

Discussions give food for thought about the future

John H. Smith

The Institute of Postcolonial Studies in Curzon Street is hosting public discussions throughout the year as part of its Future of Food project.

IPCS director Melinda Hinkson said Mildura restaurateur, arts and community advocate Stefano de Pieri was leading a high-calibre group to guide the project.

A prominent foodie's involvement suggests the program might focus on preparing delicious food. However, it is aimed at something deeper and increasingly more urgent.

"Our food system is facing pressing challenges, and not only from fire, drought, flood, and water conservation issues. There is a deep disconnect between city residents and those living in food producing regions," Melinda said.

"It's a division that continually plays out in national politics, but there is more to it than politics."

Food has a different status and function than previously. "Food was once at the heart

of productive and convivial relationships, but regional areas are increasingly overtaken by industrial scale agriculture," Melinda explained.

"The human and ecological environments suffer from these depersonalising processes, and food – our most basic human need – is put at risk."

The Future of Food project will discuss these challenges with prominent environmental scientists, Indigenous land managers, pastoralists, politicians, and others with experience and investment in our food system.

"We will explore the competing narratives in Australia about agriculture. We'll ask how attitudes need to change to help generate more diverse and positive agricultural futures for all," Melinda said.

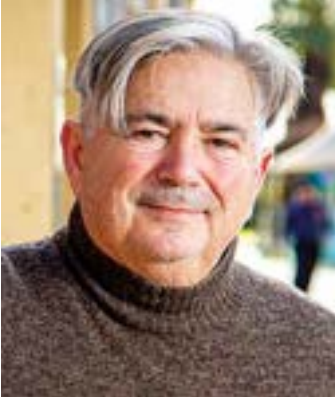
IPCS invites the local community to join in the Future of Food project and to debate ideas for a better future across the rural-urban divide.

The project is supported by the Lord Mayor's Charitable Trust and by private donations. Its lead researcher is RMIT associate professor Lauren Rickards.

John H. Smith writes regularly for the News.

Want to know more?

The first Future of Food panel discussion will be at IPCS, 78-80 Curzon Street, North Melbourne, on Thursday 9 May, 7.30–9.30 pm. Visit: ipcs.org.au/event/is-eating-a-settler-colonial-act-history-justice-and-the-future-of-food/



Restaurateur Stefano de Pieri is guiding the IPCS Future of Food project.



Jas Grierson's football career is bounding ahead with the Kangaroos. Photograph: Laura Misale

AFLW star at home in North Melbourne

Laura Misale

Jas Grierson starts her day with a flat white, smashed avo and poached eggs – sometimes with bacon – at a local cafe.

"I like Auction Rooms in Errol Street, and my other local favourite is Roasting Warehouse in Leveson Street, just around the corner from home."

Jas then catches the tram to work in administration at RMIT.

After work her life becomes a little more extraordinary as she heads off to training for the North Melbourne AFLW team.

Juggling work and football often gets a bit hectic and Jas chooses to relax by heading to the North Melbourne Recreation Centre for the outdoor pool.

"I'm not much of a swimmer. I might swim a few laps then I'll lounge around on the edge of the pool in the grass areas. That's my favourite place right now," she says.

Jas moved to live in North Melbourne last year during her first

pre-season with the club. She loves that the area is close to the city but still feels quiet. She enjoys Clayton Reserve dog park even though she doesn't have a dog and often wanders through the Queen Vic market.

"As a kid, North Melbourne was a place that always seemed exciting and new, and it's pretty cool that it's now my home," she smiles.

Jas feels that she has been very lucky in her football pathway. "I joined my twin brother's under 12s team. They needed some players and I just jumped in and helped out and I loved it, so I played with the boys until under 14s.

"Then I stopped and played soccer for a year, which I didn't like; it's such a weird game. A friend at school started playing AFL and said I should come down to North Melbourne, so I did," she says.

Drafted by Melbourne in the 2016 inaugural AFLW draft, Jas was the Rising Star nominee in round four of the 2017 AFLW season. Last year she played a key role in

the North Melbourne-Tasmanian Kangaroos' side.

With family from Tasmania, playing for a team that represents both North Melbourne and Tassie feels like a good fit. Jas also enjoys the unity between the men's and women's teams at Arden Street and she feels that the women now feel accepted and valued.

"It's awesome," she says. "I love that we have our own change rooms, and we share the ice baths and the gym and everything like that with the guys. It's really one club."

With the AFLW season in full swing, Jas usually prepares mentally each week with the unusual ritual of cleaning her room.

"But now I've got my bedroom in order, I'm thinking I'll probably start on the bathroom. It really needs it. Just anything that will keep me occupied before the game," she grins.

Laura Misale writes regularly for the News.

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Urban portraits inspired by moments of reflection

John H. Smith

Local artist Eric Henshall is hard at work preparing for the May exhibition of his paintings at Fitzroy's Brunswick Street Gallery. "I have always loved the colour, the smell, and the touch of painting. My family were supportive and an artist friend of the family gave me art supplies every birthday," he says. Eric works across different mediums but painting has always been his first love. "I took all the art classes at school and the fine arts course at RMIT and found inspiration in the work of John Brack and Edward Hooper." From the start, he set out to earn a living from art. "This meant living outside the prescribed patterns of what is regarded as normal. I was incredibly poor but incredibly happy. Anyone who lives as I did is a hero," Eric laughs. Eventually, he began teaching English as a second language. "I love it. It is more than extra

money. I meet great people from all over the world who enrich my pool of ideas." Eric has found another source of inspiration in overseas travel. "When you get out of your comfort zone, you can escape the unconscious assumptions you naturally make about life," he says. His work features many scenes of city life, often inspired by quiet moments of reflection. "I go on long walks every week to gather ideas and to figure out which combinations will work." Eric's urban landscapes often include human figures that help define the work. He has recently added portraiture to his portfolio.

John H. Smith writes regularly for the News.

Want to know more?
Eric's recent work will be featured at the Brunswick Street Gallery, Level 1 and 2/322 Brunswick Street, Fitzroy from 1 to 22 May. See www.brunswickstreetgallery.com.au



Eric Henshall preparing for his May exhibition. Photograph: John H. Smith

The News mirrors our community

Geoff Pound

The North and West Melbourne News is a rare treasure. A community newspaper that really taps into the community can be vital for our wellbeing. Most Melbourne suburbs, and towns and cities across Australia, no longer have a local newspaper. Most have been replaced by regional and national publications that survive on syndicated stories. While the web has given us a greater immediacy and an awareness of global issues, the burgeoning growth of online news has minimised the value of local happenings. Feeling the paper copy of the North and West Melbourne News and smelling the ink may be an exercise in nostalgia. But it's much more than a simple feel-good moment. This newspaper – written, produced and delivered by locals – is our precious community diary. With its local focus, it reports on the activities and contributions of local people and the workings of local groups. By highlighting local events and informing residents of local issues and local events, the newspaper acts as a powerful social glue. It has a great capacity to build community as it fosters a collective identity in our area. If you're keen on researching the history of North and West Melbourne, the News – and its archived issues from its proud 41-year history – can be your primary source of information.



Illustration: Dan Collier

Facebook posts, Instagram pics and tweets will provide plenty of photos and off-the-top-of-the-head thoughts, but they are of limited historical value. They won't help future researchers discover what happened in our community or the issues it faced. Viewing the world through the windows of social media can merely intensify our anger towards our politicians and make us feel powerless in the face of climate change, the burning

of our bush and the threat of extinction to our wildlife. A paper that is truly local – reporting on the planting of trees in our streets, the creation of community gardens, art exhibitions of locals' paintings, a concert raising funds for asylum seekers – does something else. It becomes an instrument that empowers us, that lifts our spirits and enhances our wellbeing.

Geoff Pound is pastor of the West Melbourne Baptist Church.

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The appeal of a peal at St James

Flora Sciarra

On 21 March, the bells will be ringing at St James Old Cathedral in Batman Street, West Melbourne, for the inaugural Festival of Bells. Church bellringers will offer guided tours and demonstrations, and there will also be activities for children and a sausage sizzle. The cathedral's loyal volunteers look forward to sharing their passion for the bells. They continue a St James' tradition that began almost 170 years ago, in 1853, and includes ringing the bells during Burke and Wills' 1863 funeral cortège. The ringers practise every Friday night and every fortnight are part of Sunday morning services.

Every one of them is keen to talk about their love of the bells. "I've been ringing for 71 years," Graham Heyes says. Fellow ringer Bill Cook chimes in with his own tale of a lifetime's service. "I've only been ringing for 61 years, starting when I got into it in Bendigo when I was at school." Andrew Cole explains the importance of teamwork. "It's always a challenge, but when it works, when it comes together, it's wonderful," he says. Bruce Watson nods in agreement as he admits he fell in love with bellringing from the start. "The first time I saw a bunch of bells was such a thrill." For Laura Goodin, a visit to a belltower at her vicar cousin's church in England was an



Bellringers at St James Old Cathedral. Photograph: Flora Sciarra

epiphany. "As soon as I saw and heard the ringing, I thought this is so weird, so esoteric, so full of history that I just had to do it myself." Other volunteer ringers reveal more practical reasons for their involvement. "It's good exercise as you constantly move your back and it relieves muscle pain," Damien Wright says. It was a

much simpler reason that first brought him to St James' bells. "My girlfriend said to go and try it," he laughs. Bill Cook is excited at the prospect of giving locals a behind-the-scenes look at bellringing. "Neighbours have been hearing the bells pealing every week for years. Now they can come and see how it all works.

"Maybe they might like to give bellringing a try," he says.

Flora Sciarra is a new contributor to the News.

Want to know more?
Meet the ringers on Saturday 21 March, 1.00–5.00 pm. They'll show you the ropes. Check the website: sjocbellringers.org

Sounds of the city are the background music of our lives

Tim Cremean

North Melbourne is so full of the sounds of life. Everywhere. They're all around us. Have you heard the low drone of a ship's foghorn during the still dark hours? Or a V/Line two-toned horn (one low, one high) at night or in the early morning? Most Sunday mornings you can hear the hobbyists' steam train leaving Southern Cross with its engine grinding and whistle shrieking. There is always plenty of

ambulance and helicopter action near the busy hospital precinct. The 'wee-waah-wee-waah' of the life-saving ambos doing their wonderful work and the 'wocha-wocha-wocha' of the choppers bringing the sick and injured from far away. There's the reassuring grinding and the nerve-jangling squealing of the 57 tram's wheels as it turns into Errol Street from Victoria Street. At home, there's my neighbour's motorbike as he revs it before he heads off to work each morning.

Later, there's the surge, lift, crash, tinkle and repeat of the garbage truck. There are the impatient toots of queueing traffic and the deep purr of the school bus as it pulls up and waits to pick up a child, on the dot of eight each morning. Above, the air is full of the droning of planes and their distinctive noises. The whining of the big jets as they slow and bank towards Tullamarine. The whistle of a business jet as it circles towards Essendon. There's the piston roar of the

lumbering DC-3 Gooney Bird as it returns from a sightseeing flight. And on military memorial days like Anzac Day, the buzz, like a plague of giant insects, of World War II aircraft in formation as they line up the Shrine for a flyover. North Melbourne has its natural sounds, too. There's the yodelling of magpies in the park and the screeching of a thousand swarming lorikeets in the trees. You might even hear the mating cries of animals at the zoo. And there are human voices. There's the 'mandy man' at the

Queen Vic market calling, "Get your sweet mandarins here." There's the loud and angry swearing man who harmlessly patrols the streets. My favourite sounds are those of innocence and youth. There's the soothing music over the school PA calling the children to class. There's the bump-bump-bump of the basketball as its owner dribbles towards school.

Tim Cremean writes regularly for the News.

Community Comment

Annette McQuarrie asked locals the deep question of where all those lost socks really go



Swifty (ageless), concretor, West Melbourne
The Sock Fairies enter the house and take them at midnight. Just after they've finished twisting all the cords behind your television and your computer.



Ivan (24), fashion buyer, North Melbourne
I've never lost a sock in my life. I have them all carefully colour-coded and I always wash them in pairs. Then I hang them in pairs. I'm a bit funny that way.



Tanya (36), administrator, Kensington
They all get sucked up behind the drum inside your washing machine. That's where they hide. That's what happened to my Mum's socks. Once she found an entire bra.



Andy (43), IT engineer, Altona
My dog Buddy eats them. He sneaks into the laundry and steals them right out of the clothes basket. Later we find them all chewed up and strewn throughout the garden.

Audience keeps its eyes open

Warwick Jones

Early last month, two dozen intrepid playgoers walked upstairs at the Courthouse Hotel and entered a make-believe apartment. A table and chairs, couch, and toilet on the first floor of the Errol Street watering hole set the scene for *Eyes Wide Woke*, the debut play by writer and artist Kathy Atkins. “It may as well have been on Broadway,” Kathy says. “I was very excited to have a play in North Melbourne, so close to the Comic’s Lounge. It felt like New York to me.” Chairs lined the room’s four walls, surrounding



Four of the play’s characters (Noah, Valorie, Angelo and Sara) face the fifth, call girl Jasmine. Photograph: Jack Dixon-Gunn

the set and giving each member of the small audience a unique view of the play’s theatrics. The performance begins with four friends filing into the apartment of lesbian lovers Sara and Valorie for a dinner party with a soon-to-arrive guest of honour. The apartment quickly becomes a cesspool of pretentious sensibilities and sanctimonious condescension, for which the only antidote is mystery guest and call girl Jasmine. It is soon apparent that Jasmine’s invitation is

designed to make Valorie appear tolerant and kind to sex workers. Although used as a prop in Valorie’s affectations, Jasmine is a key player in unravelling the four friends’ foibles. “She plays the part of a sex worker with a heart of gold, something

like Julia Roberts in *Pretty Woman*,” Kathy says. All through the play, Valorie demands a purity from her dinner guests that she herself clearly lacks. Her hypocritical moralising rings comically true. “Valorie is very much based on a girl I went to high school with – actually, a couple of girls I went to school with. But, in truth, there’s a little Valorie in all of us,” Kathy says. Kathy constructs characters you love to hate, who turn moral rectitude into a fashion accessory, and kindness into a pissing contest. “I don’t believe the pursuit of being a good person is a bad thing,” Kathy says. “We all should try and be good people. Of course we should.” She maintains that power will always corrupt. “The moment being good becomes about power, then it becomes rife for abuse and ill intentions,” she says. “Besides, are you really being a good person if you make someone feel bad about it in the process?” *Eyes Wide Woke* is a refreshing commentary on a topic seldom broached in the arts, but that seems to sit front and centre in people’s lives today. Kathy takes pains to distinguish herself from the Katherine Atkins who writes lesbian erotica such as *Dripping Honey* and *Seducing the Religious Beauty*. “No, that’s not me,” she smiles coyly. “I have a phobia of honey stemming from an early childhood incident involving a jar of honey, my meanest brother and a hairbrush.” If you missed Kathy’s comedy thriller, you can catch a refined version at the Melbourne Fringe Festival in September.

Warwick Jones writes regularly for the News.

Max settles in to an Ace life

Harry Patte-Dobbs

There’s a new face on the block outside Ace Antiques in Queensberry Street. Ace owner Dave speaks happily about his shop’s new star attraction, American Staffie Max. “I picked Max because he was the runt of the litter, and because he had a nice face. Now people come here just to visit him, just like they used to visit Gus years ago,” he says. “Max is very relaxed, but when we’re at the dog park and I throw a ball, he goes crazy. He likes doing a victory lap with it.” As Dave walks Max around the corner into Curzon Street, his best buddy, Leo the labradoodle, comes bounding down the stairs of JMRE Real Estate to meet him. Here, in Max’s unofficial daily doggie daycare, he and Leo happily wrestle

and play their doggie games. Max is at least 10kg heavier than Leo, but he graciously allows his little mate to win the battle for the chew toy. The playdate over, Dave leads Max down the street where he runs into another pal, Scout, and they sniff each other happily. Then it’s across the street to the Albion Hotel for a catch-up with yet another mate, BoBo. Later, Max relaxes in his usual spot, in the shade of a trestle table just outside Dave’s antiques shop. He snoozes away as Dave has a quick chat with some local tradies as they inspect a redgum tree on the footpath. “It’s great having a pet that you can bring to work and he loves it here. At home, when I’m getting lunch, Max will sit near the front door to ensure he doesn’t get left behind,” Dave laughs. Watch the two of them

together and there’s no doubt that it’s Max who is in charge. “He just makes friends in a flash. A little girl came in and Max started licking her, she started laughing, and then he kept licking and she kept laughing,” Dave grins. “Having him here attracts people and sparks conversation. And it’s good for business when people come,” he says. And even as he speaks, yet another local pops in to say “Hi” to Max and to have a nose around the shop. Next time you’re passing Ace Antiques, you’ll almost certainly spot Max relaxing on his bed on the footpath. Make sure you give him a pat.

Harry Patte-Dobbs writes regularly for the News.

Want to know more?
Drop in to Ace Antiques at 555 Queensberry Street. Dave will fill you in on Max’s latest adventures.



Max and labradoodle Leo in a friendly tussle. Photographs: Harry Patte-Dobbs



Max takes it easy outside Ace Antiques.



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Ciana O'Neil,
Paige Heinrich,
Anika Williams
and Erin
McCulloch.

Local Irish dancers to compete for world title

Ruby Ramsden

In the lilt of Irish laughter, you can hear the angels sing.

The Pacific Irish Dance girls launch into their 'hop and skip, hop and skip' every Wednesday evening at their practice sessions in North Melbourne's Sutton Street. There's never a lack of the gentle lilt of Irish laughter, to be sure.

Charmayne Dulley set up Pacific Dance and coaches the six girls in the group's championship class. A dancer herself for 25 years and a teacher for 10, she radiates enthusiasm for her young charges.

"I love it when a dancer does their best on stage then walks off, and they know it and you know it," she says.

"Irish dancing provides young children with wonderful experiences and teaches them

lessons for life such as how to compete, how to set goals, how to achieve goals, resilience and passion."

Charmayne is excited that two of her young dancers performed

brilliantly at last year's state and national championships. As a result, they have qualified for next month's world championships and will soon be off to compete in Dublin.



Paige Heinrich, Anika Williams, Erin McCulloch and Ciana O'Neil. Photographs: Ruby Ramsden

Paige Heinrich is just 13 and has been dancing for five years. Last year she placed fifth nationally and is thrilled that this won her a spot in the world titles. "I always found Irish dancing uplifting," she says. "I like that it's got a bit of seriousness about it and also a bit of cheerfulness."

Clad in her glittery and sparkly dance dress, she happily admits that not everything has gone as smoothly as an Irish reel. "I've slipped and fallen over on stage, very embarrassing, and once in competition I had to keep going with a drawing pin in my shoe."

Fellow dancer Erin McCulloch, also 13, used to be paralysed by nerves when she began. "I used to get stressed and worry about what the competition judges might think, but I've got past that."

Judges sometimes require dancers to include totally new movements when they perform,

and Erin recounts the first time she faced this challenge. "I was so panicked for a moment, but as soon as I finished, I felt, 'Oh, wow, I actually did it.' I didn't qualify for this year's world championships but I'm aiming at next year."

Erin will leave it to good friends Paige and Ciana O'Neil to carry Pacific Irish Dance's shillelagh at the world titles in Dublin. "I wish them all the luck of the Irish," she laughs.

Ruby Ramsden is a new contributor to the News.

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St Michael's enjoys a week of wellbeing

Rita Totino

A Week of Wellbeing kicked off the year at St Michael's Primary.

Our first week featured lots of fun and health-focused activities for both students and staff. The first day began with a meet-and-greet morning tea for parents.

Families of new students were invited to join us and make connections with other families in our school community.

Breakfast served at school included delicious pancakes, with a variety of tasty toppings, for children and a morning coffee for parents. All found it very much to their taste.

Parents and students joined in 'mindful colouring' before school. This activity asks us to focus on how we choose and apply colour in a design, and it brings our awareness to the present moment.

The highlight of the week was the pre-school fitness circuit class for staff, organised by Sarah Pizzoferrato, our PE teacher.

"It was a great way to start the day with our colleagues. We all encouraged each other to push ourselves to complete every activity to the best of our ability," Sarah says.

"Playing music added to the atmosphere and possibly distracted some of us from thinking about the demanding plank, where the body is held motionless for two minutes."

The week's grand finale was the Zumba classes for all children, parents and staff. Qualified instructor Alycia visited St Michael's to take the activity and led everyone in an energetic 40-minute session.

At the end, everyone was glowing and buzzing with exhilaration. It highlighted to the children the importance of keeping your body and mind healthy.

Maddie (grade 2) summed it up. "It was so cool! I learned new moves that I will remember and dance to with other music."

Rita Totino is the teaching and learning leader at St Michael's.



Excited St Michael's children with Zumba teacher Alycia.



Teachers Sarah, Hayley and Molly flying in Zumba class. Photographs: Rita Totino



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Fire sparks creative spirit

Nancy Lane

North Melbourne-based artist Myrna McRae grew up in Horsham. “The Grampians were like our backyard,” she says.

When she married David, they built and lived in a house in that part of western Victoria. The house was destroyed in a bushfire several years ago, but the upside – if there can ever be an upside to such a loss – was that it prompted Myrna to start painting the imposing Grampians.

She celebrated the beauty of this area in her recent exhibition at Fitzroy North’s Red Gallery.

While Myrna depicted the Grampians in a previous exhibition by using traditional techniques of landscape painting, her new work uses motifs, shapes and colour to embody both the physical place and her reaction to it.

Myrna credits her new approach to her teacher and mentor, Helen Brack, known as an artist as Helen Maudsley. A major exhibition of Helen’s works was held at the National Gallery of Victoria in Federation Square in 2018.

Helen gave Myrna lessons on and off for more than 20 years, and continues to stay in touch. Helen has opened each of Myrna’s previous five exhibitions and, at the age of 93, opened the Red Gallery exhibition as well.

Myrna started taking art lessons from Helen because she had always liked painting. She also studied drawing with her long-time mentor. “I repeated Helen’s beginners and intermediate classes over and over, always learning more every time,” she says.

As a teacher, Helen made a deep impression on Myrna. “She was a fearsome presence, always serious about what she was teaching. She has great respect for an artwork, never allowing students to treat painting as trivial.”



Myrna McRae in her studio at home. Photographs: Nancy Lane

When Myrna was working on a painting, Helen would come and have a look, then make suggestions such as “This bit needs fixing up” or “You need more colour here”.

While Myrna initially found this frustrating, over time she became grateful for Helen’s approach.

“Helen wanted each painting to have its own integrity,” Myrna explains. “This can’t be hurried. That’s why, even now, each painting takes me a long time.”

Even though Myrna has not



One of Myrna’s Grampians paintings.

taken lessons for several years, she says that she still hears Helen in her head whenever she’s painting. “I just do what she says,” she jokes. “I think as student and teacher, we were a good match.”

When working full-time, Myrna only painted once a week, during her lesson. Since retiring 12 years ago, she has met regularly with another of Helen’s students.

The two painted together in what became a very supportive relationship. “We understood and could help each other because we had both been in the same classes with the same teacher,” she says.

Myrna has now set up a painting (and sewing) room in her home, so that she can paint at any time. She initially started painting in acrylic on paper and she continues with it to this day.

“I like this medium for its own sake. But it’s also very practical. Unlike oil on canvas, acrylic on paper is much easier to store,” she says.

Nancy Lane writes regularly for the News.

New French connection

Ansh Verma

Tim Beylie and Brice Antier recently opened Bread Club in Queensberry Street. The bakery grew from the two Frenchmen’s long friendship and their shared love for the craft of baking.

Tim says the inspiration for Bread Club came from his Iranian-born wife, Diba. “She had been encouraging me to start my own bakery for a long while. I live in North Melbourne so we all decided to start the business here,” he says.

Tim speaks warmly of his early days in France. “I grew up in the south-western region of Nouvelle-Aquitaine, close to the border of Spain. I was introduced to baking as a 14-year-old by my pastry chef father,” he says.

But it was in Australia that Tim learnt his trade since arriving here in 2005. He became head baker at Vue de Monde where he met Brice. They both left to follow their own ventures but decided to team up to launch Bread Club.

“It’s a perfect working relationship as we complement each other. We are also supported by our partners, Diba and Katarina, who designed the décor together,” Tim grins.

Front-of-house manager Leisha Lim lives locally and also came from Vue de Monde.

It’s a genuine family business that extends into a second generation. Both the owners’ mothers-in-law bring their respective Iranian and Croatian heritage. “They have inspired us to do some twists on classic dishes creating a fusion between French baking and their own food cultures.”

Tim’s eyes dance as he describes the Persian-inspired potato salad that he has created. “Every culture has a potato salad, but this one is special. I use it to fill baguettes and we’ve had a great response to it,” he smiles.

He speaks with pride of his bread. “It’s not fluffy supermarket bread, just flour and water mixed together. Bread must ferment properly. Our sourdough won’t leave you with a sour stomach. It will be good for you. It’s the sort of bread people have been eating for thousands of years.”

Tim says he is doing plenty of overtime. “But only because I love talking to my customers so much.”

Ansh Verma is a new contributor to the News.

Want to know more?
Bread Club is at 558 Queensberry Street, North Melbourne. Drop in for bread, coffee or lunch, and meet the crew. Be sure to say “Bonjour”.



Bread Club manager Leisha Lim and co-owner Tim Beylie. Photograph: Ansh Verma

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While preparing my outfit for the Pride March, I realised everything I do is to get young climate-warrior Greta’s attention. I bet there are plenty of other adoring almost-52-year-old Queers like me. And I bet Sir Dave Attenborough calls her weekly, but I want to do it too.

We have unprecedented and catastrophic conditions. Is 2020 another Anushoribilis? Not sure of the spelling but you’ll get the drift.

★ ★ ★

I’m sitting here at Haymarket, awaiting a Sydney Road tram to Brunswick. They must be on strike – every tram going north is headed to DEPOT. And now there are none. Sure, striking as protest is dramatically important but it’s Foolishly

VERY IMPRESSIVE



Bloody counter-productive to be striking without warning. This sort of thing annoys the occasional PT user and sends them back to their car.

★ ★ ★

The apartment I share with Nunga, the Magnificent Wonder Dog, has +’s and -’s. One minus is it has a concrete slab ceiling that needs a hammer drill to hang anything from it. A plus is we have a small garden space opening off the bedroom, overrun with cacti, succulents, ferns, flowers and art. Everywhere there are colour-texture-shapes and

things that inspire happiness within and without.

★ ★ ★

I’ve been to two countries – Australia and my native New Zealand – and always wanted to go to Antarctica. I’ve just

had their outlines tattooed on the back of my left hand. I love that I’ve finally done it, after three years thinking about it but I’m not entirely happy with the shape of the North Island. It’s the most expensive tatt I’ve had.

Hope I win at tonight’s lotto.

★ ★ ★

Is there anyone else out there in Bookface Landia reading Thomas Harris’ *Cari Mora*? I’m only some 65 pages into it (there’s nine chapters). But I’ve already begun to think that Dr Hannibal Lecter, a character in an earlier Harris book, might

just have been a hobbyist in the murder game.

I’m also enjoying Sandi Toksvig’s new book, but now the library wants it back.

★ ★ ★

Wonder Dog Nunga and I got home and spotted a fabulous tossed-out chair and two-seater couch.

Franco Cotzo-esque style, burgundy leather and timber, it appealed to my sense of plump and pomposity. But as I dragged it through the door, I dropped my keys – gate pass, mailbox, front door, the lot. I can’t find them. When I go out, I jam the door closed with bits of material.

Very Impressive shares his views on life in each issue of the News.

Plenty River sets the scene for a ride with the lot

Here is another beaut ride for you, my fellow guerrilla riders. If you ride without a uniform, drag along a friend to explore new places, and if time and speed don’t matter, you may be subversive enough to be a guerrilla rider.

This ride can take half a day. However, you can cut it by a third if a two- or three-hour journey is more to your liking. Today, our return journey will take us beside the Plenty and Yarra rivers as we wind our way back to North Melbourne.

First, you must train it out to Greensborough, or Heidelberg if you prefer the shorter version. From North Melbourne station you’ll need to change in the city

WHEELS ON FIRE

Tim Cremean



to the Hurstbridge line. Or you might choose to ride the Capital City trail towards Clifton Hill station and catch the train there.

The bike path starts in the park on the north side of Greensborough station. It then meanders down to the Plenty River and under busy Para Road. You then cruise through parkland and ovals, keeping to the path nearest the river. After 5km, you’ll edge past Heidelberg Golf Club and enter a very rural part of Viewbank.

The path becomes gravel for some kilometres through hilly horse paddocks and the gradient will test the cardiovascular system. However, the views from the top are rewarding. This must be why it is called Viewbank.

Descend to Banyule Flats wetlands and the Yarra. Turn right and ride past the billabongs and on to the sports grounds and the river. This path will take you under the very busy Banksia Street.

If you prefer the shorter ride, leave the path at Heidelberg station and ride a kilometre down Yarra Street, then walk your bike across the Banksia Street intersection. Join the Main Yarra Trail from the Boulevard if you fancy a rural setting.

This area is artist central. You are near Heide, the home of many 20th century artists. The area is the original base of the 19th century Heidelberg School of impressionist artists. Some bends in the river here were painted by the legendary Arthur

Streeton and Tom Roberts.

Interpretive signs explain the history.

Alas, the gentle ambience is shattered as you reach that part of the trail beside the freeway, but soon it’s parkland and river again. You might pause at Fairfield Park Boathouse for refreshments. Soon you’ll join the Capital Trail at Merri Creek in Clifton Hill. From there it’s just 30 minutes home to North Melbourne.

This ride has the lot. There’s nature, pleasant views, uplifting art and a few sharp rises to get the blood flowing.

Tim Cremean shares his love of bike-riding in each issue of the News.

It’s time to talk of many things, of Fiestas and of Flings

We are busy preparing, under the leadership of Yulay Perez, for a great fifth year of our Spanish Language Fiesta on Saturday 4 April.

Yulay came to Australia after growing up and attending university in Venezuela. I’m glad to welcome her on board, even as we were all sorry that Tatiana Echeverri moved on last year after two Spring Flings and four fiestas.

I hope you like the logo for this year’s fiesta. It was made for us by Carolina Echeverri, Tatiana’s sister, a designer in Medellin, Colombia.

Yulay has some great new ideas, and so the fiesta will be both familiar and refreshed. There will be music and dancing, crafts,

FROM THE DIRECTOR

Tom Seddon



plenty to eat and drink and to see and do, for all ages. You’re sure to have a great day, so come by and say ¡Hola!

Speaking of festivals, we really want to hear from people about the future of Spring Fling. As I’ve said more than once, it is now too expensive on a community-festival budget to close the tramline and take over several blocks of Victoria, Errol and Queensberry streets as has been done in years past.

Some people liked the laneway-style Spring Fling of 2019, while others very firmly did not. Certainly the decision to move the event to Saturday was an error, and we did not decorate the festival footprint well enough to help create a sense of occasion.

Both decisions were about controlling costs, but they were mistakes. If there is to be a Spring Fling in 2020, rest assured we won’t make them again!

Thank you to those who did write or call, or say something on the day. If you have thoughts about what an affordable, fun, COMMUNITY festival in the lanes or on the block of Errol Street,

north of Queensberry Street, should be, or you want to help put it on, I still very much want to hear from you.

Email us at springflingfest@thecentre.org.au or drop into The Centre at 58 Errol Street.

Finally, if you should find yourself in Docklands, be sure to drop into The Centre’s Pop-Up Neighbourhood House at 4 Wharf Drive, just off Docklands Drive in the District Shopping Centre. Pop-Up chief Carolynne Venn and her friendly volunteers will be happy to see you.



Centre gives children a good start

Flora Sciarra

Caitlin Griffin works at Goodstart Early Learning in Flemington Road, North Melbourne.

With nine years in early childcare education under her belt, she is a relative veteran in the industry. She is Goodstart's educational leader and mentors other early childhood educators.

Childcare was not always Caitlin's dream. "I wanted to be a nurse," she says. But as she moved through school, new ideas arose. "Then I thought I'd like to be a Kinder teacher."

Once Caitlin started caring for children she found herself drawn to the little ones. "Childcare is different to my earlier dreams, but

it's still about caring for people," she says.

"I just fell in love with working with younger children. I love seeing their faces light up every morning."

While caring for children can be a challenge, Caitlin believes it really does depend on the individual child. What works for one child won't necessarily work with another.

"Some children act out purely for attention, while others just need some quiet time," she says.

Like everyone who works with children, Caitlin has many stories about the lighter moments of the job.

"When I first started in childcare I overheard two Kinder children talking. I heard one say, 'Your mum looks pregnant.' The other came back with, 'She's not pregnant, she's just fat.'"

It's no surprise when she says the Kinder children are the funniest.

"They just have no concept of anything, they just say whatever they think of. They have no filter and they just blurt anything out," she laughs.

Caitlin firmly believes in the importance of education in the early years. She sees it as an essential preparation for the later school years.

"There's a purpose to education. It is embedded into our practice as educators," she says.

Flora Sciarra is a new contributor to the News.



Childcare worker Caitlin Griffin at Goodstart Early Learning. Photograph: Flora Sciarra

An Angel flies home from her US tour

Rosie Greenfield

Errol's Angels are back in full voice under the tutelage of choir leader Maryanne Clements. She is busy introducing us to new songs while also dipping into the archives for some old favourites.

It is wonderful to see a few new faces in the group. However, it's always sad to farewell long-term members.

Our final gig for 2019 took us on tour singing a range of Christmas songs. We started at the Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre before we headed off to The Centre's pop-up shop in Docklands.

Then we had our usual Christmas carols session in Errol Street with Santa and Santa's helpers joining in the fun. Our final stop was the West Melbourne Baptist Church where we sang to an appreciative Christmas audience. A great end to our year!

While the rest of us were singing Christmas songs in the heat, one of our choristers was performing in the snowy United States. Sarah Mainwaring, a performer in the Geelong-based Back to Back Theatre, toured the States with the play, *The Shadow Whose Prey the Hunter Becomes*. The show



Errol's Angel Sarah Mainwaring (second from right) performing with Back to Back Theatre. Photograph: Jeff Busby

received rave reviews. The *New York Stage Review's* David Finkle called it "a piece of unexpectedly brilliant theatre" while the *Boston Globe's* Don Aucoin was even more effusive.

"Into its one remarkable hour, *Shadow* packed more insight, wisdom, emotional resonance, and steadily accumulating power than many stage productions achieve in three times that duration," he wrote.

The play had won similar plaudits at last year's Melbourne International Arts Festival. The show was insightful, funny and at times biting in its portrayals, and it received a deserved standing ovation.

We in Errol's Angels are not a bit surprised that Sarah is now making her name internationally. Ever since she joined us in 2006, her vibrant personality and determination have been obvious.

Sarah finds Thursdays, the Angels' practice night, especially busy. She gets her day underway

early, catching public transport from home in Parkville to Geelong, where she is soon part of Back to Back's daily round of activities.

She spends her day immersed in workshops, rehearsals and writing sessions. After all that, it's back to our two-hour rehearsal at night.

We are delighted to have Sarah back with the Angels for 2020.

Rosie Greenfield is a member of Errol's Angels.

Want to know more?
You're welcome to come to rehearsals, Thursday evenings from 7.00 to 9.00 pm during school terms. They are held at the Maternal and Child Health Centre, 505 Abbotsford Street, North Melbourne. Find us at www.facebook.com/ErrolsAngels/



Errol's Angel Sarah Mainwaring (right) with Pam Every. Photograph: Brian Hinkley

First-year teachers start the year with class

Nine first-year teachers at our local schools recently walked into the classroom for their first day. They tell *News* editor Maurice Gaul about their experience.

Aaron Heppell (North Melbourne Primary)

Aaron launched his PE teaching career with some sedate lawn bowls with his grade 5 group. His second class, skateboarding with grade 3, brought him back to earth with a thump.

The talented Essendon footballer soon came a cropper. "I told the kids to watch carefully to see how I push off, then first thing I fell off and landed on my backside. At least it proved a good icebreaker," he laughs.

Aaron's other problem on day one was locating his various classrooms. "It's a big school and I tried to navigate my way around, but the map I'd been given just confused me even more. Maybe I shouldn't plan to teach orienteering."



Molly Fisher (St Michael's Primary)

Molly went into her first class on a bit of a high. "Yes, I made sure I had a coffee first thing to get me going before meeting my first group," she says.

"It all went smoothly. Well, except for when I was writing the word 'teacher' on the whiteboard and I was distracted and left off the last two letters. And next moment a child calls out: 'Molly, you left the last bit off,'" she smiles.

"The most daunting part of the first day was yard duty. I had to be a counsellor in disputes and Nurse Molly when a preppie came running up with a grazed knee. I'm happy I didn't get any broken legs."



Tom Madden (St Aloysius College)

Tom had the odd qualm before his first year 8 PE class. "I wasn't sure where to meet the girls and I was a bit worried we'd get lost on the way to the Boundary Road gym or I couldn't open the door," he admits.

In the gym, he bet the girls he'd know all their names within 10 minutes. "We played this get-to-know-you game where I said: 'My name is Tom, I like tomatoes', and everyone had to link their name with a food."

He got all the girls' names right. "I don't see them until next week. I expect they'll call me Mr Madden. I hope I don't get Tom Tomato," he laughs.



Risa Hammel (North Melbourne Primary)

Risa brought a dose of jetlag to her first class after returning from visiting family in California. "I walked in to a big room, 90 grade 6 kids and two other teachers, but had no idea which 28 were mine," she smiles.

"We soon got organised, then they all wanted to laminate their names. Of course, I couldn't find a laminator. But the children were more interested to learn that I was American," she says. The questions came thick and fast.

"Do you know any influencers?" "Did you go to school with any film stars?" "Did you vote for Trump?" Risa replied, "No way!", and she laughs as she recalls the moment. "They all went 'Yayyyyyy'."



Peter Di Natale (Simonds College)

Peter felt the heat of teaching in his first year 8 home-room class. "It was 41 degrees, I couldn't get the air-con to work and I was sweating profusely," he says.

A quick move to a cooler room and he was soon down to business.

"I got the boys to cut up their diary and tape it to their workbook cover, just like my old teachers used to do. Then we played 'activity bingo'."

After assembly at Simonds' senior campus, Peter returned with the year 7s on the bus.

"I heard them talking about all sorts of unusual things. I'm not all that sure that I should have been listening," he grins.



Megan Anderson (North Melbourne Primary)

Megan felt slightly unwanted on her debut day of teaching. "I didn't have a classroom for my 22 grade 1 children, and we were running around looking for one. But it all turned out well," she says.

Then more misfortune struck. "I lost a couple of them after lunch. They had gone to the wrong room, and I found them lined up and waiting patiently. We were all very relieved to find each other."

Megan told the children about her cat, Arnold, then launched into an alphabet lesson. "I began on the board with 'A' and a child asked: 'Are you writing Arnold's name?' I never thought my cat would be part of my first day," she laughs.



Michelle Reeves (St Aloysius College)

Michelle's first year 8 class tapped into her passion for music. A singer, and capable on guitar, piano and most instruments, she began the year with a music version of 'fruit salad'.

"It was a good icebreaker," she says. "In 'musical salad' the students chose an instrument then found someone who'd gone for the same one, then called out 'Musical Salad'. The TV audio kept dropping out but I just joked through it."

Not everything went smoothly.

"I'd been to the pool the day before and my nose was rosy red. And we had school photos that day. Thank God for concealer," she laughs.



Ari Gurra (North Melbourne Primary)

Ari felt he was still in holiday mode as his grade 3 students quizzed him about his recent trip to Europe. "I told them about what I had seen in London, Italy and the Netherlands," he says.

Later, Ari was supervising the lunchtime mayhem of children playing their noisy games. He soon faced his first moral dilemma. "Kids in my class were playing hidey and they asked if I'd seen the ones they were chasing," he grins.

"I decided to respect the game and not give away the secret. So I just gave them random directions and sent them off anywhere. I don't know if they found them, but I'm sure they had fun."



Tahlia Boggs (St Michael's Primary)

Tahlia faced one of teaching's eternal challenges soon after meeting her grade 3/4 class. "One of the girls came up to me and said, 'I'm just not feeling very worky today,'" she says.

Tahlia's response was creative. "We did some 'Go Noodle' activity, which encourages children to be their 'strongest, bravest, silliest, bestest selves'. I joined in and was happy to make a fool of myself using a silly voice."

There was one first-day downer that Tahlia didn't share with the children.

"I was a bit disorganised and I forgot to bring my lunch. So I just had two coffees to get through the day. OK, I admit it, it might have been three."



Mike goes on show at the Meat Market

Warwick Jones

Mike Nicholson's Melrose Street home is brimming with his paintings. They're mostly techni-coloured abstractions, made up of stylised forms, flat tones and pleasing textures. Mike is busy preparing for his new exhibition next month at the Meat Market Stables in Wreckyn Street. He and six other artists will exhibit paintings, films, photos and ceramics at the free exhibition.

He points to a painting propped up against a chair depicting Australia as a giant open-cut coal mine. "I want my art to be entertaining and engaging, so I try not to get too political," he says.

But Mike's history as an artist is highly political. He and brother Peter created the cult *Rubbery Figures* political cartoon, which aired weekly on ABC TV. "I did the animation, editing, writing and filming. The whole kit and caboodle," he says.

The show used hand puppet caricatures and comically unflattering impressions of politicians to make unapologetic political commentary. "Nothing really changes, politicians are still all hopeless," he laughs.



Mike Nicholson at home with his daughter and fellow artist Melissa. Photograph: Warwick Jones

Mike and Peter shot and edited *Rubbery Figures* on 16 mm film in three houses they owned in Melrose Street before moving to a studio in Errol Street. "Then the ABC said, as they do, 'right, that's it, we're axing it.' We had the whole setup but couldn't get it on TV," he laments. The puppets had their final curtain call on Channel 7's *Fast Forward*. They were then shown at the National Art Gallery and are now on display at the Old Parliament House in Canberra.

In 1993, Mike took a two-year sabbatical to care for his father, who had Alzheimer's, at his dad's home in Mornington. Some of the paintings at Mike's upcoming exhibition were painted there. Mike's plan for the exhibition is to use huge video installations in between his films and oil paintings. It will also include works by award-winning Aboriginal artist Brian Birch and brothers Gary and Wayne Bateman from Mallacoota. Wayne is a photographer who

lost his life's work in the 2009 Black Saturday bushfires. His photographs of the recent fires that forced Mallacoota residents to be evacuated by naval vessels will be on display. Mike speaks enthusiastically about the younger exhibitors. A neighbour, Ami Taib, will be showing a plinth of her Scandinavian minimalist vases. Mike is proud that daughter Melissa will display her wide-ranging painting, photography and digital imagery.

He hopes the exhibition will attract many art students. "Everyone will be welcome on opening night, 17 April. There'll be cheap wine and beer, and an art table for kids. If you can, bring a savoury platter to share," he says.

Warwick Jones writes regularly for the News.

Want to know more?
Mike's art will be on display at Meat Market Stables, 2 Wreckyn Street, North Melbourne, 17-29 April, midday to 8.00 pm.

Comedian finds a convivial community in North Melbourne

Annette McQuarrie

North Melbourne is full of laughs. Especially down at The Comic's Lounge in Errol Street, a favourite haunt of comedians from across the country. Local funnyman Matt Elsbury, a veteran of 14 Melbourne International Comedy Festivals, recently headlined with Fiona O'Loughlin at the Lounge. Getting there was easy – he simply walked from home. He moved his family to North Melbourne just last year. "We were a family of four living in a two-bedroom flat and we needed more elbow-room. We

love it here with everything so close," he says. "At Christmas, there was even a community gathering on Errol Street, which took us completely by surprise. There was a choir, Santa and even tap-dancing." Matt is feeling a bit weary after a hectic afternoon of kid-wrangling his two youngsters. He loves that he can be a full-time dad during the day and then head off to gigs in the evening. The children provide lots of comedy material. "There's a cliché in the comedy world that each child comes with 15 minutes of material – and you don't even need to write it," he laughs. Matt's rise to comedic fame



Matt Elsbury: kid wrangler and funnyman.

began straight after uni. While working as a relief teacher soon

after his teacher training, he was spotted while doing a night-time stand-up gig. "I was given the chance to tour with popular Sydney comedian Carl Barron as his support act. I toured with him for five years. It was my first opportunity to work night after night, and my improvement as a comic was just exponential." Comedians can be great company and great conversationalists, and Matt is no exception. When asked who from the world of comedy he would invite to dinner, his answer was surprisingly eclectic. "First would be George Carlin – he was a trailblazer and his

routines still hold up today. Next would be British comedian Peter Kay – I don't usually find myself drawn to 'everyday' comedy but Kay's stagecraft is impeccable." And the third? "Well, I've always enjoyed Judith Lucy's sardonic style. She can carry a level of dry, one that I just can't reach. She takes the stage with an aura of someone who is just sick of your shit. She's just had enough of you and then she tells you why." Matt is also a fan of *The Two Ronnies*. They're gone now, but he says that classic comedy doesn't get any better than that. Annette McQuarrie is a new contributor to the News.

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Speech pathologist and FGM activist Paula Ferrari.
Photograph: Jim Weatherill

Therapist uses comedy to send serious message

Annette McQuarrie

Not many people consider themselves fortunate to be mown down by a moving vehicle. But that’s what West Melbourne local Paula Ferrari reveals when asked why she decided to become a speech therapist.

“I originally started a science degree but I was frustrated by the lack of job options. Luckily, I was hit by a car in my first year at uni and while I was in rehab I got talking to the allied health team,” she says.

“My mother had been a nurse and I wanted to help people. I thought speech therapy would be helpful in a practical way without having to wipe too many bums like she did.”

As well as being a speech therapist at her own speech pathology business in Abbotsford Street, West Melbourne, Paula is also a mum of three (including 12-year-old twins) and certainly had her share of bum-wiping in the children’s early years.

Paula enjoys the unique ambience of West Melbourne. “I love the area’s industrial vibe. I feel it is aesthetic in its own right,” she muses as she looks out the window of her favourite local restaurant, Sassy.x.

The mid-afternoon panorama reveals a spectacular view of the Wheel and the Bolte Bridge. But Paula’s attention is soon focused on her meal of whiting fillets.

At work, she has bigger fish to fry. Her innate desire to help people has led her to her role as director of the registered charity Female Genital Mutilation Restoration Australia. “I started it in 2014. We support survivors of FGM and help them access restorative surgery,” she says.

It’s a highly confronting topic. Paula’s expertise and interest in the issue has led to her being the guest speaker at the coming launch of *Me and Her*, a documentary on the issue of FGM. Paula has planned a surprising start to her speech.

“I’m going to introduce the film with a comedy routine,” she smiles. “But the serious

purpose is, of course, to raise awareness of the problems women face while living with the damage done by female genital mutilation.”

It seems a brave choice to mix comedy and high seriousness. “It’s not an obvious topic for comedy, but I see it as an effective way to promote female sexuality and to support women who are survivors of FGM,” Paula says.

As she speaks, her phone rings insistently. Her teenage daughter has had an incident with her ear and an earring, and is off to emergency.

Paula is out the door in a flash. Always the helper, always Supermum.

Annette McQuarrie is a new contributor to the News.

Want to know more?
You can contact Paula at FGMRestoration Australia (Facebook) or email paula@paulaferrari@gmail.com

Legal Centre’s helping hand is there for all

Nicole Pereira

Lawyer Lloyd Murphy spends his days helping people get their lives back on track. He looks after the ‘criminal law’ and ‘fines and infringements’ teams at the Inner Melbourne Legal Centre in Queensberry Street.

He is passionate about helping community members overcome their legal problems. “When you’ve got a client in tears and hugging you in court, it’s very satisfying,” he says.

Lloyd’s hectic day at the IMLC starts with a cup of coffee before he heads off to a legal clinic or to do client visits. “I usually have five back-to-back clients most days. I just love North Melbourne. Errol Street has a real country-town feel,” he says.

Before coming to IMLC, Lloyd worked at other community legal centres, including Brimbank and St Kilda. “Different areas have different issues. Here, our clients usually bring issues relating to refugees, public housing, homelessness, and fines and infringements,” he explains.

Lloyd uses a holistic approach when looking at a client’s situation.

“A client might present with one issue, but they’ve often got much more going on. A person with a fines and infringements problem can also have issues such as mental health, family

violence, drug addiction and homelessness.”

He is acutely aware of delicate cultural issues. “In some cultures, it’s not appropriate to seek help about certain things or even to speak to an outsider about them. I often see a hesitancy to disclose details relating to survivor trauma,” he says.

His eyes light up as he tells of one major success. “I helped a disabled woman with cancer, and a victim of family violence, regain her licence and car. Essentially, she also regained her freedom.”

The woman had no idea that her son’s fines had led to her licence being suspended. “Letters had gone to her previous addresses and she had no idea about the suspension until she was picked up by police on the road,” Lloyd says.

He immediately got in touch with contacts at Fines Victoria and was able to resolve her problem. “She was back on the road soon after. Getting the fines waived at court was very satisfying,” he says. The liability had been \$72,000.

Lloyd urges anyone with a problem to approach IMLC.

“Even if you think it’s not a legal issue, give us a call and one of our volunteers can chat to you to see if we can help. It’s always good for us to intervene as early as possible,” he says.

He often meets clients at the café at Ozanam House, where he



Lloyd Murphy outside the Inner Melbourne Legal Centre in Queensberry Street. Photograph: Nicole Pereira

enjoys a chat over a coffee. “I have a long-standing client whom I see there weekly,” he says.

“Sometimes we just sit down and have a chat. Often, just having someone to talk to can be the most important thing.”

Nicole Pereira is a new contributor to the News.

Want to know more?
The Inner Melbourne Legal Centre, 2/508 Queensberry Street, North Melbourne. Hours 9.00am–5.00pm, weekdays.

Something to share?

Do you have a skill, talent or expertise to share?

Would you like to start a club or discussion group?

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Artist finds inspiration in River Studios space

Mike Muscat

Bridget Baldwin relocated from New Zealand to Australia a year ago. The big move proved a challenge for the artist and her family. They traded an idyllic seaside lifestyle at home for a very different life in inner-city Melbourne. "I've always lived by the sea but now I've moved to a big city. I do miss home," Bridget says. There has been an upside to the big move as she has become immersed in the diversity of Melbourne. "I've always been fascinated by different cultures and the physiology of people," she explains. "There is a narrative behind each of my portraits. Every painting has its own story to tell." Recently, Bridget has moved away from painting people to focus on capturing images of the

ocean. Perhaps it is a sense of longing for her old home in New Zealand that has influenced the new direction in her work. "I enjoyed painting portraits but I was ready for a change. The connection to water and nature was always on my mind, and I started experimenting with colours," she says. Bridget is now happily based at River Studios, a converted warehouse for more than 60 artists on the banks of the Maribyrnong. She has found it to be a creative space that allows her to separate her busy family life from her artistic work. She enjoys the interactions she has with other creatives in the River Studios' rabbit warren. "I love being surrounded by artists who are all doing something different and who are all passionate about their work. It's so inspiring," she says. Bridget is delighted by her adopted city's attitude to the



Bridget Baldwin at River Studios. Photograph: Mike Muscat

creative arts. "Melbourne is very nurturing of artists and there is a lot of funding and lots of accessible public works here. "It's an exciting city for an artist

and I'm excited to make it my new home." Mike Muscat writes regularly for the News.

Want to know more?
Check out Bridget Baldwin's work at <http://bridgetbaldwin.com/>

Lort Smith expertise gives one-eyed Muffin a second chance

Suzanne Kundevska

Muffin went missing from his home last November and returned in a frightful state. The nine-month-old cat had been hit by a car, receiving a terrible head trauma, jaw fractures and a severely damaged eye that had become so infected it was too awful to look at. Unable to care for him, but not wanting to put this beautiful cat to sleep, Muffin's carer brought him to Lort Smith. He needed emergency surgery, rehabilitation and a new home where he could live out his days indoors and in peace.

Muffin was immediately given pain relief and antibiotics. Sadly, the trauma to his head was so severe he couldn't close his mouth. The impact had caused his eye to come out of its socket so he went straight into surgery to remove the eye, which couldn't be repaired. During his operation, vets placed an 'O' tube in Muffin to ensure his body could receive nourishment while he was unable to eat. After surgery, Muffin had a CT scan to give the vets a clear picture of his head injuries. It confirmed the impact had



Muffin the one-eyed cat has made a full recovery. Photograph: Lort Smith

forced his teeth out of alignment so Muffin needed a dental operation. Vet dental surgeon

Dr Tom removed one tooth and shortened another to help him eat easily again. Through this incredibly tough time, Muffin's spirit shone through. He loved the care and attention he received and would purr away happily when groomed. He spent two weeks in hospital and a further four weeks in foster care before he was ready to find a forever home. It wasn't long before Michael, who had been searching for a new housemate, spotted Muffin in the Adoption Hub. It was an instant match! "Muffin's been through some serious trauma, but he's come through it with one of the best

personalities," says a very happy Michael. These days Muffin can be found playing with his toys, or curling up with Michael to watch TV. While there are a handful of places that offer the holistic care Muffin required, Lort Smith is the only one that takes on cases where an animal has no 'family'. We are grateful to the clients who choose Lort Smith as their preferred vet. When they bring their pets in for treatment they are also helping us provide care for deserving animals like Muffin. Suzanne Kundevska is PR manager at Lort Smith.

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BETWEEN THE COVERS

Chris Saliba



Miss Austen

Gill Hornby
(Random House, RRP: \$32.99)



It's 1840 and Cassandra Austen, sister to the famous Jane, has come to the village of Kintbury on a solemn mission. Her sister's letters, containing much that is private and should remain so, are hidden somewhere in the vicarage.

Cassandra has a plan to destroy any 'dangerous' correspondence that compromises the reputation of her dear, long-departed sister. Many of the letters are to Eliza Fowle, a close friend of Jane. As Cassandra reads the letters, a whole world comes rushing back, of former loves and personal tragedies, and memories of Jane.

Gill Hornby's *Miss Austen* (the title refers to Cassandra, not Jane) is a great triumph, painting a vivid portrait of the lives and precarious fortunes of women during the early 19th century. The novel jumps back and forth between 1840 and the period 1795–1817, Jane's great period of literary activity.

The core of *Miss Austen* concentrates on Cassandra's emotional life, her loves, personal losses and troubled pursuit of happiness. Insightful and emotionally satisfying, Hornby's book works brilliantly as both a page-turning novel and an eye-opener into the Regency period, especially its treatment of women.

Chris Saliba is co-owner of North Melbourne Books, 546 Queensberry Street. He writes regular reviews for the News.

We Are the Weather: Saving the Planet Begins at Breakfast

Jonathan Safran Foer (Hamish Hamilton, RRP: \$35)



Changes in diet may well be one of the most difficult requirements for reducing our carbon footprint. As novelist Jonathan Safran Foer discusses in his new book, *We Are the Weather*, emissions from livestock pose an enormous danger to the planet.

Not only do livestock create methane and other emissions, but land cleared for grazing removes trees and foliage that would usually sequester carbon. A double hit to the environment. Some researchers even suggest that if the world went on a plant-based diet, this would dramatically reduce carbon in the atmosphere.

No doubt this is all daunting to consider. Foer doesn't preach or thunder from on high about the need to eat more plants, and confesses to his lapses as a vegetarian. Indeed, for the most part, *We Are the Weather* addresses the psychology of inaction and draws parallels with historical examples of looming catastrophes that were ignored.

We Are the Weather is a book of ethical conundrums, a personal quest to find the right way to live. Melancholy reading for sure, sometimes confronting, yet it's searingly honest about our collective failure to act and it identifies what needs to be done.

The Wonderful Wisdom of Ants

Philip Bunting (Omnibus Books, RRP: \$17.99)
4+ years old



Who would have thought that ants could be so much fun? In this new book from Philip Bunting (author of *Koalas Eat Gum Leaves* and *Kookaburras Love to Laugh*), we learn all sorts of fascinating facts and figures about the humble ant.

Did you know there are 10 quadrillion ants? Amazing! And that ants communicate by smell? That's right. Ants talk to each other through an "odorous alphabet of smells". Ants organise themselves in complex colonies where everyone has a special job to do, either laying eggs, gathering food or doing housework.

They are also eco-friendly, recycling nutrients from plants and trees to create richer soil. And after a busy spell of work, ants like to take a power nap before starting all over again.

The *Wonderful Wisdom of Ants* presents all this information with bright, lively illustrations and easy-to-follow graphics. There are quite a few laughs in the text, too. One ant holds its newborn and says: "I larva you". The book is tied up with a neat message about the importance of caring for the environment, family and community.

Entertaining and educational, *The Wonderful Wisdom of Ants* will leave you in a cheerful mood.

THE LIFE OF THE PARTY

Ellen Sandell



Ellen on a bushwalk in Toolangi State Forest.

As I was writing this article, I still hadn't fully come to terms with the scale of the loss that we saw across the country this summer.

Of course, fire has been part of our landscape for generations. It was a huge part of my family's life, and I grew up around fire. My birthday is in late November, which used to be right at the start of the fire season.

My dad, who passed away six years ago, was a firefighter. He would always feel incredibly guilty, because, around the time of my birthday, he was often away fighting fires. Fire was a very significant part of our lives.

Now, everything feels different. Fire seasons don't start in November any more – they start in September or in October. The seasons are now much more ferocious.

We know why this is. The scientists and emergency services experts have been telling us for a long time that there is no doubt that climate change is fuelling these fires. These are climate fires.

It's difficult to be optimistic, especially when I think about my kids and what kind of a future they might have. I know there are many people watching with immense grief, wondering what the future might hold as they see the nature that sustains us literally go up in smoke.

I share that fear and I share that anger, but I don't want people to be fearful. I don't want kids to feel worried about their future. I want them to feel hopeful.

I still have hope. I know that even though we cannot regain everything we've lost, there is still a narrow window in which we can stop things getting worse.

There are so many stories of

community members doing incredible things during these fires – saving homes, saving animals and donating money. The AMSSA North Melbourne mosque in Boundary Road is just one of many community groups that have raised funds for bushfire relief.

I know that Victorians will go and visit fire-affected towns. I also know that we can harness this positive energy to call on our leaders to do more to protect us from fires and worsening climate, and to restore the forests and nature we've lost.

I hope decision makers look at this outpouring of support for climate action, and take it seriously. It's given me a new resolve to keep pushing for our parliament and leaders to do more on climate change.

Ellen Sandell is the Greens state MP for Melbourne.

Want to know more?
If you want to chat about a local (or state-wide) issue, get in touch. Ring 9328 4637 or email Ellen's electorate office at office@ellensandell.com.

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Admiral gives suburban street a nautical link

Back in the early 1850s, the area surrounding Hawke Street, West Melbourne, offered distant views of Port Phillip Bay. It was cleared bushland, quite unlike its built form of today.

In 1853, W.M. Tennent wrote in *The Argus*: “Hawke Street is most desirably situated, is a most healthy & elevated position & commands extensive views of the shipping in the bay.”

Four streets now intersect Hawke Street – King, Spencer, Adderley and Railway Place.

RIGHT UP OUR STREET Stephen Hatcher

The street’s name honours Edward Hawke (1705–81), an admiral of the English fleet. Hawke achieved a victory over a French fleet at the Battle of Quiberon Bay in 1759 during the Seven Years’ War, thus preventing a French invasion of Britain. He developed the concept of a Western Squadron, keeping a near-continuous blockade of the French coast throughout the war. He was also influential in giving Captain James Cook command of his first expedition in 1768. During Melbourne’s 1850s’ gold rush, Hawke Street was part of the great north-western expansion

of the city of Melbourne. Charles Laing’s 1847 ‘Plan of North Melbourne’ shows a city that ended at La Trobe Street and included a burial ground in what is now the Queen Victoria Market. Five years later, Laing’s 1852 ‘Plan of the City of Melbourne and its Extension Northwards’ shows many new roads, including Hawke Street adjacent to the Benevolent Asylum. The Hawke Street of the gold rush was essentially a residential street in a residential neighbourhood. The era’s newspaper ‘To Let’ entries include

Roden, Stanley, Rosslyn, Dudley, Batman and Jeffcott streets. Stroll along Hawke Street today and you will see it is no longer mainly terrace houses. As CBD rents rose, many terraces were demolished and factories sprung up. Industrial chemist S. J. Marshall built at 1–11 Hawke Street in 1920. Also built at that time were the Apollo Gym building and the Don Kyatt building further down the street towards Railway Place.

Stephen Hatcher will write regularly about local street names for the News.



Hawke Street, West Melbourne. Photograph: Stephen Hatcher

Want to know more?

Hotham History Project researches and records the history of our surroundings and runs regular events – walks, talks and workshops. Since the Project began in 1995 a number of books have been published and can be purchased through the website. In 2004 the Project published Guy Murphy’s history of one particular house at 519 Dryburgh Street, At Home on Hotham Hill: A Portrait of a Nineteenth Century Entrepreneur. Next year Guy will give a talk on what further research has revealed about the history of the house. The Project is keen to attract new members and encourage people to participate in whatever way they can. Details: www.hothamhistory.org.au.

International Women’s Day Morning Tea @ Docklands

People from diverse backgrounds and cultures gathered to celebrate International Women’s Day on 4 March. New friendships were formed and people inspired each other to create a more equal world. The room was full of positive energy, conversation and laughter as our Hope tree was created and developed. It is now displayed in the front window of the Pop-Up Neighbourhood House @ Docklands with positive messages of equality and joy written on the leaves by everyone present.



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Christmas in Errol Street

Part of Errol Street became a black backdrop for local kids to show off their artistic skills as part of Christmas celebrations. There was plenty of entertainment to enjoy, including a magician, a tap dancer, our own Errol's Angels and – of course – a visit from Santa.

Photographs: Anne Burgi



Vale Nancy McIntosh

1.11.1921 – 8.11.2019

June McIntosh

Born in Kyabram in rural Victoria on Melbourne Cup Day 1921, Nancy Brown arrived in North Melbourne in the late 1920s. She was the third of four children who lived with their mother while their father, a saddler, remained in Kyabram.

Times were difficult with the Depression looming, and sport became a popular outlet. Nancy loved a flutter on the races and was a keen cricket and football fan.

She remained a member of the North Melbourne Football Club until the day she died. Anyone visiting Nancy's home would be in no doubt of this allegiance as her décor was distinctly blue and white.

She always spoke fondly of the community spirit that developed during those early years – of family gatherings, social outings to the beach in a horse-drawn van, dances and sporting matches.

Nancy's mother died in 1938 when her children's ages ranged from 12 to 23. They stayed on in the house caring for the youngest brother who was still at school.

Nancy had dreamed of becoming a teacher but instead she went to work in a cardboard box factory. Later she worked as a weaver in tiny Raglan Street. The friendships she forged during those years remained strong throughout her life.

Wartime brought many more hardships and lost friends. Nancy



Nancy McIntosh on the veranda at home in Provost Street. Photograph: McIntosh family

recalled this time, not with grief but with stories of camaraderie and cooperation.

She married Harold McIntosh (Mac) in 1948. Together they bought the house in Provost Street where Nancy was to live for the rest of her life. Their first son, Neil, sadly died of whooping cough in 1949, aged just four months.

Soon after, two girls were born – Helen in 1950 and June in 1955. The street was always full of children during these years and many a warm night was spent sitting on the footpath until well after dark, with the adults chatting and the children playing noisily.

Mac passed away suddenly in 1966 leaving Nancy to raise the girls alone. Both went on to become teachers. Nancy worked for many years at Marie's Café in Errol Street then at the cafeteria at the University of Melbourne. She was also a founding member of the Hotham History Project.

Her home in Provost Street became a hub for family and friends. Nancy was a generous and fun-loving matriarch to all who knew her.

As her hearse drove past her home, which was adorned with flowers, for the last time, the street filled with people. Many tears were shed.

A beautiful lady, full of living history and with a mind as sharp as ever, was taken after a short illness at the grand age of 98. Gone but never forgotten.

June McIntosh is one of Nancy's daughters.

From the archives

Michelle Brett

The *North Melbourne Advertiser* was distributed in the North Melbourne area from 1873 to 1894. Some of the most intriguing articles were the criminal cases heard in the North Melbourne court. Here are some of the reports from more than 130 years ago in March.

Blue language causes red blushes (1882)

Two old mates, Simmonds and O'Connor, faced court for using abusive language. They had also appeared a week earlier but this time the language was much fruitier. The magistrate suggested the more flowery words be written down so as to avoid scandalising onlookers in the public gallery. The two miscreants were released with a caution.

Fanny's folly to belt Dolly with broolly (1883)

Fanny Diaw was charged with assaulting Dolly Taniel, who alleged that Diaw had hit her in the face with an umbrella. The magistrate grew impatient as the evidence dragged on endlessly. Finally, it was adjudged that Taniel had provoked Diaw whom she had accused of vulgar abuse. Taniel was found guilty and fined 10 shillings.

Drunken mother-in-law (1883)

Ruth and Henry Switzer appeared before the bench in an unusual case of 'wife maintenance'. The young couple's relationship had always been rocky and was not helped by the interference of a nagging mother-in-law who was constantly drunk. The bench recommended the couple go home and make up. It's not known if the mother-in-law accompanied them.

Margaret gets stoned in Royal Park (1885)

Molly Ryan, Julia Dolaiey and Annie Garvin were charged with throwing stones at Margaret White. She testified that she had been walking in Royal Park when the defendants began to annoy her. Their defence argued the court summons was incorrectly stamped. The court ruled that fresh stamps be used then fined each defendant two shillings.

Flash young man gets a whipping (1889)

James Ryan (19) was charged with committing a nuisance in a water trough and exposing his person to passing ladies. A witness stated that Ryan had appeared quite sober and had his senses about him. The bench called his behaviour offensive to society. Ryan pleaded guilty and was sentenced to a dozen strokes with a birch rod.

Michelle Brett writes regularly for the News.

Hotham History Project loses a very special member

Nancy McIntosh joined the Hotham History Project when it was formed in 1995 and she became a loyal and very special member.

Her many years in North Melbourne and her vivid recall of her life and experiences here made her the 'go-to' person when we wanted information about local people and events.

Her memory was prodigious, and she could name all the little shops along Queensberry Street from the 1930s. Nancy also became a dear friend. She will be sorely missed.

– Mary Kehoe



Get involved through The Centre

Looking for a volunteer opportunity? The Centre has lots of them, from office administration to event management. Or we can point you towards other organisations that also rely on volunteers.

Take a walk with a purpose

If you enjoy walking around North and West Melbourne, a great way to explore areas you may not usually visit is to help with delivery of the *North & West Melbourne News* to homes and businesses.

If you are interested, please email admin@centre.org.au or call in at The Centre in Errol Street.



the centre

Connecting Community in North & West Melbourne

ADAM BANDT MP

FEDERAL MEMBER FOR MELBOURNE

FOR THE MANY, NOT THE FEW.

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Rail projects cause concern

With so many major projects taking place around us, this is a good time to provide an update on the two that most affect North and West Melbourne.

Metro Tunnel

Our Arden and Parkville Community Reference Group representatives have found Rail Projects Victoria responsive to suggestions and comments by concerned residents, particularly those whose properties lie directly above the planned route of the twin Metro tunnels.

The tunnel will be just 14 metres under Courtney and Errol/O'Shanassy streets and 15 metres at Dryburgh Street near Arden Street. Residents worry about noise and vibration when the tunnel boring machines (TBMs) pass under their homes and also impacts when the new Metro line becomes operational.

The first round of property inspections was due to begin in February. These consist of an independent party taking photographs inside affected houses so that any damage can be assessed after the tunnels are bored and again after the trains start running.

Our members are not happy with the recent decision to retain the name North Melbourne for the current station despite its geographic location in West Melbourne. There is less concern that the proposed new 'North Melbourne station' on Laurens Street is to be renamed 'Arden', as it is close to the Arden Street Oval.

Reasons given for the reversal are the cost of changing the identity markers in the rail network and safety issues with the possibility of confusion in communication between railway operatives in the field and those in the control room. We are not convinced by this argument, since the name change from Spencer Street to Southern Cross Station was accomplished uneventfully.

Local residents were not



consulted about the name change. Journey planning apps find the North/West anomaly confusing and provide unhelpful directions.

Last year the NWMA, with the Hotham History Project, submitted comprehensive notes on the industrial, Indigenous and natural history of the area around Arden to inform the Legacy Artwork Program. These have been included as part of the briefing pack for the shortlisted artists for North Melbourne.

We would also like the important social role of the railway yards and their workers to be separately recognised at the new station.

There was much excitement on 23 February when TBM 'Joan' broke through to a 13-metre-deep shaft at the western tunnel entrance in Childers Street, South Kensington. The machine had travelled 1.2 kilometres since setting off from the Arden site in August, burrowing under railway lines, CityLink, Moonee Ponds Creek and the West Melbourne Terminal Station.

TBM 'Meg' will arrive at the tunnel portal soon. Both TBMs will be disassembled and most components trucked back to Arden during the night while the gantries will return through the tunnels. After reassembly, Joan and Meg will start tunnelling under North Melbourne towards the new Parkville station in May.

West Gate Tunnel Project

The NWMA has opposed this project from the start. We believe investment in public transport is

the way forward to provide mass transit to a growing population and to reduce fuel consumption and pollution.

Unaccountably, the State Government was persuaded by a private company, Transurban, to approve a massive unsolicited project way beyond the scope of the original plan. It includes 12-lane highways and the destruction of thousands of mature trees.

As a result, North and West Melbourne and Parkville will have to cope with an additional 9,500 vehicles a day exiting the junction at Dynon Road. Moonee Ponds Creek's viability will diminish further as light-blocking roads are built overhead. One hope lies in the State Government's commitment of \$50 million to develop solutions to manage the extra traffic generated in our suburbs, which the City of Melbourne has pledged to match.

Disputes over contamination and retrenchments in the western part of the project do not seem to have affected works in West Melbourne and elsewhere. Work has begun on additional bridges over the Maribyrnong River.

A shared-use bridge for cyclists and pedestrians next to the Dynon Road bridge is about to be built. Separated from motor vehicles, this will provide safer access to the broader cycling network and over Moonee Ponds Creek.

Works slated for February include installation of a worksite shed in the recently refurbished Railway and Miller Street Park (near the station), closure of the skatepark and removal of vegetation. This may include some trees.

A temporary diversion of the Moonee Ponds Creek Trail is also under construction. Expected to open in March and remain for up to 12 months, the main change is switching the path to the west bank of the creek via pontoons.

SHAPING OUR STREETS Syd Sherrin

Buildings hold stories of our past

The building at 707 Spencer Street, West Melbourne, was the Cobb & Co depot that ran stage coaches from West Melbourne to country Victoria, including the Bendigo and Ballarat goldfields during the mid-1800s.

The land once stretched though to the Yarra, with many acres to agist the coach horses.

When W.B. Simpson's sold the property many years ago, the artesian well that serviced the farm house was still operative at the rear of the building.

Haddow's hardware

Many of those in search of gold would have visited Haddow's hardware store opposite the North Melbourne Town Hall in Queensberry Street.

They would have purchased their miner's licence, pick, shovel and haversack at this store, then walked down to Spencer Street to jump on the stage coach.

Another historic house still stands on the corner of Milton Street and Dudley Street, opposite the leafy Flagstaff Gardens.

This bluestone cottage housed the captain of the lookout tower, which was positioned at the highest possible vantage point of the gardens in the 1800s.

This tower acted as Melbourne's communication centre. Its main function was to acknowledge the ships that arrived and departed from Hobsons Bay, Williamstown, the original shipping port of Melbourne.

The ships had a series of flags, the old semaphore system, that conveyed information to the lookout tower, giving the name of the vessel, which port it departed from, its cargo, and the time of arrival in port.

A large flag was hoisted up the tower to let the public know of the arrival or departure of a ship.

Early historic pictures from the tower also show Batman's Swamp. This was a large saltwater wetland to the west of Melbourne. The swamp was drained in 1877 with a steam-operated pump near Browns Hill in South Kensington and drains along Swamp Road, now Dynon Road.

On the southern side of Dynon Road a canal was constructed as a drainage outlet to the Moonee Ponds Creek, to facilitate the extensive railway yards servicing

the new Melbourne docks, including Appleton Dock.

The land that was once Batman's Swamp is still noticeable today, with many industrial and commercial buildings occupying this low-level site under the modern Bolte Bridge.

Another local house of significance is Rose Cottage in Dryburgh Street.

During the 1880s, this small bluestone cottage was the home of Melbourne's first Lord Mayor.

Other notable buildings include two two-storey bluestone terraces on the south-east corner of Lothian Street and Victoria Street.

These beautiful buildings were built in the 1880s by the resident chemist, whose pharmacy was in Errol Street.

One of the most significant houses that bless the Hotham Hill area is the two-storey corner house on the south-west corner of Curran Street and Dryburgh Street. This house, with its ornate classical architecture now covered in a massive, colourful bougainvillea vine, was built by renowned 19th century entrepreneur Robert Langford. Langford was a well-known pioneer of inner Melbourne and a very successful politician.

World War II link

Another house to watch out for is the three-level Victorian balcony terrace on the corner of Courtney and Errol streets, North Melbourne. This was a regular meeting place for many American servicemen during their occupation of Royal Park during World War II.

I remember vividly a house that we were selling in Curran Street.

The owners had an aerial shot of the house taken in 1943 proudly displayed in the entrance foyer. The photograph showed the house, with the parklands in the background, with many rows of tents that the Americans had erected. This was the original site of the old Royal Children's Hospital, which was built in 1948.

The Americans occupied this site for recreational leave for servicemen who were engaged in battles throughout the Pacific.

Syd Sherrin, W.B. Simpson's sales manager, has worked in North Melbourne since 1989.



Work goes on at the Metro Tunnel entrance in South Kensington despite the rain. Photograph: Janet Graham

The Violineri strikes a fine note in Victoria St

John H. Smith

Musician Martin Welch is proprietor of The Violineri, a fascinating shop at 309 Victoria Street in West Melbourne.

He specialises in the restoration and repair of violins, violas and cellos. He also sells quality instruments.

“My mother is a talented teacher who taught all her children music,” Martin says. Those early lessons set him on his music path.

“I went on to learn the violin at school and then studied music at university. I trained in the classical tradition,” he says.

Martin’s mother and his tertiary teachers were important influences in his development. However, he was fortunate to meet and be inspired by Brenton Fyfield, a legendary Melbourne musician and instrument repairer.

“In my final year as a student, I began working with Brenton at his The Violineri shop in Richmond,” Martin says. Brenton soon became a tutor and a mentor to the young Martin.

“He befriended me,” Martin says. “He introduced me to the craft and he encouraged my development. Initially I did small jobs – fingerboards, fingers and pegs – and gradually progressed to more serious jobs.”

These tasks included the delicate work of repairing cracks in instruments. This involves removing the top plate, carefully washing out and cleaning the cracks, then gluing it back together and reinforcing the cracks with spruce.

After teaching music and playing violin and viola in various orchestral and string ensembles, Martin travelled to the UK to do an advanced course in violin repair and restoration skills under John Gosling, a well-known English luthier.



Martin Welch fiddling with his violins at The Violineri in Victoria Street. Photographs: John H. Smith

For Martin, it was a turning point in his career. “It was a wonderful old style, one-to-one apprenticeship. And I return there periodically for refreshment and to pick up further skills,” he smiles.

When Martin acquired The Violineri in Richmond from Brenton, he searched for

a property in which he could continue the business’s proud traditions. “I wanted an inner-suburban location that was both central and accessible,” he explains.

“Here, at 309 Victoria Street and with a full shop frontage, I’ve found something that is just right,” Martin grins. He is delighted that Brenton, now retired, drops in and does repair work alongside his former pupil.

Martin is planning to keep up one of Brenton’s traditions with The Violineri. “I’d love to use the shop to hold on-site soirees featuring fine musicians,” he says.

“My dream is to hold these evenings several times a year and to make them a social occasion with wine and cheese. I’m sure we could cater for 20 or so people at the shop.”

John H. Smith writes regularly for the News.

Want to know more?
Drop in and meet Martin Welch at The Violineri, 309 Victoria Street, West Melbourne, email workshop@theviolineri.com or visit www.theviolineri.com/



Martin Welch hopes to hold on-site soirees at the shop.

Let there be light

A streetlight on a local laneway stopped shedding its welcome glow recently. A simple online search provided a spectacularly simple solution.

‘Reporting street lighting issues’ at www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/residents/home-neighbourhood/street-lighting/Pages/street-lighting.aspx leads through a simple set of steps to a map. Click on the particular (numbered) light that is out and you’re done.

In the same spot, there are links to report broken or overflowing bins, illegally dumped rubbish, and street cleaning or maintenance issues in your neighbourhood using online forms or by calling the council.

PS: The light was fixed about two days later.

ELLEN SANDELL

STATE MP FOR MELBOURNE

Hi, I’m Ellen. I’m passionate about a fair and liveable Melbourne. Tell me what’s important to you.

(03) 9328 4637

office@ellensandell.com

146 Peel Street

North Melbourne VIC 3051

ellensandell.com

A portrait of Ellen Sandell, a woman with dark hair, smiling, wearing a black blazer over a pink top.

Funded from Parliamentary Budget. Authorised by E. Sandell, 146 Peel St, North Melbourne.

On course with the Centre in Term 2

COURSE	MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	TIME	START DATE	VENUE	COST
COMMUNITY PROGRAMS									
Errols Angels				✓		7.00-9.00pm		Maternal & Child Health Centre, 505 Abbotsford Street	\$179 / \$111 concession* per term
HOME AWAY FROM HOMEWORK CLUB									
Primary (Grades 4–6)			✓			3.30pm–5.00pm	15 April	North Melbourne Library	Free
Secondary (Grades 7–10)			✓			3.30pm–5.00pm	15 April	58 Errol Street, North Melbourne	Free
Open (Grades 4–10)			✓			4.30pm–6.00pm	15 April	North Melbourne Language & Learning	Free
Open (Grades 4–12)				✓		3.30pm–5.00pm	16 April	Altona North Community Library	Free to City of Hobsons Bay residents
VIVA LA SENIORS – ACTIVITIES FOR OLDER ADULTS									
Centre Adventures – Monthly Bus Trips (4th Tuesday of the month)		✓				9.00am–5.00pm	24 March	Meet at: 58 Errol Street, North Melbourne. To Phillip Island	\$43 / \$33 Health Care Card concession*
		✓				9.20am–5.00pm	28 April	To Heronswood House and Gardens, Dromana	
		✓				9.20am–5.00pm	26 May	To be confirmed	
Community Morning Tea		✓				10am – noon	5 May, 2 June	The Centre	\$5 or bring a plate to share
Older Adults Exercise Class			✓			10.15am – 11.15am	15 April	The Legion (behind North Melbourne Library)	\$197 per term or \$144 Health Care Card concession
Older Adults Exercise Class					✓	12.15pm – 1.15pm	17 April	The Legion (behind North Melbourne Library)	\$197 per term or \$144 Health Care Card concession
HEALTH AND WELLBEING PROGRAM									
General Pilates Sessions in Term Break		✓				5.30–6.30pm	31 March & 7 April	The Meat Market	\$24 per session
				✓		6.30pm–7.30pm	2 and 9 April	The Meat Market	\$24 per session
Tuesday Pilates		✓				5.30pm–6.30pm: Beginners 6.30pm–7.30pm: Intermediate Plus 7.30pm–8.30pm: Intermediate	14 April	The Meat Market	\$197 per term or \$144 Health Care Card concession
Wednesday Pilates			✓			9.15am–10.15am: General	15 April	The Legion (behind North Melbourne Library)	\$197 per term or \$144 Health Care Card concession
Thursday Pilates				✓		5.30pm–6.30pm: Beginners 6.30pm–7.30pm: Intermediate Plus 7.30pm–8.30pm: Intermediate	16 April	The Meat Market	\$197 per term or \$144 Health Care Card concession
COURSES									
Information, Digital Media and Technology			✓			10.00am–12.30pm 16 weekly 2½-hour sessions	July	The Centre	\$120 / \$90 concession*
Introduction to Technology		✓				10.00am–12.30pm Six weekly 2½-hour sessions	21 April	The Centre	Cost: \$40 / \$32 concession*#
iGadgets				✓		10.00am – noon Four weekly 2-hour sessions	23 April	The Centre	\$25 / \$20 concession*
One on One IT Tutoring							Times to suit you	The Centre	\$65 per hour
Introduction to Accounting/ Basic Bookkeeping					✓	Eight 3-hour sessions 10.00am–1.00pm	17 April	The Centre	\$75 / \$55 concession*#
Make it to Market – Crafting and Sewing		✓				9.30am–12.30pm Seven 3-hour sessions	14 April	Docklands Pop Up Neighbourhood House	\$50 / \$38 concession*# (excludes materials)
Connect with People – Introduction to Customer & Client Service			✓			12.30 – 3.00pm Eight 2½-hour sessions	TBA		\$35 / \$25 concession*#

The Centre has tutors able to deliver workshops, short courses or one-on-one training on a variety of subjects. Minimum and maximum numbers may apply; fees (if any) will vary. If you are interested in Art Therapy, Photoshop, Teacher's Aide Training, Spanish Conversation, Job Interview Practice or Résumé Writing get in touch!

To book, contact The Centre on 9328 1126, at admin@centre.org.au or call into 58 Errol Street. Check www.centre.org.au

* subject to conditions
subject to staff–student ratios
Classes follow school term dates unless otherwise stated.
No classes on Public Holidays

The Centre: Connecting Community in North & West Melbourne Inc
58 Errol Street, North Melbourne, Vic 3051 Tel: (03) 9328 1126
Office hours: Monday 10.00am to 6.00pm
Tuesday to Friday 10.00am to 3.00pm



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 42nd year of production. Readers' contributions and letters are welcomed. Where relevant the *News* may seek alternative opinions in the interests of balance. Contributors' opinions are their own, however, and the *News* takes no responsibility for them. We reserve the right to edit or omit articles considered unsuitable or when space is limited.

Articles should be submitted by email to editorial@centre.org.au. Please use minimal formatting and do not embed graphics in documents. Photographs of suitable resolution for reproduction should be sent as graphic files attached with the article.

Finance
The *News* is a program of The Centre: Connecting Community in North & West Melbourne Inc, a registered charity. Costs of producing the *News* are met through advertising, sponsorships, subscriptions and donations. Donations of more than \$20 are tax deductible through the ANHCA Public Fund for DGR.

News subscriptions
Subscriptions are available at the rate of \$20 per year (four issues) sent anywhere in Australia. The *News* is distributed free throughout North and West Melbourne. Further copies are available from The Centre and the North Melbourne Library.

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

Editor: Maurice Gaul
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Please deliver contributions, letters and feedback to:

North and West Melbourne News
58 Errol Street, North Melbourne 3051
Email: editorial@centre.org.au
Telephone: 9328 1126

Provisional dates for rest of 2020

Copy deadline for Winter issue:

Friday 15 May

Publication date: Friday 12 June

Copy deadline for Spring issue: Friday 14 August

Publication date: Friday 11 September

Copy deadline for Summer 2020–2021 issue:

Friday 6 November

Publication date: Friday 4 December

North and West Melbourne News is available online at
The Centre's website: www.centre.org.au

Advertisement sizes and rates for 2020

Size	Colour	Mono
Full page (24 cm wide x 34 cm high)	\$1732.50	\$1457.50
Half page (24 cm wide x 17 cm high or 12 cm wide x 34 cm high)	\$841.50	\$731.50
One-third page (24 cm wide x 12 cm high)	\$610.50	\$533.50
One-quarter page (24 cm wide x 8.5 cm high or 12 cm wide x 17 cm high)	\$451.00	\$390.50
One-eighth page (12 cm wide x 8.5 cm high)	\$225.50	\$198.00
One-16th page (12 cm wide x 4 cm high)	\$121.00	\$104.50
Business card (in Services Directory) (9 cm wide x 5.5 cm high)	\$104.50	\$88.00

- Prices inclusive of GST
- Book a repeat advertisement for four issues for a 20% discount, total amount payable at time of booking.
- All previous introductory offers, transitional rates and discounts ceased with publication of Summer 2019–2020 issue.
- Prices are for supplied artwork (high-resolution PDF). Layout services are available — talk to us about how we can help.
- The *News* reserves the right to reject advertising bookings that are outside the standards for a community-based publication.
- Email Advertising.NWMN@outlook.com for info and bookings.

Baptists baptised with new name

Last month, the local The Eighth Day community changed its name to the West Melbourne Baptist Church. This new name is, in fact, the original name of the group of worshippers who have gathered in West and North Melbourne since 1870.

Around 2005, the name of The Eighth Day came into being to signify a new beginning. While this name hints at a new way of living, many people got the name mixed up with the Seventh Day Adventist Church or the local Third Day function centre. Even some congregants were confused.

The new name, West Melbourne Baptist Church, was embraced to make clear that the group that gathers at 4 Miller Street, West Melbourne, is both a church and part of the branch of the Christian church known as Baptist.

It links us to other Baptist churches in Victoria and to more than 47 million people around the world who take the name Baptist. And the West Melbourne tag connects us to the community that our church serves.

The people of the West Melbourne Baptist Church gather for worship on Sundays at 5.30pm in a multi-purpose space that also serves as a community centre. During the week many community groups meet there regularly.

Geoff Pound (Pastor), West Melbourne Baptist Church

St Mary's Fair

Saturday 2 May, 10.00am – 2.00pm

Cake stall, sausage sizzle, jams, preserves, organic home produce, face painting, second-hand children's toys, clothes and books, jumping castle, children's crafts, 'Devonshire tea' and Mother's Day gifts

St Mary's Church and Kindergarten
430 Queensberry Street, North Melbourne

Easter Services in North and West Melbourne



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

Sunday 5 April 10.00am Palm Sunday Holy Communion
Friday 10 April 10.00am Good Friday Passion Reading
Sunday 12 April 10.00am Easter Sunday Holy Communion
St Mary Star of the Sea, Catholic
Corner Victoria and Howard streets, West Melbourne
Stations of the Cross: every Friday until 3 April, 5.30pm – 6.30pm
Saturday 4 April 6.30pm Vigil Mass
Passion Sunday (Palm Sunday) 5 April 10.15am Sunday Mass;
12.00 noon Sunday Mass (in Lithuanian); 6.00pm Latin Mass
— palms will be distributed at each Mass
Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday of Holy Week, 6, 7 and 8 April,
12.30pm Weekday Mass
Holy Thursday 9 April 7.30pm Mass of the Lord's Supper
Good Friday 10 April 10.30am Stations of the Cross; 11.15am
Seven Words of Our Lord on the Cross Sermon; 12.00 noon Holy
Rosary; 3.00pm Celebration of the Lord's Passion
Holy Saturday 11 April 8.00pm Easter Vigil
Easter Sunday 12 April 10.30am Easter Mass; 12.00 noon Easter
Mass (in Lithuanian); 6.00pm Latin Mass

St Mary's, Anglican
Corner Queensberry and Howard streets, North Melbourne
Sunday 29 March, Tenebrae, 8.00pm Service of Darkness
Palm Sunday 5 April 8.00am Eucharist; 10.00am Sung Eucharist
with Procession
Thursday 9 April 7.00pm Maundy Thursday Liturgy
Friday 10 April 10.00am Good Friday Liturgy
Saturday 11 April 9.00pm Great Paschal Vigil
Easter Day Sunday 12 April 8.00am Eucharist; 10.00am Sung Eucharist

St Michael's, Catholic
456 Dryburgh Street, North Melbourne
Holy Thursday 9 April 6.00pm Mass
Good Friday 10 April 3.00pm Mass
Saturday 11 April 6.00pm Easter Vigil
Easter Sunday 12 April 10.30am Mass
Saints Peter and Paul, Ukrainian Catholic
35 Canning Street, North Melbourne (corner Canning and
Dryburgh streets)

Good Friday 17 April 6.00pm Vespers and procession, veneration
and Matins
Holy Saturday 18 April 6.00pm Matins and blessing of baskets
Easter Sunday 19 April 8.00am Divine Liturgy (recited); 10.00am
Solemn Pontifical Divine Liturgy

Uniting Church, Mark the Evangelist
51 Curzon Street, North Melbourne
The congregation meets in the church hall, 4 Elm Street
Passion Sunday 5 April 10.00am a reading of St Matthew's Passion
of the Christ

Maundy Thursday 9 April 7.30pm a Tenebrae (Shadows) service
Good Friday 10 April 10.00am
Saturday 11 April 8.00pm Easter Vigil, with Eucharist
Easter Day Sunday 12 April 10.00am, with Eucharist

West Melbourne Baptist Church
4 Miller Street, West Melbourne
Friday 10 April 9.30am Good Friday Service followed by coffee/
tea and hot cross buns
Easter Sunday 12 April 5.30pm Easter Service



Creating paths to local employment

Local businesses and residents are invited to join the
conversation on the benefits of employing locally, at the

#WorkTOGETHER Networking Event

10.00am – 12.00 noon on Wednesday 25 March 2020
at Kensington Town Hall

For further details/registration please contact:
Wingate Avenue Community Centre
Tel: (03) 9376 5244 – Email: admin@wingateave.com.au



Locals partied in the park

Live music, street food, local beers and free kids entertainment recently turned Eades Park, West Melbourne, into a colourful tapestry.

The fun kicked off with face painting, giant games, playground, picnic areas and kids' entertainers, followed by the official opening and Welcome to Country. Live music and comedy filled the rest of the day.

The second Northside Block Party celebrated all we love about our neighbourhood. The event was staged by the North & West Melbourne Precinct Association as part of the week-long Northside Summer Festival in late February. The Northside Summer Festival is supported by City of Melbourne and the local business community.

Photographs: Anne Burgi

