne (CoM) on the Queen Victoria Market redevelopment, the draft West Melbourne Structure Plan and the Gardiner Reserve expansion project, and we met the CoM Placemaking and Engagement team.


We also heard from Jenny Smith, Council to Homeless Persons CEO, and Rob McLeod from Adam Bandt MP's office, standing in for Ellen Sandell MP, who had been detained in Parliament.

The next NWMA meeting will probably be on Tuesday 20 February 2018. Check our website at www.nwma.org.au or email info@nwma.org.au for information.



The NWMA team at the Association's Spring Fling stall

Photo: Jim Weatherill




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A public toilet for North Melbourne

Valerie Gerrand

This is a good-news story. After many stops and starts, North Melbourne now has a 24-hour, public unisex toilet in the Errol Street precinct.

The toilet is located in Queensberry Street, alongside the existing public urinal on the corner of Errol and Queensberry streets. The facade is heritage green, similar to that of the urinal, and the decoration is almost identical.

Excavation for the toilet's installation began in mid-October. However, the campaign for a toilet goes back nearly 20 years. It was initially prompted by the 1998 closure of the underground public toilet at the intersection of King and Hawke streets. That toilet was installed in 1938 but by the late 1990s was deemed unsafe. However, local residents did not support the proposed alternative sites: above-ground in the same location, or across the road next to the cenotaph.

The closure meant that North Melbourne's main shopping precinct no longer had 24-hour public toilet facilities for both sexes. The only options left were the heritage-listed male urinal on Queensberry Street (built in 1909), opposite the town hall, and the male and female toilets in the library.

However, the library's hours are irregular as on most days it does not open until 10.00am (or later on Fridays and Sundays) and closes at 5.00 or 6.00pm. In addition, after the North Melbourne Town Hall became a dedicated Arts House, its facilities were no longer accessible to the public.

Local residents and traders agreed on the need for a 24-hour public toilet, and a campaign gathered momentum. From 2003 to 2009 and beyond, two local residents, Lorraine Siska and Alba Gatto, took turns in leading the advocacy for a new toilet. They were backed by the North and West Melbourne Association (NWMA), often in conjunction with the North and West Melbourne Precinct Association (NWMPA).

In 2003 the NWMA sent a petition to the City of Melbourne (CoM) with around 100 signatories requesting a new public toilet. They wanted a toilet situated next to the heritage urinal in Queensberry Street. An indicative design was provided by Alba Gatto's partner, Alan Ashley, but the proposal got no traction with the CoM.

The NWMA and the NWMPA in 2008 again pursued the need for a public toilet for North

Melbourne. An above-ground toilet for North Melbourne was approved in the CoM Public Toilet Plan for 2008–13, with construction indicated for 2012–13.

In 2009 the CoM proposed that a 'silver bullet'-style Exeloo be provided in Queensberry Street at the intersection with Leveson Street. This proposal was knocked back by the NWMA on several grounds: the location was too far from the main shopping strip in Errol Street and too close to a very busy intersection; the surrounding street lighting was inadequate at dusk and night-time; and finally, the silver-bullet design was out of keeping with the green heritage facade of the nearby urinal.

The CoM's response was that as this proposal was unacceptable North Melbourne would have to wait another four years before a different design would be forthcoming!

By 2014, as there had been no further CoM action, the NWMA made yet another request for a new public toilet. This was repeated in 2015 by the author of this article, followed by a formal submission signed off by Kevin Chamberlin as NWMA chair. The NWMPA also supported provision of a toilet. And many respondents to an informal survey undertaken by the NWMA at the October 2015 Spring Fling agreed with the site being adjacent to the urinal, but not with a silver-bullet-style Exeloo.

Approval finally came in February 2016 for the toilet to be included in the 2016–17 budget. At last it seemed that the CoM was becoming more attuned to residents' needs.

In October 2016, local traders were informed that a new public toilet would be provided, with the project to start in March 2017. On 21 June we had the first hint that the project was on the home stretch, when the CoM sent Jane Poynter, NWMA secretary, a photo of the new toilet.

To our amazement, it was sitting on an Auckland wharf awaiting shipment to Australia. That was the first time we realised the loo had been fabricated 'across the ditch'.

By August 2017 we had confirmation the toilet was ready for installation, but excavation did not start until October. At that point, several residents were ready with their cameras. At times we caused consternation amongst contractors, who needed reassurance that our enthusiastic snapping just followed many years of waiting for the toilet.

At the time of writing this article, the final date for the toilet to become operational is not yet clear, but its appearance after such a long campaign is very welcome.



1: The Exeloo on an Auckland wharf awaiting shipment, 21 June

Photo: courtesy City of Melbourne

2: Digging up and removing the concrete, 17 October

Photo: Valerie Gerrand

3: Preparing the site, 17 October

Photo: Janet Graham

4: The kiwi has landed! 24 October

Photo: Helen Lew Ton



2



3



4



5



6



7

5: Pushing the loo into place, 24 October

Photo: Helen Lew Ton

6: Plumbing in, 24 October

Photo: Janet Graham

7: Smiles all round, 24 October

Photo: Janet Graham

8: Settled in for the night, 24 October

Photo: Peter Gerrand



8

Season's
Greetings

from



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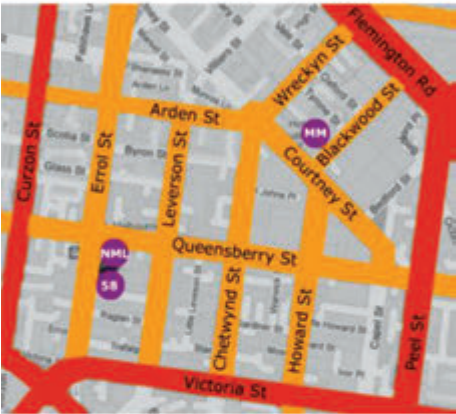
Dr Alan Underwood

THE CENTRE



The Centre Courses Term 1, 2018


www.centre.org.au
admin@centre.org.au
Office Hours:
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Tuesday to Friday 10.00am to 3.00pm
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19 December to 7 January inclusive*
Classes follow school term dates
unless otherwise stated




The Centre
58 Errol Street, North Melbourne VIC 3051
Tel: (03) 9328 1126

North Melbourne Library
66 Errol Street, North Melbourne VIC 3051
Tel: (03) 9658 9700

The Meat Market
5 Blackwood Street, North Melbourne VIC 3051
Tel: (03) 9329 9966



Docklands Hub
80 Harbour Esplanade, Docklands VIC 3008
(near the corner of Bourke Street — look for the giant rabbit)



ART AND CRAFT

Art Therapy
Time: Tuesday 1pm – 3pm
Cost: \$137 / \$108 concession*
Venue: 58 Errol St, North Melbourne

Photoshop and Your Photography
Time: Tuesday 10am – 12 noon
Cost: \$137 / \$108 concession*
Venue: 58 Errol St, North Melbourne

COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

Centre Adventures (Day Field Trips)
Time: Fourth Tuesday monthly
9am – 5pm
Cost: \$41 / \$31 concession* #
Meet at: 58 Errol St, North Melbourne

Drop-in Morning Teas
Cost: \$4 per session
Time: First Tuesday monthly
10am – 12 noon
Venue: 58 Errol St, North Melbourne

Errol’s Angels Community Choir and Beginners Singing
Time: Thursday 7pm – 9pm
Membership: \$173 / \$106 concession* per term
Venue: Maternal & Child Health Centre, 505 Abbotsford St, North Melbourne

Spanish Language
Time: Tuesday 6.30pm – 8pm (five-week program)
Cost: \$173 / \$106 concession*
Venue: 58 Errol St, North Melbourne

Volunteer and Internship Program
We have a wide range of structured learning opportunities for everyone, for example:

- Spring Fling Festival, third Sunday in October annually
- Spanish Language Fiesta, second Saturday in April
- Writing and editing *NWM News*
- *News* distribution
- Tutoring or teacher’s aide
- Office and business administration
- Venue and facilities management
- Community development work
- Business promotion and development
- Other events

Time: Must enter into a regular commitment
Venue: 58 Errol St, North Melbourne

EMPLOYABILITY AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

Asthma Management or Anaphylaxis Management or First Aid or Food Handling
Time: 9am – 4pm quarterly (two sessions with pre-reading)
Cost: \$155, \$108 Food Handling
Dates: Once each term subject to demand
Venue: 58 Errol St, North Melbourne

Conservation and Land Management – Certificate II
Time: Wednesday 9.30am – 3.30pm
Cost: \$1232 / \$555 concession* plus \$650 additional cost for field trip
Venue: 58 Errol St, North Melbourne

Core Skills for Work – Vocational Preparation
Time: Monday 10am – 12 noon
Cost: \$137 / \$108 concession*
Venue: 58 Errol St, North Melbourne

Education Support: Teacher’s Aide or Certificate III
Time: Wednesday 9am – 3.30pm
Cost: \$1552 / \$727 concession*
Venue: 58 Errol St, North Melbourne

Event Management
Time: Monthly and term options available
Cost: \$65 / \$55 concession* or free internship
Venue: 58 Errol St, North Melbourne

Venue and Facilities Management
Time: On-the-job training
Cost: \$65 / \$55 concession* or free internship
Venue: 58 Errol St, North Melbourne

Journalism, Media and Printing
Time: Monday 1pm – 3pm
Cost: \$137 / \$108 concession*
Venue: 58 Errol St, North Melbourne

Retail Operations *NEW*
Time: Friday 9.30am – 3.30pm (five sessions)
Cost: \$65 / \$55 concession*

Train the Trainer
Time: Monday 6pm – 9pm (three sessions)
Cost: \$475 / \$375 concession*
Venue: 58 Errol St, North Melbourne

FOUNDATION SKILLS

Career Planning and Advice
Time: By appointment
Cost: \$99 / \$55 concession*
Venue: 58 Errol St, North Melbourne

Home Away From Homework Club
Primary (Grades 4–6)
Time: Wednesday 3.30 – 5pm
Secondary (Grades 7–12)
Time: Tuesday 3.30 – 5pm
Cost: \$37 / \$27 concession*
Venue: North Melbourne Library

Open (Grades 4–10)
Time: Thursday 3.30 – 5pm
Cost: Free to City of Hobsons Bay residents
Venue: Altona North Community Library

Management Studies: Business Communications or Compliance Frameworks or Understanding Workplace Documents and Processes
Time: Wednesday 12.30 – 3.30pm or 6pm – 9pm
Cost: \$137 / \$108 concession*
Venue: 58 Errol St, North Melbourne

Financial Literacy
Time: Monday 1pm – 3pm
Cost: Free for those sleeping rough, others \$55
Venue: 58 Errol St, North Melbourne

Job Seeker Skills
Time: Monday 1pm – 3pm
Cost: Free for those sleeping rough
Venue: 58 Errol St, North Melbourne

Basic Skills
Time: Friday 1pm – 2pm
Cost: Free for those sleeping rough
Venue: 58 Errol St, North Melbourne

Return to Study and Study Support
Time: Friday 1pm – 3pm
Cost: \$99 / \$55 concession*
Venue: 58 Errol St, North Melbourne

Self-development Short Courses: Human Resources for Small Business Quality Customer Service
Time: Wednesday 6pm – 9pm (two sessions)
Cost: \$99 / \$55 concession*
Venue: 58 Errol St, North Melbourne

HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Active at Any Age
Time: Second and third Tuesday monthly #
10am – 12 noon
Cost: \$41 / \$31 concession*
Venue: North Melbourne Library

Pilates:
Venues: ¹The Meat Market, Blackwood Street, or ²The Legion, Little Errol Street (behind The Centre)
Cost: \$190 / \$139 concession*

Beginners
Time: Thursday 5.30 – 6.30pm¹

Exercise for Older Adults
Time: Wednesday 10.15 – 11.15am²

General Classes for any level
Time: Tuesday 5.30 – 6.30pm¹
Tuesday 6.30 – 7.30pm¹
Wednesday 9.15 – 10.15am²

Intermediate
Time: Thursday 7.30 – 8.30pm¹

Intermediate Plus
Time: Thursday 6.30 – 7.30pm¹

INFORMATION, DIGITAL MEDIA AND TECHNOLOGY


Information, Digital Media and Technology
Time: Monday 10am – 12 noon
Wednesday 10am – 12 noon / 1pm – 3pm / 6.30pm – 8.30pm #
Cost: \$137 / \$108 concession*
Venue: 58 Errol St, North Melbourne

Computer Skills: INTEL® Easy Steps
Time: Wednesday 1pm – 3pm
Cost: \$137 / \$108 concession*
Venue: 58 Errol St, North Melbourne

Drop-in One to One Sessions
One-on-one training arranged with instructor
Time: By appointment, bring your own device(s)
Cost: First four hours \$108 and thereafter \$56 per session
Venue: 58 Errol St, North Melbourne

Introduction to Technology
Bring your own iPad or iPhone or laptop to class to learn.
Time: Wednesday 10am – 12 noon / 6.30pm – 8.30pm #
(four sessions in group setting)
Cost: \$108 / \$56 concession*
Venue: 58 Errol St, North Melbourne

* subject to conditions
subject to staff–student ratios



Home Away From Homework Club

at The Centre: Connecting Community in North & West Melbourne Inc.


Home Away from Homework Club is a part of the North and West Melbourne community that cares about young people, their potential and their futures.

The program is committed to principles of *Right to learn*, *Personal responsibility*, *Inclusion*, *Positive discipline*, *Respect*, *Diversity*

You can be part of that too!

To find out more about the Homework Club visit centre.org.au/homeworkclub

Please take a few minutes to learn about us, to join our community and to donate to our campaign on *Top Tutors for Top Kids!*





Musicians shine on the Impact Busker's Stage

Photo: Marg Huxtable



What a great day for the Spring Fling!

Photo: Jim Weatherill



Lenggok Geni Indonesian dance troupe

Photo: Manatosh Chakma



Winner of Best Trick in the Spring Fling Dog Show

Photo: Janet Graham

Spring Fling shines again!

Michael Walker

Errol and Queensberry streets came alive for the 40th Spring Fling Street Festival on Sunday 15 October. Produced annually by The Centre, it was, as always, a great time for the North and West Melbourne communities to come together and celebrate their diversity.

With local and statewide community groups, such as the Homelessness Action Group, SalamFest and of course the Lost Dogs' Home, the festival kicked off at 10.00am and went well into the afternoon, with officials having to curb patrons' enthusiasm at 6.00pm.

The Precinct Music Stage was buzzing all day with the beer garden in full swing. Pop-up Park was a new initiative this year. The Pop-up Park saw recycled and donated materials turned into a place for kids and big kids-at-heart as they tried their luck at the multitude of games on offer! Mini-golf, bowling, giant jenga and quoits were all highly competitive, tempered by much laughter, talking and smiles all round.

Right alongside the Pop-up Park was the second annual Melbourne stARTers Market. It was fantastic to see the next generation of artists, designers and collaborators showcasing their wares and their art.

Entertaining Errol Street was a vast array of different stallholders and vendors. A unique activation this year was the Kooinda Long Bar. In conjunction with Wonky Trolley, the bar expanded along Errol Street to create a hub away from the main action. With music flowing from the Impact Events Buskers Stage, it provided the perfect opportunity to settle down with one of the classic combinations: beers and burgers.

Queensberry Street, now dubbed Harmony Street, lit up with colour and movement. This year, both United and Melbourne Filmoteca proudly supported the designated Multicultural Hub. Throughout the day you could hear the beats of some amazing cultural artists from around the world.

NB Dance showcased their dazzling Bollywood moves while Lenggok Geni entertained

the crowd with some numbers from our Indonesian neighbours across the sea. With these and many more performers, vendors and activities, Harmony Street was a resounding success.

Of course, the perennial highlight — the Spring Fling Dog Show — delivered once again. The seating at the Alexkarbon Community Stage in the north section of Errol Street was completely packed, with children sitting on the ground in front. Spectators witnessed four lucky — or clever — dogs take out their categories, with two runners-up in each division. Most Obedient, Best Costume, Owner/Pooch Lookalike and Best Trick entrants had everyone clapping.

Special guest Charles Bongiovanni acted as MC, local judges made hard decisions, and pet shop The Paw Principality provided prizes. The Alexkarbon Community Stage also hosted local groups, including Errol's Angels Community Choir, school groups and some local up-and-coming bands.

To help celebrate the 40 years of Spring Fling, Public Record Office Victoria transformed George Johnson Lane into a walking history book. This memory lane helped inform and educate visitors about North and West Melbourne's past and, of course, the Spring Fling.

With the sun beaming down all day, great tunes pumping, and plenty of local community groups and vendors, the 40th Spring Fling Street Festival was a fantastic day out for all ages. We'll see you next year!

Many thanks to our wonderful volunteers who kept the festival running smoothly and to our very generous sponsors who helped make the 40th Spring Fling Street Festival such a success: City of Melbourne, North and West Melbourne Precinct Association, Alexkarbon Real Estate, Yarra Trams, the Office of Multicultural Affairs and Citizenship, Flexicar, City West Water, Suitcase Rummage, Kooinda Brewery, Wonky Trolley, United Spanish Latin American Welfare Centre, Melbourne Filmoteca, Prop & Pose Co, Nova 100, Aesop, TRAPT Bar & Escape Rooms, Native Title Services Victoria, CLOC Musical Theatre and many more.



Lauren with The Centre's Ball of Friendship

Photo: Jim Weatherill

Melbourne Filmoteca: lights, camera, passion

Andrea Vela

Spring Fling lit up North and West Melbourne on 15 October and the Melbourne Filmoteca crew were there to share our passion for Spanish and Latin American culture and film. We were able to meet lots of energetic Spanish speakers and fellow cinephiles.

If you missed our last screening, make sure you don't miss *Magallanes*, the closing film in Filmoteca's 2017 season at ACMI, on

5 December. It's about a taxi driver, formerly a Shining Path officer's military assistant, who crosses paths with an Indigenous woman who sparks a fire in him.

Starring Magaly Solier, who delivered a stunning performance in *The Milk of Sorrow* (*La Teta Asustada*), this film promises not to disappoint. The ticket includes a complimentary drink and great conversation!

¡Nos vemos! — See you there!

Check out the website at www.acmi.net.au/events/magallanes/

Spring Fling Festival and United: 40 years of community service

Andrea Vela

For United Spanish Latin American Welfare Centre to be part of the Spring Fling Festival 2017 was a wonderful opportunity to engage with the community by promoting our services, activities, members' program and the best of our Latin culture with activities designed to bring the community together.

We had a stall at which Spanish-speaking visitors had the opportunity to tell us about their needs and suggest ways to improve our services and create new ones to support the community. Some people took fun pictures using Latin props with our photographic activity; others shared their traditions and heritage with our team.

By the end of the day we had a list of 15 needs identified by the community, the top seven being: services for elderly people; educational programs and workshops; therapeutic-psychological support services; sport activities; information on job offers and applications (résumés, letter presentation and interviews); activities and services for people with disabilities; and information about life in Australia.

United shared a special time with North and West Melbourne locals who tried to break the piñata, and with La Descarga, the only traditional Afro-Colombian music ensemble in

Melbourne. Everybody enjoyed the explosive percussion, South American flute and marimba and the colourful dancing. La Descarga pays tribute to the music and dance traditions of Colombia's Caribbean and Pacific coastal regions.

About United

We are an experienced not-for-profit organisation that provides culturally and linguistically appropriate community services to the Spanish-speaking community of Victoria. We have supported many people since 1977 through a variety of programs and services including aged-care services, education services, tax assistance and children's play groups.

Further information from:

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Melbourne Filmoteca at Spring Fling

Photo: Melbourne Filmoteca



Photo: courtesy United Spanish Latin American Welfare Centre

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Different Voices, Common Goals — a community art exhibition

Lorraine Siska

On a slightly chilly Saturday night a small band of people set up an art work in the arched wall running along Errol Place, ready for a viewing by the many people who attended Spring Fling on what turned out to be a lovely spring day.

These painted panels were the result of many workshops that about 50 people had attended over the previous two months. With the theme *Different Voices, Common Goals*, this was a community-based art project exploring the notion of community, connectedness and belonging.

The Homelessness Action Group, which is made up of member organisations that represent people who live and work in the local area of North and West Melbourne, identified

these workshops as a way of bringing diverse people together. With a grant from the City of Melbourne, community artist Dan Waters was engaged and Maria Keon was appointed project coordinator.

The aim of this project was to increase the community's understanding of each other's experiences and promote harmony and acceptance. Those taking part included local residents, people experiencing homelessness and life challenges, and various ethnic groups such as the Chinese community and students, and the Muslim and African communities.

Dan encouraged participants to free-draw on all sides of large cartons locked together and then colour shapes in vibrant pastels. Finally, out came the paints, with gold, pink and blue being very popular and splashed on liberally!

In the last couple of workshops the various panels were cut up and laid out to form pat-

terns and connections. Dan, with some regular members of the painting group, built frames to attach the mural into the Errol Place arches.

The project achieved its aims and a diverse community with many voices reached a common goal with the culmination on the day of Spring Fling! The exhibition attracted many viewers who expressed their appreciation. The workshop journal was on display with pages of photos recording the many phases of the project.

As a result of these workshops, the Homelessness Action Group has identified a need for ongoing art projects within the community where anyone can participate.

The next step in this project's journey is to have sections of the *Different Voices, Common Goals* mural digitally printed, graffiti-proofed and professionally mounted as a permanent display on a wall in the local area.



The *Different Voices, Common Goals* mural in Errol Place with (left to right) Alex Brown, project coordinator Maria Keon, Shane Broadway and Miki Brown

Photo: Jim Weatherill

#TopTutors ForTopKids thank you!

Frances McMillan

Thank you to everyone who has generously supported the #TopTutorsForTopKids campaign for Home Away From Homework Club in 2017. We have raised \$2000, which will help ensure this vital program continues for the communities of North and West Melbourne into the foreseeable future.

The kids and tutors are especially grateful for this support and have put a short video on YouTube, which is a highly recommended watch (search 'Home Away From Homework Club Thanks You!').

Here is a short excerpt from our Chuffed campaign page explaining what Home Away From Homework Club is about and our goals in providing the best education possible for the people of the future:

Home Away From Homework Club is a project run from The Centre: Connecting Community in North & West Melbourne Inc. It is a uniquely successful homework program providing educational support to the diverse student body of the inner north area of Melbourne. Currently we support 70 students who face obstacles to their positive connection to, and achievement at school. To offer this educational support we maintain a pool of 30 well trained tutors to work alongside the students.

In fact Home Away From Homework Club succeeds precisely because of our strong, highly skilled and very motivated volunteer tutors who give of their time and expertise every week to make a positive impact on the learning experiences of our young people.

This does not happen by magic ... we spend a lot of time and effort making sure we recruit, train and induct the best people possible from all walks of life, all kinds of educational backgrounds and all ages. However the benefits of their work are staggering and incalculable. We watch the children grow in confidence, develop stronger literacy and numeracy skills, demonstrate improved social skills and increasingly take personal responsibility for their learning and behaviour. It is certainly worth the investment!

If you would like to contribute to the #TopTutorsForTopKids campaign, please visit our Chuffed page to donate. We would really appreciate any donation and this will make a difference to the lives of our young, inspiring students and the amazing tutors who give up their time every week to help them excel.

Visit chuffed.org/project/hafhc-top-tutors-for-top-kids-2017 or follow our hashtag #TopTutorsForTopKids



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COMMUNITY

Residents About Integrated Development

Marg Leser

Residents About Integrated Development — RAID@3051 Inc — is a North Melbourne-based community group that is primarily focused on integrated and long-term planning for urban renewal in North Melbourne and surrounding areas.

Increasing urban developments bring an increasing population. In turn, this creates an increasing need for schools and community-based health services and community infrastructure such as public transport, traffic management, parking spaces, recreational facilities and open areas.

North Melbourne has already been altered by large-scale developments. Through strong involvement by residents and local councillors, many of these changes were welcomed as opportunities for creating new community facilities and services. For example, in 1973 local residents formulated a Citizens Action Plan for North and West Melbourne with detailed plans for integrated development, while advocating for citizen participation in the local planning of buildings, services, traffic movement and transport.

With population growth, changes in building stock provide opportunities for urban renewal and the forging of new community connections. Therefore, before any development is approved, the statutory authorities must bring a committed focus to integrated planning and community needs.

Envisioning medium to long-term development in the area, the Arden-Macaulay Structure Plan was formulated by the City of Melbourne (CoM) in consultation with the community. Information on the status of the plan is available at www.participate.melbourne.vic.gov.au/ardenmacaulayc190 or see article on page 6.

Woolworths site development (Arden Gardens)

RAID was formed in 2011 by residents concerned about the overdevelopment proposed by Woolworths in the residential area bounded by Macaulay Road, Vaughan Terrace and Canning Street, North Melbourne. Despite strong opposition by residents on the grounds of height, density, proposed hours of packaged liquor sales and projected traffic impact, VCAT dismissed all objections.

Before construction began, RAID met with key CoM personnel and then with the site developer, Hickory, to discuss the impact of construction on residents, including the issue of traffic management. Hickory representatives said they would communicate with residents interested in receiving updates or concerned

about site construction issues. Those residents should contact ardengardens@hickory.com.au

The permitted hours of construction site work within the CoM are Monday to Friday from 7.00am to 7.00pm and Saturday from 8.00am to 3.00pm. Any work outside these hours requires an out-of-hours permit to be issued. Workers are permitted to be on site before this time but must not undertake any building work. Any issues can be reported to the CoM on 9658 9658.

Residents are experiencing the effects of trucks queueing before 7.00am, the noise of cranes starting up in the early morning and access to footpaths and streets being restricted. Council's failure to effectively and consistently monitor construction activity has left residents feeling angry and concerned about pedestrian safety.

In mid-November, RAID members are meeting with representatives of council and Hickory to ensure effective site monitoring and communication with residents about the construction and its impacts.

Abbotsford Street public housing estate redevelopment

RAID supports increased appropriate social housing but notes that the proposed redevelopment of housing stock will be largely private housing and will increase social housing by only 10 per cent. RAID does not support the site being reclassified from residential to mixed use. RAID maintains that the interests of the community are not served by selling public land and that entrusting private developers with provision of public housing has serious drawbacks.

RAID believes that this site could be developed to appropriate standards at relatively low cost. We are also concerned that the proposed design allows site overdevelopment, excessive height, inactive street frontages and overshadowing of existing streets and of future open space. All this will have a deadening effect on the local neighbourhood.

The proposed height of the new buildings is starkly out of scale with the existing urban environment, in particular with the low-rise, fine-grained, 19th-century streetscape on the north side of Molesworth Street.

RAID supports the Melbourne Planning Scheme Municipal Strategic Statement's direction to maintain residential and mixed-use areas in North Melbourne while ensuring that "infill redevelopment and extensions complement the architecture, scale and heritage values of the residential area, especially where it is in a Heritage Overlay" (clause 21.16–5).

We are concerned that children who live in houses with pocket gardens or in flats with no gardens should have access to outdoor



A suburban park near Bonne Nouvelle metro station, Paris

Photo: Marg Leser

play space at ground level. RAID is therefore against a high-rise school model. The substantially increased population envisioned in the site redevelopment will place additional pressure on already overstretched public infrastructure including schools, open space, playgrounds, recreation facilities, trams and bus services.

European cities such as Paris and Berlin demonstrate that integrated development is achievable. Clear planning for new buildings and redevelopments enables scale and heritage to be complemented, with neighbourhood play parks and communal facilities included in residential developments.

Impact of Transurban's West Gate Tunnel Project

The Minister for Planning is currently considering the report of the independent panel established to receive submissions and assess the effects of tunnel design, construction and operation.

Residents have expressed concern at the projection that some 18,000 cars per day would be fed into North and West Melbourne, potentially negating the significant millions spent by CoM on reducing traffic in the area. Vehicles coming off the toll road would further congest the inner city and impede trams and buses servicing the rest of Melbourne.

This proposal comes at a time when many other major cities are restricting cars from entering their downtown areas. London and Singapore, for example, impose a fee on drivers who enter those areas. North and West Melbourne have much to lose if this project proceeds in its present form.

Stakeholder engagement

RAID is strongly committed to engaging stakeholders to achieve integrated development in our local community.

We are urging the CoM and state planning bodies to secure a range of open spaces in all future developments. RAID supports CoM's plans to expand Gardiner Reserve and continues to lobby for the provision of a community hub in the Hotham Hill area and in all new precincts. RAID is seeking additional traffic-calming measures to make the area safer for pedestrians.

Contact and connect with RAID@3051

RAID welcomes residents' involvement in a range of roles and invites all interested community members to join and share their skills. For further information about RAID, or to become a member and receive our e-newsletter, email raid3051@gmail.com, access our website at www.3051-integrated.com or follow us on Facebook by searching 3051 RAID.

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EDUCATION & TECHNOLOGY

Halloween and horror stories haunt HAFHC

Frances McMillan and students

The Halloween theme in Term 4 has seen students excel in their creative writing and drawing, which is part and parcel of the activities in the Home Away From Homework Club.

We consistently encourage students in the primary group to draw and write creatively and freely as a way of developing and improving their literacy skills. Here are some fine examples of the efforts they make when they have finished their homework tasks. The stories are placed in a raffle box and the students have a chance to win a prize if their story is one of five drawn out of the box at the end of term.

The ghost and the zombie

by Shadi, Year 4

A ghost told the zombie to throw a knife at the man but the ghost accidentally dropped the pistol and the trigger pulled back and shot a little boy.



The storm

by Aisha, Year 4

I was in bed, the storm outside was terrific. It was so hard to sleep and I was starting to get quite scared. Everyone else in the house was asleep except for me. I started to sweat and I could feel the tears in my eyes trying to escape. I could hear the bin lids slapping against the wind and the trees smashing against the fence in the backyard. Suddenly I heard the front door open and there were footsteps coming towards my room. There was a girl who had been shot and blood everywhere.



Matos, the little girl

by Najla, Year 4

Matos was a little girl. She was a little girl who loved looking in a mirror. Then suddenly she got bigger and ugly, then turned into a monster. Her family didn't need her any more so they threw her off the Eiffel Tower.



Monster Drive

by Dylan, Year 4

One day at Monster Drive, a man ran up and entered the huntsman house. The zombie who was sleeping opened the cupboard and got an arrow lodged in his head. At the end Miss Creep jumped down and ripped his brains out!



Electric library, the future vision

Ian Truong

For as long as the concept has existed, the word 'library' has evoked the image of row upon row of bookshelves. However, the vision of what a library might look like in the near future is starting to turn into reality.

Books are gradually being replaced by electronic devices, and some people believe these will actually enhance learning ability. So is the library evolving into something different, where there will be fewer books and more services available on screen?

The shift from traditional print to digital content is inevitable. With the number of

printed books being reduced to make way for digital versions, book publishers are foreshadowing how our future library and bookshop will look.

In 2010, former Google CEO Eric Schmidt claimed that the volume of information human beings created every two days was the same amount that we produced from the beginning of civilisation up until 2003. Statistically, it is equal to five exabytes, or 5 billion gigabytes! Leaving aside the secondary data generated by these five exabytes, the information worth archiving would consume a million trees if it were printed.

The initial goals of eBooks, therefore, are to make the information easier to archive and to be more eco-friendly. Sure, the printing

process does create jobs and contribute to the economy, but the environment pays the price.

Another reason for this change is to make all content more accessible. Readers' access to rare or collected-edition books and prints, especially those of historical value, is very limited. Even the newly published content of certain newspapers, such as *The Washington Post* and *The New York Times*, requires a paid subscription to enable the reader to view digital material.

The 'electric library' will be a bricks-and-mortar form of the internet. Visitors will have free access to the internet, and their library membership will allow access to the desired eBooks or newspapers.

It was not that long ago that North Mel-

bourne Library started to provide various forms of electric content. The rows of books stacked on endless shelves gradually gave way to CDs and DVDs during the millennial era. Today, eBooks and audiobooks are available through the 'cloud' service, with up to four renewable loans and 50 items per member.

The outcome is looking positive for readers, who can now view content and services online, or use the facility provided at the library.

The function and operation of a library thus will not change. What will change is the amount of physical storage space needed by a library, as well as its maintenance costs, both of which will decrease as we march towards the future electric library.

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SPORT & HEALTH

Bowls Club helps stock food relief pantry

Gary Dowling

The City of Melbourne Bowls Club (CoMBC) arranged for a stall and interactive lawn-bowling activity at the Spring Fling Street Festival on Sunday 15 October.

The CoMBC board saw the club's involvement in this event as a means to celebrate and promote our vibrant inner-city community bowls club. The club is very appreciative of the support received on the day from Neil Dalrymple, CEO of Bowls Australia, Paul Holtschke of Bowls Victoria, individual club members and especially Michael Walker and his team from The Centre.

A highlight of the day was the Councillors Bowls Challenge, with the victor being Deputy Lord Mayor Arron Wood and the runner-up Councillor Cathy Oke. The club's foray into the Spring Fling was a great success and sets

the club up for future involvement in this excellent local community activity.

On the bowls front, the club's three teams are all performing well leading into the Christmas break. If you are interested in meeting new people and socialising with our diverse mix of club members, or would simply like the opportunity to improve your physical wellbeing by playing outdoor lawn bowls, why not visit the club, talk to some members and see what a great club it is to be part of?

We pride ourselves on being a very welcoming club. In addition to lawn bowls the club holds a number of social events including weekly dinners.

We extend an invitation to readers to visit the club in Flagstaff Gardens, where you will be made most welcome. For further information have a look at our website, www.citybowls.com, email info@citybowls.net or phone 8329 0211 during business hours.

With Christmas fast approaching, this year

the club will be supporting VincentCare's Ozanam Community Centre's Emergency Food Relief Pantry. The Emergency Food Relief Pantry is supported by the work of community and client volunteers, and the people who access the pantry are generally those experiencing financial difficulties.

The community centre relies on donations of non-perishable food or Coles–Myer vouchers from schools, corporate groups and the local community to keep the pantry stocked. The centre's approach is to take a community volunteer, a worker and a client volunteer shopping to purchase the items they need.

If you would like to donate food items, the

following are suitable: cans of stew or meals (nothing spicy!), two-minute noodles in a cup, pasta and pasta sauce, Up & Go liquid breakfasts, breakfast cereals, canned meat (corned beef or chicken), canned vegetables such as peas and carrots, tins of fruit, any 'add water' meals, fruit cups, rice sachets and tinned tuna.

Please note the preference is for cans with a ring-pull, as most clients do not have access to a tin-opener. Donations can be dropped off at the City of Melbourne Bowls Club in Flagstaff Gardens. Please telephone the Ozanam Community Centre on 9329 6733 for more details.

Out, damned (sun) spot! Out, I say!

Dr Paul Grinzi and
Dr Graham Jacobs

*"Geez it's hot! Let's go to the beach."
"Hey, wanna come over for a barbecue this weekend?"
"Put your hats and sunscreen on, kids!"*

Summer is here and refrains such as these are being uttered throughout North and West Melbourne.

Longer days, warmer weather and, for many lucky individuals, holidays — what's not to love?

One downside of the Aussie summer is the Australian sun — particularly its UV radiation. The amount of sun exposure we receive has led to skin cancers becoming the most commonly diagnosed cancers in Australia.

Allen didn't think of his skin often; he had a good tan and felt healthy. Apart from a sun-burnt childhood, he was careful these days, avoiding excess sun whenever possible. Allen, however, had a skin cancer growing on his back, without him realising it.

"I never thought I'd get cancer, let alone a melanoma," he recalls. Luckily, his wife saw and commented on his 'new skin spot', insisting he see a GP.

There are three main types of skin cancer: basal cell carcinomas (BCCs), squamous cell carcinomas (SCCs) and melanoma. Melanoma accounts for 1–2 per cent of skin cancers and is the most dangerous and aggressive form of skin cancer. Allen was lucky; early detection, assessment and then treatment by his GP have probably saved his life. With almost 14,000 Australians diagnosed annually, Allen certainly isn't alone.

"It was pretty amazing really," Allen remembers. "One day I thought I was invincible and then within a week I was diagnosed and cured of a cancer I previously didn't know I had."

"My GP was fantastic; after a thorough interview and skin examination, she explained the process of arranging a biopsy of the suspicious mole whilst answering my questions and concerns. It was great getting treated at Royal Park Medical, without the stress of hospitals or the need to travel."

Who should have a skin check?

Anyone with:

- a personal or family history of skin cancer
- a fair complexion
- multiple moles ('naevi')
- a history of exposure to UV light (eg excessive sunlight, tanning beds)
- a history of sunburns that caused blistering, especially in childhood
- xeroderma pigmentosum, a rare genetic condition
- a suppressed immune system
- age over 50, especially with evidence of existing sun damage
- a mole or skin lesion that is **new or changing**

At Royal Park Medical, a number of our GPs are trained to assess, diagnose and treat skin cancers. We use subsurface imaging, also known as dermoscopy, which is a tool used to assist in the diagnosis of skin cancers. All our doctors will also discuss the options for confirming a diagnosis and treatment. If necessary, we are able to excise most suspicious skin lesions on site, for patients' convenience. We always send the specimen for pathology testing.

"I'm one of the lucky ones," Allen explains. "My GP has helped save my life and will be doing my annual skin check for years to come."

Melanoma misconceptions

Melanomas only grow on certain parts of the body that have been exposed to the sun.

The statistics show that the legs (the most frequent site for women) and the back (the most frequent site for men) are common sites, but melanomas can grow virtually anywhere.

Melanomas only appear on existing moles.

It is estimated that approximately 30–40 per cent of melanomas arise out of pre-existing moles and 60–70 per cent on unmarked skin.

Skin cancers hurt, itch, ooze or bleed heavily.

These symptoms can appear at the later stages of development, but the person may not experience them at all. A new or changing skin spot should be assessed regardless of symptoms.

Appointments for skin checks are currently available at Royal Park Medical on 8301 5500 or at www.royalparkmedical.com.au



Drop-in coordinator Bev Farrugia making up a food parcel

Photo: Emily Dare

Thank you and good luck, Dr McDowell

Dr Paul O'Keefe

Dr Margaret McDowell is retiring after a long and interesting career in medicine.

Margaret has spent most of her working life in general practice. For many years she was at Doutta Galla Community Health Centre in Kensington (now Cohealth), following that with nine years in Victoria Street working with Dr Ronald Suss.

Together with Gary Bohmer, she established the Errol Street Medical Centre, and more recently has practised at Premier Health Partners, integrating a medical centre into the West Melbourne site. She has always had a great interest in community and family medicine. Margaret has enjoyed getting to know her many clients, a number of whom have followed her to her various practices.

She is now retiring to explore the next stage of her life and spend more time with her grandchildren. She will also have time for her many interests, which include the arts, bushwalking, camping and exploring the Otway region.

Margaret wishes to thank all her clients for their loyalty, trust, friendship and kindness.



The partners and staff at Premier Health invite all Margaret's patients to join us at the clinic for afternoon tea on Wednesday 20 December from 1.30 to 3.00pm to wish Margaret 'goodbye and good luck'. No RSVP is necessary.

The trauma of surrogacy

Katrina Kincade-Sharkey

Medicos, social workers, educators and child psychologists are uniform in their identity protection of young people born through the latest reproductive technology trend, gestational surrogacy.

This gestational fertility technique is fairly recent and offers hope to intending parents who are unable to produce a healthy baby of their own. It produces births by introducing sperm from a male partner, or donor, with eggs from the female partner, or donor, into a 'surrogate' mother's uterus, where the sperm may fertilise an egg and form an embryo.

The surrogate woman agrees to carry — or gestate — a pregnancy for the couple, who will become that newborn child's parents after birth. The woman who carries the foetus 'gestationally' for up to nine months never meets the infertile commissioning couple.

Not one of the several dozen people contacted for this article would be quoted with their opinions, professional or personal. Included were gynaecologists and obstetricians, nurses, medical scientists, social workers, couples battling to have a child by the 'new' surrogacy, and two men now in their 30s and born of the 'traditional' surrogacy method. None would go public, although all felt deeply about the procedure.

Every Victorian contact was reluctant to speak openly about gestational pregnancies, confirming participants' trauma during their pursuit of newborns through surrogacy. Medical professionals were especially reticent. "Everyone can access us through their GP" was their common response, so they needed no media publicity. All prospective, waiting and current 'parents' lambasted previous publicity of their cause as intensely negative.

Those potential parents' trauma was vivid. Several broke down while discussing their journey through the seemingly endless testing and waiting and hoping for the chance to 'parent' a child.

Many prospective surrogacy parents seek this 'baby-breed' arrangement when pregnancy is medically impossible, or pregnancy risks present an unacceptable danger to the intending mother's health, or when it is a same-sex couple's preferred method of having a child.

Gestational surrogates are often women from Third World nations such as the Philippines and Cambodia, or from Eastern European and South American countries. Carrying babies for Westerners may be the only way they can make a living; for many that means survival. India and Thailand banned access to surrogacy services by foreigners in 2015.

Monetary compensation may or may not be involved in these arrangements. If the surrogate receives money for her efforts, the

arrangement is considered commercial surrogacy; if she receives no compensation beyond reimbursement for medical and other reasonable expenses, it is referred to as 'altruistic surrogacy'.

The legality and costs of surrogacy vary widely between jurisdictions, now often resulting in interstate or international contractual arrangements. Fertility clinics have been established on all five continents to profit from participants on this painful physical and emotional journey.

Within her just-released Spinifex Press publication *Surrogacy: A Human Rights Violation*, Dr Renate Klein examines the debilitating and wasteful practice of test-tube foetus creation while our societies breed so many unwanted babies destined for orphanages.

During impregnation with sperm — be that from a commissioning father, or from a stranger — gestational surrogates are subjected to a succession of invasive 'suitability' practices by their local fertility clinic, most notably IVF (in-vitro fertilisation).

After IVF fusion of the donor or surrogate egg and the buyer's or donor's sperm, pre-natal genetic diagnosis is conducted before any resulting foetus is implanted in the surrogate's uterus.

Western governments are becoming increasingly aware of — and legislating against — traditional surrogacy, because birth mothers' genes form half a child's genetic heritage, making the woman more prone to resist relinquishing her baby. Hence, childless couples are now hiring gestational wombs for the pregnancy and birth, assuming those birth mothers — gestational wombs — will not miss babies they have not conceived.

Commissioning couples must undergo myriad tests for several years at fertility clinics where gynaecologists and obstetricians determine their reproductive ability.

Given these female partners have been publicly deemed unable to carry their mate's sperm to maturity in birth, the emotional toll wrought upon them is unspeakable. As Dr Klein's *Surrogacy* argues: "It is also grossly inhumane to then demand they love the resulting child as their own."

"It's cost so much, and not just in dollar terms," naysayers will argue. "Your surrogate's gone through hell to give you this child, not to mention all the doctors and nurses ... You now have a beautiful baby; you should be so grateful."

Gynaecology is the medical specialty dealing with the health of the female reproductive system, while obstetrics is medicine and surgery concerning childbirth and midwifery; that is, with pregnancy, childbirth and the post-partum period. Each of these specialties would be assumed to hold patients' emotional desires of equal import with maternal capabilities, but

many practitioners fail, exacerbating infertility's trauma.

Handling of potential surrogates is similarly abusive. "The recruitment process ... begins with intrusive scrutiny of the woman's personal and social circumstances as to her suitability, and then informing her of the 'rules' to be followed over the next nine months (e.g. a strict diet and no sex with the husband). This is the prerequisite for medical tests including ultrasounds to establish her as a healthy baby carrier, followed by dozens of painful injections often with debilitating adverse effects to prepare the body for the embryo insertion," Klein writes, querying whether surrogacy can ever be ethical.

Klein's easily-read, yet exactly learned 200-plus-page paperback covers the surrogacy journey from pre-placement to delivery, continually decrying the unethical, dangerous, damaging and uncertain aspects of this 'baby trade', recently estimated by the World Health Organisation to net several tens of millions of US dollars for fertility clinics, 'baby brokers' who match intending parents with surrogate agencies, and those surrogate agencies.

Stop Surrogacy Now is an organisation formed in California in 2015 by 500 women and men from around the world. It now has more than 8000 supporters, including femi-

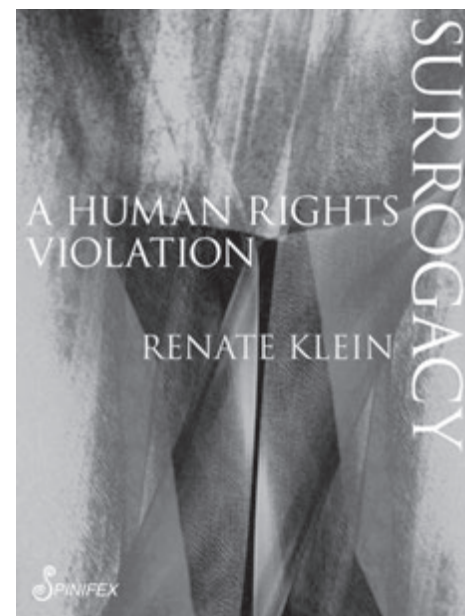
nists, surrogate mothers and children, human rights and LGBTI activists, prostitutes, MPs, academics, authors and media. The website is at www.stopsurrogacynow.com

Surrogacy: A Human Rights Violation is available in paperback for \$19.95 from women@spinifexpress.com.au



Author Dr Renate Klein

Photo: courtesy Spinifex Press



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TRAVEL & FOOD

Recipe:

Lamb Kofta — a taste of the Mediterranean

Ian Truong

After just 30 minutes of preparation and cooking time, your family could be sitting down to this light but healthy summer meal.

Ingredients (serves 4 people)

500 g lamb mince
2 large eggs
1 brown onion, chopped
2 cloves of garlic, chopped
½ bunch of parsley, finely chopped
½ bunch of mint, finely chopped
2 teaspoons (tsp) ground cumin
1 tsp ground coriander
1 tsp mild paprika
1 tsp chilli flakes or fresh chilli
Salt, pepper, olive oil

Optional ingredients for salad

Pita bread
2 cucumbers
Handful of olives
1 small red onion
3 tomatoes
2 tablespoons (tbs) feta cheese
4 tbs Greek yogurt

Method

1. Finely chop and sauté brown onion and garlic in olive oil.
2. When onion and garlic cooked, add all spices (ground coriander, cumin, paprika, chilli) and mix well.
3. Pre-heat oven to 180 degrees Celsius. Meanwhile, add cooked onion, garlic and spices to the lamb mince and mix well. Then add chopped parsley and mint leaves and mix again. Finally, add two eggs and mix. (You could add a third egg to help bind the mixture.)
4. Shape the mince mixture into meatballs of the desired size. The weight should be 70–80 grams per ball. Cook in oven for 12–15 minutes.

To serve

1. Best to serve when the centre of the meatball has a touch of pink.
2. Cut pita bread into eight pieces and toast lightly in oven to soften.
3. Dice cucumber, then mix with chopped olives, tomato and red onion. Crumble feta on top of salad.



Lamb Kofta

Photo: Ian Truong

Gone in Saigon, lost in the delta



Lost in the Mekong Delta

Photo: Suzie Luddon

Suzie Luddon

There's a tee-shirt you can buy in Vietnam that says "Green light I can go, orange light I can go, red light I can still go". And that pretty much sums up the traffic situation there.

As a pedestrian tourist, all you can do is copy the locals and weave in and out of the traffic when trying to cross the road, all the while holding your breath and praying to the gods of road safety to get you to the other side in one piece.

If you successfully navigate that enough times, you might get really brave and take a motorbike ride (as a passenger, not, perish the thought, as a rider). Then you'll really get the heart pumping and the adrenalin flowing. It's not for the faint-hearted, but it is an experience like no other, and it gives you an up-close idea of how it all seems to work, even while defying logic. I think the term for it is organised chaos.

For all its traffic nightmares, Vietnam is a great destination for anyone wanting an antidote to a long cold winter. During our winter months it's the rainy season there, but still a pleasant 30 degrees around the clock. When the rain does come it tends to pour down furiously for five to 10 minutes, then the sun comes out once again.

The rain doesn't deter the Vietnamese motorcyclists, though, who don all manner of wet-weather gear to protect themselves and

whatever precious cargo they're carrying on their bike, which could be anything from a gigantic wardrobe to a family of five.

Yes, the traffic is a constant source of amusement, horror and incredulity when travelling in Vietnam.

A few days in Ho Chi Minh City, or Saigon, is a must for anyone who likes to delve below the surface of big cities to discover the more hidden delights. For, while Saigon is definitely in the hot, chaotic and crowded South-East Asian city category, it's also a cosmopolitan city full of buzz and energy, with a young, hip and arty vibe about it.

If you get out of District 1, which is the CBD but also the main tourist area, you will find less of the tourist touting and more of what makes this city tick. District 3 is a good compromise as it's close to the centre, has plenty of attractions of its own, and is a hub of Saigon's emerging cafe culture.

Exploring District 3 will uncover some great markets, leafy parks and neighbourhoods, trendy boutiques and the only bright pink Catholic church in the world! And you can find mouth-watering food wherever you turn.

Watching the world go by while sitting on a low stool at a sidewalk eatery with a Vietnamese coffee and a *bánh mì* (Vietnamese baguette) is a great way to start the day. The street food scene in Saigon, and indeed throughout Vietnam, is a highlight and there are food carts galore on practically every street, be it a main thoroughfare or a tiny alleyway.

More than just cheap and delicious, eating

street food is a total experience, from pointing to what you want, to watching it being cooked in front of you and served up piping hot. And you have to eat it then and there, for it just doesn't seem to taste as good if you take it away.

Taking a food tour in Saigon is also a great experience, and if you're feeling particularly adventurous you can even go on the back of a motorbike!

If you feel like seeing a more relaxed side of Vietnam, there are lots of options, including Hoi An, Dalat, Mui Ne and the east-coast beaches. All of these are within a short flight or a longer bus ride from Saigon, and all are worth a visit. If you travel south-west of Saigon, though, you can be in another world after a few hours on a bus.

The Mekong Delta is a sprawling network of rivers, tributaries, canals, cities, towns and villages which make up the 'rice bowl' of Vietnam. It's lush, verdant and maze-like, and a day in a longboat sailing up tranquil tributaries, stopping at the bustling floating markets on the way, is like being transported into another world.

Although the ubiquitous cell-phone towers and the ever-present sound of motorbikes belie the sense of remoteness, when you're out there it feels like you're a million miles away from the rest of the world. If you want to get away from it all, go and get lost in the delta. And you'll know you've really acclimatised when the sound of motorbikes has a calming effect.



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December 24: Advent sequence of readings,
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Christmas Day: 9.30am with Eucharist

Services in January at the usual time of 10.00am

Sunday Worship 10am in the church hall, 4 Elm St, North Melbourne
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HISTORY

How we live in the heat

Bill Hannan

Refuge is an ongoing project of Arts House. It encourages the community to explore some of the difficulties we have experienced in the past and may experience in the future because of our harsh climate.

Last year the theme of *Refuge* was what to do in a flood. This year's theme is heatwave. How do we cope best in the heat? Ideas will be explored by artists in various genres in a free day of events at the North Melbourne Town Hall, which is appropriate given that in a real emergency it is our local community Emergency Relief Centre.

Australians are very familiar with hot weather. Sweltering conditions during our summer season are 'par for the course'. We are used to the threat of bushfires. Indeed, many of our readers have probably been touched by bushfire in some way. One hundred degrees in the shade was the heat 'touchstone' of my childhood (37.7 recurring does not roll so easily off the tongue).

My father saw 100 degrees in the shade through his long-sighted view of vanishing Riverina horizons. Temperatures on those shadeless plains started at around 100 degrees on a good day; so they did in my childish imagination and so they did when I visited the Riverina, usually during summer.

The difference in Melbourne was what my parents called the humidity. A dry heat was their perfect world, with brown grasses and silly sheep running off toward the horizon. Smoke-filled skies over Melbourne, on the other hand, signalled disaster.

Swimming was our refuge. When I lived in Windsor we could walk to St Kilda beach. We preferred the small West St Kilda beach, which now is part of the marina. Then it had sand and wavelets. St Kilda beach proper was thought to be more for the sunbathers and perhaps lovers.

Fifty years ago we moved to North Melbourne. We thought our house was a bargain, though the agent (Simpsons of course) was surprised we'd pay so much. The place had been empty so long that the 'For Sale' notice had fallen on its face in the front garden.

When the heat of summer arrived, though, we discovered that the house was a gem. The ground floor stayed cool through most of a heatwave as the street it faced was lined with plane trees on our side and elms on the other. Shade wherever you walked.

One place you could walk to on a hot day were the North Baths. We'd had baths near where we lived beforehand in Richmond, but not too many suburbs in Melbourne were that fortunate. The water was pretty cold back then, but today, according to the Melbourne

City Council website, "all pools are heated to a balmy 27.5 degrees Celsius" (81.5 degrees Fahrenheit).

North Baths opened in 1910, not long after baths opened at Richmond (1897) and Fitzroy (1908), but several years before those in Brunswick (1914).

I am told North Baths were opened by world champion distance swimmer Frank Beaurepaire. He was at the peak of his competitive career and was undefeated in his previous 41 meets. Beaurepaire became a great patron of municipal baths. For him, municipal baths were a focus due to a passion he had devel-

oped for teaching young people how to swim.

The Herald took this up with its 'Learn to swim' program and the *Herald Sun* today is campaigning for a return of such programs. The pools belong to the people and have always been important places to cool off for the community. I remember well the many North Melbourne residents joining forces with Kensington people in protest when their pools were threatened in 1992.

The hazard in walking the streets of the suburbs on hot days was the asphalt. The black stuff stuck to your shoes and produced bubbles which some said emitted fluid when burst. We

longed for concrete but apparently concrete was reserved for the upmarket distant suburbs.

We still don't have concrete but asphalt these days seems to be bubble-proof. The pronunciation of *asphalt* remains unresolved except in dictionaries. My dictionary says: "The terms bitumen and asphalt are mostly interchangeable, except where asphalt is used as a shorthand for asphalt concrete." What on earth does that mean?

One of the great joys on hot days long ago was ice blocks. I guess people make them in their own freezers now, or perhaps they've gone the way of many sweets. Back in my day, confectioners made flavoured ice blocks and sold them in ice-block cones, which were actually cubes.

Less popular with me was a seeming obsession with cold meat and salad. But even that had an upside: the possibility of eating ham. It was routine for older folk to remark on the inappropriateness of Christmas dinner, but the turkey and pudding easily won the day against cold meats and salads.

In spite of the heat, memories of summer are happy because it was also the time of the long holidays, with Christmas and New Year thrown in. Long after schooldays summer kept its holiday feel. It was the time to go to the beach house away from the asphalt pavements and inland fires. Summer combines pleasure with dread in our consciousness. Spring makes us hopeful, autumn wistful and winter inward-looking. Summer excites us.

Bill Hannan is a member of the Hotham History Project and a regular contributor to the News.



North Melbourne and Kensington residents protest against the closure of their beloved pools in 1992

Photo: courtesy Leader Community News

Get to know your local history group!

Why are we called the 'Hotham History Project'?

For much of the 19th century Hotham was the name of the suburb now known as North Melbourne.

Who are we?

The Hotham History Project is a group of North and West Melbourne residents and friends who are writing, illustrating and publishing about the history of North and West Melbourne. We also hold events such as talks on aspects of our suburbs' fascinating history as well as guided walks.

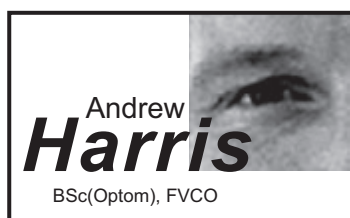
There are many ways that people can become involved and our aim is to make the compiling of this history a pleasure for all.

We welcome people who can write, research, interview, transcribe, illustrate, edit, type, desktop publish, organise, publicise and raise money, as well as those who just share our interest in local history.

Website: www.hothamhistory.org.au/
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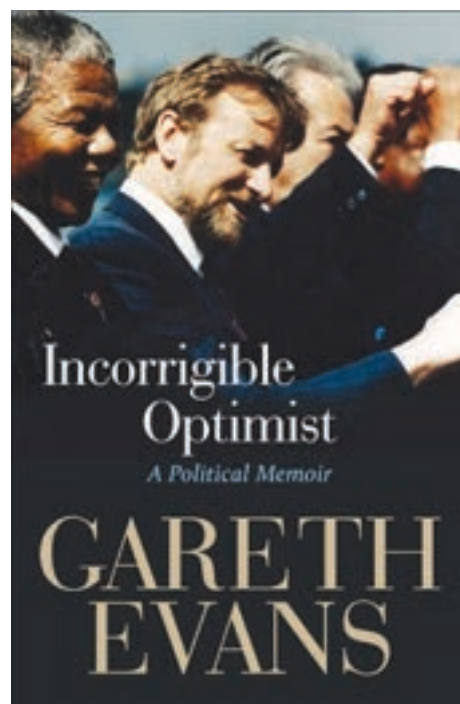
Chris Saliba

The Ninth HourAlice McDermott
(Bloomsbury. RRP: \$24.99)

Brooklyn, New York, in the early years of the 20th century. A young husband, Jim, commits suicide in his railroad flat. An elderly nun, Sister St Saviour, sniffs trouble and comes to the rescue of the man's wife, Annie. Annie is pregnant and will soon give birth to a daughter, Sally. The nun finds Annie work at the nearby convent's laundry. There Annie meets other nuns, notably sisters Illuminata, Jeanne and Lucy.

As the daughter grows up, she thinks she too wants to enter the convent as a nun, but life's harsh realities, its bitter ironies and fleeting joys, eventually make her change her mind.

Alice McDermott's *The Ninth Hour* is a warm, funny and often brutal portrait of Irish Catholic life a century ago in New York, where the nuns moved "through the streets of the city in their black and white, doing good where it was needed, imposing good where they found it lacking". There is plenty of punchy humour: Sister Aquina is described as a "tomboy of a nun" with the "matter-of-fact authority of a cop on the street". This is a novel with the dolorous themes of suffering and sacrifice, yet with a mood that is hearty and uplifting.

Incorrigible Optimist: A Political MemoirGareth Evans
(MUP. RRP: \$49.99)

Gareth Evans is best known for his time as a minister in the Hawke and Keating govern-

ments. After politics, he made a sterling career for himself as a policy expert and internationalist. *Incorrigible Optimist* is a political memoir, following on from Evans's cabinet diaries, *Inside the Hawke-Keating Government*. In a style that is witty and nimble (there are quite a few laugh-out-loud moments) Evans discusses a range of policy areas, everything from education and industry to war, terror and disarmament.

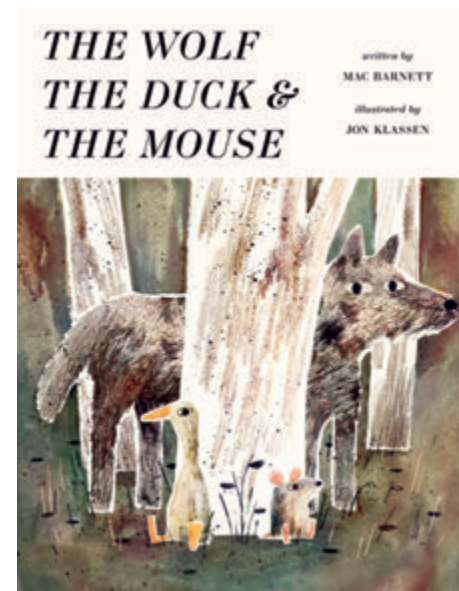
Like all such memoirs, *Incorrigible Optimist* spends quite a bit of time defending the author's political legacy. Controversial questions are revisited and given further context. For example, Evans strenuously defends the carve-up of East Timor's hydrocarbon resources. The political aside, there is much fascinating analysis and discussion in *Incorrigible Optimist*, especially of China and the UN.

A special chapter devoted to politicians is brutally honest about their motivations and monster egos (they're described as either idealists or megalomaniacs). There are also wonderfully gossipy sections, with behind-the-scenes sketches of prominent political and diplomatic figures.

Incorrigible Optimist is the work of a shrewd and incisive mind. It provides indispensable reading for historians, up-and-coming diplomats and politicians.

The Wolf, the Duck and the MouseMac Barnett and Jon Klassen
(Walker Books. RRP: \$24.99)

One morning a mouse meets a wolf in the woods. The wolf wastes no time in gobbling up the mouse. Oh woe! says the mouse. Could things get any worse, trapped in the belly of a wolf? The mouse hears a voice tell him to be quiet. It's a duck, also in the wolf's belly, trying to get some sleep. The two make friends and the mouse soon finds out that living inside



the wolf is not so bad. They live in a pleasant manner, with all the household amenities, and there's no need to worry about being pursued by predators.

The situation changes when the wolf finds that he is being hunted by a man with a rifle. What is he to do? The mouse and the duck come up with an idea to save the wolf, but ask for a favour in return. What kind of favour will they ask for?

The Wolf, the Duck and the Mouse will entertain and surprise with its witty story of life inside a wolf's belly. The clever ending, explaining why wolves howl at night, will make young readers laugh out loud. From writer Mac Barnett and illustrator Jon Klassen.

Ages 3+

Chris Saliba is co-owner of North Melbourne Books, 546 Queensberry Street, and a regular contributor to the News.

Mr Romanov's Garden in the Sky

Columbia Winterton

Meet Lexie: a curious and compassionate 13-year-old, forced, in a sense, to grow up early while her mum attempts to fend off a hovering Human Services, among other distractions.

Starting with a few mysteries at the Melbourne commission estate where she lives, Lexie's investigations lead her to meet Mr Romanov (called 'the Creeper' by the neighbours). Mr Romanov, a kind, solitary widower with his own traumatic story and illness, allows a friendship with Lexie to grow. He agrees to join her in a road trip and offers to drive — he has a car parked in a garage on Gertrude Street.

Davey Goodman, who also lives at the estate, is the next to be persuaded to join the adventure. He is a trivia genius, *Star Trek* buff, and an honest, supportive companion, all of which makes for some funny and moving moments.

With the few friends she can count on — Davey, Mr Romanov and Ramesh, the local

store owner — Lexie sets about reaching a destination she's long dreamed of and where, perhaps, she might meet her dad. Determined and courageous, Lexie pushes through what seem endless obstacles to make meaningful connections with others and forge a way into hearts.

A mix of hilarity and tragedy, Robert Newton's novel tells of a young girl's integrity and persistence when, through no fault of her own, the world is, in a way, against her. She maintains her own style, keeping her hair short and donning a cowboy hat, despite the mean taunts of others. While she is painfully aware that she doesn't fit the cultural 'ideal', she is open to experimenting on her terms, and doesn't shrink under peer pressure.

Most admirable of all perhaps, amidst a plethora of struggling people in complex circumstances, Lexie helps those around her to be brave, even her mum.

Ages 10+



Mr Romanov's Garden in the Sky by Robert Newton (Penguin Books, RRP: \$17.99)