

Sticky beak at new Arden Station

Liam Heitmann-Ryce-LeMercier

The newly completed Arden Station “welcomed around 3,000 people on [30 August] for a sneak peak ahead of the Metro Tunnel opening later this year,” according to Project Director Ben Ryan.

In the centre of what is proposed to be a bustling housing and employment precinct, the underground station represents an important transport vein across Melbourne’s western suburbs.

It links the Sunbury train line with the Cranbourne and Pakenham lines, and will be the first in a new chain of stations across the long-awaited Metro Tunnel project. Four other new hubs connecting to Arden will be Parkville, State Library, Town Hall and Anzac Station on St Kilda Road.

The most striking aspect of the new station’s design is the sense of space and mobility, with the high brick archways above the entrance creating a welcoming, spacious atmosphere.

The tall arches are constructed of 100,000 red bricks, all



The interior and exterior of Arden Station. Photographs: Thomas O’Dwyer

manufactured in Victoria.

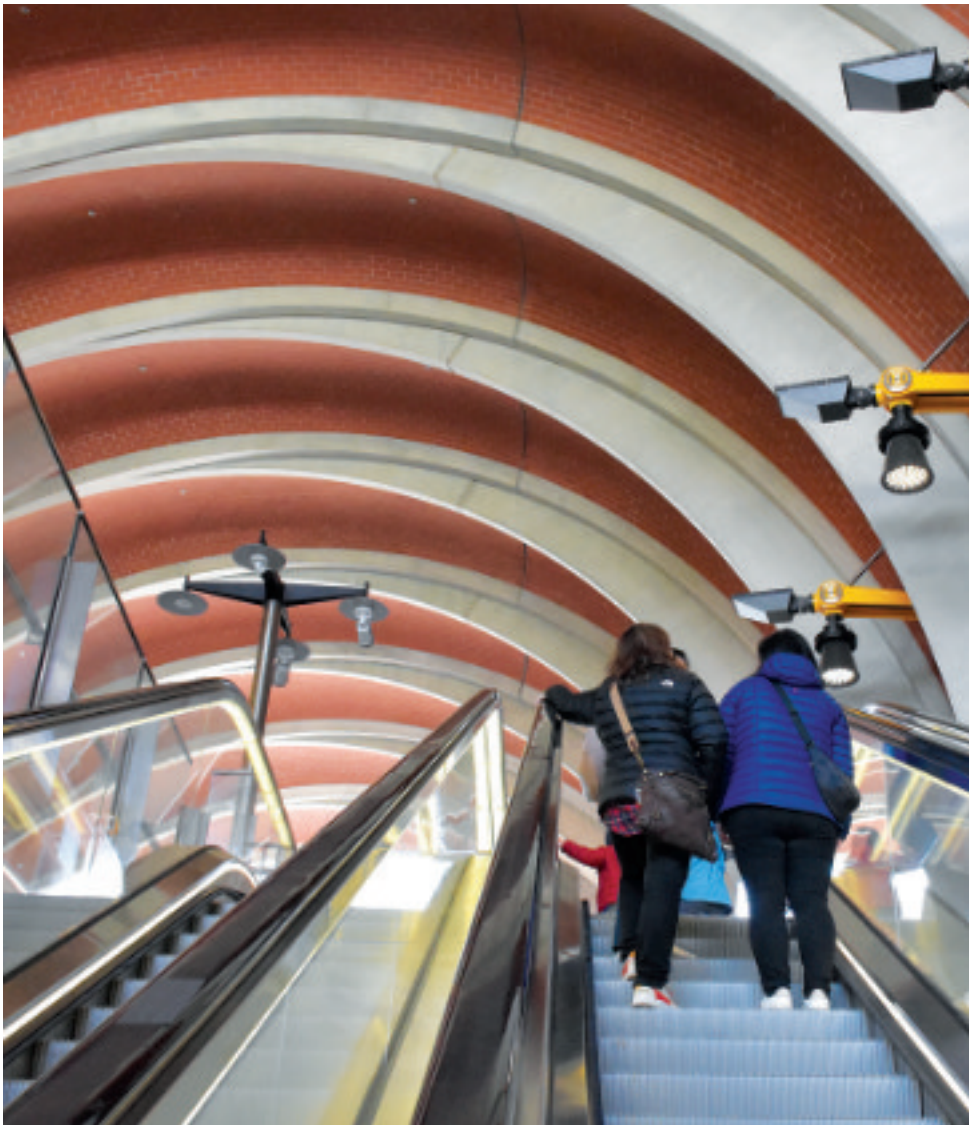
The escalators are also noticeably wider than those in existing underground train stations, allowing for more accessible passage to the platforms below.

Another significant safety consideration is the glass split-doors along the platform, a first for Victoria. The split-doors will guide passengers directly onto the train without risk of falling below.

High above the platform, 16 m-long skylights bathe the underground station in ample natural light, minimising the airless sense of claustrophobia that blights many underground public transport hubs.

The station’s opening date is yet to be announced, though signs visible on the open day gave reassurances of ‘Metro Tunnel Opening in 2025’.

Liam Heitmann-Ryce-LeMercier is Editor of the News.



Neville’s heart of gold earns national recognition

Louise Yaxley

Neville Page has been awarded a Medal of the Order of Australia for volunteering – including with the North Melbourne Rotary Club, which he considers the most multicultural Rotary Club in the world.

His medal was announced in the King’s Birthday Honours in June, but Neville nearly wasn’t around to accept it.

In 2022, two weeks after retiring from his North Melbourne architecture business, he had a heart attack on a cruise in New Zealand.

Fortunately, he was already at the onboard medical centre while his wife Judy was being treated after a fall.

“While they were checking her out, they could see I didn’t look too good,” Neville recalls. “I was having a heart attack . . . I couldn’t have been in a better place. I was six weeks in New Zealand waiting for a triple bypass.”

Three years on, Neville is a mainstay of North Melbourne Rotary, which has changed a lot since he joined in 1996, when, he says, “it was pretty much all male businessmen”.

Now, he says there are equal numbers of men and women members, as well as five male and five female presidents in the last 10 years.

“A couple of years ago we had the World Rotary Convention in Melbourne, and I said our North Melbourne club is the most



Medal of the Order of Australia recipient Neville Page. Photograph: Jim Weatherill

multicultural club in the world.” He concedes that’s hard to confirm, but challenged others to prove him wrong. “We had members from

Somalia, Ethiopia, Malawi, India, Italy, Poland, Greece, Hong Kong – and that’s out of about 18 members.

“We’re not a big club, but we’ve created an environment where people feel very welcome. They enjoy being there and that’s why I think a lot of people from different cultures are very happy to be in our club,” Neville explained.

Among the Rotary projects Neville has been involved with recently are a breakfast club at Simonds College, organising the local mock United Nations for senior school students and a program to celebrate people who have been helping at local charities or schools.

His Order of Australia Medal also recognises service to the

King David School, Maccabi Athletics Club and Ajax Hockey club, as well as being a blood donor since he was 18.

“My mentality with that is, at some point in your life, you may need to go into hospital. I just always thought you’ve got no right to expect that blood to be there, if you’re not willing to donate yourself,” he says.

Neville has a deep connection to North Melbourne, despite never living in the suburb. During school holidays from when he was 14, he would work at his father’s manufacturing business.

“They did their own steel work – imagine, in the heart of North Melbourne. They’d have to pull the parking sign out so the truck could get up on the

footpath to get out of the street.”

Neville’s professional life as an architect is also linked to North Melbourne as a founding partner of Greenway, Hirst, Page in Leveson St. The Australian Institute of Architects was among many to congratulate him on the King’s Birthday Honour.

“Your tireless dedication to the community is truly inspiring, from your leadership with Rotary Club to your generous support of international students, and the longevity of your company. These efforts exemplify a powerful model of civic engagement and compassion.”

Louise Yaxley is Deputy Editor of the News.

INSIDE



Page 6



Page 9



Page 11



Pages 14-16

Politics with purpose: Sarah Witty on community, housing and representation

Mahek Patalia

From leading a national charity to representing her community, Sarah Witty's path to Parliament has been shaped by years of work in housing and social support.

A former CEO of The Nappy Collective – and a senior leader at Homes for Homes, where she helped raise a pipeline of more than \$110 million for social and affordable housing – Sarah has also spent the past decade as a foster parent.

Now a member of the Australian House of Representatives, the Richmond local of more than 20 years says these experiences continue to inform her priorities as an MP.

Her decision to enter politics, she says, was influenced by personal experiences.

"One of my foster children shared a devastating experience. It opened my eyes in a new way, and I knew then

that something had to change," Sarah said.

"Around the same time, I was also fundraising for social and affordable housing, meeting people experiencing homelessness. Many of them had also been through the foster system: that overlap struck me hard."

She began working with government stakeholders and was later asked to run for Parliament. She describes her motivation in one word: passion.

"When I work, I think of the children I've cared for and the people I've met. They're a part of me," she said.

Her core focus as an MP is to remain connected to constituents through direct engagement as well as policy. "I never want to use people's disadvantage for political gain," she said, adding that she aims to prioritise trust and the stories of those she represents.

Sarah's priorities include secure housing for families, improved support for children and carers, and a focus on listening to community concerns. She says these priorities are shaped by her upbringing in a family of four children, in which care and community involvement were central values.

In discussing women in politics, Sarah also acknowledged challenges relating to visibility. Her advice to younger women considering public roles is, "Take little steps. Every step forward gives you a better view of the bigger picture. And to older women, don't stop mentoring. We need you to keep bringing the younger ones in."

Sarah also referenced Labor's Emily's List initiative, which supports progressive women candidates, and suggested mentorship can be valuable in any sector. "Even if you don't pursue politics, find a mentor," she said. "Follow someone who



Sarah Witty MP with News writer Mahek Patalia.

inspires you; they'll become your quiet guide."

Whether in Parliament or at local events, Sarah aims to stay true to a message from her first parliamentary speech: she does not stand there alone but carries with her the voices of

renters calling for justice, citizens advocating for climate action, and communities seeking to be heard rather than managed.

Mahek Patalia is a regular writer for the News.

Ukrainian Cathedral opens its doors

The majestic Ukrainian Catholic Cathedral of Saints Peter and Paul, on the corner of Canning and Dryburgh streets, was one of the local buildings that was open to the public as part of the Open House Melbourne weekend in late July. The parish priest, Father Andriy Mykytyuk, welcomed about 200 visitors, including Natashcha Pijper from Mont Albert.



CHAT MAN FRIDAY

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for men living, studying, or working in
North and West Melbourne.

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Funded by the Australian Government Department of Social Services. Go to www.dss.gov.au for more information.



North & West Melbourne
Neighbourhood Centre

Seniors and students find common ground

Arnav Goyal

Being a Melburnian is an innovative program designed by Peiqi (Kevin) Shi that is creating connections between two often-overlooked groups: Melbourne seniors and international students.

The concept grew out of a gap Kevin noticed during his volunteer work both at Melbourne Uni and in North and West Melbourne: international students often face isolation, cultural adjustment challenges and uncertainty, while many older Australians seek meaningful ways to engage with their community.

Without a link between the two, valuable life experience goes untapped, and students can struggle to settle into Melbourne.

Food and footy are some of the starting points to help students feel at home through conversation and cultural exchange.

Students and their new older

friends have already gone beyond the weekly get-togethers to head out to see kangaroos in the wild.

Kevin is a University of Melbourne graduate student in philosophy and a board member at the North & West Melbourne Neighbourhood Centre. He points to research such as Ending Loneliness Together's 2023 report, which highlights that loneliness affects people of all ages, with both international students and older Australians at particular risk.

The City of Melbourne's Great Place to Age strategy also emphasises the benefits of intergenerational engagement for building stronger, more inclusive communities.

Running from August to September, Being a Melburnian is designed for one-on-one conversations and meaningful cultural exchanges. With topics on food, language and sports, participants are encouraged to share everyday stories and cultural insights – navigating

Melbourne's laneways to understanding Australian humour, building trust and belonging in the process.

The goal is not only to ease the transition of students into Melbourne life, but also to give older Melburnians rewarding opportunities to contribute. Over time, these connections are expected to grow into long-lasting friendships that extend far beyond the program.

In a city celebrated for its diversity, Being a Melburnian transforms that diversity into genuine human connection, one conversation at a time.

Hosted by the North & West Melbourne Neighbourhood Centre and supported by the University of Melbourne Student Services and Amenities Fee (SSAF) Grant Funding, the program offers a safe, welcoming space where respectful engagement is the priority.

Arnav Goyal is a Community Outreach Worker at NWMNC.



SingNoW! performing for ABC Radio.

Choristers sing songs across the ages

Rosie Greenfield

Community choir SingNoW! had two gigs on consecutive days in late May – both pulled together at short notice.

The first celebrated Volunteer Week with fellow North & West Melbourne Neighbourhood Centre members. It served as a wonderful opportunity to simultaneously show off what we do at choir as well as provide entertainment for the celebrations.

The next day our singing was broadcast from the studios of the ABC to the broader Victorian community.

Both performances gave us a wonderful sense of achievement and purpose.

Undertaking these gigs comes with potential risks. Have we prepared well enough? Have we prepared the right music for the audience? Will there be enough of our members onstage available to make strong, rich sound? Then

there's the question of song selection, when the demographics of our choir ranges from secondary school students to one member in their 80s!

So, when music written by the likes of Baby Monster, Dua Lipa and The Sports is presented to us, there are shouts of recognition alongside comments like, "I've never heard of this one before." Fortunately, music director Susie Kelly's wonderful arrangements enable us to approach these songs with ease.

Preparation is key to everything, so you can imagine our consternation when we turned up to our rehearsal space recently to find the key had been left elsewhere. After a quick think, and a shout out to Errol's Cafe, we practised in its upstairs space.

As a community choir, we are regularly invited to other local musical performances where our members are performing. These include showcases of

Pippin at Melbourne High and Beauty and the Beast at Uni High.

Come along yourself to join our community and see what all the fuss is about. We are in the midst of preparing for the Queensberry Cup, and you never know what the range of music will be. Something new, something worldly, something classical – but always doable when performed by this community choir! And the best part about joining: no auditions required. Just come along and give it a try.

Rosie Greenfield is a member of SingNoW! and a regular writer for the News.

Want to know more?

Sign up for SingNoW! online, via email or at NWMNC on Errol Street. Or just rock up and check us out one Thursday night (school terms only).

Email: admin@centre.org.au
Online: www.socialplanet.com.au/at/north-west-melbourne-neighbourhood-centre



Seniors and students break bread (and cookies) for Being a Melburnian.

Community Comment

We asked four local students their favourite study spots in North and West Melbourne



Lachie, Master of Mechanical Engineering, West Melbourne

The second room at Town Hall Pub of an arvo. Then I'm perfectly primed for happy hour.



Morgan, Master of Social Work, North Melbourne

I like studying at the library on Errol Street. Support your local libraries!



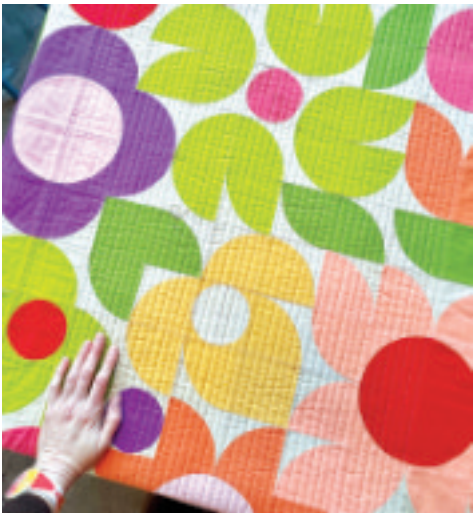
Sidhant, Master of Social Work, West Melbourne

Now that the weather is starting to change, I drag my study stuff out onto the median strip.



Isobel, Associate Degree of Education, North Melbourne

Mr Tucker – I love the big tables and windows. I'd be on campus today, but my car was blocked in!



Quilting threads of stories with artist Tara Glastonbury

Josh Rule

In her light-filled warehouse studio in West Melbourne, Tara Glastonbury brings her bold, colourful, graphic designs to life.

"I grew up in the '80s, and nobody I knew was into knitting or sewing – except me," Tara said. "It wasn't until Instagram that I realised there were millions of others out there like me."

Along with about 50 local artists, she has called River Studios home since the end of the pandemic, working there two or three days a week.

"During the lockdowns, my apartment became a fabric bomb site – there was nowhere to put anything away, and when interstate guests started visiting again, I realised I needed a studio."

Influenced by her mother and nanna's sewing and knitting, Tara's style isn't constrained by traditional patterns and old-fashioned rules.

"It usually takes me about two months to make a quilt, but it can be longer depending on the complexity."

She pieces her quilts using a mix of new and upcycled fabrics, then quilts them by hand or machine – a single quilt can take anywhere from



Tara behind the sewing machine.

two weeks to a year to make.

When it comes to colour, nothing is off limits – almost.

"I don't use grey, ever," she said. "I really like combinations of bright with a bit of something dirty or funky – something in there to give it intensity, interest."

Tara's work blurs the line between design, craft and utility. "I wouldn't call myself an artist. I see myself more as a designer or craftsperson. My quilts are functional. They're made to be used, not just admired on a wall."

While some have turned their quilting into full-time businesses, Tara has retains a keen sense of play within the

patterns she designs under her label Stitch & Yarn.

"I decided early on that I wanted quilting to stay fun, so I work my day job a couple of days a week rather than turning this into a job that could become very stressful. I didn't want to do things because they would be a successful product, rather than something I wanted to make."

Tara is headed for France to exhibit at the prestigious Carrefour EPM in September, one of the world's largest quilt shows. This year Australia is the feature country, and Tara will be showing a collection of 16 quilts including pieces made from upcycled denim and second-hand textiles.

Sustainability is a constant thread in her practice. She regularly uses second-hand fabrics and avoids buying the latest patterned fabrics – the 'fast-fashion' equivalent in quilting.

"I try not to buy into that kind of thing; it's a values-driven choice," she said.

Josh Rule is a regular writer for the News.

Want to know more?
You can follow Tara's work on Instagram at [@stitchandyam](#)

Clockwise from top left: Tara's award-winning Blue Giant quilt, made from upcycled jeans; The Laneways quilt, originally designed as a mural for Tara's nephew's bedroom; Bloomin' Lot is Tara's latest quilt and includes nearly a dozen upcycled bed sheets.

Cat about town left hanging

Kevin Cai

Many people have cats. Some put their cats next to the window. A cat on Abbotsford Street lies on its royal bed in a VIP spot behind the window.

Most of the time, this cat lays on its side, either sleeping or staring at everyone that goes past.

But this time ... I came past this window to go shopping. The cat is no longer sleeping, or staring. It stands next to its bed, trying to step on the bed with a string broken on one side. The bed drops down on one side as the other stays fit. The carpet and toys on the bed drop down onto the floor below. This made the bed no longer safe and warm for the cat to stay.

The cat looks at us with its pair of eyes saying, "Save my bed!" Then, with its tiny paws,



Local cat loses its perch, illustrated by our youngest journalist Kevin Cai.

it points at the string that still works. The cat looks over to the other side of the bed. Then, it looks below at the carpet and toys.

A once peaceful noon break is no longer peaceful.

Kevin Cai, aged 12, is a new writer and illustrator for the News.

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City Gardens housing designed to foster community

Felicity Jack

North Melbourne’s City Gardens Housing Estate was the subject of a talk hosted by the Hotham History Project on 11 August. Architect Peter Hogg and David Nichols, Professor in Urban Planning at Melbourne University, spoke about how this housing scheme came to be developed and how it has evolved over nearly 50 years. North Melbourne was one of several

suburbs that underwent a major slum clearance operation after World War II. One significant area, known as Happy Valley, was extremely prone to flooding. The Housing Commission built a series of high- and mid-rise public housing developments around Melbourne’s inner suburbs, but a large area of Happy Valley was developed as a partnership between the Housing Commission and the Master Builders Association.

The last block of this area to be developed was the City Gardens Estate bounded by Abbotsford, Haines, Dryburgh and what is now known as Plane Tree Way. This block is the only one that was let out to private tender. It was bought by the building company Inge Brothers. Inge Brothers engaged Peter McIntyre to design the estate but most of the detailed design was done by Davis Bité, the firm’s senior designer. McIntyre influenced Inge

Brothers to put quality over quantity, arguing they would get a better return. One of the main themes of the talk was how meaningful architectural design influences the development of a community. Prompted by the social activists Ruth and Maurice Crow, who had recently moved into the area, the design focused on fostering a sense of community amidst peaceful gardens and greenery. McIntyre’s firm designed an area of unusual character, with three- and four-storey buildings nestled among the plane trees. There was a total of 92 apartments, built in four main blocks of concrete and brick. Each block has a wide shared concourse with split levels, for getting around and sometimes bumping into neighbours. Brutalist-style external staircases and linking pathways helped create a sense of community. The apartment sizes were somewhat larger than usual for the time – and even for the present day, when small rooms are common. An important part of the design was that every apartment had a view of plants and shrubbery. In particular, the Crows stressed the need for underground car parking that allowed significantly more open space for recreation and gardens. The dug-up soil was used to build up the

ground level, providing space for an attractive central garden over the car park. Unfortunately the fourth block was not built until later and, due to a shortage of money, it was not built to the same standard or with the same features. For instance, timber balconies replaced the concrete ones and need replacing as they have been subject to weathering. The Lady Huntingfield Free Kindergarten, designed and built by Melbourne City Council in 1939/40, was retained within the overall design of the development.

Felicity Jack is a member of Hotham History Project and a regular contributor to the News.



City Gardens from Abbotsford Street.

Want to know more?

Hotham History Project researches and records the history of our surroundings and runs regular events – walks, talks and workshops. A number of books it has published can be purchased through the website. The Project is keen to attract new members and encourage people to participate in whatever way they can. Details: www.hothamhistory.org.au



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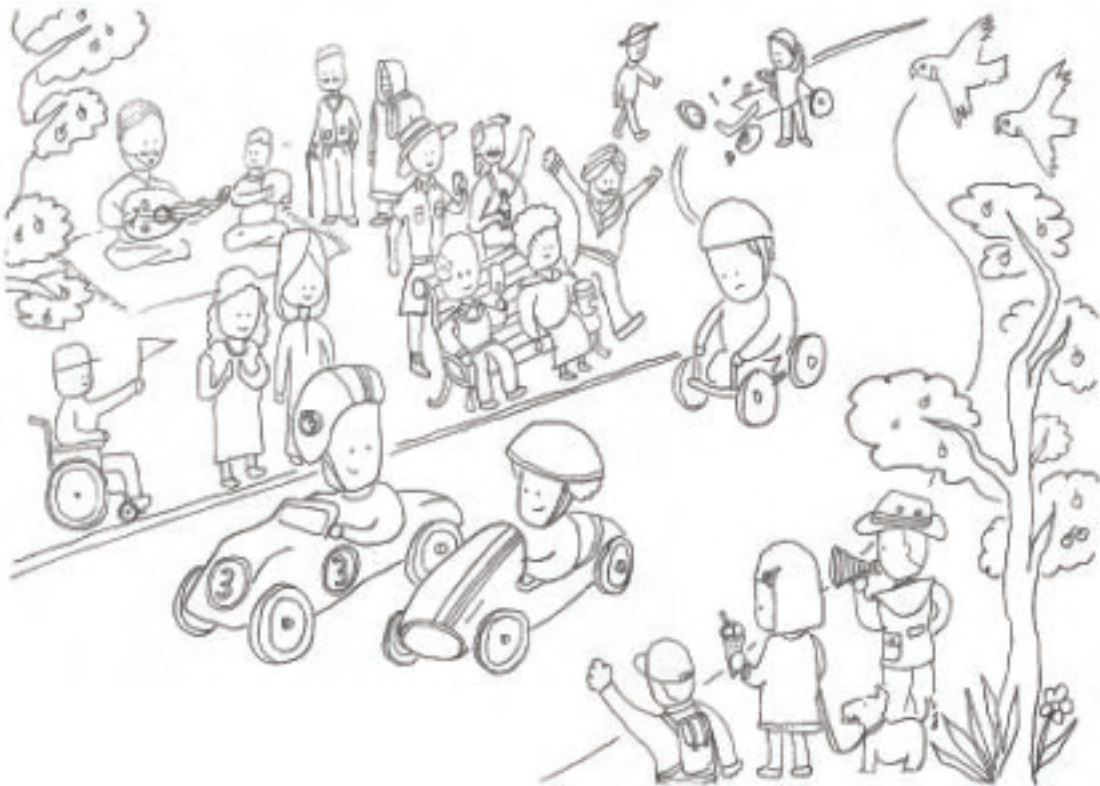
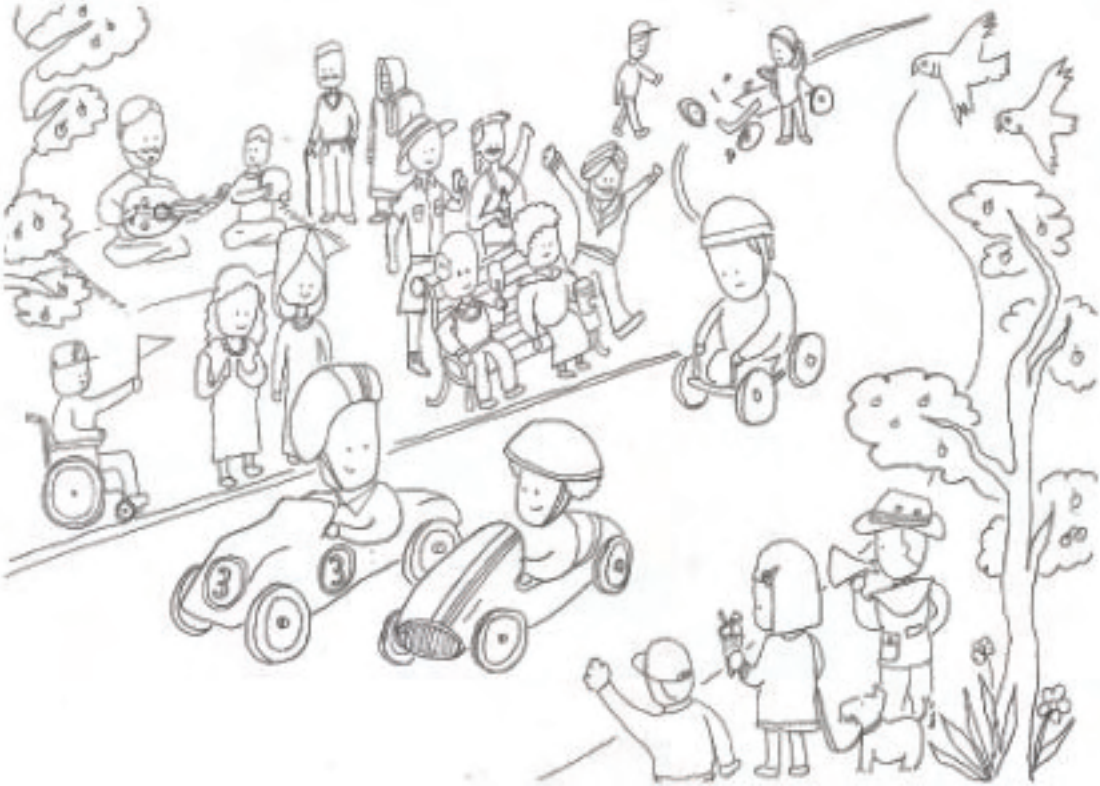




Amplify Bookstore owners Jing Xuan Teo and Marina Sano. Photography: Anna K Photography

Spot the Difference

News illustrator Ed Zhao reflects on Queensberry Cups gone by and has set readers a challenge. These illustrations may look the same, but there are 17 differences. Track them down and colour in the drawing. (Answers: page 27)



Amplifying diversity on our bookshelves

Swagata Majumdar

North Melbourne's Amplify Bookstore began as a radical idea born during Marina Sano and Jing Xuan Teo's postgraduate studies in publishing and communications. "We were looking for a way to make a tangible difference in the industry," Xuan said. "It's quite a white industry, and we wanted to highlight the stories that were already being published."

Initially imagined as a publishing house, Amplify quickly pivoted into a bookstore dedicated solely to books by BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Colour) authors.

"Finding books by people of colour that aren't on Amazon or a big chain is almost impossible," Xuan said. "So we created a space where readers could find these stories all in one place."

That mission drove Amplify to become a community-focused storefront just opposite Queen Victoria Market on Peel Street. For locals, it has become more than a retail space.

"The community has been really positive and welcoming," Xuan said. "We have locals who tell us they're grateful to have a bookstore in the area. It's heartwarming."

"We host a book club that has been really popular, and the space can be rented out by other book clubs to use. Now that we have a space, we want Amplify to focus on being a community space, a safe space for people to gather," she said.

Amplify's curation philosophy has remained firm, despite industry advice to include more mainstream titles. The store developed a unique tagging system for their online store, helping readers discover titles based on region, identity and theme.

Readers from across Melbourne travel to Amplify for titles they won't find elsewhere. These include works by BIPOC authors, books that explore diverse themes and experiences, and stories that are often overlooked by mainstream bookstores.

"Someone came in and cried when they realised what kind of store we were," Xuan said. "Others tell us their local bookstores don't have this kind of range. It's affirming to know that what we do matters."

Amplify hopes to expand its physical space, add more shelves, and provide consulting support to support BIPOC authors through the publishing journey.

Their community-driven ethos goes beyond just selling books, in the process cultivating a loyal following, both online and by word of mouth.

Amplify strongly advocates reading for young adults as well, though they don't cater to small children yet. "If I had stories that reflected me as a kid, I probably would've turned out a little differently, maybe a little better," Xuan said. "That's why reading from a young age matters."

Swagata Majumdar is a new writer for the News.

Photography: On Jackson Street



Trials and blessings of winter

The balmy, languorous days of autumn suddenly evaporated with the onset of winter. As we approached the winter solstice and the year's shortest day on 21 June, we were hit by bitterly cold, dark and frequently wet mornings.

Donning coat and gloves I often delayed setting off on my early morning walk with our dog Billy till nearer to 8 am. I spent more time inside, in front of a cosy fire, than outside doing jobs in the garden.

Winter is generally considered a down-time in the garden. At first glance this appeared to be the case in my own bleak backyard. All that remained of the deciduous fruit trees were bare, sticky branches, while the rusty leaves of the giant copper beech now covered the soil beneath it. The lawn's grass had stopped growing, as had the flowers of most of the perennial plants.

Little remained, it seemed, to pick for the vases of flower arrangements I do at our local church each week.

But as winter advanced, and there were more sunny days, I spent more time out there doing jobs. I began to observe and appreciate some of the good things that were happening. A number of intensely sweet-smelling flowers slowly made an appearance. It seems that fragrant flowers are most adventurous in winter, where they

GARDEN GLORIES Marion Poynter



serve as pollinators when there are fewer brightly coloured blooms around.

The wintersweet tree (*Chimonanthus*) came into full flower as winter began, then the two daphnes: one pink, the other white. The violets appeared in their masses, and then the pungent jonquils. I was able to gather small bunches of



daphne and violets for the house.

A time-consuming labour of love, it took ages! I can see how violets are rarely for sale in

florists, and if they are, why they cost so much.

Splashes of bright colour in the garden were provided by the fruit now ripening on the citrus trees: limes, oranges – Seville and blood - and

cumquats. Although there were no big flowers to use for the church flower arrangements, I had the sudden inspiration of picking and using generous branches of blood oranges and mixing them with foliage. They were much admired.

Early in August, a young family of friends on holiday from Innsbruck came for afternoon tea in front of the fire. The two children, 6 and 8, enjoyed playing with Billy, but were keen to see our chooks. Our four colourful bantams delighted them, and they were thrilled to gather eggs from their nest. It is good to have a supply of eggs again after they stopped laying over most of winter.

As the days grow longer, and less cold, I reflect that winter is not really such a bad time after all. The worst of it now past us, so I should get on with the winter tasks of pruning and mulching, and generally tidying up.

Marion Poynter is a North Melbourne local – and a very keen gardener.



Clockwise from above: small hands helping in the kitchen; Marion's citrusy arrangement for church; Marion and her green-thumb friends.



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Here’s a good one for you. Last year the air conditioning in my marvellous North Melbourne Library had a failure of its system, which the council has had difficulty fixing. So, they have given us these hideously noisy, portable WPH136 movable units instead.

The library is no longer a quiet and comfortable space because of them. No one has any idea if the AC system will be working for summer.

It’s not a great idea for me. The library is my main source of AC as I don’t have any at home.

❖❖❖

Pet insurance. Everybody should have some. My tiny dog Agent Orange broke his leg and is having surgery to repair it. This will cost an amazing \$4,500 to fix. Previously I’ve never thought about pet insurance. Now I must.

❖❖❖

Some 223 billion kretek (clove) cigarettes are smoked in Indonesia every day: Joanna Lumley said so. Now, that sounds like a serious problem. As many people know, I am seriously anti-smoking; have never done it myself. Even more so now that I have been spending so much time in the Combined Comprehensive Cancer Centre, dealing

VERY’S WORLD Very Impressive



with my own cancer problem.

Less than 5% of Melbourne’s population are still smoking, so why am I still seeing their butts absolutely everywhere?

Then there’s also all of the crap that the stupid vaper people are leaving behind, including many lithium-ion batteries that run their vapes ... which are just dropped on the ground, like they don’t even slightly care about the environment.

Stupid people, they are, because we have no idea what the long-term effects of vaping might be. But we do know that the short-term effects can be devastating for some people.

Even babies can be born with cancer: it comes in so many different varieties that there is one for everybody. Cancer, cancer for everybody. Come right up and get yourself some, the major illness that the entire family can play.

❖❖❖

An odd thing that I recently find myself thinking about often: some years ago at a party in St Kilda, I met a man who told me he was an engineer.

He said that his job was designing the interiors of yoghurt containers.

Odd when you think about it: every brand of yoghurt, the interior of the container is completely different.

❖❖❖

Quantum Entanglement connects particles instantly across galaxies rewriting everything we know about space, time and reality.

More than 6,000 years ago the Sumerians mapped the solar system with shocking accuracy depicting planets, DNA-like symbols and mysterious sky beings called Annunaki. There’s a giant hexagon-shaped storm at Saturn’s north

pole, which is more than 17 times larger than Earth.

❖❖❖

Dutch scientists have created a next-gen, Mxene carbon-based foam battery that fully charges in just nine seconds without overheating or degrading.

Now think how much further ahead we could be in the fight against climate change and sea-level rising if we had been putting money and resources into such research, when the world’s liberal media and governments first started whinging about how human-induced climate change was not real? All so they could ignore it and not be bothered to do anything about it.

It’s now more than 25 years since Australia was the main campaigner in completely ruining the Kyoto Protocol, watering it down so far that it became almost entirely useless. To the point where most other countries did not sign it, ‘If you’re not going to sign it, then I’m not going to sign it,’ like stupid petty bureaucrats. Those countries who did are now not even paying any attention to it.

Very Impressive has been sharing his views on life with the News for 17 years.

I’m more of a runner than a writer. I’m here to reflect on the quirks and qualities of this strange sport and the benefits of getting out for a trot. I’ll share things I’ve learned along the way and one or two stories from my attempts to get fitter, lose weight, get faster, climb higher and try not to fall over so much.

We run for many reasons. A friend and fellow runner recently asked me, “What are you running from?” It got me wondering: am I, in fact, running from something? Sometimes I chase the odd podium place or race win. Sometimes I chase faster times and longer distances – I once ran 89 km through mountains overnight, wet and hungry. But I’m still not 100% sure why I run.

I live and work in North Melbourne, and I love this area. I’ll tell anyone who will listen about how Melbourne is one of the

MOSTLY UPRIGHT Phil Gijsbers

best cities to run in. There’s a network of trails, tracks, parks and paths to explore. They intertwine and intersect in ways you wouldn’t notice driving through the often-congested streets.

Each week, I explore these networks by foot, often covering more than 140 km. Running through them provides a freedom of movement that isn’t at the mercy of peak hour traffic, and it offers different perspectives of our city and our suburb.

So, why do I run? Well, sometimes it’s to catch up with a friend. Sometimes it’s for

a quiet escape. Sometimes it’s to get faster. Sometimes the sun is out, the dog needs exercise and I really need a coffee. Whatever the reason, I do enjoy it. Even when I don’t.

Last November I started a run club at the pub I manage in North Melbourne, Bobbie Peels. We called it Pub Run – like Park Run, but with beer. The aim is to bring locals together who want to go for a run, whatever their motivation. People turn up and run at all paces; they wear all kinds of clothes (one guy ran the full 5 km in hi-vis after leaving his running

gear at home). But everyone gets amongst it together. It’s a great night that highlights how our motivations are our own, though the result can often look similar – and we all feel good after a run. Even if we didn’t think we would.

If you see me running down Errol Street or looping around Royal Park, just know I could be running for any number of reasons – and yes, beating the queue at Bread Club is one of them. So maybe I’m not running from something after all. Maybe it’s actually a pastry, a coffee or a cold beer that I’m running towards.

Phil Gijsbers is a marathon and ultramarathon runner, podcaster and a co-owner of Bobbie Peels.

Want to know more?
You can follow Phil’s running adventures at [@bobbiepeels](#) on Instagram and at [Phil Gijsbers](#) on Strava. Listen to the Gariwerd Trail Running podcast on Apple or Spotify.

I was talking recently to a friend who works at an office in West Melbourne. She was telling me about how her IT department had recently banned use of USB flash drives on work laptops.

She was frustrated by this because, before the change, she’d often copy files onto a USB and walk them over to the office printer.

This was her workaround for when the printer dropped off the network, which it did frequently, and printing directly from her laptop wasn’t possible. The USB method kept her working.

Now that USB drives were blocked, she’d found a new workaround.

She’d email the documents to her personal email account, open her email on her private laptop and download them to her USB. Then she’d walk over to the office printer and print the files from her USB just as before.

SAFETY IN CYBERSPACE Nebojsa Pajkic

She admitted this wasn’t ideal, but it was the only way she could get her work done without waiting for IT to fix the printer connection each time.

The irony was, the policy that was meant to make things more secure had pushed her into a less secure practice.

Instead of a direct USB transfer from her work laptop to the printer, which was not ideal in the first place, potentially sensitive business information was now being sent across the open internet to a personal email account and then handled on a private device. The opportunities for an adversary to intercept the data anywhere in that process were endless!

This is a good reminder that security policies don’t exist in a vacuum. They’re part of a bigger picture that includes how people actually operate.

If security measures are too restrictive or inconvenient, people will almost always find ways around them.

And those workarounds often introduce far greater risks than the ones the controls were designed to prevent in the first place.

The goal should be to think about security with the user at the centre. That means striking the right balance between security and practicality.

A policy that makes it impossible to

work efficiently is a policy that invites risky behaviours.

A policy that supports the way people work while quietly protecting them in the background has a far better chance of being followed.

In this case, fixing the unreliable printer connection or modernising the printer altogether would likely have been more effective than blocking USBs.

Cybersecurity isn’t just about protecting information, it’s also about understanding how humans behave – and the realities and practicalities of everyday life.

If we ignore that, we risk creating security rules that look good on paper but fail where it matters most: in practice.

Nebojsa Pajkic is a local resident and an information security professional. He shares his cybersecurity knowledge in the News.



Street artists Andrew and Manda.

Artists in action on Raglan Street

Shoppers slowed, then stopped to watch the evolution of a colourful scene in Raglan Street on the wall of Malaysian restaurant KL Bunga Raya. Artists Andrew Yeoh (Drewfunk) and Manda Lane chatted to passers-by while they worked.

“The flowers that Manda painted are hibiscus, the national flower of Malaysia,” Andrew said.

“The big, iconic rooster bowl I painted is common around Malaysia and South-East Asia. It’s normally used for soup, or curry-based dishes like the laksa. The boy is kinda like a self-portrait, but it’s also to balance out the giant bowl in proportion to everything else.

“The spray cans symbolise the Petronas twin towers in Kuala Lumpur, and give homage to my graffiti roots.”

Want to know more?
Visit Manda and Drew at www.mandalane.com.au and thedrewfunk@gmail.com



A fine feast of laughs on Errol Street

Ruby Liakoureas

In the heart of North Melbourne’s Errol Street you’ll find popular comedy venue the Comics Lounge. Founded by the O’Sullivan family in 2000, my first visit was on a night out with the team from the *North & West Melbourne News*.

The venue seems a touch dated but this only adds to its charm. At each step of the classic staircase, visitors are greeted by framed photographs of familiar local and international faces.

The venue is renowned as the host of new and established stand-up icons such as Dave Hughes, Carl Barron and Kitty Flanagan, and international talents such as Chris Rock.

The O’Sullivans have more than 55 years in the hospitality and comedy industries. Owner Tony O’Sullivan started his own journey in hospitality when he bought the Star and Garter pub in 1998. He introduced comedy sets on Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights, gathering huge audiences. After noise complaints from locals, Tony sought another venue to continue his

comedic success – and found Errol Street.

Along with Grant-Lee O’Sullivan, Tony’s son and general manager of the venue, the lounge has become a landmark for stand-up comedy.

For just \$20, audiences can experience new material from Australian Comedy Circuit comedians before they share it on TV or radio. The night hosts 10 comedians testing their fare, while offering guests dining for the 2-and-a-half-hour show.

The Best of the Melbourne International Comedy Festival is also running in September, a comedy show that hosts anywhere from six to eight mystery comedians from the festival.

Any appearance at the Comics Lounge will be a night of laughs, extensive dining options and the discovery of your new favourite stand-up.

Ruby Liakoureas is a new contributor to the News.

What to know more?
Check www.thecomicslounge.com.au or phone (03) 9348 9488 for their latest events.



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The News illustrator Ed Zhao takes a stroll beneath the blossoms of Melrose Street and shares the sights and scenes





Fine food, fun and friendship

The Loco Hall in Victoria Street was filled with chatter and laughter on 7 August, when more than 100 local women gathered for the 18th North Melbourne Women's Dinner. Jan Lacey, who arrived in North Melbourne with her daughter in 1980, was thrilled by the evening. "As an older woman, I found it inspiring to be in a room of such varied and vibrant women. I often despair at the state of the world, but if women like those with whom I shared the room last night were in charge, what a great world it could be."

Attendees enjoyed a tasty dinner provided by Al Makan Mediterranean Restaurant on Errol Street.

During the evening, an elimination 'longevity game' at the dinner identified West Melbourne resident Lorraine Siska as the longest resident, at an impressive 80 years.

River Nile School received a \$500 donation from ticket sales to the dinner. Its representative, Francine Sculli, thanked the gathering for their contribution to the school's mission of empowering women of refugee backgrounds aged 15 to 24.

Bouquets were presented to the original committee Kay Oke, Mary Nicholson and Sue Allnutt, and to the second generation committee: Glenys Crawford, Deanne Hocking, Tanya Smith and Alison Parkes. This year's

dinner was organised by Finella Oakley, Robyn Phelan, Anne Corry, Chris Bohan and Colleen Pearson.

The evening included a door prize raffle, supported by generous donations of vouchers and gifts from local businesses: Al Makan, Town Hall Hotel, Courthouse Hotel, Radical Yes, Equilibrium Gym, Three Crowns Hotel, Bread Club, Errol Street Physiotherapy, Chris Bohan Jewellery; and High Tea at Parliament House, donated by Ellen Sandell.

The post-pandemic hiatus of five years did not dim support for the event. The tickets sold out quickly, giving the committee the motivation to go bigger in 2026.



Clockwise from top right:
Committee members Finella Oakley, Chris Bohan and Anne Corry.
Committee member Colleen Pearson with River Nile Learning Centre's Sarah Gray, Head of Partnerships and Development, and Francine Sculli, Engagement Officer.
Deanne Hocking and Helen Slonek.
Original committee member Kay Oke with current member Robyn Phelan.
Longest West Melbourne resident of 80+ years Lorraine Siska with resident of 49 years Mary Kehoe.
Jenny Hayes and Gwen Rathjens.
Photographs: Mikayla Abdo, Kay Oke, Chris Bohan and Robyn Phelan





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St Michael's athletes run, jump and shine



St Michael's grade 3/4 students are all smiles at District Sports Day. From left to right: Juno, Sebi, Ayrton, Patrick, David, Evelyn, Abigail and Mia.

Fiona Dunne

The sun was shining and so were the spirits of our young athletes, as students from grades 3 to 6 proudly represented St Michael's at the District Sports Day held at Moonee Valley Athletics Centre in early August.

The spectacular day was filled with energy, encouragement and outstanding sportsmanship as students competed in a range of field and track events. From shot put, discus and high jump to the fast-paced 200 m, 800 m, and the ever-exciting relay races – our students gave it their all.

One of our enthusiastic Grade 3/4 students, Juno, captured the spirit of the day perfectly: "I loved cheering on my friends from the sidelines."

Whether competing or supporting, every student contributed to the electric atmosphere of camaraderie and school pride.

Congratulations to Evelyn and Polaris, who have both qualified for the Regional Athletics Carnival in September. This is a

tremendous achievement and we're so proud of their effort, dedication and talent. We know they'll represent St Michael's with heart and determination.

Days like this remind us of the value of sport in bringing people together, building confidence and celebrating effort just as much as achievement. Well done to all of our students for showing such great sportsmanship, and to the families and staff who supported them throughout the day.

We can't wait to cheer on Evelyn and Polaris at Regionals – go St Michael's!

Fiona Dunne is Community Engagement Leader at St Michael's Primary School.



Evelyn beams after qualifying for regionals.

Errol Street darlings win big

North Melbourne's own comedy series *Fisk* topped the honours at the recent Logie Awards. The show, which features Errol Street and the 57 tram prominently, won five awards including Best Lead Actress in a comedy for Kitty Flanagan, who is also the co-creator and co-writer. Aaron Chen won a Logie for Best Lead in a comedy.



Fisk cast and crew from left to right: Vincent Sheehan (co-creator), Tom Peterson (co-director), Kitty Flanagan, Julia Zemiro and Glenn Butcher

Source: Getty Images

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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 involved the criminal cases heard in the North Melbourne Court. Here are some of the stories that ran in September in the 1880s.

Rum go for licensee (1882)

Elizabeth, licensee of the Roso of Denmark Hotel, was charged with possession of a tobacco extract for purposes other than medicinal or domestic. The two bottles found were said to be rum used for cleaning. However, the Government's analytical chemist found them to be a combination of nicotine, water and burnt sugar. The defence argued that the bottles had been left by the previous licensee and not touched since. The Bench, acknowledging that this was possible but couldn't be proven, imposed a fine of £15.

Racing or 'a sharp trot'? (1882)

Cabmen William Hart and James Oliver were accused of racing down Victoria Street, travelling at speeds 'nearly as fast as an express train'. In the process, one of them collided with a meat truck, damaging the cab to the amount of £3. The defence argued that no racing took place and the vehicles were only going at a sharp trot. The Bench considered the case proven and ordered that the defendants pay for damages to the cab and fined them 10s each.

Jailed but not cautioned (1883)

Peter Monaghan was charged with the theft of a tablecloth and two watches. Detective O'Donnell told the Bench that Monaghan claimed he had purchased the watch from a sailor for £5. However, O'Donnell also acknowledged that he had not cautioned the defendant, before they spoke, which he should have as a matter of justice and fair play. Monaghan was sentenced to two months imprisonment.

Castlemaine or jail (1884)

Theresa Winter was charged with having no lawful visible means of support. Constable Lowry stated he found her sleeping in an old stable. After asking her what she was doing, she responded with obscene language. Winter appealed to the Bench to allow her to go to Castlemaine, where she has a married daughter. The Bench agreed but warned that if she did not stop at Castlemaine and presented again, she would get 12 months' imprisonment.

On track for a nap (1889)

John Brock, while intoxicated, attempted to sleep on the railway line near North Melbourne. Fortunately, Constable Vaughan heard of Brock's foolish act and managed to find him lying there with his face cut, having stumbled among the points and crossings. Brock was fined 10s or three days.

Leaving the fortress for the big wide world

Osman Glaidos was inspired to write this fiction piece after he overheard a young man speaking to his friend while waiting at North Melbourne train station. The young man admitted how scared he was – but at the same time so excited – on his way to the first day of work out of North Melbourne.

The annoying beeps of the alarm knocked me back from my dreams to the real world. I held my quilt close to my body, begging the alarm with mumbles to give me a few more minutes to float underneath the waves of my bedsheets.

It was 5:00 am and the winter winds were roaring, knocking on my doors and calling for a morning fight.

My hands flashed towards the alarm, hitting the silence button. The alarm was dead for the moment, ready to resurrect itself the following dawn at the same time and take its revenge on me.

It was my first day of work away from my neighbourhood and I had some mixed feelings ... Anticipation, yes ... Anxiety, probably ... Excitement, maybe ... Joy? I couldn't say.

In my 18 years in this world, North Melbourne was the fortress of high walls that I hid myself behind. North Melbourne is a cappuccino blend of everything that always makes you feel good.

Big streets, small streets; streets that take you anywhere and nowhere. You can walk on a street that still remembers the footsteps of people enjoying their walk more than 150 years ago. In North Melbourne, every rock has a story.

I like the big green blanket covering the streets of North Melbourne: trees and parks are everywhere. It's why I love flowers and gardening.

In my little backyard, I grew many vegetables and flowers, but my favourite was the Heartsease Tricolour flower. One of teachers in my high school told me once that the word heartsease can describe the feelings of peace, serenity and calmness.

The Heartsease Tricolour is originally from Spain but, like many of its residents, happily settled in Melbourne. The flower is made of three hearts with purple, yellow and white hugging each other in harmony.

I always felt so peaceful when watering my Heartsease flowers. Every morning, as the water drops softly

touch the petals of the flower, they answer my wakeup call with a joyful flamenco dance they learnt from their ancestors.

I was happy that I found an opportunity to work at one of the nurseries in the eastern suburbs of Melbourne.

It was time to get up. I had a quick shower, trying to wash all these mixed feeling and thoughts away with no success.

As I left, I pushed the door to my mum's room and saw she was in a deep sleep. She always works late at night at one of the nearby warehouses. I felt she was trying to bury her broken heart under the heavy machinery, to forget my dad, who left us when I was young.

Oh Mum, she never forgets ... I saw my lunch box ready and there was a little note from her: Go, sweetheart, and chase your dreams.

I took the note and placed it in the top left pocket of my jacket. I opened the door and the winter winds roared louder. I rushed out, covering my head, and the winds were crazily upset that I took up their challenge.

People were running to reach their destinations, but no-one was looking at the others, who were losing their way.

The lovely trees of North Melbourne had lost their green hair, after it turned yellow in autumn and fell to cover the wet streets.

I saw the city's big buildings around North Melbourne train station sending their dim lights to wish me good luck, and the seven fingers of Melbourne's City Star waving goodbye. Many trains were coming in and out of the station; people jumped out running and others jumped in happily, looking at their phones.

I looked at the coming train that was smiling quietly. I held my bag and lunch box tightly to my shivering body. The train opened its mouth; I hopped into the belly of the beast and ... disappeared.

Osman Glaidos is Volunteers Program Coordinator at the North and West Neighbourhood Centre (NWMNC).

Pour Diane is rich in neighbours and good wine

Mishelle Tongco

In the neighbourly streets of Paris, Tina and Andy Buchan found themselves drawn to a wine culture where locals gathered outside their homes, sharing a bottle and bringing people together in a way that felt special, natural and communal.

"Everyone seems to know everyone," Tina said. "On their way home from work, they would get some food from next door and share a glass of wine. We thought, 'That's beautiful – we can do something like that.'"

The experience became the heart and soul of Pour Diane.

Pour Diane is a 1970s-themed bar in Victoria Street offering a curated selection of European wines, along with light bites such as cheese and bread to complement the natural wine experience.

Tina and Andy envisioned a welcoming spot where locals could gather, talk and share a glass of wine, in a space that differs from other wine bars in the city.

"The space isn't like those cafeteria-style wine bars where everyone's got their little booths and little space," Andy said. "You walk into a lot of wine shops and bars, and the place around the corner will have the same wine. We want to have the wines that you have to come here to get. [Pour Diane] is more free, and people can talk and interact with each other."

The wine bar promotes the idea that hospitality shouldn't end when guests walk out the door, but rather be the starting point to a memorable evening.

Guests are encouraged to grab a bottle of wine and explore North Melbourne's local food scene, with a strong focus on BYO.

"People can come here and we can give them a beautiful hunk of bread, some cheese and great wine, and they

can go on and have a fabulous dinner in North Melbourne at some of the amazing venues that are out here," Tina said.

By embracing what they call a collaborative approach to hospitality, Tina and Andy foster a sense of community that extends far beyond its doors.

"Go across to the Kathmandu Cottage and take a bottle of rosé and have that with the curry. Or take a

chardonnay and have that with some honey chicken at Char Siu House," Andy added. "We like the idea of that. We see North Melbourne as our kitchen."

Pour Diane plans to host a special event in October for the Queensberry Cup, featuring a curated selection of cheese, wine and their very own billycart.

Mishelle Tongco is a new writer for the News.

Pour Diane, cloaked behind a red velvet curtain.



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Lord Mayor message

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Now an annual institution thanks to the North and West Melbourne Neighbourhood Centre, the Cup brings people together in a positive, welcoming environment – just as the Centre's programs have done for nearly 50 years.

And with plans for a greener, leafier Errol Street now underway, future festivals will be even more enjoyable.

Nick Reece
Lord Mayor

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Mr Gonzo offers taste of Columbia

Paola Mila

Fernanda Mayorga was just 23-years-old when she arrived in Australia from Acacías, Colombia. Melbourne welcomed her with open arms, but she felt something was missing: the Colombian flavours she had grown up with. Her parents owned a popular restaurant in her small home town, renowned for its tamales and lechonas. Fernanda couldn't find these traditional Colombian dishes anywhere in Melbourne. Tamal is a corn dough filled with meats and vegetables, wrapped in plantain leaves and steamed. It's commonly served for breakfast with hot chocolate, arepa (white corn cakes), or bread. Lechona is eaten at any time of day, whenever cravings strike. It's made from chopped pork, rice, and seasonings, all stuffed into a whole pig and slow-roasted until the skin turns perfectly crispy. Fernanda made the bold decision to stop job hunting and start cooking the dishes her parents had taught her. The only problem? She had never truly learned the craft, as all she had ever really wanted was to travel. Determined, she put on her apron and got to work.

Mr Gonzo, in Melrose Street, is named in honor of her father, Gonzalo. Throughout the journey she has had the unwavering support of her parents. They would make late-night or early-morning video calls, adjusting to the time difference with Colombia. Fernanda sends a message to all those women who have left their home in pursuit of a better life or brighter opportunities, and to all the single mothers, entrepreneurs and dreamers: do not give up, keep fighting for your dreams.

Paola Mila is a new writer for the News.



Above: Mr Gonzo's best-selling Lechona. Right: Mr Gonzo owner, Fernanda Mayorga.



Pavilion Select Produce: Sharing the stories behind unique flavours

Amber Ammouche

Pavilion Select Produce is known for selling a variety of local and international products, including cheeses, dips and olives, and for the introduction of halal cold meats. Now, the Queen Victoria Market store is under the new ownership of Ali Ammouche. Ali lived in Lebanon most of his life, coming to Melbourne for better opportunities.

Cost-of-living increases and inflation has had a deep impact on his business. Raw materials, transportation and utilities have all increased in price. "This has forced me to make difficult decisions about raising my prices, therefore shrinking my profit margins. I've noticed a change in my customers' behaviour," Ali said. To adapt, Ali highlights the value and unique qualities of products to keep customers coming back, even offering

smaller cuts of expensive cheeses to make them more accessible. Introducing halal-certified products led to a significant increase in sales. By catering to the specific dietary needs of the Muslim community, Ali unlocked a previously untapped market and created a new stream of revenue. The emphasis on ethical sourcing that comes with halal production has also attracted a wider range of consumers increasingly conscious

about their food choices. Pavilion Select Produce's goal is to create a memorable experience that makes customers feel that they've just discovered what Ali considers "the best cheese ever!" His approach combines in-store experience with unique storytelling, such as: In-Store Sampling: Offering samples and having knowledgeable staff who can share the story behind each

cheese, such as the milk source and its special flavour profile, turns a simple purchase into a memorable discovery. Creating 'Hero Products': Identifying specific, high-quality cheeses – like an aged gouda or a creamy brie – that have a truly exceptional taste and market them as a 'must-try' experience.

Amber Ammouche is a regular writer for the News (and Ali Ammouche's cousin).

Sarah Witty
Federal Member for Melbourne

I am your local Federal MP and I'm here to help. Please get in touch.

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Words on the street

Spring is here. Daffodils are blooming, bees are buzzing and neighbours are dragging their picnic rugs out onto the median strips with books in tow. In short: the time is ripe to pick back up your reading habits (perhaps you lost them to an annual bout of Seasonal Affective Disorder). But what to read? If your budget is still thawing from a winter of heating bills, a pile of new releases probably

isn't at the top of your grocery list. The answer is closer than you think, dear reader. Try one of the street libraries scattered around the neighbourhood. You never know what you'll find: a

classic, a hidden gem or something you'd never purchase with your own funds. We've tracked the local libraries down, but tell us: have we missed any?



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THE LIFE OF THE PARTY
Ellen Sandell



Public housing residents
deserve better

Nearly two years after former Labor Premier Dan Andrews announced the demolition of all 44 high-rise public housing towers across Melbourne, the residents face an uncertain future.

Since then, my office has been inundated with calls and emails from residents who lack clear information about their relocation.

Residents who are evicted due to the demolitions have been promised that they will have a right to return once new dwellings are built on these sites. We fear these promises from Labor are empty words: I've heard from many previous residents who have been moved away from public housing and have not been able to return.

One such constituent contacted me recently. The family of five were relocated from their home in North Melbourne when their Abbotsford Street estate was demolished. When the new apartments were built, they tried to return, as was their right.

However, they were told no apartments big enough for their family were built at the new estate. Instead, they were offered two two-bedroom apartments on separate floors. Imagine being told you would have to live on one floor while your children live in a separate apartment two floors down!

To add salt to the wound, when the Labor Victorian Government demolishes all these public housing towers, they've said not one single public home will be built in their place. Instead, they will mostly build expensive private apartments, with some undefined "affordable" housing. There will reportedly be some social housing, which is managed by non-government organisations and does not provide the same level of security of tenure or rent controls as public housing.

I'm deeply concerned that Labor and property developers simply look at these inner-city housing estates and see dollar signs – rather than realising that for our city and community to thrive, we need all kinds of housing to make sure the inner-city isn't just a place for the very wealthy.

My Greens colleagues and I will continue to fight against large-scale public housing demolitions, and campaign to see that residents who are forced to relocate are guaranteed the right to return to a home suitable for their family's needs.

What to know more?
If you have any questions or concerns, don't hesitate to get in touch:
ellen.sandell@parliament.vic.gov.au

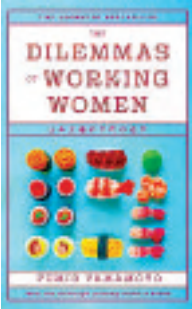


Local VLA Ellen Sandell hears concerns from a public housing resident.

BETWEEN THE COVERS
Chris Saliba



The Dilemmas of Working Women
Fumio Yamamoto (Virago. RRP: \$32.99)




In 2001 Japanese writer Fumio Yamamoto won the Naoki Prize in literature for *The Dilemmas of Working Women*, a collection of five novellas each about 60 pages long. English readers can now enjoy this Japanese classic in this enjoyable translation by Brian Bergstrom.

Each of the stories concentrates on a woman's financial and emotional dilemmas. Izumi bounces around job prospects while hooking up with an old work buddy; Haruka is recovering from cancer surgery but finds those around her impatient with her inability to move on; Kato works at a convenience store and must negotiate tricky workplace politics; Mito has a complicated relationship with her boyfriend; and Sumie is a free spirit who reads fortunes.

Fumio Yamamoto writes in simple, addictive prose about everyday struggles: wanting to be understood, trying to find meaningful work, figuring out if a relationship is worth pursuing, coping with difficult family members. There is an existential quality to Yamamoto's work, as her characters cycle through relationships, career choices and social roles looking in vain to establish meaning in their lives. A welcome addition to Japanese fiction in translation.

A Different Kind of Power
Jacinta Ardern (Penguin. RRP: \$55.00)



Jacinda Ardern was raised a Mormon but grew more and more at odds with her church's teachings. How could she be pro-gay rights and abortion, yet keep faith with her religious upbringing? Ardern loved the church and its people, but this tension between personal belief and religious moral codes would cause an identity crisis.

Painfully, and after much struggle, Ardern left her faith and became a warrior for progressive politics. That road was not an easy one. Filled with self-doubts and more than susceptible to imposter syndrome, New Zealand's future prime minister was nudged into leadership roles. It was a surprise for the reluctant politician to find herself prime minister, but once there she hoped to govern with kindness and compassion.

A Different Kind of Power is indeed a different kind of political memoir. It tells a story of vulnerability and inner-conflict, rather than a myth-making march to power. The book is refreshingly devoid of ego and political preaching, and offers an array of surprising insights told with clarity and humour. Jacinda Ardern's memoir opens a fresh window on the possibilities of politics beyond the usual grind of point-scoring and confected conflict.

The Boy with Big Decisions
Helen Rutter (Scholastic. RRP: \$19.99)



Fred Timple's parents Madeline and John have moved to a new house. Added to this upheaval is the daunting prospect of starting high school. John Timple wants his son to follow in his footsteps and go to Gains School, a place renowned for its academic excellence and focus on sports. But Fred prefers the more arts-friendly and easy-going Browtree.

Secretly, Fred dreams of being an artist and must keep his drawings hidden from his disapproving and overly controlling parents. On his first day as he waits at the bus stop, he sees one bus for Gains School and the other for Browtree. What should he do?

In this interactive novel from British writer Helen Rutter, the reader gets to choose which path to take and find out whether it was the right or wrong decision (Fred gets into quite a few scrapes and learns some tough lessons about honesty). Throughout, there are many crossroads where the reader chooses from two options, leading to eight different outcomes. An Escher-like novel of sliding-door moments, the reader is repeatedly circled back to the beginning to try a different journey. An engaging story about the challenges of being true to yourself.

For children aged 9 years and older.

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

Old North Melbourne
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Report to the community 2024/25



Looking forward to celebrating 50 years

NWMNC will be celebrating 50 years of operation next year. This is quite an achievement in an area like North and West Melbourne that has seen so many changes over the years. It started as an information service and has moved into managing a range of services and activities to meet the diverse needs of our community.

North and West Melbourne is now very multicultural and also economically and socially diverse. The new Men Out of the Margins program is a great example of NWMNC programs that are targeted to deliver practical relief and build pathways for those in our community with the greatest need.

I would like to thank our Director Ariel Valent,

CHAIR’S REPORT
Kay Oke



who has now been with us for five years. Ariel has been able to calmly plan, initiate and manage new ventures to meet the changing needs of our

community. Thanks also to Dhanya, who manages the front desk and the volunteers, and to Craig, who wrangles the finances.

Many thanks to the Board members who have volunteered so much time and expertise to NWMNC: Alan Cooke, Kate Ritchie, Leah Huynh, Lorna Hannan, Kevin Shi, Barry Berih, Greg Ferrington and Sachin Singhal. Thanks for their commitment in attending meetings and activities. I would especially like to thank Leah, who took over as Treasurer and makes financial reports into understandable and interesting documents.

Volunteers are what make a neighbourhood house into a community. There have been so many people involved over the past 50 years in a range of activities at NWMNC. Thanks to all of you and hope we can have even more volunteers for the next 50 years.

This year at North & West Melbourne Neighbourhood Centre (NWMNC) has been one of growth, resilience and the provision of assistance where it’s needed most.

As a Neighbourhood House, we are here for everyone from North Melbourne (3051) and West Melbourne (3003), however we particularly focus our efforts on people in poverty or distress. Our aim is to help those people in our community experiencing disadvantage, isolation, marginalisation or facing barriers to participation.

All the programs and activities described in this Annual Report flow from this purpose.

Our programs are (almost) as diverse as our community. Across the year, thousands of people engaged with NWMNC: women from refugee backgrounds taking their first steps in digital skills; children receiving vital homework support; men rebuilding confidence after homelessness or incarceration; and seniors finding friendship, movement and meaning to combat isolation.

Neighbourhood Houses Victoria recently surveyed our participants, revealing:

- 92% improved physical wellbeing
- 92% improved emotional wellbeing
- 88% stronger sense of belonging to the

A helping hand where it’s needed most

DIRECTOR’S REPORT
Ariel Valent



community

Some notable highlights over the past 12 months include:

- The establishment of Men Out of the Margins, a program that relieves poverty and distress by working intensively with men who have experienced homelessness. Whilst new, this program has already been successful in providing pathways to self-reliance and community belonging.
- Growing partnerships with both River Nile School and River Nile Learning Centre who service girls and women from refugee

backgrounds. NWMNC provides core foundational skills to help relieve the distress of their displacement and begin to prosper in Australia.

- The sustained success of the Container Deposit Scheme that has seen more than 100,000 containers recycled and more than \$10,000 into the pockets of community members in need.
- The third annual Queensberry Cup that welcomed more than 10,000 spectators supporting vital connections across the community.

- Appointing a volunteer co-ordinator to implement the volunteer strategy that provides a better experience for our growing volunteer base.
- Commencing the strategic planning process for the next four years.

I extend sincere thanks to our tight-knit team of staff, contractors and volunteers. Each of us in our own way is dedicated to the betterment of our neighbourhood. By working together, we have had tangible community impact.

To everyone who walked through our doors; to every partner who shared their expertise; to every donor who backed a fairer neighbourhood - **thank you**. Together, we are making real and lasting difference to people in need.

In the coming year, we look forward to extending our benevolent impact as we deepen Men Out of the Margins, through the Chat Man Friday podcast, additional workshops and referrals, grow learning opportunities for refugee women and commence programs addressing isolation in older people and international students. To our partners, funders and broad community, please join us as we celebrate our 50th anniversary.



A NWMNC Senior’s outing to Mount Franklin.

Impact report

Neighbourhood Houses Victoria conduct an annual survey that allows us to measure the value of our impact.

In the 2024 calendar year:

- NWMNC provided in excess of \$1,614,719 of community value (excluding events), which is more than double our income
- \$16.37 of value for every dollar of state government NHCP funding
- \$766 of value for every hour that NWMNC is in use
- 222 participants in programmed activities per week
- 191 volunteer hours per week

NWMNC staff, key contractors and volunteers

Director: Ariel Valent
CFO / CIO: Craig Barry
Community Development Co-ordinator: Khalid Farah
Community Events Co-ordinator: Yulay Perez
Community & Marketing Co-ordinator: Dhanya Nair
Mens Program and Volunteer Co-ordinator: Osman Osman
Community Outreach Workers: Cindy Huang, Najat Mussa, Jabriil Mohamed
Team Leader – Homework Club: Laurence Angwin
Session Supervisors – Homework Club: Ayla Dempsey, Koluthumani Venkatraman, Marwa Zakzouk, Uma Bharathi
Container Deposit Scheme (CDS) Operations Co-ordinator: Michael Taylor
Mens Program Leader: Frances McMillan
ACFE Administration: Cindy Huang
Events Sponsorship Co-ordinator: Reechma Kumari
Tutors: Fernanda Cury, Bethany Rayner, Susie Kelly, Jenna Stamp, Jennifer

Miller, James Klonis, Shyamasree Bose, Anna Trigos, Leah Huynh, Helena Steel, Adongwat Manyoul, Louisa Malki
N&WN News Volunteer Leaders: Maurice Gaul (editor until March 2025); Liam Heitmann-Ryce-Le Mercier (from March 2025), Anne Burgi (production); Thomas Linkins (production manager); Louise Yaxley (deputy editor); Janet Graham (advertising); Tim Cremean (distribution)
Front Desk Volunteers: Karen Kirsopp, Trinh Nguyen, Yin Myat Thu, Alan Cooke, Amina Hassan, Ian Woodruffe, Shine Ma, Michael Taylor, Isabella Barclay, Isa Charalabidis, Matt Hirst, Catherine Tinlin
Events Volunteer Leaders: Peter Wright, Jon Sulte, Phillip Pavlidis, David Moorhouse, Nadia Melih, John Howarth, Kevin Shi, Chris Peile, Yeimy Romero, Heidy Montes, Barry Berih, Ahmed Dini, Khalid Mohammed, Yasin Mussa, Farah Warsame
CDS volunteers: Peter Roberts, Andrea Mentlikowski, Jessica Hu, Merry Kidby
Cleaner: Mitsalal (Zafu) Gebrekidan, Kidan Woldu

NWMNC Board members

Kay Oke (Chair)
Alan Cooke (Deputy Chair)
Kate Ritchie (Secretary)
Leah Huynh (Treasurer)

Lorna Hannan
Sachin Singhal
Barry Berih
Greg Ferrington
Kevin Shi

Report to the community 2024/25

Men Out of the Margins – practical relief for marginalised men

Launched in January 2025, Men Out of the Margins is supported by the Federal Department of Social Services and delivered in partnership with VincentCare (Ozanam House), The Salvation Army (Flagstaff Crisis Accommodation and Open Door) and Launch Housing (Elizabeth Street Common Ground).

The program targets local men affected by homelessness, incarceration and social isolation to relieve poverty and distress.

The program has established several non-judgmental men’s social groups in transitional housing facilities to deliver key information and activities that encourages self-reflection. The structured 11-week program helps participants move forward in areas including job readiness, identity, self-care, digital literacy, money management, sense of belonging in the local community, and volunteering.

The aim is practical relief and a pathway towards independence and empowerment. Early indications suggest men completing this program will be at reduced risk of poverty and re-entering homelessness when they leave supported accommodation.

In the first six months, 43 men participated in at least one of:

- Men’s Afternoon Tea at NWMNC (Thursdays)

Sam* is a 47-year-old who completed the Ozanam Men Group (OMG) sessions. Prior to his engagement, he was described by Ozanam House staff as a very quiet person who showed no interest in any of the activities at the residence or his surroundings in North Melbourne.

Despite being very quiet in the first two sessions, Sam was observant. He later mentioned that he felt that the OMG sessions were non-judgmental, and everyone’s ideas and views were very well respected and appreciated.

A fellow group member encouraged him to join him in volunteering at the Ozanam House Cafe, while another supported him to join the cast of a movie in a casual role. He actively participated in NWMNC 2025 Volunteers’ Day celebrations.

Ozanam House staff now describe him as a different person. Sam is volunteering in two different organisations. Further, he has been accepted by RMIT to study his Diploma in Community Services starting in January 2026.

*name has been changed

- Ozanam Men Group (Tuesdays)
 - Men @ Common Ground Group (Sundays).
- Eighty-seven per cent (87%) of the participants in the men groups have reported improvements in social connectedness, and 91% of men that completed the structured men groups have been



Members of the inaugural Ozanam Mens Group celebrate their graduation.

linked to programs and activities after their program is finished, meaning that they stand an increased chance of living successful, hope-filled independent lives free from poverty.

NWMNC is launching a new podcast in August 2025 called Chat Man Friday. This weekly podcast

will provide listeners with an insight into the perspectives of men from North & West Melbourne with a different featured interview each episode. The creation of the podcast has also been a learning experience for the men involved.

Supporting children, young people and families

Home Away From Homework Club

Our long-established homework clubs are a cornerstone of practical relief for low-income families – free, weekly, structured learning support that allows participants to keep pace with their peers in literacy, numeracy and social development.

For families whose schooling was interrupted by displacement, who don’t speak English, who are working multiple jobs to feed their families or who can’t afford private tutoring, the Home Away From Homework Club is a lifeline, breaking the cycle of intergenerational disadvantage. For kids, it’s a place to belong and thrive.

The clubs create safe, welcoming spaces where children receive bespoke intensive support from trained volunteer tutors. These volunteers include tertiary students, many of whom are considering a teaching career, alongside retired teachers, academics and higher secondary students. All of them are excellent role models for the students.

Each participant also receives a nutritious after-school snack that they would not get at home.

In the past year our clubs served 60 students and have regularly operated at capacity. We are very grateful to North Melbourne Rotary, Nelson

Alexander Foundation and some anonymous community donors who provided the necessary financial support when our other funding applications were knocked back.

We were saddened that financial constraints meant we had to close the Docklands Homework Club. While NWMNC facilities and programs are still open to Docklands residents, this closure marks the end of NWMNC’s formal relationship with the Docklands community.

The three remaining clubs (including the one at the base of the Alfred Street public housing tower soon to be redeveloped) have all continued to thrive. Most students come from migrant and refugee families navigating language barriers, complex settlement challenges and tight household budgets.

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Beyond Homework Club, we offer opportunities for children and their families to engage.

Our popular three-day school holiday coding program expanded this year, welcoming more participants than previously. These sessions catered for absolute beginners discovering coding to more experienced coders extending their skills.

Rainbow Art classes this year have expanded into two groups. The classes continue to inspire children and nurture their creativity.

All our programs aimed at children offer pathways for their parents and other family members to meet their own needs: for example, by enrolling in English conversation class, gaining assistance with form-filling or other means of practical support.

Education, skills and pathways

At NWMNC, we consider education to be a doorway. For many of our learners – especially refugee-background women, older residents and those completing prison terms – pre-accredited learning provides practical relief: the confidence to use a smartphone, the skill to write a CV, the courage to speak up in a class.

Through our Adult, Community and Further Education (ACFE) Program we offered digital literacy, employability and English literacy courses designed as stepping stones to further education and work. In the past year, our offering included Digital Essentials, Know Your Phone, Read Write Now, Let’s Learn English, Financial Literacy, Event Management and Podcasting.

Refugee Women’s Learning

Through a new partnership with River Nile Learning Centre, refugee-background women studied English language and digital literacy in a safe, culturally appropriate setting. This program directly tackles compounding disadvantage – language barriers, interrupted schooling, and limited access to technology – by delivering the basic tools new arrivals need to participate in Australian society.

Healthy bodies, calmer minds

NWMNC’s long-standing Pilates program continued in the last year, offering affordable

classes to support strength, mobility and mental health for residents of all ages. This year we added a Stretching & Relaxation class.

Lifelong learning for wellbeing

French and Spanish classes continued throughout the year. We also introduced exciting food-related activities, including a cheese tasting session at the Queen Victoria Market and a French cooking experience in collaboration with local businesses. Both were well received by our community fostering joy, culture and connection.

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While these activities enrich the whole community, they also serve people in need by reducing isolation, fostering peer networks, and sometimes providing a bridge to more structured study or volunteering. They also provide an income stream allowing NWMNC to provide better services to community members in need.

Open Access, Food Relief and Referrals

The Neighbourhood House in Errol Street, North Melbourne, is open to anyone as “a welcoming place to connect, learn and share”. The welcome people get when they first step into the building is very important.

Our front desk is staffed by a culturally rich and multi-generational team of volunteers, from international students to retirees who bring varied life experiences. Their shared dedication makes NWMNC a warm, inclusive and welcoming space for everyone. This is particularly important for community members in some kind of distress (for example homelessness, family violence, anxiety or depression). This year four of our staff and volunteers completed Mental Health First Aid training to better address acute needs of our community.

Our front desk and community development team provide one-on-one practical support for community members, including: listening with empathy; help with filling in government forms;



From left: Home Away From Homework Club; Two friendly volunteer receptionists at NWMNC.

Report to the community 2024/25

providing basic material, and; advocating for a place to sleep at night. While our range of services is broad, our team also makes referrals to specialist providers to ensure community members' needs are best addressed by experts.

Container Deposit Scheme (CDS)

Our CDS provides community members with 10c for every container they bring to NWMNC. While this might not seem like much, it can provide a vital form of income for people living in poverty. Additionally, NWMNC generates income to invest in its benevolent programs.

For several men leaving homelessness, the CDS has been a first step back into responsibility and routine, supported by staff and peers.

In May, NWMNC hosted Environment Minister Steve Dimopolous, a giant foam can and a scrum of media cameras as the Win a Million Cents competition was launched on Errol Street. CDS

Volunteer Co-ordinator Michael Taylor spoke about his experience with the scheme and appeared on the TV news.

Beyond CDS, we implemented a circular economy system for food and drinks at our events including the purchase of 600 re-usable plates.

Food security

While we occasionally have vouchers for food shopping to give away, we are better placed to link community members to local meals programs. We are also taking a systemic approach to this growing issue. With other neighbourhood houses, we advocated to City of Melbourne and the state government and utilised the North Melbourne Agencies Collective as a lever towards improved neighbourhood food security.

Social inclusion and community connection

Isolation is one of the most painful forms of disadvantage and if not addressed can lead to distress and hopelessness. At NWMNC, our programs create regular, meaningful contact, leading to friendships, routines and shared purpose.

We have had a particularly strong relationship with African Australian communities that arrived in our neighbourhoods as refugees. This cohort mainly lives in public housing and suffers intergenerational disadvantage.

The most notable example was the Intergenerational Sports & Games project that helped create hope for disaffected community members across two generations. The weekly sessions hosted various activities including soccer, basketball and womens-only dance. Participants reported that the program helped define personal purpose: "The program gave me a sense of belonging I haven't felt before."

Otherwise, we supported African Australian communities in the neighbourhood by:

- sponsoring Young Australian People's powerful Connecting the Dots program
- facilitating a Melbourne-wide women's soccer tournament
- contributing cultural performances to enhance United Through Football soccer tournament
- supporting the Eritrean Community of Victoria's annual conference
- hosting a stall and running a podcast activity at River Nile School's Harmony Day.

Also see Eid Festival in Cultural Belonging & Community Celebrations.

Viva La Seniors: NWMNC offers two weekly Older Adults Exercise programs, monthly Morning Teas, and low-cost bus trips, helping seniors in our community (most living on fixed incomes) to stay active, informed and socially connected.

Guest speakers covered topics on health literacy and on one occasion refugee students from River Nile Learning Centre visited the morning tea program to share board games they had developed in class.

In the past year, the popular Centre Adventure bus trips visited a range of destinations, including visiting the Frida Kahlo exhibition in Bendigo. The group also went dolphin spotting off the Portsea coastline and visited Overnewton Castle in Keilor.

Mandarin Afternoon Tea sessions continued to provide a welcoming space for Mandarin speakers to connect and build community. Attendees enjoyed traditional Chinese tea, sunflower seeds, chestnuts, cakes and fruit, enhancing the cultural experience.

Wellness Through Ages. This intergenerational initiative, which brings together Chinese seniors and international students, was planned and co-designed, with the intention to bring it to fruition next year.

Sing NoW! Community Choir has continued under the stellar leadership of Susie Kelly. One highlight this year was performing live on ABC Radio as part of National Reconciliation Week. The choir is more than music – it is a weekly anchor for residents who might otherwise spend days without meaningful conversation.

The children's choir led by Jenna Stamp ran until April, giving dozens of children the opportunity to find their voice.



Top: Michael Taylor helps kick off the Win a Million! Cents competition outside NWMNC on Errol Street.
Bottom: Seniors Morning Tea catch up with the River Nile School students.

Cultural belonging and community celebration

Community festivals may look like fun (and they are), but they also deliver serious social outcomes: pride, visibility, cross-cultural understanding and a tangible sense of belonging. When people who have felt excluded stand amongst a crowd and are celebrated, the alleviation of distress is noteworthy.

Queensberry Cup – Street Festival & Billycart Race

In just its third year, Queensberry Cup has become the most anticipated annual event for the local community. In 2024, we hit our audience target of 10,000 people.

Leni Furlong took home the silverware, beating older brother Orly who had won the first two years. Earlier, Lord Mayoral candidates raced against each other in a fun competition. In a precursor to Men Out of the Margins, we helped homeless men race a billycart and supported others to volunteer at the event.

Beyond the racetrack, Louise Lavarack's interactive art project in the Arts House laneway was a hit and young people from Ministry of Dance created a vibrant atmosphere.

Dozens of local businesses connected with the broader community and we partnered with Drummond Street's FReeZA program that gave

seven teenagers hands-on experience in events management. More than 50 volunteers kept the day running, from race marshals to activity supervisors.

Multicultural Eid Festival

In partnership with African community leaders and the Victorian Multicultural Commission, our Eid celebration offered local Muslim families a chance to celebrate the end of Ramadan with food, rides, music and interactive activities. The festival welcomed 800 people, almost all public housing residents on low incomes. Multicultural Eid allowed these community members to feel publicly at home in the city. Young volunteers from the Eritrean, Somali, Ethiopian and Tigrin communities supported the event through volunteering.

Anzac Day Ceremony

Presented in partnership with the Australian Legion of Returned Servicemen and Women, this year's annual Anzac Day ceremony featured guest speaker Patrick Ferry from National Archives of Australia. A new ramp allowed for the full participation of Legion President Charlie Elliot (who uses a wheelchair) in stark contrast to the previous year. However, the event was dealt a surprise when the decades-old flagpole disappeared mysteriously. A hastily arranged temporary flagpole meant the event could proceed as planned.



Queensberry Cup winner Leni Furlong zooming down the course on race day.

Report to the community 2024/25

Community voice

North & West Melbourne News

It was a year of transition at the community newspaper now in its 48th year of publication. After more than six years as Editor, Maurice Gaul put the red pen back in its box and retired with Autumn 2025 being his last issue.

Sincere thanks to Maurice for his incredible stewardship of the paper. Under his leadership, the newspaper flourished as the voice of our neighbourhood and took out statewide awards in the process. Maurice wrote stories, including his regular quirky Kryptic Quiz, delivered his share of newspapers each quarter, stayed on for longer than he expected in order to allow NWMNC to plan the paper's future, and left very detailed records and documentation to assist an incoming editor.

We put the call out and the community answered. Two community meetings were held to determine the overall direction of the newspaper. With Liam Heitmann-Ryce-Le Mercier as Editor, Louise Yaxley as Deputy Editor, Tom Linkins managing production alongside elder

Anne Burgi and publisher Ariel Valent, the new News team found its feet and published its first issue in June 2025.

Two writers meetings were held. Most of the previous writers have stayed on and a fresh batch of eager contributors have joined them.

The unsung heroes of the newspaper are the team of 40 distributors who make sure the paper gets into almost 8000 letterboxes each quarter. The News has secured a federal government grant to help create a full digital edition of the newspaper. Watch this space.

Podcast Studio

NWMNC produced a podcast in collaboration with River Nile School as part of their Harmony Day celebrations. As well as being a record of that day, the podcast explored community and the life opportunities that this unique school offers.

Our podcast studio was finally finished. It has hosted training sessions, audio experiments and the production of the Chat Man Friday podcast (see Men Out of the Margins).

Our podcast studio is available for hire, for collaborations and personal project.

Volunteering and student placements

The 150 volunteers supporting our programs are the lifeblood of NWMNC; they amplify our benevolent purpose, and without them, our impact would be severely reduced.

Osman Osman dedicated one day per week as Volunteer Co-ordinator and he has created both a strategic framework for NWMNC's involvement with volunteers and a suite of volunteer role descriptions in the following key areas:

- Front Desk and Administration
- Container Deposit Scheme
- Homework Club
- Community Development
- Events
- Newspaper / Media.

More than 90 volunteers attended NWMNC's National Volunteers Week event at Sokol Melbourne. This event was full of energy, smiles and discussions, cementing a long-lasting positivity between NWMNC and its volunteers. The event was a small gesture of gratitude to those volunteers, who had given their skills, heart

and time to the North and West Melbourne community.

For many, volunteering at NWMNC is a stepping stone towards employment or career development. We are constantly delighted to hear the stories of our successful former (and current) volunteers.

NWMNC is also blessed to have strong partnerships with educational institutions in the local area. These partnerships led to four master's students from Melbourne University undertaking placements at Errol Street. Four social work master's students from RMIT will start early in 2025-26 as well as one high school student from The University High School. These opportunities help these young people to interact more with the community, learn new skills, and develop their careers.

NWMNC also continued our partnership with University of Melbourne PhD candidate Yushan Xing, whose "Tangible Topics" prototype assisted older people to use technology to combat loneliness and isolation. The project has been submitted to the prestigious ACM Transactions on Computer-Human Interaction.



Osman and Ian record an episode of Chat Man Fridays in NWMNC's new podcast studio.

Looking ahead to 2025–26

- In the year ahead we will:
- Deepen Men Out of the Margins by expanding structured workshops and strengthening referrals to volunteering and employment.
 - Refresh seniors programming with co-design, increasing transport support and partnerships to reduce isolation.
 - Sustain Homework Clubs by diversifying funding and volunteer recruitment, keeping access free for families in need.
 - Grow refugee women's learning, building on River Nile partnerships and adding women-led digital mentoring.
 - Launch Chat Man Friday and a digital *North & West Melbourne News*, amplifying voices that are rarely heard.
 - Embed evaluation across programs so we can demonstrate relief, pathways and outcomes clearly and confidently.

TREASURER'S REPORT

The financial year ended 30 June 2025 has been another year of growth for NWMNC, which saw income grow by 2.15 per cent, or just over \$17,060. NWMNC's total income now exceeds \$805,400. While income growth slowed compared to last year's 8.6 per cent rise, income still grew as the loss of income associated with the closure of the Docklands Neighbourhood House and its programs was offset by funding from the Department of Social Services to run a new program targeting disadvantaged and socially isolated men.

NWMNC's core funding from the City of Melbourne and the Victorian Department of Families, Fairness & Housing increased by a modest \$8,105. Following a fall in 2024, income from the Victorian Department of Education grew by just over \$29,600 due to increased delivery of adult education program.

We also saw growth in fees and charges and interest revenue, which totalled just over \$15,000 for the year.

On the expenditure side, direct program costs grew by just under \$18,500 to \$315,285. Administration, occupancy and staffing costs were static for the year reporting a slight overall reduction of \$700.

As a result, NWMNC is reporting a very modest surplus this year of \$80. This is largely in line with the surplus reported last year of \$787. Overall, this is an excellent result given the inflationary pressures and increase in activity experienced over the course of the last 12 months.

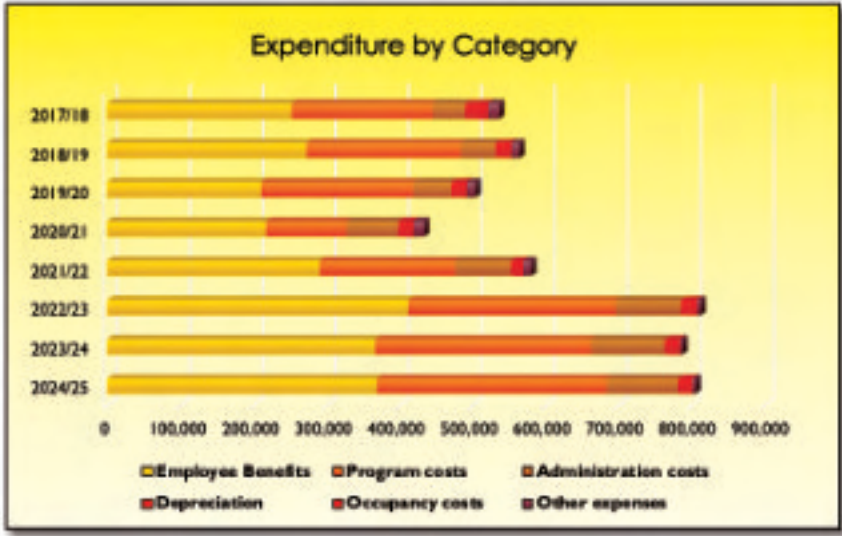
I am pleased to report that NWMNC remains in a sound financial position with net assets totalling just over \$101,000. With cash and liquid

assets totalling over \$213,000 at 30 June this year, NWMNC's Board has no solvency worries, and the organisation continues as going concern. The full set of audited financial statements will be available on our website once they are presented at the Annual General Meeting.

Finally, my thanks to the Chair and the Board for their assistance and diligent oversight of NWMNC's finances and also acknowledge CFO Craig Barry and Director Ariel Valent for their exemplary financial management throughout the year.

Leah Huynh
Treasurer

Summary Financial Data



	2024/25	2023/24	2022/23	2021/22	2020/21	2019/20	2018/19	2017/18	2016/17
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Income	805,426	788,362	725,766	602,475	486,359	556,079	518,988	497,509	518,152
Expenditure	805,345	787,574	812,742	581,274	434,165	504,317	564,688	536,880	507,697
Surplus /(Deficit)	81	788	(86,976)	21,201	52,194	51,762	(45,700)	(39,371)	10,455
Assets	218,291	219,162	254,984	331,647	309,350	205,938	157,640	199,082	262,112
Liabilities	117,243	118,195	154,804	144,491	143,395	92,177	95,641	91,383	115,043
Net Assets / Equity	101,048	100,967	100,180	187,156	165,955	113,761	61,999	107,699	147,069

Courses & Activities (September to December 2025)

North & West Melbourne Neighbourhood Centre (NWMNC) hosts programs and activities for locals.

We try and offer programs that people in our community want to see happen.

Use the QR code to register your interest for forthcoming programs and share your ideas about what you think we should offer. If you are interested in a course but the time doesn't suit, let us know. Maybe you even want to offer something yourself.

Bookings: nwmnc.org.au, 9328 1126, in person at NWMNC,
58 Errol Street, North Melbourne

Minimum enrolments are required for courses to run.



Creative Pursuits

Sing NoW! Community Choir

Join music director Susie Kelly in this inclusive community choir for adults of all ages. The choir sings music from across the world and spanning many decades. No previous experience required.

Thursdays 7 pm – 8.30 pm, from 9 October for 11 weeks
Sokol Melbourne, 497 Queensberry St, North Melbourne
Cost: \$18 (\$11.50 Concession) per session when booking for the term. Casual enrolment \$25 per session, if available. New singers can trial first session for free.

Spanish for Fun

Learn the language spoken by more than 500 million people across the Americas and Spain: Español. A small and friendly conversation-based class that will prepare you for travelling. With Anna Trigos.

Mondays 5.15 pm – 6.15 pm starting 13 October for 10 weeks
NWMNC, 58 Errol Street, North Melbourne
\$175 (\$115 concession)

Beginners' French

If you would like to begin, extend or re-kindle your Francophile tendencies, join native French teacher in a relaxed and supportive environment. Over 10weeks you will build your vocabulary, practice conversations and grasp grammatical structures while exploring French culture and tradition.

Friday 4 pm – 5 pm – Basic Steps I (no experience necessary)
Friday 5 pm – 6 pm – Basic Steps II (a little knowledge)
Starting 10 October for 10 weeks
NWMNC, 58 Errol Street, North Melbourne
\$175 (\$125 concession)

Painting on Canvas

As we get older, most of us stop doing art. Making art has so many benefits: self-expression, focus, mental health. Shyamasree Bose will guide you through the art-making process with acrylic paints on canvas. At the end you'll have your very own masterpiece to take home. Bring something you want to emulate or get inspired by our examples. Open to ages 13 and above.

Monday 22 September 1 pm – 2.30 pm
NWMNC, 58 Errol Street, North Melbourne
\$45 (\$35 concession)

Health & Wellbeing

Pilates

Pilates aims to improve your awareness of how to use your body correctly and strengthen your postural muscles to allow you to support your spine. Pilates classes are graded so it is possible to find the level that suits your ability, experience or limitations. Exercises can be adjusted to suit all ages. Graded classes are taught by Brazilian-trained physiotherapist Fernanda Cury. Classes are relaxed and a great way to meet up with other locals. Tuesdays and Thursdays now in fabulous Quaker Centre.

General/Intro to Pilates

A class that caters for all levels of experience.

Wednesdays 9.15 am – 10.15 am
Legion Hall, George Johnson Lane
(behind North Melbourne Library)

Beginners

The basics are still covered but some knowledge is assumed. Over the term exercises will progress to more challenging options as you build strength and flexibility.

Thursdays 5.30 pm – 6.30 pm
Quaker Centre, 484 William Street, West Melbourne

Intermediate

This class provides the next step up with more challenging exercises. Strengthen your postural muscles and exercise in a manner that is safe for all your joints.

Tuesdays 5.30 pm – 6.30 pm
Quaker Centre, 484 William Street, West Melbourne

Intermediate Plus

Our hardest class is suitable for people with a good level of body awareness and strength. Designed to improve your trunk strength and provide a really stable base for your other sports or daily activities.

Thursdays 6.45 pm – 7.45 pm
Quaker Centre, 484 William Street, West Melbourne

Stretching and Relaxation

This class focuses on flexibility while calming down body and mind in a very relaxing session. Work on building the connection between the mind and body. About 45 minutes of slow movements and muscle release techniques and 15 minutes of mindful relaxation

Tuesdays 6:45 pm – 7:45 pm from 7 October for 11 weeks
Quaker Centre, 484 William Street, West Melbourne

School Holiday Pilates

Thursday 6:45 pm – 7:45 pm
Quaker Centre, 484 William Street, West Melbourne
School holiday pilates will run on 25 September and 2 October

Timetable: Term 4 Health & Wellbeing classes operate on an 11-week term timetable. Term 3 2025 ends 19 September. Term 4 commences on 7 October and concludes 19 December.

Costs: \$21 (\$15.50 concession) per class when booking for full term or remainder of term. Casual enrolments online \$28 per session, if available.

For Seniors

Centre Adventures

Visit places of historical, cultural or horticultural interest and significance. Normally a full-day bus trip, Centre Adventures are a great way to get out beyond the everyday.

4th Tuesday of the month – 28 October (visit to a winery) & 25 November (TBC)
9.30 am – 5 pm. Departing from NWMNC
58 Errol Street, North Melbourne
Cost: \$65 (\$45 Concession), including lunch and morning tea

Also see Seniors Morning Tea in Community Gatherings

Older Adults Exercise

A general strengthening class for those 60+. Includes low impact aerobics, balance and strengthening exercises, using exercise band resistance for all parts of the body. Suitable for people of all abilities.

Mondays 11 am – 12 noon – 11-week term
Starting 6 October for 11 weeks
West Melbourne Baptist Community Centre
4 Miller Street, West Melbourne

Wednesdays 10.30 am – 11.30 am – 11-week term
Starts 8 October for 11 weeks
Legion Hall, George Johnson Lane
(behind North Melbourne Library)

Cost: \$21 (\$15.50 concession) per session when booking for the 11-week term



North & West Melbourne Neighbourhood Centre Inc
58 Errol Street, North Melbourne, Vic 3051
Tel: (03) 9328 1126 Email: admin@centre.org.au Website: www.nwmnc.org.au
Office hours: Monday 10 am to 6 pm, Tuesday to Friday 10 am to 3 pm
Container Deposit Scheme opening hours: Monday 10 am to 6 pm; Tuesday 10 am to 4 pm, Wednesday to Friday 10 am to 3 pm, Saturday 10 am to 2 pm

Career & Life Skills

Money Skills for Life

This 6-week program is designed to give you the essential money skills. From budgeting and saving to making smart spending choices, the course focuses on simple, practical guidance. It will help you learn the basics and provide awareness to improve your money habits.

Wednesdays 10 am – 12 pm
29 October – 3 December (6 weeks)
NWMNC, 58 Errol St, North Melbourne
FREE. Bookings essential.

Introduction to Journalism

Do you read the news and wonder how it gets done? Experienced ABC journalist Louise Yaxley will share her expertise. The course covers how to identify a potential story, interview techniques, research skills, writing styles, fact checking and digital platforms. Graduates will have the opportunity to see their work published in *North & West Melbourne News*.

Tuesdays 6.15 pm – 9 pm (11, 18 & 25 November, 2 December)
NWMNC, 58 Errol Street North Melbourne
\$60 (\$45 concession)

Your Career: The Next Steps



Career coach and human resources executive Helena Steel presents a workshop to plan your next career transition. This workshop re-affirms who you are, and how your abilities and preferences align with current labour market trends. The outcome allows you to "Rescue your Resume and CV" and stand out uniquely in a swamp of AI job applications.

Saturday 8 November, 9.30 am – 2.30 pm
NWMNC, 58 Errol Street, North Melbourne
\$110 (\$70 concession), including light refreshments

School Holiday Program

Podcasting for Kids

This is an exciting, hands-on workshop at our very own studio at 58 Errol Street. Presented by Ralph Barba from Live FM, this engaging session will teach kids how to come up with ideas, find information, tell compelling stories, present and interview with confidence, edit audio and share their podcast with the world. It's a fantastic opportunity for young voices to develop new skills, build confidence and have fun while creating their very own podcast pilot. For ages 8 to 12.

Tuesday 30 September, 10 am to 3 pm (30 minute lunch break)
NWMNC, 58 Errol Street, North Melbourne
\$120 (\$100 concession)

Free Activities this School Holiday

Join us these school holidays for free kids' activities, including a fun Origami Workshop and a free movie screening that's perfect for children aged 5 to 12 years. Kids under 7 must be accompanied by an adult. Limited spots. Bookings essential.

Movie screenings on Thursdays, 25 September and 2 October
10 am – 12 pm

Origami workshop on Monday 29 September and
Friday 3 October 10 am – 12 pm
58 Errol Street, North Melbourne
FREE. Bookings essential.

Also see 'Painting on Canvas' in Creative Pursuits.

Digital Skills

Computers: Digital Essentials

Make your computer work for you. Become more comfortable engaging in the digital world. This friendly course will help you maximise your productivity and minimise frustration. With tech-wiz Anastacia Beasley.

Fridays 10 am – 12.30 pm (from 10 October for 10 weeks)
NWMNC, 58 Errol Street, North Melbourne
Cost: \$65 (\$50 Concession)



Making Your Phone Work for You

Who said phones were made for calling people every now and then? Modern 'smartphones' are mobile computers, used for all matter of activities. This course covers setting up your phone, choosing apps, using the cloud and phone security. With tech-wiz Anastacia Beasley.

Fridays 1 pm – 3 pm (starting 10 October for 10 weeks)
NWMNC, 58 Errol St, North Melbourne
\$65 (\$50 concession)

Introduction to Artificial Intelligence

Scientists have been building artificial intelligence since the 50s, and it has come a long way! Using faster computers and more online information, today's tech can generate images, music, and lifelike speech. Some say it will make our lives so much easier, but others say it is the beginning of the end of the world. In this session Anastasia Beasley will introduce the concepts and help you understand how you can use AI in your professional and personal lives. If you are curious, overwhelmed or scared, this is a great place to start.

Saturday 22 November, 10.30 am – 12 pm
NWMNC, 58 Errol Street North Melbourne
FREE. Bookings essential.

For Kids and Young People

Rainbow Art Class

Experienced art teacher Shyamasree Bose will guide children in a colourful exploration of drawing and painting, using watercolour, acrylic, oil pastels, mixed media and pencils. Suitable for creative kids aged 4 to 12.

Tuesdays 4 pm – 5 pm;
5 pm – 6 pm
(starting 7 October for 11 weeks)
\$12 (\$10 concession) when booking for term (\$15 casual if available)

Home Away from Homework Club

Friendly and inclusive, students come to complete their homework (or our extra material) with the assistance of tutors. There are also games, and a nutritious snack and drink provided. For children in Grades 3 to Year 9.

8 October to 17 December for 11 weeks
Wednesdays 3.30 pm – 5 pm
NWMNC, 58 Errol St, North Melbourne (grades 4 to 6)
Hotham Room, North Melbourne Library, 66 Errol Street,
North Melbourne (grades 7 to 10)
Wednesdays 4 pm – 5.30 pm
North Melbourne Language & Learning,
North Melbourne (grades 4 to 8)
Venue to be advised

\$66 for 11 weeks. Free for concession card holders.

Community Gatherings

Seniors' Morning Tea

Join this group of multicultural seniors for an informal chat over morning tea – a place where friendships can flourish. Sometimes with a guest speaker.

First Tuesday of the month 10 am – 11.30 am (7 October, 2 December)
NWMNC, 58 Errol Street, North Melbourne
Cost: \$5

Men's Afternoon Tea

A casual get-together for some food and a chat with other men from the neighbourhood. New people encouraged. **FREE**

Fortnightly Thursdays (9 & 23 October, 6 & 20 November, 4 & 18 December)
2.30 pm – 4 pm
NWMNC, 58 Errol Street, North Melbourne

Monthly Community Dinner

Delicious food (home-cooked entree, mains and desserts) and good company.

First Sunday of each month, 5.30 pm – 7.30 pm
West Melbourne Baptist Community Centre,
4 Miller Street, West Melbourne
\$10 (under 12s free) RSVP 0403 175 200

Countdown to Queensberry Cup

The Queensberry Cup is almost here, happening Saturday 18 October (see pages 14 to 15 for details)! Want to be part of the excitement and help bring the event to life? Join us for one or more of our fun prep sessions! Make bunting, signs, decorations and more with the team. Perfect for a creative afternoon out.

Tuesdays (16 September, 7 & 14 October)
3.30 pm – 6.30 pm
Hotham Room at North Melbourne Library, 66 Errol Street,
North Melbourne
FREE. Bookings essential.

Dungeons & Dragons

Learn the ropes of Dungeons & Dragons – a tabletop game that combines teamwork, problem solving and imagination. The session will be led by a local with years of D&D experience. All materials and characters will be provided, just come prepared for adventure. This session is designed for absolute beginners.

Friday 24 October, 6.15 pm – 9.30 pm
NWMNC, 58 Errol St, North Melbourne
FREE. Bookings essential.

Afternoon Tea (Mandarin speakers)

Join this group of Mandarin speakers for an informal chat over afternoon tea – a place where friendships can flourish. Tea and light refreshments will be provided. Facilitated by a Mandarin speaker. **FREE**

Fortnightly Wednesdays (8 & 22 October, 5 & 19 November, 3 & 17 December)
2 pm – 3 pm
NWMNC, 58 Errol Street, North Melbourne

每两周的星期三
**日期: **10月8日、22日, 11月5日、19日, 12月3日、17日
**时间: **下午2点至3点
**地点: **NWMNC, 埃罗尔街58号, 北墨尔本

We don't want cost to be a barrier to participation. Those with the means are encouraged to pay a bit more so that others can also participate. If you would like to take advantage of our flexible pricing policy, contact the North & West Melbourne Neighbourhood Centre.

Community panel gets a voice – but not the final choice

Many readers would be aware that last year the City of Melbourne Council explored the opportunity to turn the car park on Victoria Street, near Errol Street, into affordable housing. Affordable housing is a broad term that includes public housing, community housing and affordable rental housing.

The local community was split on the idea. On one hand, there is an obvious need for more affordable housing and support for those who lack a secure place to call home. On the other, some had concerns about where cars would park and the potential issues of integrating into the community a group of new residents who may have special needs.

When Council voted in August 2024 to lease 325-341 Victoria Street, West Melbourne, to a community housing provider for the purpose of affordable housing, they also decided to provide opportunities for residents and businesses to inform the next steps of the project.

I have been lucky enough to have been a part of this process. After submitting an application last year, I was invited to join a Project Reference Group (PRG). It's a pretty uninspired name, but the work of the PRG was anything but.

Back in February, for three consecutive Monday evenings, the 13 PRG members met at West Melbourne Baptist Community Centre. Between us, we represented businesses, community services and residents – including some living very close to the site in question.

None of us knew who else would be on the PRG

FROM THE CENTRE DIRECTOR Ariel Valent



until the first session: the introductions revealed some residents who had lived in the area for more than 40 years, as well as some relative newcomers.

Our task, it was explained, was to develop a set of Community Assessment Principles. Typically with developments like this, it's all about planning controls, architectural drawings and organisational reputation. But for 325-341 Victoria Street, community housing providers would also need to demonstrate how their proposals respond to these Community Assessment Principles.

It didn't take long for disagreement to arise. There were diverse opinions amongst the group, which showed the PRG was representative of the community. We were all keen to know who our new neighbours would be.

Over three weeks, we had a number of guest presenters, including people with lived

experience of homelessness; City of Melbourne staff with expertise in parking, transport and design; and a representative from the Community Housing Industry Association of Victoria.

By the third session, we had our work cut out for us. Working in small groups on different themes, we did our best to put into words those things we wanted to make sure would be addressed in the development.

Over some catering from Errol's, we all got to say which principles were on- or off-track. Those without overall support were sent back for re-drafting, or scrapping altogether.

I'm sworn to secrecy about the details of the Community Assessment Principles, but I'm pleased to report that this diverse group of passionate locals came to shared agreement on issues such as:

- how to manage negative impacts of

- construction
- communication between the housing provider and the local community
- integration of greening
- maximising community connection with the new residents.

After the principles were finalised, there was silence for months. Then, in early August, each member of the PRG was able to assess the community housing developer bids against the Community Assessment Principles.

This time there were no group dynamics to manage: just a wad of paper, an iPad to record comments and some Smarties to keep up the blood sugar levels.

It was explained that this individual assessment was necessary to maintain probity. As part of that process, the names of the organisations behind each of the bids were kept hidden and other identifying information was redacted.

The PRG did come together one more time to discuss our aggregated scores. It was explained that our assessments would contribute to the overall evaluation of the proposals, with more traditional criteria making up the balance.

Kudos to City of Melbourne for creating this innovative process, through which community can influence what happens in our neighbourhood. As one of the PRG members pointed out, this development is likely to be there for 200 years!

Council will provide a further update on this project in late 2025.



Help celebrate 50 years of community action

Kate Ritchie

In 1976, the North Melbourne Neighbourhood Centre – now known as the North & West Melbourne Neighbourhood Centre, Inc. (NWMNC) – was founded at the North Melbourne Town Hall before moving to its current home at 58 Errol Street. Next year marks 50 years of service.

We are putting out a call for help to assist us make 2026 a memorable celebration. We'd like you to share stories, reflections, and memories of your involvement or interaction with the Centre over the past 50 years.

Where were you then? Were you in our Homework Club? Did you volunteer and start off your career at NWMNC? Have you been writing for

the News? We want to hear from YOU!

NWMNC is planning to host a gala celebratory dinner early in 2026, with supporting activities to bring the community together to reflect on our history, our achievements and honour those who have helped along the way.

We have an opportunity for you to join our Organising Committee to help shape our festivities. And, if you know someone who should be recognised and included in our celebrations, please let us know.

Festivals like Spring Fling, and now Queensberry Cup in October every year, bring the community together in a colourful, multicultural celebration of North and West Melbourne. Whether it is ANZAC Day or the Eid Festival, the Centre provides the impetus to get together and enjoy our

community.

If singing is your thing, Sing NoW! community choir has been making music since around 2000; health and fitness classes also abound. Young or old, NWMNC has a program for you!

Our newspaper, the *North & West Melbourne News*, has been published since 1978 and is entirely volunteer run. How many budding journalists have kicked off their careers here?

Kate Ritchie is NWMNC Board Secretary.

Want to know more?

We welcome suggestions, ideas, photos and reflections, and offers of help or sponsorship for the 50-year celebrations. Contact: Kate Ritchie, Secretary, NWMNC Board: kater@centre.org.au

Spring brings team growth

Louise Yaxley

This second issue from the new Editorial Team gives you a spring-flavoured taste of our local community – from choirs and colourful quilts to history and insights into local businesses and prominent people.

Our stories are from a growing team of keen writers, including a contribution from 12-year-old Kevin from North Melbourne Primary.

We enjoy trying to bring you the essence of North and West Melbourne. It is a joy to keep discovering how much happens in this area and to publish the highlights.

Our team is always considering what else our quarterly paper should cover. If there is something we are missing, or someone with a story we should report – let us know. Our newspaper has been going since 1978 and we love shepherding it into next phase.

Louise Yaxley is Deputy Editor of the News.

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 Neighbourhood Centre in Errol Street.

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Saturday 8:30AM – 12:30PM
Sunday Closed

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- Dr. Magda Wojtasiak
- Dr. Edward Vergara
- Dr. Sarah Humphry
- Dr. Madhavi Thotadur
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- Dr. Anthea Lillywhite
- Dr. Paul Grinzi
- Dr. Kieran Garbutcheon-Singh
- Dr. Levente Varga
- Dr. Alistair Don
- Dr. Ranya Kumar



The *North & West Melbourne News* is a quarterly publication produced by volunteers. Readers' contributions and letters are welcomed. Where relevant the *News* may seek alternative opinions in the interests of balance. Contributors' opinions are their own and the *News* takes no responsibility for them. We reserve the right to edit or omit articles considered unsuitable or when space is limited. Send articles by email to editorial@centre.org.au. Please send photographs of suitable resolution for reproduction as graphic files with the article.

Finance
The *News* is a program of the North & West Melbourne Neighbourhood Centre, 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 distribution
The *News* is distributed free throughout North and West Melbourne. Get in touch if you know of anyone not receiving their copy. Copies are available from the North & West Melbourne Neighbourhood Centre, North Melbourne Library and online at www.nwmnc.org.au. Subscriptions are \$20 per year (four issues) sent to anywhere in Australia.

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

Editor: Liam Heitmann-Ryce-LeMercier
Deputy editor: Louise Yaxley
Production: Tom Linkins and Anne Burgi
Advertising: Janet Graham and Kevin Shi
Intern: Morgan Reddick
Distribution: Tim Cremean
Illustrator: Ed Zhao
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Publisher: Ariel Valent
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5 Jones Road, Morwell 3844



Annual General Meeting Notification

The 49th Annual General Meeting of North & West Melbourne Neighbourhood Centre is soon.

Monday 29 September 2025
6.30 pm
River Nile School
Level 3, 117 Capel Street
North Melbourne
Refreshments will be provided

All members of NWMNC are welcome.
The Annual Report is printed on pages 20-23.
Use the QR code to RSVP or phone 9328 1126.
Nominations to join the Committee are now open. Please contact Chair Kay Oke kayo@centre.org.au for more information.



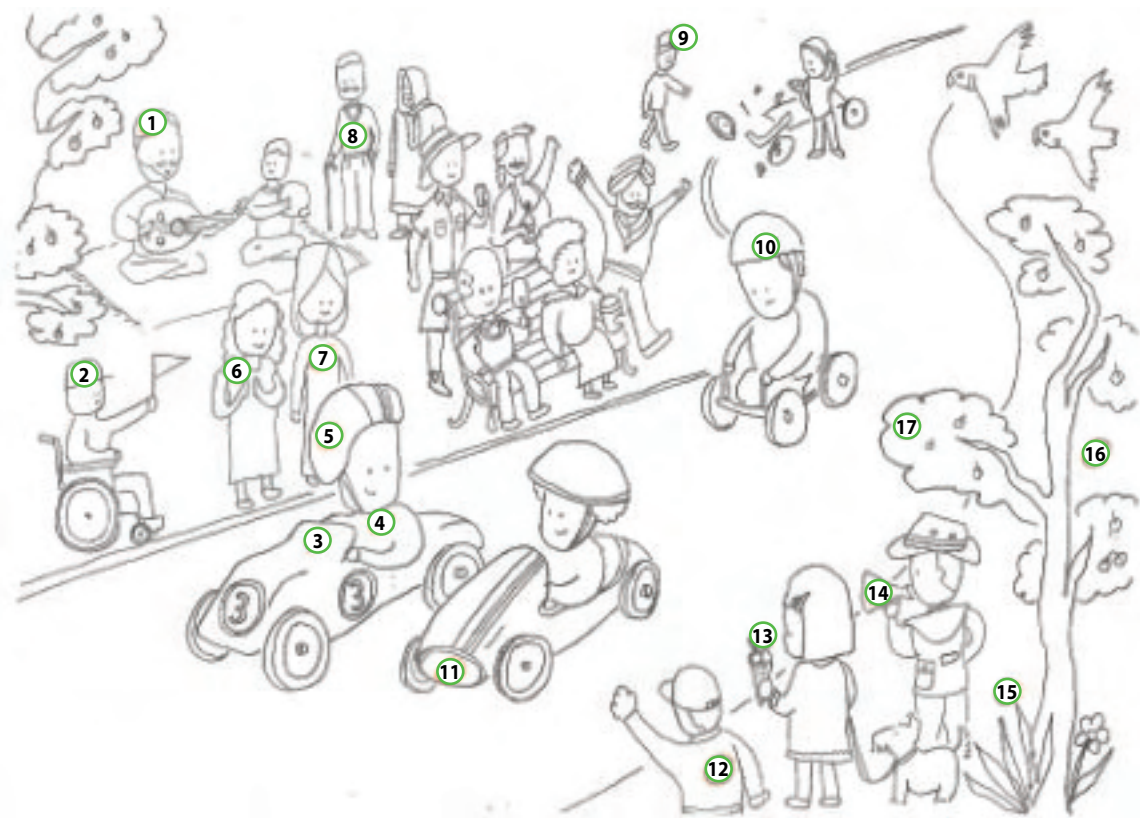
Sustainability Festival at the University of Melbourne

Join us at the University of Melbourne's Sustainability Festival, where sustainable businesses and services present innovative ways to bring mindful practices into everyday life. Discover eco-friendly products, take part in interactive displays, hear inspiring stories, and enjoy complimentary food.

Tuesday 16 September 2025
2.00 pm
Market Hall at 761 Swanston St, Parkville
Organiser: Smart Consumers Student Club



Spot the Difference (page 6) answers



Call to remember Eades Place

Do you have a personal connection to Eades Place or memories of attending the West Melbourne State School on King Street?
We're gathering oral histories and written stories for a social history book celebrating the people and lives of Eades Place – to be published later this year.

This community project is proudly supported by the City of Melbourne and the North and West Melbourne Association. If you have a story to share or would like to volunteer your voice, please get in touch before 28 September by email to stephenahatcher@hotmail.com. Help us bring local history to life!

Sunday night laughs at Club Voltaire

Come along to Sunday Night Comedy where, each week, Club Voltaire showcases a fresh lineup of some of Melbourne's best stand-up comedians. Enjoy jokes from comics of the Melbourne International Comedy Festival, Edinburgh Fringe Festival and Australia Raw Comedy Finals alongside interstate acts, local legends and future stars of comedy.

Every Sunday night for only \$10
7 pm to 9 pm
14 Raglan Street, North Melbourne

\$100

POWER SAVING BONUS

FOR ELIGIBLE CONCESSION CARD HOLDERS

CALL NWMNC 03 93281126 TO BOOK AN APPOINTMENT

NWMN Advertisement Sizes & Rates

Size	Colour	Mono
Full page (24 cm wide x 34 cm high)	\$1,885.00	\$1,640.00
Half page (24 cm wide x 17 cm high or 12 cm wide x 34 cm high)	\$945.00	\$825.00
One-third page (24 cm wide x 12 cm high)	\$685.00	\$600.00
One-quarter page (24 cm wide x 8.5 cm high or 12 cm wide x 17 cm high)	\$510.00	\$435.00
One-eighth page (12 cm wide x 8.5 cm high)	\$260.00	\$220.00
One-16th page (12 cm wide x 4 cm high)	\$135.00	\$120.00
Business card (in Services Directory) (9 cm wide x 5.5 cm high)	\$120.00	\$100.00

- Prices inclusive of GST
- Book a repeat advertisement for four issues for a 20% discount, total amount payable at time of booking.
- 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.
- For information and bookings, email: advertising@centre.org.au

Send contributions, letters and feedback to:

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

Summer 2025
Copy deadline: Friday 14 November
Publication date: Friday 12 December



Rumeli Dey

Spring breathes fresh life into our streets, inviting us to step outside, and unfurls its brightest colours across our neighbourhood. What makes North and West Melbourne so special during spring?

For Gail Jackson (left), who has lived in West Melbourne for 16 years, spring is as much a feeling as a sight. “There’s lots of daffodils and jonquils; all the bulbs coming out,” she says of the season’s arrival.

After winter’s quiet, the parks and footpaths fill up again. Gail loves heading down to Flagstaff Gardens to find a sunny bench and watch the world go by. She keeps an eye out for the purple haze of jacaranda, hanging bougainvillea and the magnolia blooms.

Whether it’s browsing the market for new plants or dusting off outdoor furniture for a barbecue, there’s a shared anticipation for the longer, sunnier days.

The season also find its way into local cafes. For John (left), 25-year-old owner of Palette on Queensberry Street, spring shows up in his customers’ moods and habits. “I wanted a space where everyone could come by and enjoy, regardless of background,” he said.

Gentle sunlight on the seating by the arched doorway creates a cozy spot for a peaceful morning.

By day, the cafe buzzes with office workers and commuters; by night, it becomes a warm, alcohol-free space for students and creatives to study and chat.

“Restaurants are where you eat food. Cafes are spaces where people feel human,” John says. Spring brings lighter menus with fresh greens, seasonal fruits and smoothies created with fresh local produce.



For Sarah (above), a parent of four, the seasonal change is instantly noticeable. “There are more people out and about, reading books or catching up with friends; more people eating outside on Errol Street,” she says. “Spring has a certain smell. It’s light and fresh.”

Her weekends are spent outdoors with family bike rides and park visits. Gardiner Reserve is her favourite. “It’s the best around North Melbourne,” she attests. “There’s a great playground where I can keep an eye on the kids and big shady spots for the adults to relax.”

Across North Melbourne, spring unfolds not just in petals and sunshine but in the spaces and gestures that connect us. Whether it’s a flower on the verge, picnics at Gardiner Reserve or a coffee poured with care, these simple shared moments make our neighbourhood bloom.

Rumeli Dey is a new writer for the News.

