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A landmark moment for *Alma*

WORDS BY *Meg Hill*
PHOTOGRAPHY BY *John Tadigiri*
MARITIME

After 10 years of fundraising and restoration work, the historic tall ship *Alma Doepel* is set to re-enter the water by the end of the year.

Restoration director Peter Harris said the project had just reached a major milestone, with *Docklands News* photographer John Tadigiri capturing the moment the last plank was placed on the boat on May 21.

"We've had a major milestone reached with the last plank of around 300 was nailed in place and we had the gold nail used, which is a tradition," Mr Harris said.

"We plan to relaunch it by the end of the year. We're past the talking about it stage and we're in the countdown stage."

Mr Harris said there were a few more stages to go in the project.

"Right now, we're levelling the outside of the hull with planers and sanders, it sounds a bit like disturbing a beehive," he said.

"Our volunteers are busy drilling in the last of the timber plugs for holes where old nails have been pulled out of the wood. There are around 6000 of them and we've finished about 5500."

He said that one volunteer had been working from home to facilitate social distancing while making the timber plugs.

"We think that will be finished by the end of this month and it's looking absolutely amazing," he said.

"We'll be caulking between the planks next month and that will take three months. Then we paint, fit the propeller shaft and the runners and we plan to relaunch by the end of this year."

"All of the masts and the rigging will go back on, it's all in the shed ready to go on."

Mr Harris also said that Development Victoria had extended the *Alma's* lease at North Wharf in Docklands, which was a huge relief.

Mr Harris said he had been with the ship in Docklands for 35 years. The last time a crew did training on the ship was in 1999 when it needed work done and the years since then have been a battle to have the historic ship restored.

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Residents speak out against "dodgy" Docklands planning

A long-term NewQuay resident has led a chorus of locals calling for a meeting with Minister for Planning Richard Wynne to put an end to "deceptive" planning processes in Docklands.

WORDS BY *Meg Hill and Sean Car*
PLANNING

It comes after local residents, as well as some City of Melbourne councillors, objected to Minister Wynne's recent decision to carve Docklands out of new legislation aimed at protecting inner-city parks from overshadowing, as reported in *Docklands News*.

While Docklands' development has never been short of critics, the nearing completion of developer MAB Corporation's NewQuay precinct has seen one early buyer raise his frustration with what he described as a "windswept failure".

John Langton-Bunker lives in a three-storey town house built in NewQuay Promenade in 2012. He has claimed that NewQuay's development has little resemblance to the vision outlined when he bought in.

"I purchased this home on the understanding that North Docklands was to have good urban design to make it liveable for residents," Mr Langton-Bunker wrote in an open letter to the Minister for Planning last month.

"That urban design was to be provided by low-rise residential homes along NewQuay Promenade through to the Bolte Bridge. Instead long-term residents have been ignored in the planning process."

Mr Langton-Bunker claimed that an original plan for mostly low-rise street fronting buildings had been replaced by "soulless" and "alienating" streets with a waterfront dominated by "obscene high-rises".

Of particular concern was MAB's future NewQuay West development

– currently the last vacant piece of NewQuay land – which earmarks five towers and a linear park connecting Central Park to Ron Barassi Snr Park.

While the master plan for NewQuay West was approved by the Minister for Planning and endorsed by the City of Melbourne back in 2018, the delegation of NewQuay residents said they wished to "amicably negotiate" an acceptable resolution.

Mr Langton-Bunker said MAB's plans for the site would leave his townhouse, along with 35 others, "bookended" between the 41-storey Marina complex and the NewQuay West site. He also accused the state government of "gifting" land adjacent to Ron Barassi Snr Park to the AFL for its new headquarters "without concern, consideration or reference" to owners.

But a spokesperson for Richard Wynne said that there was no obligation to notify and review applications within the Docklands zone.

"Questions regarding strategic planning for Docklands are best directed at the City of Melbourne or Development Victoria," the spokesperson said. "The planning system is designed to strike the right balance between density, public open space and a thriving construction industry in inner-city Melbourne."

MAB Corporation, which bought the rights to develop the NewQuay parcel of Docklands in the mid-1990s, said that although amendments had been made to the NewQuay Development Plan, they had been misrepresented.

MAB chief operating officer David Hall told *Docklands News* that there

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A true champion of Docklands passes

WORDS BY *Sean Rogasch*

OBITUARY

Summing up the life of Peter Crowley in a 400-word column is a bit similar to decoding one of the man's famed long-winded emails; almost impossible.

Thankfully, there are so many locals who knew him and will understand.

Sadly, we lost Peter last month, but so much of his work lives on.

He started his affinity with Docklands as a Vic Urban staff member and by the time he left, he had fully embraced the community, and the community had embraced him. So much so, he made many visits back to the area long after his work commitments compelled him to.

His most lasting legacy in Docklands are perhaps these very pages.

Among his many achievements while at Vic Urban, Peter founded the *Docklands News* as a way to help build the then embryonic community of people calling Docklands home. His understanding of what made a community tick, his passion for storytelling and that razor-sharp wit quickly built a strong following. For those of us who were lucky enough to know him personally, the paper's long-lasting success is hardly surprising.

He was outrageously funny, although this writer will admit to not always understanding the joke. On the odd occasion this occurred it was always because of some obscure knowledge you didn't possess and not a flaw in the gag.

And of obscure knowledge, Peter was king.

Random, often useless but never dull, the man was FULL of facts. General knowledge poured out of his every utterance and you felt richer for every conversation.

The possession of and pleasure in passing on these facts could only be possible because of the way he lived his life, fully committed to whatever he was doing.

He was an action man and this wasn't confined to his work. Peter personally built



▲ Peter Crowley in the Docklands News office in 2012.

his family a house, broke bones on adventure holidays and even allowed his son's dishevelled university mates to lodge semi-permanently in his home.

One particular friend was known to stay so often, the family were forced to buy a spare bed. And while that would be more than enough generosity towards one of your son's mates for most people, it wasn't for Peter.

The spare bed's occupant got his professional career started thanks to Peter coordinating an introduction to then editor of the *Docklands News* (DN) Shane Scanlan. He and Shane

went on to establish DN's sister publication, the *Southbank Local News*, further increasing Peter's impact on the local media landscape.

This writer – that once dishevelled spare bed occupant – will always be grateful for the influence Peter had on my professional career, but far more so for the way he embraced me personally. It's been 13 years since sleeping in that spare bed, yet every catch up and dinner party with the Crowley's since, I'm still made to feel like a family member.

I, among many in Docklands, will miss him dearly ●

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▲ The Alma Doepel restoration team celebrate the final plank at North Wharf last month. Photo: John Tadigiri.

A landmark moment for *Alma*

Continued from page 1

The *Alma* was built in 1903 and was first used to carry timber to New Zealand from northern New South Wales. By 1916 she was transporting jam. That year is also the year of the earliest record of the ship entering the Yarra River.

Later, she was taken over by the Australian Army in the Second World War.

Help with the restoration came from different directions.

The ship carried some of the timber that was used in an old wharf in Docklands, now demolished to make way for a Mirvac development.

That timber was then donated by Development Victoria to the restoration project, and some of it is now part of the ship.

A government grant also provided the project with the ability to hire a curator, a historian and a designer to put together an exhibition on the ship at the restoration sheds ●



Information and donations:
almadoepel.com.au

Docklands “should rebound”, says Property Council

WORDS BY *David Schout*
PROPERTY

A “strong-performing” commercial property sector in Docklands “should rebound” from the difficulties posed by COVID-19, the Property Council of Australia’s Victorian director has said.

Cressida Wall said that while the exact nature of future challenges were yet to be seen, Docklands was well positioned to bounce back.

Docklands News last month reported the significant impact of the pandemic on the residential property market, in particular on short-stay operators.

One local real estate director described the current climate as “100 per cent completely unprecedented” as the vacancy rate shot up to 9.1 per cent in April - three times the level at the same time in 2019 according to SQM Research.

But Ms Wall said that it was a different case with the commercial sector.

“All businesses, including commercial leasing, are facing challenges as a result of COVID-19 but we have strong fundamentals in Melbourne, including Docklands,” Ms Wall said.

“Docklands has experienced several years of strong performance. While the challenges ahead are yet to be seen, as a precinct, Docklands has a strong value proposition - it is located close to a transport hub, boasts retail and social amenity and historically has been well-priced in comparison to other markets such as Sydney.”

Prior to the COVID-19 shutdowns, Melbourne’s commercial property market had the lowest vacancy rate in Australia, and the lowest in the Victorian history according to the Property Council.

Former Labor adviser Wall, who replaced Lord Mayor Sally Capp as the Property Council’s Victorian director in 2018, said as people began to return to work, it was incumbent on owners to ensure this was done properly.

“Many commercial landlords have gone above and beyond to support and maintain their tenants through this crisis. Effort now turns to how to commercial office owners support tenants and their workers as they plan for a safe return to work.”

Docklands Chamber of Commerce (DCC) president Johanna Maxwell said prior to COVID-19, commercial space in Docklands had shown strong growth, and said they too expected a rebound.

“Our cafes and restaurants have been impacted negatively during this time and with workers continuing to work from home where possible, the reduced foot traffic will continue to impact [the area],” she said.

“We continue to see a re-emerging of business from within our precinct. Our business leaders have been creative and we are confident that this will continue.”

Mrs Maxwell echoed sentiments about working together in the coming months.

“There are still tough times ahead for business and community while we return to the new normal. We will continue to encourage landlords to work with their tenants by supporting them through this time. City of Melbourne have also continued to support via rental relief, fees and the grants that have been made available. Planning for a safe return to work for all workers is a high priority and while we are early in this process, it is clear that social distancing is going to be part of the long term future.”

The Property Council’s office market report is due to be released in August ●



David Schout
JOURNALIST
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RESIDENTS' DELEGATES REQUEST MEETING WITH MINISTER

24 May 2020. Dear The Hon. Richard Wynne

This is to request a meeting with a delegation representing West New Quay property owners by 30 June 2020. This delegation wishes to negotiate amicably an acceptable resolution to the gift of land to the AFL for its head office and MAB's proposal to build five mixed-use high-rise buildings next to their properties. The City of Melbourne has endorsed MAB's proposal and the State has proposed the gift of land to the AFL, without concern, consideration or reference to these owners.

These small town house property owners (20 per cent residents and 80 per cent investors) are galvanised in their opposition. They purchased these properties on the written representations made by a developer engaged in its trade and commerce. Those representations were misleading. Should MAB proceed with these high-rise developments the representations made will be viewed as misleading or deceptive and from which these property owners will suffer loss and damage.

The Crown Land gifted to the AFL will be reviewed under the *Crown Land (Reserves) Act 1978*, the *Land Act 1958*, the *Heritage Rivers Act 1992* and *Native Titles Act 1993* in the context of a breach of any or all of these statutes.

A community of families and residents cannot develop in Docklands if the State's express purpose is to have built high-rises to encourage Asian investments in flats for itinerant and small business renters and for the benefit of big business and powerful lobby groups.

The criticism of Docklands has been ongoing for years and the MAB proposal will exacerbate these valid condemnations:

1. The former Lord Mayor Robert Doyle (ignoring personal issues) saw Docklands as lacking any form of "social glue";
2. Neil Mitchell (*The Age*) declared Docklands as a planning "dud";
3. VicUrban's David Young acknowledged that Harbour Esplanade "doesn't stack up";
4. Kim Dovey, professor of architecture and design University of Melbourne, claimed Docklands was "so badly done" that it required a "major rethink"; and
5. George Savvides, CEO Medibank, criticised the area's lack of soul and amenity.

The delegation wishes to discuss a professional solution that will offset these issues. It understands that some reasonable high-rise can be built. It wishes, however, that MAB, Andrew Buxton and Guy Pahor adhere to their representations made in writing prior to the group purchasing our properties. Indeed, it was upon those representations that those purchases were made.

Michael Buxton's statement "Success is what you leave the world" could be your epitaph for an Australian community of families living long-term in Docklands. This would be in the form of negotiating a community and an environmentally friendly suburb. That suburb would also be consistent with Andrew Buxton's written representations regarding "The Avenues".

The alternative is to leave the world with the remembrance - supported developers doing what they do best making huge profits in Docklands. Surely a long-term successful family environment and community is a more lasting tribute than leaving behind an ethos that has as its sole objective of the receipt of massive ROIs. This short-term return does have a cost. It is paid for in the long term in Docklands through a lack of a community spirit, a lack of integrity and truth. These costs will leave Docklands dysfunctional, dirty and derelict of values and of positive human interaction.

John E Langton-Bunker

"Provide Support" email: bonleigh@hitechnology.net.au



IS WEST NEWQUAY TOXIC? PFAS FEAR

Dr Wilkinson EPA CEO was advised on April 28 that contractors had confirmed in 2019 that chemicals and contaminants were at the MAB West NewQuay site. "Hazard" signs were put up but removed soon thereafter.

Residents requested that the CEO publish the results of the toxicity analysis of the site in the interests of public health. No such site analysis was published.

That contamination is at the confluence of the Yarra and Moonee Ponds Creek is consistent with the site's history over 185 years.

In 1835, the creek was an industrial drain and transport corridor and was highly polluted. The City confirmed that for 150 years the creek was an industrial drain.

The site had warehouses 20-21 for over 140 years where loading, unloading and storage of flammable and toxic cargoes occurred.

In 1883, the location was a "disgrace to the name of civilisation". It was "a positive menace to the health of those residing in the vicinity," with solid loads of filthy stuff up to six feet deep.

In the 1980s the creek was a drain along the Tullamarine Freeway near Melbourne Airport.

The Airport confirmed that the creek was contaminated by toxic PFAS. The PFAS being carried downstream by the creek would have been deposited at this confluence site.

The creek (*The Age* said) was "arguably the most abused tributary of the Yarra River, and part of the true underside of Melbourne" and that noxious industries, sewerage and storm water drainage all flowed to the confluence of the Yarra and the creek.

The huge constructions envisaged by MAB & the AFL will require massive and deep piling and ground disturbance in the contaminated Yarra bank and harbour bed. Such construction works may well release toxins including possibly PFAS held in the polluted land. The release of such toxins will impact the health of residents who like us live within five metres of the development.

If no EPA study has been undertaken (refer to E&Y's indictment of EPA) then to protect their health and that of Victorians, the residents require the EPA to undertake such a toxicity study of the site given its dark history.

We as residents, living in such close proximity to this site, wish our voices to be heard and the EPA to protect us from the release of in-ground toxins and carcinogens.



Original plan low rise on foreshore

致 维多利亚州规划厅厅长理查德·韦恩 (Richard Wynne) 先生

尊敬的厅长,

关于: MAB开发公司在滨海港区西纽基海滨区 (West NewQuay Docklands) 高层开发项目的投诉

这是一份针对MAB开发公司在West NewQuay海滨长廊的高层建筑开发项目作出的正式投诉。这些开发项目包括一个120米高, 36层的开发项目, 距离我们三层的联排别墅和房屋只有五米。

对于我们滨海港区长期居民的绝望状况, 我请求您对我提出的投诉给予一个书面答复。尤其是MBA在West NewQuay海滨长廊开发项目中的五个高达120米的高层建筑, 这些高层建筑具有以下令人无法接受的规划后果:

1. 这些高层建筑将与目前的三层联排别墅只相距五米;
2. 这些高层建筑的“建筑红线”相距三层联排别墅前的建筑线只有四米;
3. 目前的36栋联排别墅将处在41层的Marina大楼和MAB开发项目的高层建筑之间, 正好处在这大型高层公寓之间造成的风涡之中;
4. 由于地下水位的限制而不可能建造地下车库, 这些高层建筑将没有足够的停车位;
5. 未来租户的大量增加将导致更严重的交通拥堵;
6. 这些高层公寓中的大多数租户将主要是国际学生和B&B民宿的临时短租客, 不会增加社区所需的家庭居民;
7. 租户的短期性将造成该区域的垃圾增加, 大大降低滨海港区的可居住性。这些租户由于大多只是短租, 因而没有社区和社区关怀的感觉;
8. 罗恩·巴拉西 (Ron Barassi Snr) 公园的椭圆形足球场地将不能被长期居民使用, 因为它将被开发项目的租户所侵占。
9. 给予澳大利亚澳式足球联盟 (AFL)

价值7500万澳元的礼物, 这可是纳税人的钱, 应立即停止, 以便允许在港区前沿开发建造一个公园以及开发低层公寓建筑;

10. 为什么该开发项目没有综合考虑从Footscray路到港口的Moonee Pond Creek的开发? 该处目前有一个露天的下水道, 里面全天都有流浪汉和垃圾。
11. 由此低端的租赁将继续增加, 使得滨海港区处处可以看到低端的咖啡馆和商店;
12. 这将会增加滨海港区北部的短暂游客, 更加扰乱我们这些当地居民的生活, 并增加滨海港区各处的垃圾;
13. 为什么没有让我们这些长期居住在此开发项目旁边的居民参与评论? 这一切似乎都是开发商和市政府之间的暗箱操作。
14. 该开发项目既不是在建立一个社区, 也不是在建立一个住宅区, 因为这不是为家庭居住而开发建造, 而是他们Buxton家族的赚钱需求。
15. 这个高层项目的主楼距离目前的三层联排别墅仅五米, 必将遮盖联排别墅的光线。尤其是在41层的Marina高楼的东端和MAB高层开发建筑 (36层) 的西端;

16. 万一发生火灾, 有什么计划? 这个120米高的MAB开发建筑, 由于地处死角, 万一发生火灾无法有足够的消防车能够开进来救火。

17. 对于将来使用该公共封闭区域的数以千计租户的健康, 以及万一出现任何病毒的传播, (如COVID-19新冠病毒发生之后的游轮状况), 该开发项目设想了什么?
18. 在每年施工打桩的几个里, MAB开发商需要向邻近的居民支付什么样的补偿?
19. 有什么赔偿保险来赔偿由于施工时地基打桩振动, 对我们房屋小得多的桩柱地基所造成的损害?
20. 对于接下来几个月在施工过程中将要产生的灰尘、垃圾、污物和卡车带来的污染, MAB将向该开发区附近的居民支付什么样的补偿?
21. 在没有跟我们拥有该毗邻土地的任何一位居民沟通的情况下, MAB开发商和市政府怎么能继续实施这个开发项目?

John E. Langton-Bunker 2020年4月24日
将您的支持意见通过电子邮件发送至:
bonleigh@hitechnology.net.au

Residents speak out against “dodgy” Docklands planning

Continued from page 1.

had been changes toward higher density buildings.

“Mr Langton-Bunker did not buy his home directly from MAB so we can’t comment on what representations were made to him or what he was expecting,” he said.

“It appears that some of Mr Langton-Bunker’s concerns stem from the change to the NewQuay Development Plan which was amended by the Minister for Planning in 2018 from an earlier version created in 2007.”

“Under the 2007 development plan, MAB had proposed townhouses along the waterfront. In 2012, as part of Development Victoria’s ongoing review of community facilities and public realm, the Government sought to create active open space for the growing community at NewQuay which was not adequately provided for in the initial development plan.”

Mr Hall said this initiative led to the creation of Ron Barassi Snr Park, which increased the amount of open space in Docklands by 50 per cent and required changes to the development plan to “spatially accommodate” the new active open space.

“Under this plan, the remaining development parcels in the approved development plan are not proposed to be town houses but are in the form of high-density buildings, however the tallest building is only approximately six stories higher than was originally proposed,” he said.

Mr Hall also highlighted that all changes to the plan had gone through the proper planning processes, as well as required community consultation.

“The development of Docklands was a 30-year vision initiated by the Victorian Government under the *Docklands Act 1991*. Under the Act, Development Victoria has responsibilities to promote, encourage and facilitate development of the Docklands area,” he said.

“While the overarching vision remains unchanged, there have been refinements and enhancements as the precinct has matured. These

enhancements are not undertaken freely by the developer but require detailed assessment and consideration under the planning framework.”

“A positive component of the planning framework at Docklands is to satisfy the requirements of the approved development plans before any planning permits can be considered. The development plan provides a master plan, objectives and requirements to be satisfied prior to any planning permit being considered by the authorities.”

Mr Langton-Bunker’s criticism of the planning process in Docklands was supported by former RMIT planning expert Professor Michael Buxton – not to be confused with MAB Corporation’s founder of the same name.

Prof. Buxton said there had been a distinct change from the original Docklands vision and the reality of development and, contrary to MAB’s view, that those changes had not been justified.

“The original Docklands plan in 1989 put forward a European-style development, with low- to medium-rise buildings, lots of townhouses and European-style apartments with narrow streets and squares and so on,” he said.

“It was meant to be built around public space around the waterways, with a population of around 25,000, and it would have been one of the most interesting and liveable places in Australia.”

Prof Buxton said the original vision had been “thrown away” by the Jeff Kennett state government - a trajectory that was followed by subsequent governments of both political persuasions.

He said that while developers like MAB may indeed fulfil all legal and planning requirements, the process was flawed.

“The Minister for Planning and the City of Melbourne, and the other authorities involved, approve these developments and presumably somewhere they assess them, but there’s no proper public process,” he said.

“It’s a process of developers putting forward their ideas and the government approving them



▲ A render of NewQuay West development.

according to some unknown criteria.”

Minister for Planning Richard Wynne was criticised by a number of residents recently after carving Docklands out of new legislation aimed at protecting inner-city parks from being overshadowed by high-rise developments.

Speaking in support of residents, Cr Rohan Leppert said the decision had only reinforced the “infamously opaque” planning controls in Docklands often characterised by “confidential agreements between Development Victoria and developers.”

“Removing the sunlight rules from Docklands just perpetuates the secret planning processes favoured by Development Victoria, keeping the public in the dark,” Cr Leppert said.

But a spokesperson for Richard Wynne said that there were already existing height controls to minimise overshadowing over key public open space in Docklands, including Ron Barassi Snr Park.

“The development plan specifies the maximum allowable overshadowing as well as sets the built form parameters around maximum building heights,” the spokesperson said.

In a further allegation, Mr Langton-Bunker also pointed criticisms at the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), claiming the NewQuay West site had been contaminated with the toxic chemical PFAS pre-development.

“Dr Wilkinson EPA CEO was advised on April 28 that contractors had confirmed last year that chemicals and contaminants were at the MAB West NewQuay site. ‘Hazard’ signs were put up but removed soon thereafter,” Mr Langton-Bunker said.

“Residents requested that the CEO publish the results of the toxicity analysis of the site in the interests of public health. No such site analysis was published.”

But EPA Western Metropolitan Regional Manager Stephen Lansdell told Docklands News there had been an environmental audit of the site.

“The MAB NewQuay West development site was the subject of an extensive environmental audit before being considered for planning approval by the appropriate planning authority, the Melbourne City Council,” he said.

“This is normal procedure for any residential development proposed for a former industrial site and is triggered by the requirements of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987*.”

The auditor’s report, with sampling results, was made available to the public on May 15, 2019, and is available on the EPA’s website here: apps.epa.vic.gov.au/EnvAuditFiles/53X/0008005128/74655-1_C.pdf

The report concluded that soil at the site had been impacted by widespread heavy metals related to site history as well as naturally occurring chemicals but did not mention PFAS.

Tests reported elevated concentrations of chemicals including arsenic, copper, lead, mercury and zinc and the auditor’s report put forward guidelines for the development of the site ●

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Our COVID-19 Business Concierge Hotline is now available to help small businesses and organisations in the City of Melbourne access support services and important business information.

The newly-expanded Business Concierge service is a dedicated team of people who can speak to small business owners directly, offer mentoring and help people through the process to apply for support.

To find out how we can assist you, visit melbourne.vic.gov.au or call our Business Concierge Hotline on 9658 9658 (press 1 for business).

melbourne.vic.gov.au



CITY OF MELBOURNE

INFRASTRUCTURE DELIVERY TO KICK-START OUR ECONOMY



The City of Melbourne's draft Annual Plan and Budget 2020-21 invests \$168.5 million in infrastructure over the coming year, with an aim to create jobs and support Melbourne's economy as it emerges from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Renewal of Queen Victoria Market precinct: \$45 million

- Improve conditions for traders and shoppers while preserving the unique heritage and character of the market.
- Including \$25 million investment to deliver 500 car parks on the doorstep of the market.

Restoring Melbourne Town Hall: \$6.5 million

- New customer service facilities, improved security and a flexible public forum space to encourage community participation in Committee and Council meetings.
- Roof conservation works.

Southbank Boulevard: \$12.8 million

- Delivering 2200 square metres of open space, along with new lawn areas, trees and seating.

Sporting facilities

- \$2.6 million investment in rebuilding the Western Pavilion at Royal Park, including new change rooms.
- \$260,000 towards three new courts at Royal Park Tennis Club.
- \$1 million for designs for Kensington Recreation Centre, featuring a new two-level facility plus refurbished pool, change facilities, café and more.

Have your say

Public submissions on the City of Melbourne's draft Annual Plan and Budget 2020-21 are open until Wednesday 17 June 2020.

participate.melbourne.vic.gov.au



Movement at Digital Harbour

PLANNING

Developer Digital Harbour Holdings has recently submitted plans to the state government for twin commercial office towers at the site adjacent to Melbourne Water's headquarters at 30-40 Digital Drive.

The \$195 million Bates Smart-designed plans submitted to the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) on March 13 include two 23-storey towers with a combined gross leasing area of 39,744 sqm, 494 sqm of retail space, a health and wellness centre and 302 car parking spaces.

New hoarding went up around the site last month emblazoned with the name "City Harbour" and an expressions of interest campaign for the project, which forms part of a new master plan for the precinct expected to be released in the coming months.

Construction is currently underway on developer Poly Australia's 1000 Latrobe development in the precinct, which recently attracted Myer to relocate its offices from its current headquarters at 800 Collins St, Docklands ●



▲ The team at Berth and Cargo with their take-away boxes ready for delivery on May 28.

New-look morning tea, same big impact

WORDS BY *Sean Car*
PHOTOGRAPHY BY *John Tadigiri*
CHARITY

While COVID-19 safety measures meant the team at Berth and Cargo was unable to host its usual Biggest Morning Tea event, it didn't stop it raising \$7500 for the Cancer Council on May 28 thanks to a clever tweak.

Australia's Biggest Morning Tea has become an annual fixture for the two restaurants over many years and for the first time it, like so many other events, was forced to cancel due to coronavirus.

However, Berth's venue manager Vanessa Muggianu said that while they were unable to welcome guests to fundraise in the traditional sense, the team had decided to take morning tea to their supporters instead!

With the support of its staff and suppliers, the team created morning tea takeaway boxes

featuring goodies such as bagels, croissants, sandwiches, donuts, scones, mini champagnes and mini-teacups to deliver to homes in Docklands and beyond.

In selling around 130 takeaway boxes and receiving a number of individual donations, the team was able to rally and raise a whopping \$7500 for the Cancer Council's efforts to support cancer research.

Vanessa Muggianu said they were "blown away" by the support.

"We didn't think we were going to be able to do anything at the start so to sell as many as we did was incredible," she said ●



Sean Car
EDITOR
SEAN@HYPERLOCALNEWS.COM.AU

DRG to host vertical living webinar

COMMUNITY

The Docklands Representative Group (DRG) will host a webinar on June 18 focused on helping local residential strata communities prepare for the world post COVID-19.

Led by DRG member and Docklands resident Dr Janette Corcoran, the webinar will discuss a number of pressing issues for owners' corporations (OCs) dealing with the gradual easing of state government restrictions from June.

Featuring Strata Title Lawyers principal and regular *Docklands News*, *Southbank News* and *CBD News* columnist Tom Bacon, Dr Corcoran said the webinar would help OCs deal with many important decisions they were likely to face in the coming months.

"When COVID19 hit our vertical villages, volunteer owners' corporation committees had to make many on-the-run decisions about closing facilities, restricting entry and determining cleaning schedules," she said. "Many of these decisions were made with little external guidance, which saw approaches vary greatly – and the ramifications of some decisions will likely have a long tail. Now that COVID-19 restrictions in Victoria are beginning to be lifted, OCs are again faced with some tough decisions."

"Do they simply lift these restrictions or do they have a responsibility to manage resident behaviour? And this is all happening against a backdrop of financial stress with many reports of fee non-payment and owner confusion about what can be waived, reduced or deferred."

The free webinar, to be held at 5pm on June 18, will largely discuss two key issues:

- Reopening common property; and
- Waiving, delaying or reducing OC fees and interest – what can be legally done? ●

To register:
docklands.org.au

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Go to tiny.cc/project614 and give your Red Shield Appeal gift today!

Rate freeze marks rebuild

WORDS BY *Sean Car*
ECONOMY

Despite unsurprisingly recording its first deficit in more than 30 years as a result of COVID-19, the City of Melbourne has made the symbolic move to implement a freeze on rate increases over the next financial year.

Having lost more than \$100 million since the outbreak of COVID-19 in March, the release of council's draft annual plan and budget on May 19 was unfortunately marred by a significant \$57.4 million deficit.

Despite the financial setbacks of COVID-19, however, years of strong fiscal management and economic growth has meant the council's finances are in good shape as it forecasts a return to surplus by the 2022-23 financial year.

The \$632 million draft budget is underpinned by a substantial \$168.5 million capital works program, \$41 million investment in transport infrastructure as well as a \$50 million COVID-19 recovery package to assist small businesses and precincts.

"Years of disciplined financial management means the City of Melbourne can step up in these unprecedented times," Lord Mayor Sally Capp said.

"This year, for the first time in more than 30 years, the budget will have a deficit. We are deliberately investing in our community now so we can support businesses and deliver infrastructure and stimulus as a platform for recovery."

Having made a habit of underspending its capital works budget for the best part of the past decade, CEO Justin Hanney told *CBD News* that new measures had been taken to ensure that trend wouldn't continue.

"Our investment on capital works has been prioritised with a focus on projects that will help our city recover from COVID-19," he said. "Internal project reporting has also been enhanced to track and manage the progress of capital projects."

Headlining the infrastructure spend is a \$45 million investment to ramp up the renewal of Queen Victoria Market, while \$6.5 million has been included to restore Melbourne Town Hall.

The \$41 million towards transport will also see car parks replaced with footpaths and 12 kilometres of pop-up cycling lanes to cater for social distancing as part of its COVID-19 recovery strategy.

The impacts of COVID-19 could likely see the council draw on its five-year \$75 million line of credit from ANZ Bank for the first time, however Mr Hanney said it would only be used on a "needs basis" to meet capital works requirements.

"The loan expires on June 30, 2021 but there

are options to extend if required," Mr Hanney said. "The interest rate is 0.74 per cent and is very competitive."

The City of Melbourne's 1425 staff, 30 fewer full-time than last year, are the best-paid in the country and are expected to cost the council \$165.9 million during the 2020-21 financial year.

With the majority of council services delivered through its staff, the budget promises a reduction on expenditure on purchasing, contractors, consultants and administration and will look to "redeploy staff into areas with higher demand."

Mr Hanney said the current enterprise bargaining agreement (EBA) had expired and the agreement process was on hold while the council prioritised essential services in response to COVID-19.

"We have had positive discussions with unions and will revisit the new enterprise agreement in the coming months," Mr Hanney said.

In addition to providing rate relief at a cost of \$18.9 million, the council will also not increase fees and charges for 2020-21 for community services such as recreation centres, children's services and libraries.

Parking revenue is forecast to decline significantly due to a decrease in the number of cars in the city during the COVID-19 lockdown. Parking fee revenue is budgeted at \$28 million, down 33 per cent from \$43 million the previous year. Naturally, parking fine revenue is also budgeted down at \$16 million.

Overall, 64 per cent of council fees remain unchanged or are only increasing according to consumer price index (CPI).

Deputy Lord Mayor Arron Wood said the budget was putting "people and businesses first."

"We are freezing rates with a zero per cent rate rise. In every announcement since the pandemic hit, we've focussed on fixed costs for businesses and residents," he said.

"By not increasing rates and delivering essential services, programs and support packages, we are doing our bit to rebuild the local economy."

Lord Mayor Sally Capp said the council was also preparing a package of "shovel-ready" projects to present to the federal and state governments to help stimulate the economy and create jobs.

Public submissions on the draft annual plan and budget 2020-21 are open until 5pm on June 17 ●

For more information:
participate.melbourne.vic.gov.au



▲ A City of Melbourne graphic showing infrastructure projects that are commencing (red), progressing (green) and completing (blue) within the municipality.

Quiet budget for Docklands

WORDS BY *David Schout*
ECONOMY

While funding was allocated for key projects in surrounding areas, investment in Docklands infrastructure appeared light-on in the City of Melbourne's recently released draft 2020-21 budget.

In recent months the council's budget was completely repositioned to respond to demand for short-term measures related to COVID-19.

What it has termed as a "recovery budget", the council has fallen into the red for the first time in 30 years.

However, the \$168.5 million capital works infrastructure program to "create jobs and support Melbourne's economy" still managed to surpass last year's "record" spend of \$166 million.

It appeared, though, to give little concrete backing for the Docklands area.

Highlights included huge investment in the Queen Victoria Market renewal, Southbank Boulevard redevelopment, Town Hall renovations and CBD bike lanes.

But a graphic from the council's website (above) shows a lack of locked-in spending within Docklands.

Again, funding details on the long-awaited Harbour Esplanade upgrade were missing as the council likely waits on movements from the state government and the AFL with regards to

its renewal of Marvel Stadium.

It did, however, pledge to "activate Docklands with a focus on Victoria Harbour" in its 2020-21 initiatives.

"In light of the closure of Central Pier, work with Development Victoria to identify specific initiatives that will increase visitation to Victoria Harbour and disbursement throughout Docklands hospitality and retail offerings," it read.

It also pledged to "explore opportunities for water transport and tourism and a strategic feasibility study of a maritime heritage museum experience (in partnership with Development Victoria and Heritage Victoria)."

The council has committed to drawing visitors back to Docklands once the worst of the COVID-19 restrictions have passed, although details on this are yet to be released.

A giant street party is one specific idea being thought over, stretching potentially all the way from Carlton to Docklands and Southbank in a celebration of reopening.

After June's Firelight Festival was cancelled, Docklands resident and Lord Mayor Sally Capp said the council understood the plight of struggling local workers.

"We know many Docklands businesses are doing it tough, so when restrictions are lifted, we will work with businesses and precinct leaders to drive visitation to the Docklands area." ●

Ian Isaacs answers your legal questions

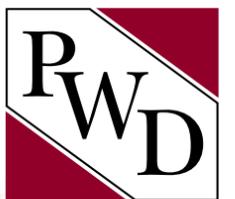
Q. My business has been heavily impacted by COVID-19. Yet my landlord is demanding that I keep paying my rent in full. I thought "we were all in this together?" What can I do?

A. The Victorian Parliament has recently passed the COVID-19 Omnibus (Emergency Measures) (Commercial Leases and Licences) Regulations. The Regulations specifically respond to the global pandemic by implementing temporary measures which apply to landlords and tenants under commercial and retail leases. They also implement mechanisms to resolve disputes concerning leases. Landlords and tenants must cooperate and act reasonably and in good faith in order to comply with the Regulations. There are also specific measures pertaining to rental relief. However, to activate any claim for rental relief you must comply with the new Regulations. If you are a tenant and your landlord is demanding you pay rent, or if you are a landlord with a tenant who is unable to pay, it is critical that you seek urgent legal advice whilst the global pandemic continues.

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New park for Seafarers Rest

PLANNING

The City of Melbourne is now seeking the community's feedback on the designs of a new 3500 sqm park at Seafarers Rest in Docklands.

A motion went before councillors at the Future Melbourne Committee (FMC) meeting on June 2 to consider the designs and begin public consultation for a period of six weeks from June 3.

Located next to the historic Mission to Seafarers building on Flinders St, the \$5 million park is a joint venture between developer Riverlee, the City of Melbourne and the state government.

The new public park, designed by Oculus Landscape Architecture, forms part of Riverlee's Seafarer's development, which will restore the heritage goods shed and wharf and construct a mixed-use building comprising apartments, a hotel and retail.

The report from council management on June 2 said that the design of the new park considered its location within the Dockland historic maritime precinct and that, where appropriate, proposed "the inclusion of local maritime artefacts"

The new park will be handed over to the council to manage once completed in conjunction with Riverlee's development in 2023.

For more information visit participate.melbourne.vic.gov.au ●

Reading habits during the pandemic

WORDS BY Rhonda Dredge
PHOTOGRAPHY BY Rhonda Dredge
KNOWLEDGE

Books dealing with anxiety and adversity are the top reads by borrowers in Docklands, according to lists of e-resources released by the City of Melbourne.

At the top of the list of e-books borrowed from Library at the Dock in April was the self help best-seller *The Subtle Art of Not Giving a F*ck*.

And in fourth place was *Reasons to Stay Alive* by Matt Haig, a memoir about anxiety.

"There's a little bit of an existential theme," Cr Dr Jackie Watts, chair of the council's knowledge portfolio, said.

"Introspection is good for times you're in a reflective frame of mind," she said. "The reality is that we're facing a new normal. Part of what we do is reading, putting us in other people's worlds."

Also on the e-books list was the Australian thriller *The Nowhere Child* by Christian White, which won the Victorian Premier's Literary Award in 2018, and the non-fiction comedy *This is Going to Hurt* by Adam Kay.

The advantage of e-resources is that there are fewer limits on the numbers that can be borrowed at once.

Books have been harder to come by, with bookshops reporting an increase in online orders.

There has been an extraordinary surge of 59 per cent in audio loans from Library at the Dock, 76 per cent in e-book loans and 184 per cent in e-films, with *The Dressmaker* and *Carol* at the top of the list.

"There's also been an interest in politics," Cr Watts said. *Becoming* by Michelle Obama and *A Bigger Picture* by Malcolm Turnbull are at the top of the audio books list, along with the novel *Nine Perfect Strangers* by Liane Moriarty.

Reading habits are of interest to the council or who worked as a business librarian during her career and who still remembers going to the circular brick library in Whitehorse Rd in the



▲ Cr Jackie Watts

1960s.

"When I was a young reader in Box Hill, you were not allowed to borrow fiction without borrowing non-fiction. You could borrow two or four books," she said.

This rule shaped her reading life. She said she got into animals, mountains and Antarctica, as well as stories.

She now reads the *New Yorker*, which has been difficult to get during the lock-down, and in her pile of books at Anglesea where she has spent the lockdown, are a John Grisham, a book on Robert Russell the artist, and a history by William Dalrymple. ●



Rhonda Dredge
JOURNALIST
RHONDA@CBDNEWS.COM.AU

Library to reopen

COUNCIL AFFAIRS

The Library at the Dock at Victoria Harbour will reopen on Tuesday, June 9, the City of Melbourne has confirmed.

The council announced on June 1 that was managing the staged re-opening of its libraries, recreation centres and community sporting fields as COVID-19 restrictions were eased across the state.

Lord Mayor Sally Capp said select council facilities would begin to reopen with strict capacity and physical distancing rules.

"We know people have been missing community facilities such as libraries and pools but safety is our first priority so will take a staged approach to re-opening," the Lord Mayor said.

"Pedestrian numbers within the city have increased by more than 20 per cent in the past week compared to three weeks ago.

"However, we cannot rush back to the way things were. It's vital we work together, follow physical distancing guidelines and maintain good hygiene practices to help keep our community safe."

Along with Library at the Dock, the City of Melbourne will re-open City Library, Kathleen Syme Library, North Melbourne Library, Southbank Library and East Melbourne Library from June 9.

Chair of the Knowledge City portfolio Cr Dr Jackie Watts said that libraries were reopening with restricted patron numbers and reduced hours.

"The safety of our staff and the community is vital as we re-open our much-loved libraries," Cr Watts said.

"Access to our libraries will be prioritised for people who are unable to access the internet at home, those facing social isolation and people experiencing economic hardship."

"For people unable to return to our branches, I certainly encourage them to continue using our digital library services ●

Docklands Community SUNDAY FARMERS MARKET

4th Sunday of month 2020

Next Farmers Market on 28th June

New Quay Promenade 9am to 2pm

Docklands Community Sunday Market craft canceled until further notice

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Farmers Welcome to Start Another Farmers Market Second Sunday in July. Food Only.

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The End of Financial Year is almost here

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▲ Community House volunteers head out on a social-distanced walk!

Recovery and renewal

WORDS BY *Meg Hill*
COMMUNITY

The Docklands Pop Up Neighbourhood House had been working to keep the community supported during the pandemic.

Now, the centre is looking to reopen safely and is asking community members to get in touch to help with local recovery and renewal.

Community development worker Jason Butcher told *Docklands News* Neighbourhood House had been attentive to community needs throughout the pandemic, altering operations as suitable.

“We worked up a community care register with all the volunteers’ names on it and had it ready for people to get into contact with us or if we heard of people who were vulnerable or struggling,” he said.

“For the past couple of weeks, we’ve been meeting up with our volunteers to go on socially-distanced walks around the area, it was brought on when the first restrictions were lifted.”

“Our volunteers are really excited to be getting closer to having the Neighbourhood House up and running again.”

Mr Butcher said Docklands had a large community of people who could be vulnerable.

“It’s particularly hard when they have little in the way of family or social supports here, such as international students and new migrants and these are communities with high representation in Docklands,” he said.

“Because of the lockdown a lot of people had their work dry up and some weren’t covered under any of the support measures.”

He said the pop up would hopefully be reopening in the next couple of weeks, with restructured operations to suit restrictions, and wanted to reach out to a larger part of the community.

“We do know that a lot of people have been hit quite hard and there’s a lot of people talking about recovery but I personally think there’s a lot of positive opportunity for renewal as well,” he said.

“It’s about figuring out what we can do better, not just what we can do to get back to where we were before, and for community development workers the last thing we want to do is talk among ourselves and come up with something that we think people need.”

“The best thing we can do is try and draw as many stories out about how people have been affected and the hopes they have coming out of this and to work with the community to create something to suit that.”

Mr Butcher and the rest of the Neighbourhood House team have asked for any interested community members to reach out to help with future direction.

“It’s my thought that individuals and grassroots community groups, whether sports clubs, hobby groups, the community gardens, or any other social group with passion and desire to do something for the community, can have a huge role in that recovery and renewal to bring people together.”

“We’d like to hear from them, find out how they have been affected by the lockdown and see what we can do to work with them for the good of the community.”

Contact the Neighbourhood House at commdev@centre.org.au ●

COVID-19 and Fishermans Bend

WORDS BY *Sean Car*
LOCAL NEWS

The economic impacts of COVID-19 are being felt far and wide. But for Australia’s largest-ever urban renewal project in Fishermans Bend, the pandemic could prove the major catalyst in determining how the state government’s vision plays out.

Since the state government adopted its recast vision for Fishermans Bend in 2018, physical progress, while prevalent, has been slower than what some had expected given its forecasts of 80,000 new residents and 80,000 new workers by 2050.

While the University of Melbourne’s investment in the Employment Precinct, which will be centred around advanced manufacturing and innovation, has provided cause for optimism, the all-important question around public transport looms large.

Leading up to the outbreak of COVID-19, the state government’s growing debt crisis was well understood following a record investment in new infrastructure across the state.

It’s a situation that has now only intensified, with last month’s Department of Treasury and Finance modelling signalling an unprecedented 14 per cent decline in Gross State Product (GSP) in the June quarter.

In response, the state government has borrowed \$24.5 billion in emergency funding to help see us through the crisis; a debt that many economists say will take a generation of tax-payers’ money to settle.

However, while the situation appears grim, Fishermans Bend, as some are predicting, could form a major part of the road to economic recovery in the post-COVID-19 world. With the state government’s modelling predicting that Victoria’s economic output will drop by \$32 billion in the next six months, putting 270,000 Victorians out of work, boosting major road and rail projects could help to stimulate the revival.

Included on a long list of major Victorian projects currently being considered for early delivery by the state government is public transport for Fishermans Bend. Namely, a new tram bridge via Collins St over the

Yarra River through Docklands and the Lorimer Precinct.

While it budgeted \$5 million in last year’s budget to assess options and fund a business case for the project, the need to link the city with the Employment Precinct, including Melbourne University’s new campus, is critical. RMIT University is also interested in Fishermans Bend, but its investment weighs heavily on the delivery of public transport.

Yet despite the tram link being crucial for achieving the overall vision on schedule and restoring development confidence in the area, the cost of delivering it, totalling north of a billion dollars, could just as likely see it slip down the government’s priority list. Who’s to know?

Amid the uncertainty, Fishermans Bend Development Board chair Meredith Sussex said that the Board had met in April to “set its course in the new environment.”

“Of course, a number of the people who support the Board are diverted to coronavirus duties - as is completely appropriate. However, the Board is now taking the time to think through how Fishermans Bend can best contribute to the post-COVID recovery in a way that is consistent with the vision for the area,” she said.

“Construction in Montague in particular is proceeding, and work on the new secondary school in Wirraway is also underway. The Board will now be providing advice to Government on which other projects, both public and private, could get underway quickly and what work needs to be finalised to assist those projects.”

“The Board is also redoubling its efforts on the development of the advanced manufacturing innovation precinct. One of the things we have learnt from the crisis is that we can, and must, keep making things, and that our adaptability and innovation will be central to the jobs and economic activity of the future.”

The Yarra Residents’ Action Group (YRAS) and the Fishermans Bend Business Forum continue in their efforts to put forward alternatives to the costly tram bridge for the state government to consider but without much luck it would seem.

YRAS chairman and Yarra’s edge

resident Keith Sutherland said he believed now was the time for the government and the community to review all options, particularly in the face of a changing work environment post COVID-19.

“I would have thought with such severe hardships on budgets and heading into a recession the Andrews Government would be embracing cheaper and more effective options with three of them having far superior and less destructive options,” he said.

“We are aware that the Employment Precinct requires public transport to satisfy the requirements of Melbourne University and RMIT University which we totally agree with, but why rush in early without doing a proper assessment of costs and needs analysis without taking into account the latest in changing transport technologies?”

“In the meantime, we have a good bus service in that area that could be increased when extra demand is required. COVID-19 has also shown employers many of their staff can affectively work from home provided they have a good internet connection.”

If COVID-19 has taught us anything, it’s that our need to adapt and adapt quickly is going to be just as important in the recovery efforts as it has been in stopping the spread of the virus.

The response to this crisis has already produced incredible innovations in technology and the ways in which we conduct our everyday lives. As Meredith Sussex pointed out, the need to further explore these spaces and create the jobs of tomorrow is going to be critical when this is all over.

We’ve seen what investment in medical research can deliver. The output from the cluster of medical institutions in the Parkville Precinct has proven powerful in both the Australian and international efforts to combat the virus.

As we begin the economic rebuild, soon should come the time for the state government to place the same emphasis on job creation, investment and development in Fishermans Bend. It all starts with public transport ●



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REBUILDING MELBOURNE'S ECONOMY WITH STIMULUS AND RATES RELIEF

The COVID-19 pandemic has hit Melbourne hard. Business and retail have been severely impacted, tourist visitation has plummeted and international students are doing it tough.

The City of Melbourne is taking action to respond to the pandemic, and protect jobs and businesses. The Council's draft Annual Plan and Budget 2020-21 invests a record \$50 million in a COVID-19 Recovery Package and implements a freeze on rate increases for residential and non-residential properties.

With a proposed total budget spend of \$632 million, the draft Budget is designed to support ratepayers, strengthen our community and rebuild the local economy. The City of Melbourne is doing all it can to help businesses thrive again, create jobs and bring the city back to its vibrant best.

COVID-19 has a combined impact of more than \$100 million on the City of Melbourne's draft Budget and rebuilding Melbourne's economy will take time and hard work. For the first time in more than 30 years, the Budget will be in deficit. This will help the City of Melbourne support our business community and invest in infrastructure and stimulus as a path to recovery.



DRAFT ANNUAL PLAN AND BUDGET 2020-21 SNAPSHOT

Major investment

-  Rates freeze for commercial and residential properties
-  Infrastructure: **\$168.5 million**
-  COVID-19 Recovery Package: **\$50 million**
-  Transport: **\$41 million**
-  Climate action: **\$32 million**
-  Major events: **\$19 million**
-  Arts: **\$17 million**
-  Community facilities: **\$12.5 million**

Infrastructure

The City of Melbourne will invest \$168.5 million in infrastructure for our local community and economy, including getting on with the Queen Victoria Market precinct renewal, restoring Melbourne Town Hall and delivering women's sporting facilities. In addition, a package of infrastructure projects are being prepared to present to the Victorian and Australian governments. These shovel-ready projects will create jobs, stimulate Melbourne's economy and protect the city's liveability.

Major events

The City of Melbourne will invest \$19 million in major events in a bid to entice people back to the city once COVID-19 restrictions are lifted.

Protecting arts and culture

The City of Melbourne will invest \$17 million in artists and arts organisations in the coming year through grants, investment in public art and programming. This will also support creatives to continue working through the shutdown by developing new works and online projects.



Supporting the Queen Victoria Market precinct renewal

Combatting social isolation and supporting rough sleepers

The City of Melbourne will invest up to \$2 million this year to support people who are homeless, as well as investing in programs to address loneliness and social isolation among seniors. This includes \$330,000 towards a daily support team which connects rough sleepers with accommodation and support.

Supporting our knowledge economy

The City of Melbourne will invest \$1 million in renewing and maintaining

its traditional and digital library collections, and a further \$180,000 to upgrade Southbank Library. As part of this, \$200,000 will be invested in the Startup Action Plan. This plan is designed to boost the skills of local startups and promote Melbourne as a great place to start, grow and go global with a business.

Supporting international students

To support international students impacted by COVID-19, the City of Melbourne will invest \$50,000 to create pathways to employment and \$10,000 on wellbeing initiatives.



Supporting our knowledge economy

HAVE YOUR SAY

Public submissions on the draft Annual Plan and Budget 2020-21 are open until 5pm Wednesday 17 June 2020. Visit participate.melbourne.vic.gov.au



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COVID-19 RECOVERY PACKAGE FOR SMALL BUSINESSES AND RETAIL

The City of Melbourne is supporting small businesses and retail precincts through a \$50 million COVID-19 Recovery Package. This includes \$18.9 million in residential and commercial rate relief and direct grants to small businesses.

To attract people back into the city when the time is right, \$19 million will be set aside to be spent on major events and festivals. Council will collaborate with precincts to boost marketing and events and protect local shopping strips and neighbourhoods.

To improve safety and bolster community confidence as more people return to our streets, laneways and parks, \$6 million will go towards extra cleaning across our public areas. Traders can also request a free service to clean and sanitise door handles and other touch-point areas.

The COVID-19 Business Concierge Hotline has connected more than 4000 businesses with information specific to their individual needs.

RATES RELIEF FOR BUSINESSES AND RESIDENTS

Since the pandemic hit, the City of Melbourne has continued to focus on fixed costs for businesses and residents. To support struggling ratepayers, rates will be frozen in 2020-21.

Fees and charges for community services such as recreation centres, children's services and libraries, will not be increased this year.



Supporting businesses and residents



YOUR COUNCIL

◀ Melbourne City Council (from left):

Cr Susan Riley, Cr Kevin Louey, Cr Beverley Pinder, Cr Nicolas Frances Gilley MBE, Lord Mayor Sally Capp, Cr Nicholas Reece, Deputy Lord Mayor Arron Wood, Cr Rohan Leppert, Cr Cathy Oke, Cr Philip Le Liu, Cr Jackie Watts OAM.

Council's vision

Find out more about the Council's shared vision for the city, visit melbourne.vic.gov.au/councilplan

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▲ Kate Matthews and Emmy: getting pleasure out of simple things.

Mums make the streets their own

COMMUNITY

Last month just off Collins St, local mums were taking pleasure in creating their own form of village life after the initial culture shock of the pandemic.

“There are little green shoots,” town planner Kate Matthews said. “There’s a little network of relationships around the place.”

The mother of one was enjoying a cola drink outside the supermarket on Merchant St.

She had just picked up her daughter Emmy from daycare and done the shopping, after a day at the desk in her 14th floor apartment.

They’ve had one organised social catch-up since restrictions were relaxed two weeks ago.

The rest of their social contact has revolved around three coffee spots that have remained open and chats with retailers.

“I’m so happy to talk to someone,” Kate said. “I like how life’s simple. There’s not much to it.”

At first the streets seemed empty after the corporates left two months ago.

“If you strip back the façade, the fantastical and the buzzy go-go purely based on the built form, people are making connections regardless,” Kate said.

Residents have slowly taken over the place. “Docklands is actually like a little village. I see the same dogs out for a walk.”

Boredom has been the driving force behind the recent spate of community spirit, she said. At first the Instagram hype was that they all engage in creative projects inside.

“Everyone was baking sourdough bread. Now we’re in a massive flat. The initial plans were not sustainable. People have been burnt out. Boredom is inevitable.”

She compared the pandemic to a culture shock, like visiting a new country.

As a town planner, Kate gets a fair bit of banter from her online colleagues and has written an article for the Victorian Town Planners on what she calls a “stealth” baby boom in Docklands.

She said the demographic was changing from the initial boom of renters and investors to young families.

“We’re now getting the birth of second children.”

She said this had put stress on childcare. “We’ve kept Emmy in childcare. Some people took their kids out and couldn’t put them back in.” She has claimed nearby public space as her own and calls the Village Green her backyard. When she returns, she sees the chalk drawings of the day before ●

Vaping ban divides

WORDS BY Tamara Clark

HEALTH

The City of Melbourne has unanimously passed a motion proposing a ban on e-cigarettes and vaping in selected areas throughout the city.

The move comes after councillors voted in favour of a motion to amend council’s local law to align with the Tobacco Act 1987 by including vaping using an e-cigarette at the Future Melbourne Committee meeting on May 5.

The proposed amendment to the council’s Local Law will now go through a public consultation process, before councillors have the final vote on the ban later this year.

“The proposed changes aim to strengthen our existing smoke-free initiatives by further protecting children and young people from accessing, using and being exposed to e-cigarettes,” Lord Mayor Sally Capp said.

“The National Health and Medical Research Council, and the Chief Medical Officer Brendan Murphy believe that there is insufficient evidence that e-cigarettes have a role as cessation aids, and the Therapeutic Goods Administration has not assessed e-cigarettes for use as a method to withdraw from smoking.”

Cr Capp said that the amendment meant using an e-cigarette was now defined as “smoking” and would be banned in existing and future smoke-free areas, such as Bourke Street Mall.

However, the move by the council has been met with widespread criticism from many in the community, with Reason Party leader Fiona Patten stating, “vaping isn’t smoking” and that councillors were misinformed about vaping.

“I am concerned that the council has been misinformed on the issue and that a ban will do more harm than good,” she said. “The council needs to listen to what the experts are saying –



that vaping is a significant help for those trying to quit.”

“There is no reasonable case for banning vaping on health grounds as there is no evidence of risk from passive vaping. The UK Royal College of Physicians, which has been a leader in research on this issue, agreed declaring that so far there is, ‘no direct evidence that passive exposure is likely to cause significant harm.’”

Associate Professor Colin Mendelsohn from the Australian Tobacco Harm Reduction Association and School of Public Health and Community Medicine at University of New South Wales, also wrote to councillors asking them to postpone the decision until they were armed with all the facts.

“Smoking remains a high public health priority and is the leading preventable cause of death in Australia,” Associate Professor Colin Mendelsohn said. “All methods to help smokers to quit should be encouraged. Banning vaping in smoke-free areas sends a message that vaping is as harmful as smoking and will discourage smokers from switching to vaping.” ●

Local government elections to proceed

WORDS BY Sean Car

ELECTIONS

The state government has confirmed that local government elections will still go ahead as planned on Saturday, October 24.

Questions had been raised in recent months as to whether the elections would be pushed back amid COVID-19 lockdowns and public safety measures to allow the Victorian Electoral Commission (VEC) more time to compile electoral rolls. However, Minister for Local Government Adem Somyurek confirmed that Victorians would still be able to have their say this October with “safe and secure” postal votes

to be used for the elections.

Mr Somyurek said it would be the first time postal voting had been used across all Victorian councils, following changes to the *Local Government Act 2020* requiring a state-wide and uniform approach to voting.

Ballot packs will be mailed to voters and will include voting instructions, candidate information, a ballot paper, and a reply-paid envelope. Postal voting is completely secret. “We will continue to liaise with Australia Post, given their critical role in the elections,” VEC electoral commissioner Warwick Gately said. Voters must confirm they are enrolled on either the State electoral roll or their council roll before 4.00pm on Friday, August 28 ●

Think Pink Zooms ahead

WORDS BY Sean Car

LOCAL NEWS

The Think Pink Foundation at Yarra’s Edge, forced to suspend all of its on-site operations since March 16 as a result of COVID-19, is literally now “Zooming” ahead.

The suspension of all services by the Think Pink Foundation came just four weeks after the successful launch of a \$2 million new Think Pink Living Centre at Forge, designed and funded by Mirvac with the support of its contractors and suppliers.

Chairman of the Think Pink Foundation Ron Smith said, “despite the suspension of services at the Living Centre and the staff all working remotely, the Think Pink Living Centre has now successfully resumed several programs with the use of the online platform, Zoom, to overcome the impact of COVID-19.”

“We have recently had classes where Think Pink clients came from as far away as Sale and one regular member on holidays ‘Zoomed’ into Tai Chi from Perth.”

Mr Smith said the demand would see an increased provision of online activities in the future which will also address the problem of public transport to its new Yarra’s Edge facility.

“Under the leadership of the Think Pink Living Centre manager and breast care nurse Andrea Cannon, the online programs have been established with the valuable assistance of staff, facilitators and volunteers over the past eight weeks,” Mr Smith said.

Think Pink has since been running online sessions including art therapy, yoga, reflexology, tai chi, pilates and support groups such as Second Hope support group (for women with metastatic breast cancer).

The online activity also includes the Supporting Blokes program, a program to support male partners of women with breast cancer to discuss the impact of breast cancer on themselves and family life.

To take part in the Think Pink Docklands online program, women need to have had a diagnosed breast cancer assessment at some stage in their life. For more information visit thinkpink.org.au ●

Connect with your local community

The Docklands Community Hub is a free online space to connect with fellow Docklands locals, stay in the know, post requests for help, share skills and local knowledge, ask for recommendations, discover local services, classes, retailers, events and more!

This Facebook group is owned by Docklands News.

If you’re a local resident or business you can join up here:

www.facebook.com/groups/docklandscommunityhub/





Sunday market is back!

LOCAL NEWS

The Docklands Sunday Market returned to NewQuay Promenade with great success on May 24 as a refreshed Farmers Market.

With the usual craft market closed since March until further notice as a result of COVID-19, the market's director Eileen Fiederling relaunched the market with 11 fresh food stallholders last month and received a great response from locals.

"It was very good. We had so many locals coming back to us welcoming us back," Fiederling said.

"We were very pleased with the result and the response was very good, especially from the locals. There was more activity than there had been in the previous months, which was great for the area."

Docklands Chamber of Commerce (DCC) executive officer Shane Wylie congratulated the market on quickly adapting to the new world, with City of Melbourne pedestrian counters having shown average 2019 Sunday numbers for NewQuay on the day.

Among the 11 stallholders present on the day, a fresh variety of fruit and vegetables, breads, cheeses, coffees and nuts were available and Eileen said management was in negotiations to have even more for the next market day on June 28.

"A great market in a beautiful location ... everybody come along and support your local farmers!" she said.

For more information:
melbmarkets.com.au

Sports club eyes spring return

WORDS BY David Schout

SPORT

Docklands Sports Club (DSC) has eyed a spring return for its junior soccer and cricket programs at Ron Barassi Snr Park.

The newly-formed club, which has taken off since launching less than 12 months ago, had seen strong numbers in its first programs.

But since COVID-19 restrictions were put in place by the state government, the club has had to suspend all activities.

President Carina Parisella told *Docklands News* the DSC committee had been meeting regularly during restrictions, and was doing all it could to ensure a safe return to action.

"Like everyone, we're needing to be really careful about when we get back out to do some training. The restrictions have been lifted, but given we can only train in groups of 10, with young kids, obviously it'll be very hard to have no contact," she said.

"So, what we've said to parents and families is that absolutely by the time spring hits, we expect to be back out on the ground doing both our Woolies Junior Blast [cricket] and Aldi MiniRoos [soccer] programs. But over the winter, given it's flu season and the restrictions are still touch-and-go, we'd be unlikely to go out and train before spring. But that could all change if the restrictions become more flexible."

The COVID-19 restrictions were a cruel blow to the burgeoning club, who had just started to gather real momentum in bringing together local children and families at its home ground next to the Bolte Bridge.

But Ms Parisella assured locals they would pick up where they left off.

"[We're] absolutely confident that we'll keep that momentum going," she said, pointing to the club's combined social media following of more than 1000.

"We've got such a strong following online so we've been able to stay in touch with our community. We definitely want to keep the momentum going for physical activity but also, it's



“

We're really missing our local families and not being able to see them each week has been tough. But as soon as we can we want to get back out there and start working with our partners again.

”

great that the community has come together on social media to stay connected during this time. So, I'm really pleased about that and think we'll knock it out of the park on our return."

Since officially forming in August, the club has also been an avenue for local parents to meet when they otherwise wouldn't have.

"We're really missing our local families and not being able to see them each week has been tough. But as soon as we can we want to get back out there and start working with our partners again. We think spring time is a nice time to do that - the weather will be picking up again and it should be safer."

Elsewhere, YMCA facility The Hub on Harbour Esplanade was waiting for restrictions to further ease before welcoming back community groups.

Team leader Tony Crawford told *Docklands News* a quiet few months had allowed them to refurbish the decking and install a new entrance at their clubhouse which contains five rooms for indoor activities and multi-purpose sports courts.

Mr Crawford said that while corporates may take some time to return to the facilities, he expected community groups to come back when it was safe to do so.

One group that uses those facilities is Melbourne Netball, which runs mixed-netball competitions at both The Hub and nearby Flagstaff Gardens.

Director Rebecca Grouios said they hoped to be back playing by July, but would be guided by state government announcements.

"We have made changes in the way that we operate to ensure that our players' safety is the number one priority including procedures for borrowing bibs, hand and ball sanitising during the night," she said ●

For more: facebook.com/docklandssportsclub/

S.T.L

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DOCKLANDER

A secret kept close

With lockdown measures easing across the state, Docklands is beginning to show shoots of life after an eerily quiet autumn.

WORDS BY *David Schout*

Workers have begun returning, restaurants are re-opening their doors, and recently deserted streets are seeing a welcome return to the hustle and bustle.

But one local resident who won't be springing back to normal life - much as she'd like to - is Mandy McCarter.

Mandy's husband Shane has cystic fibrosis, meaning the couple have had to be extra careful during the pandemic.

The pair, who live at Victoria Point, have largely avoided interaction with people since mid-March, going out for walks when they can.

Importantly, both are travelling well but Mandy, a Docklands advocate through-and-through since moving to the area 18 months ago, light-heartedly admitted her Instagram page @adventuresindocklands was somewhat one-dimensional at present.

"There's a lot of sunset shots from the balcony at the moment as I'm not out and about. It could be 'adventures at home,'" she told *Docklands News*.

The account was set up as a way to both showcase local eateries and drink spots, and to avoid "spamming" friends and family with too many shots of her new suburb.

"There's so many places tucked away in Docklands, so I thought as I found things it might be useful for someone else."

Mandy's newfound love for high-rise living, close to the water, is something conveyed by many new Docklands residents.

Many are conflicted whether to tell others of the benefits, or keep it close to their chest.

"I love it. I feel like I'm a cheerleader for Docklands. I sort of feel like it's this secret that I don't want anyone else to find out about. I liked Docklands when no one else seemed to like it. We'd always find ourselves coming in and having a meal here. I'm originally from Perth and there's something about being near the water I connect with. I feel like we're really spoilt having everything on our doorstep, being able to walk to everything."

When Mandy and Shane moved to Docklands from the northern suburbs, the response from friends was "mixed".

"But when they came here for a drink, for a meal, they couldn't believe it. I think everyone has this perception of Docklands - if they haven't spent much time here - from 10 or so years ago, when a lot of the infrastructure was up-and-coming. I still get asked all the time 'where do you get your groceries?' And I say 'at one of the three supermarkets I can walk to'. A few friends from out in the suburbs have now said

▼ *Mandy McCarter.*



'just keep an eye out on the (real estate) market for me, if you see anything that's good.'

Naturally, each suburb is not without its issues, and Mandy said one of the biggest in Docklands was coincidentally just below them.

"I think Central Pier has been a huge loss. We used to go to the Woolshed, the bakery; I just thought that was a real point of attraction, for people to be able to sit on the water. I think that situation has been a disaster and certainly hasn't helped Docklands' reputation."

She hoped that whatever was done paid homage to the maritime heritage of the area.

Further, she observed that for the area to further attract visitors and foot traffic, cafes and restaurants particularly on the Victoria

Harbour side would be seven-days-a-week operations rather than mostly serving the "Monday to Friday lunch crowd".

Although that too was improving, she said. Day to day, Mandy runs marketing and design studio Short Fuse, an operation started in 2001.

Like many, the business has been impacted by COVID-19 but has managed to hold onto some key clients.

One of those is A-League soccer club Melbourne Victory, who play some of their home games at Marvel Stadium, something Mandy described as "very convenient".

And while she's looking forward to match days returning, sunset-viewing from the balcony will suffice for now ●

HISTORY

Twenty-thousand leagues under the Yarra

On first glance, these fine, moustachioed gentlemen in their bowler hats look to be preparing for an underwater dive. Could they be looking for lost treasure? Pearlers getting ready for another hard day of fishing? Taking leisure time for a 19th century era business trip?

The answer is none of the above, especially considering that the body of water they were about to enter was likely polluted with the waste of hundreds of thousands of Melburnians.

But this was hardly the consequence of a drunken dare gone awry, for the men in the diving suits are thought to be members of the Melbourne Metropolitan Board of Works (MMBW), formed in 1891.

It is believed that these divers and their co-workers are working in the Yarra River on the edge of Docklands, west of where the Spencer Street Bridge (later built in the 1920s) now stands.

The board's formation was in response to the massive pollution of the Yarra and other water sources as the city expanded. The main cause was from industrial waste dumped by noxious industries such as abattoirs, tanning factories, and soap and candle manufacturers along the river. Other pollution was human waste thrown away in chamber pots or by careless night men who collected the "night soil" from water closets on a weekly basis. It was such negligence that gave the city the unfortunate moniker "Marvellous Smellbourne".

A report by the Harbour Trust in the *Footscray Independent* on February 15, 1890, complained about the mess, and was especially critical of the swinging basin near the West

Melbourne gasworks where several crewmen on passing boats were hospitalised due to the fumes. Adding to the city's woes was the increasing death toll from typhoid, mostly due to the population's close proximity to human waste from infected patients contaminating the water supply.

After a Royal Commission looked into the city's sanitary conditions in 1888, it was recommended that an overdue "complete system of underground drainage" should be implemented, and a Board of Works should be responsible for it. This led to the establishment of the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works, which had its first meeting at the Treasury Gardens on March 18, 1891. By 1892, under the leadership of chief engineer William Thwaites, work had begun on constructing the sewerage system, which would start operations in 1897. Under this system, waste would flow through installed pipes, all the way to the pumping station at Spotswood (now part of Scienceworks), before engaging in a long trip up the Main Outfall Sewer to the Werribee Sewage Farm. Such a system required an intricate web over 2400 miles (3840km) of sewer piping, and while the pumping station was deactivated in 1965, the main sewers are still in use today.

Before reaching Spotswood however, sewage that flowed from people's homes had to travel through one of several mains, including the North Yarra at the north, and the South Yarra and Hobsons Bay mains at the south. One of them, the Melbourne main, started at the main CBD, and skirted the south-east region of Docklands, before crossing the Yarra to Port Melbourne where it met up with the Hobsons Bay main.

Divers were especially busy when construction crossed the Yarra. Most notably, a key section of the Melbourne main was inserted west of the Spencer Street Bridge in 1897. It involved lowering a large cast-iron tube into the river and sinking it into a prepared trench. The divers assisted in the trimming of banks of bluestone metal for the bed of the tube. When



the tube broke during installation, the divers examined the tube, and assisted in bolting it together, all of which happened underwater.

Their jobs could also take a morbid turn. Sometimes, tunnelling under the Yarra would prove fatal. On April 12, 1895, while working on the Hobsons Bay main, the tunnel collapsed and six men drowned. In that incident, divers were used to examine the damaged tunnel and had to fill up the hole with bags of clay. Another accident at the South Yarra/Prahran main in December 1897, saw five men killed after breathing noxious gas. The retrieval of the bodies was up to the board's chief diver, Mr Beckett, as reported by *The Age*. After the tunnel was purposefully flooded, he dived in to retrieve the lost bodies (initially unsuccessful due to air pressure). He used leaded weights to hold his equilibrium, could only breathe through tubing attached to an oxygen apparatus (controlled by two men) and with the hot conditions, was likely in great discomfort.

It is no doubt that such jobs were dangerous professions, especially as the only thing

protecting the diver from a mouthful of toxic water would've been those bulky but, hopefully, watertight diving suits. A fault in the suit or a lack of oxygen made drowning a real risk. Accidents also happened and Beckett was not immune. An article in the *Ballarat Star* reported on October 18, 1897 that, while he was inspecting a sewer construction near Church Street Bridge, a box of concrete landed on his helmet! As he appeared to take only a small amount of the impact, he survived.

Little else is known about the circumstances of this photograph, but it does give a window into the early work of an organisation that was quickly becoming important to the liveability of Melbourne ●



Ashley Smith

RESEARCHER
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VICTORIA

A killer in Docklands

Two bodies have been found a week apart by the Moonee Ponds Creek as it enters Docklands not far from COSTCO.

Cindy, the wife of a detective at the Missing Persons Unit, has just started a new job nearby.

The job at District Docklands has been lined up for her by a creepy photography tutor.

As Cindy gets out and about to take distinctive shots of the suburb, she's led into the bushes by the creek.

Is her tutor really showing her where to take the best shots of Docklands or is there something more sinister going on?

Sticks and Stones is a debut novel by journalist Katherine Firkin, a former police reporter for the *Herald Sun* and it offers the reader many satisfying false clues and coincidences.

Firkin follows a growing line of ex-journos from that newspaper who are taking to crime fiction, including Karina Kilmore with *Where the Truth Lies* and Jane Harper, who wrote *The Dry* and has just released her third mystery.

Inevitable comparisons will be made with the best-selling *The Dry* as these Melbourne crime chicks begin staking their own territories.

Some liked *The Dry* because the lead character, a policeman, had a secret past that added texture to his personality and the narrative.

The characters in *Sticks and Stones* are not of this ilk. The protagonist Detective Emmett Corban is an over-worked cop wanting to get home to see his son's first footy game.

The everyday professionalism of his relationships drives the book, directing the reader's attention to plot rather than mood.

There are a few sparks in the police station but always in the service of the investigation which builds slowly as the police team make connections between victims and their families.

It is not until chapter 16 when the phone of one of the victims is tracked to a teenager that



▲ *Sticks and Stones*, Katherine Firkin, Penguin, 2020

suspense is activated.

Did a young cop muck up their investigations at a time when two sexual predators were on the loose?

We know that there is a forlorn loser somewhere in this cast. His profile has slowly been built. Will his identity converge with that of the killer? What about the title *Sticks and Stones*? Does this give away his identity?

There are plenty of shifty males who could be guilty and a number of young, gullible women looking for happiness and a break from child-rearing who could be the next victim.

Crime fiction aficionados like to be misled. The unexpected killer in *The Dry* was one of its big pluses and *Sticks and Stones* has this in common.

There are gripping moments of tension and the police interrogations are believable, particularly when the teenager admits to another assault during questioning on the murders.

The novel plays for the kind of realism depicted on a typical TV police procedure but with the added bonus of actual locations being identified ●



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Communicating to your communities during COVID-19

Right now, there are a lot of question marks as to when and if it will ever be possible to get back to "normal" following the COVID-19 pandemic.

As the restrictions ease, and as Melburnians go back to their schools and workplaces, now is the time for all of us to consider the "new normal".

For an owners' corporation (OC) responsible for managing a large and diverse community, my advice is to implement a comprehensive communication strategy, and to be seen to lead from the front.

Face to face meetings are not presently possible, so a Zoom or Skype meeting, or a telephone conference facility is going to be crucial. Emails are effective, but so often we see very long email chains between committee members that go off topic, or simply go in circles. A short and sharp meeting by telephone or Zoom (with minutes) is preferable.

For starters, the contractors that you engage and pay good money for, need to act in a coordinated fashion. The OC managers, concierges, facilities managers and cleaners all need to be in constant communication with each other and to work as a team. For some larger buildings, this will need to be every day, for other buildings, a weekly meeting will suffice.

These contractors need to be discussing cleaning practices, cashflow issues, and safety and security issues every day, and they need to be reporting to the committee about these issues every day and every week.

Let me break this down further:

Cleaning practices – the committee and residents need to be kept in constant contact about whether it is safe to do certain things. When will the gym and pool be reopened? How often are the elevators, stairs and common property doors and intercoms being cleaned, and with what products? Have the cleaners been instructed to use a special product? If so, what is it? How many times a day is this being applied? Have the cleaners' on-site hours been increased? Are log books being kept? Who is checking those?

Cashflow issues – the OC manager needs to be keeping an eye on the bills. For many OCs, holding the annual general meeting (AGM) is

not possible right now. But for many buildings, new budgets need to be struck and levy letters still need to go out. Of course, some owners will not be able to pay those levies. So, if the cash is not coming in quickly for the OC, the committee needs to have a plan to keep the lights on. This might include borrowing money from the maintenance fund, or applying for a loan, or otherwise entering into payment plans with owners for their levies to be paid by instalments. The committee needs to keep on top of this, and try to manage the budget carefully while acting as humanely as possible.

Security issues – the concierge and building managers and security staff need to act vigilantly to ensure that short-term rental accommodation operators are not permitted to operate. The public health order has not yet been lifted at the time of publication, so no unauthorised holiday makers should be permitted in buildings at this time. The concierge, building manager and security staff needs to keep a list of apartments where these laws are being breached, and the committee should be ready to report these owners to the police if it becomes an issue.

A weekly or fortnightly newsletter to residents about these issues needs to be circulated. Whether it's on the noticeboard or the lifts, or is sent out by email or via a portal or Facebook page, it is going to be of vital importance to get the message out.

Effective and regular communication will reassure your community that they are in good hands. Talk the talk, and walk the walk. It's not going to be easy, but you'll all get through it together over the next few months ●



Tom Bacon
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Keep your head in the boat

I, like so many I talk to, think we are really very lucky that Australia has survived the COVID-19 pandemic as well as we have.

We are in the very fortunate position that we have the headspace and time to be focused on the inconveniences – the difficulties, frustrations and yes, financial losses – that restrictions have brought. This is, indeed, a far better position to be aggrieved by the inconveniences that actions to save our lives have caused, than it is to be grieving the inconceivable loss of life that was forecast.

A conversation I have found repeating itself, is the one around JobKeeper.

The frustration that I am seeing as I continue working, often unpaid, to support my clients and ensure we have the best path out of restrictions and into a successful business landscape, is from the employees. And it's a simple gripe, but one that is heard often. It's around the fairness of some people having to work for their pay, while others are at home receiving JobKeeper. It is such a petty and short-sighted gripe, and it infers that those at home are in some way better off. As though there has been some choice, rather than businesses just trying to survive and support staff anyway they can.

Keep your head in the boat.

Culture is such an important component to how people feel, whether they believe in the shared values of the business or team or are merely using them as a façade while looking sideways to try to secure the upper hand, to accelerate their own path. The right culture embraces not only the core values, but the individuals who are the very essence of that team. Culture starts from the top, and great leaders take enormous care to understand their teams and what drives them. When each person knows their purpose, their value and their path, then comparisons to others fall by the wayside, gripes are rare and people genuinely engage and deliver. And then some. Loyalty, comradery, trust all equal results. And when there are results from a team whose members value each other, there's no stopping them.

Keep your head in the boat.

It's also true in all walks of life. There are always people who compare themselves to others, griping that they didn't get the same result as someone else, complaining that someone else succeeded over them, inferring there's some form of favouritism or unfair advantage. There are also companies and teams that behave like this, constant complaints and excuses as to why they aren't where they thought they'd be. As they scrutinise other business and individuals, and throw rocks at their successes, they rarely

consider the damage they are doing to themselves. They are simply robbing themselves of opportunities to succeed.

Keep your head in the boat.

My son has been rowing for his school club for more than six seasons. In that time, there have been three rowing directors, and all have said the same thing. "Keep your head in the boat". At first, at the tender age of 12, this advice seemed logical. Not really possible to leave your head on the bank and row a one-kilometre race. It was only with more time on the river, more involvement in racing regattas, more time spent observing not just who was winning and losing, but HOW they were doing it, that it really became quite profound advice. You see, whether a boat was winning, coming middle of the pack or just trying to finish, if a rower looked sideways to see what the competition was doing, it was all over. The oars would crab, the forward motion of the boat stagger, the crew move from being synchronised to disjointed and their path is lost.

And, as the maturity sets in for these young rowers the double meaning of "keep your head in the boat" starts to be realised. That it's not just the physical importance of keeping your head in the boat and not turning to look at the competition, but also the psychological importance of this. That you literally focus only on your team, on each stroke and make sure

you row the race past the finish line. Whether your goal is to win, or train a new crew at a capped rate, whether your goal is to take out a hard-won gold or to simply get down the river without falling in, the important thing is to keep your focus, keep your head in the boat, and don't worry about what anyone else is doing.

As restrictions slowly ease, there are still many frustrations. But let's remember it's a race to save so many lives and we need to focus on that. As individuals find themselves still working, or on benefits for the first time – remember, you are part of a team and if you don't feel that then ask for support. As businesses face having to reinvent to win the race to survive, remember your culture is what brings everyone together and if that's a struggle then get a coach. And to those who are finding that criticising and throwing rocks at others to upset their race is making you feel better about yours – get your head back in the boat and row.

I hope that calmer waters reach us all soon.
Until next month, Abby x ●



Abby Crawford
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SAM, AUSTRALIAN TAX OFFICE

I'm hanging out to get back to the gym and the pub.



JAYASHREE, STUDENT

I've missed seeing my friends. I miss going out to eat or for cultural experiences.



PRATIMA, STUDENT

I'm most looking forward to going outside with my friends and exploring new areas that we haven't been to before.



PAUL, BANKER

I couldn't wait to get back into restaurants. Now they're allowed to open, but they're only allowed to have one person per four metres. A lot of the places I want to go in Docklands are quite small so I'll have to wait a little bit longer.

Faces of Docklands

Question:

What are you most excited to do in Docklands now restrictions are easing up?

CHAMBER UPDATE

Coming out of COVID

"I know I'm not the only one that has woken up some mornings expecting to see Mila Jovovic patrolling the esplanade picking off stray zombies in some post-apocalyptic B-grade horror movie."

But the good news is we're on our way out. How long this will take and what the world is going to look like is the realm of much more intelligent people than I but I can tell you that I will be happily fitting in any restaurant this week that will take me for a beer and a friendly chat.

Docklands Community Farmers Market

What COVID has produced is some very quick pivoting and business adaptations. Docklands Sunday Markets has been an institution but the owner was smart enough to realise it was becoming stale and quickly adapted to the new world – buy local, buy fresh, enjoy it as an experience.

The very first community farmers market was right in the middle of lockdown but the City of Melbourne's pedestrian counters showed NewQuay promenade with numbers that rivalled the 2019 average for a Sunday. Amazing cheeses, fruit, vegies, pastries all presented on what was a glorious autumn day. Stay tuned to our socials – www.fb.me/melbdock as the word is that it's likely to be held more often.

Docklands coming together

I recently provided a verbal report to the City of Melbourne and Development Victoria. The figures have been almost unbelievable. With the closing of huge businesses like ANZ, Myer, NAB, NBN, Grant Thornton, Latitude – combining with the closure of Central Pier, meaning no event bookings, combining with no tourists, combining with international students going home, Docklands, on average has some 100,000 less visitors on a daily basis. But ... out walking every day, visiting our members, one thing has become very clear. Docklands has pulled together. We've all gone out, had a coffee, ordered takeaway, shared our love for our local businesses and it's brought this community closer together.

Then, the bad side

Of course, as would be expected at times like this, we've also seen a rise in unacceptable behaviours.

There are two young men actively targeting buildings on the NewQuay side of Docklands, prying open cages and checking for open cars. There's also another two young men tagging Docklands walls. Don't take any chances. If you see these activities simply call 000. We'll follow up the graffiti removal but if we can catch any of these four low-lives in the act then we can have the police deal with them on site ●



Shane Wylie
MEDIA DIRECTOR
DOCKLANDSCC.COM.AU



BUSINESS

A familiar face returns to Docklands

Amid all the uncertainty of a global pandemic, the return of one Docklands stalwart has come as a pleasant reprieve.

WORDS BY Jack Hayes

Heidi Sparks, an award-winning professional with more than 20 years' experience in residential real estate, is back in Docklands and is calling Nelson Alexander home.

Mrs Sparks left Docklands almost a decade ago after a long-serving tenure at NewQuay giant, MAB Corporation, where she grew and developed a love for inner-city property management.

Now, after spending eight years working on the Mornington Peninsula where she earned the Real Estate Institute of Victoria (REIV) Property Manager of the Year for 2018 and 2019, she is back in Docklands and feeling at home.

"I was happy with where I was, but my husband and I just felt it was the right time to move back," Mrs Sparks said. "My eldest son is starting high school in the next couple of years; all our friends and family still live in Melbourne; there was a whole lifetime drawing us back here."

"Working in the inner city was a priority for me because this is an area I really love working in property. It has been incredible being able to come back to Docklands."

Mrs Sparks will oversee Nelson Alexander's rental department while continuing her work as Victoria's premier property manager and, in the process, educating a new generation of real

▼ Heidi Sparks.



estate professionals.

Admittedly, a change in career during a global pandemic is far from ideal, but Mrs Sparks has found a reward in these challenging times.

"The major difficulty has been adjusting to changes in rules and regulations to the *Residential Tenancy Act (1997)*," she said.

"It has been a big adjustment as we can't issue certain notices as we would normally, all the while staying informed regarding negotiations relating COVID-19 rent reductions and so on." "It has been challenging, but also interesting to witness the changes to come out of this."

With the overall decline of Australia's property market much smaller than most analysts expected, and defying fears that property prices could lose a third of their value in a worst-case economic scenario, Mrs Sparks has optimism for the future of Docklands.

"It [Docklands] was very different then, to what it is now. When I left there was nowhere near the number of buildings and activity compared to Docklands today," she said.

"Even in the face of COVID-19, I have a feeling it will bounce back bigger and better than ever." ●

For more information:
nelsonalexander.com.au



A concierge's perspective on vertical living

Many vertical villages count their concierge as among their most valued feature, but how do these "keepers of the keys" view our vertical lifestyle?

Often the first person encountered when starting your vertical living journey is the building concierge.

It was for me.

And I really liked the idea that I wasn't entering an anonymous building - that there was someone readily contactable and knowledgeable in the ways of this apartment building.

At that time, I wasn't quite sure what to expect from a vertical village concierge.

I was aware that the origins of the role could be traced back to old France where the royal household employed a concierge to cater to the various needs of guests and be the "keeper of the keys" to the many castle rooms.

And I was also aware that rather than dying off, this role was alive and well in a range of sectors - albeit with a less regal focus. There is the familiar hotel concierge who helps visitors secure those tricky theatre tickets, then there is the airport concierge and, more recently, the hospital concierge. And with a nod to their exclusive past, the well-to-do can avail themselves of the services of a personal concierge (not to be confused with one's personal assistant or butler!)

But what could I expect from a vertical village concierge?

According to the US National Concierge Association (and yes, there are several such groups), duties will differ from place to place. But being well-connected and passionate about their role are invaluable traits. Also high on the list is the ability to listen and observe and then make sense of what is seen and heard.

So, what have our vertical village concierges observed about our vertical lifestyle?

For this I turned to James Naidu - my building's concierge who introduced me into the

world of vertical living.

Originally from the corporate sector, James is a five-and-a-half-year concierge veteran. Currently based in Victoria Point in Docklands, James is very well known to the more than 1000 residents who dwell there, as well as the many service providers and delivery staff who frequent our building.

I first asked this keeper of the keys what he had observed as the best feature of vertical living.

"Safety" was James's ready reply - "without a doubt, it's safety".

Digging a little deeper, I asked what form this safety took.

James noted the visible security measures that are now common across our buildings as well as the growing monitoring services. But more than this, James said that residents felt safe in vertical villages as they did not have to deal with every issue on their own.

"Compare that to living in a house. If something happens, it's all up to you."

This means that if you are living solo, or are new to the country or are not very physically active, if you live in a vertical village, you have a known first port of call. And this, according to James, is a great benefit of vertical living.

Turning next to key challenges confronting our sector, James's view is that the biggest issue on our horizon is designing new ways to live with COVID-19.

And he emphasises "with".

In his opinion, it's not really going to be "post-COVID-19" anytime soon.

Rather, James muses, it will be more "how can we live safely and comfortably while this virus is still around?" And with restrictions slowly lifting, the challenge (and perhaps opportunity) is for each building to comprehensively review how can we live together, balancing safety with comfort.

This led nicely onto our third question about

his biggest challenge as concierge and James then spoke about the issues which consumed a great deal of his time.

It will likely come as no surprise that the top complaint was noise - and that our "stay-at-home orders" have seen a dramatic increase in the number of noise complaints with a corresponding drop in people's tolerance of these incidents. Resolving such issues is where a seasoned concierge shows their mettle and James's strategy is to take a personal approach by directly engaging with all parties and seeking reasonable resolution - and, in so doing, "educating people about standards".

For our final topic, I asked James about what innovations he saw for our sector.

Perhaps drawing upon his corporate background, James nominated the trend towards better systems integration, especially the ability for residents to access information in the way they wanted.

I also asked his opinion about some trends, including the move towards 24/7 concierge services. His advice is that we need to be very clear about this role and, in particular, whether this is a concierge or security position - or some new hybrid.

Regarding the demand for better and brighter amenities, James's view is that flashy facilities are exciting when people move in, but as time goes on, most don't utilise these. In his opinion, it is what is inside a resident's apartment that is more important - along with the face that greets you as you enter your vertical village! ●



Janette Corcoran

JANETTE CORCORAN IS ANAPARTMENT LIVING EXPERT.

LEARN MORE ON FACEBOOK.COM/SKYPADLIVING/

WE LIVE HERE

Cladding: are you on the funding list?

Does your building qualify for support from the state government's cladding rectification fund?

It's a common question and we were delighted to be approached recently by Cladding Safety Victoria (CSV) with an offer to explain the process in detail.

CSV was established last year to work with individual owners, identified by the Victorian Building Authority (VBA) as having extreme- or high-risk cladding, on the appropriate solution for their building.

CSV has been tasked with providing advice on how to reduce fire risk, helping owners to find qualified project managers and other professionals. In higher risk situations, CSV is responsible for funding approved works.

Despite the ravages of COVID-19, We Live Here was able to meet virtually with CSV to delve into the details.

Now we have a great deal of information to share with you ...

Meet your new Municipal Building Surveyor!

The Minister for Planning Richard Wynne has appointed the VBA as the Municipal Building Surveyor (MBS) for more than 400 buildings assessed as having the highest risk from cladding.

In these cases, the VBA has assumed the functions of the MBS from the relevant local government. This means that affected buildings in inner Melbourne will be dealing with the VBA rather than the City of Melbourne.

The audit

Through the state-wide cladding audit, the VBA has been working with owners' corporations (OCs) to identify buildings with combustible cladding to assess the relative risks for these buildings.

About 2200 buildings have been inspected and assessed through the VBA audit.

We have learnt that the state-wide cladding audit has resumed building inspections during COVID-19 restrictions, with protective equipment and social distancing measures.

If your building is to be inspected as part of the audit, you should receive a letter from the VBA. Building managers and OCs should also be contacted by the VBA prior to any inspection (We Live Here does know that notices have not always been received - if you have experienced this, please let us know). The inspection usually involves cutting out a piece of each different type cladding, each about the size of a CD. The holes will be plugged and sealed by the inspectors.

VBA sends the samples off for chemical and fire resistance testing. The inspection entails much more than samples. The extent, location and fire risk of all instances of cladding will be examined in detail. The inspectors will require access to as-built drawings and other documentation.

Four stages to determine eligibility for funding

There are four stages to determine eligibility. Your building must satisfy ALL criteria:

1. Deemed higher risk by the state-wide cladding audit;
2. Subject to a Building Notice or Order related to combustible external wall cladding;
3. Referred to CSV by either the VBA or the City of Melbourne; and
4. Prioritised for rectification by CSV.

To date, 487 buildings have been referred to the CSV. These buildings are now being

"prioritised". CSV says that it is reviewing 60 buildings a month.

Just before going to press we asked CSV how many buildings have already been approved for funding. We will update you in the next column.

Don't call us, we'll call you

If CSV determines that your building is eligible, they will contact your OC to invite participation in the funding program. That would be a day to celebrate!

The buildings that qualify will receive a great deal of assistance from CSV - much more than just the funds.

Understandably CSV wants to make sure that its money is being well spent, and it takes high-level oversight of the appointment of the quantity surveyor and project manager and builders - all from the state government accredited vendor panels.

Knowing that your project team has been accredited by the state government will be a great comfort for OCs.

One big question we put to CSV is what happens if the rectification is urgent and the building has to proceed with rectification without the government funding - could eligible buildings be reimbursed for costs already incurred? Good news - according to CSV, if the works are exclusively for cladding and due process has been followed, such costs could well be eligible for funding.

If you have any questions about the cladding rectification program or you have an experience you wish to share, please let us know. We will stay in close contact with CSV so that we can keep you up to date with developments.

Short-term operators crunched

If any other readers have more stories about long-term rentals replacing short-term letting please let us know.

COVID-19 and apartment living

Is your building changing any processes as Melbourne prepares for a post-COVID-19 reopening?

We would welcome feedback on how the COVID-19 pandemic is being managed in your building and whether any specific issues have arisen.

Your stories

Thank you to all those who have contributed your stories to date, please keep your emails and cards coming in!

Campaign donations

As a not-for-profit organisation, donations from individuals and buildings keep our campaigns going. To register as a supporter of We Live Here or to donate, please visit our website at welvehere.net. We Live Here does not accept donations from commercial tourism interests ●

Barbara Francis & Rus Littleton

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Pet's Corner

A mane fit for a master



Mozart gets stopped regularly because his mane looks like fine art.



WORDS BY *Tamara Clark*

The nine-year-old Bichon Frise loves to play chasey with his owner Christine and together they are both huge fans of ball games.

Christine's enthusiastic little friend has been trained immaculately and knows to walk around carrying a tiny basket in his mouth when he wants to be given treats.

While his happy face doesn't show it, Mozart has been through quite a lot and still has a patch of short hair on his back leg from ACL surgery. This was the second time he has suffered this injury and Christine said it is common in this breed of dog.

Mozart is a fitness fanatic and keeps the humans in his life on their toes. His favourite places to walk are around Docklands, especially by the water. Christine makes sure to commute around the suburb every day she possibly can because she knows how much the fresh air, exercise and outdoor aromas can make Mozart's day! ●

▼ *Christine with her bichon frise Mozart.*



PRECINCT PERSPECTIVE

Looking beyond the pandemic

As a change in our lives we did not anticipate, the coronavirus (COVID-19) lockdown has placed restrictions on our everyday activities.

I asked a few residents of NewQuay what they would do when the restrictions were lifted. I also asked them what earmarked changes they were most looking forward to.

Working at home has advantages, no doubt, but one resident said, "Probably the most important is being able to go back to work. I work from home, personal interaction with people on a daily basis is critically important."

For many residents, the simple pleasures of times of old were what was wanted: "It would be nice to see the community back, enjoying cafés, restaurants and the atmosphere of community and tourists."

This resident, like many of the NewQuay locals, would like to see the restaurants re-opening, having dinner out. Adeana and Aye said, "When restrictions are lifted, we are most looking forward to slurping on a big bowl of ramen!"

Locals said they want to see residents being able to be out and about. Other residents were looking forward to the return of the Sunday

Markets or going to the casino.

For others, reconnecting with family is a theme. Shruthi, an international student and local resident said, "Before all this happened I was planning on going to India to see my family – but I couldn't. I am really looking forward to seeing my family when the lockdown restrictions are eased." Another resident, Margaret, said, "The things I am most looking forward to when the restrictions are lifted is to spend time with family and friends, hug my grandchildren, go to the movies, visit the Arts Centre and the National Gallery of Victoria, watching live theatre and to again sit down and enjoy a meal at all the many wonderful restaurants around the Docklands. Simply, a return to normality is what I will like the most."

While residents valued their time spent with family members, there was an opportunity for a return to normality and breathing space. NewQuay local Monique quipped, "The things I am most looking forward to are ones I took for granted prior to this experience. Sharing a cocktail and a meal outside of my apartment, inviting friends over for a barbecue and even just window shopping. I'll be excited just to get back to some normality and oh my god, having some time away from my brother, ha ha!"

In response to a question of future developments in NewQuay, many residents were looking forward to the completion of the

Marriot Hotel and for the decision-making and planning finalisation for Central Pier. Adeana and Aye said, "We are looking forward to the full occupancy of shops in the expanded part of The District – hopefully this and other new developments will bring some more vibrancy to the area." Residents were also curious about the progress of the previously touted water feature or laser fountain. A NewQuay local said, "I am looking forward to the water feature show which was briefly seen on the news. It would be nice to see the crowd come to Docklands."

A local resident was hoping for more vibrancy in the area post COVID-19: "Hopefully new businesses such as yoga studios and more family- and pet-friendly amenities such as a greater variety of restaurants will come to the area. A return to an even more lively Docklands than before the lockdown will be a sign of things truly turning around. We are also keen to see how the wharf will be redeveloped in the near future."

Another NewQuay local said, "being serious for a moment, as an architect I have many critical issues with how the council and planning department is dealing with Docklands, in particular NewQuay. Having said that, with more outdoor social spaces, the council needs to provide more events to get people here. Having Firelight Festival is great, but more needs to be done to make the area a permanent attraction,

they cannot rely on MAB, LendLease and other private developers to foot the bill because, as we have seen, they won't. Hopefully more hotels will help reduce the number of AirBnB in apartments and hopefully attract a better type of person. We had someone trying to break into our apartment just a few weeks ago while we were watching TV at midnight, giving the excuse they were confused about which floor they were on..."

Monique reminds us that in future times, when we look back, we should be pleased: "The developments I'd most love to see come to NewQuay are those that have been mooted for some time. For example, the AFL moving operations, and creating a precinct at the Ron Barassi Snr Park and seeing that void filled between the end of NewQuay Promenade and the Park. I think when we look back on the Docklands in 2030 and see those kinds of developments and this water-based precinct being a centre of attention, we'll be proud to have been the early adopters of the suburb we love" ●



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▼ Central Pier murals. Photo by Tony Bryers.



▼ Picture of Jim Stynes Bridge with Good Shed in the distance. Photo by Cox Architecture.



Celebrating our heritage

So much has been happening in online “virtual” world of maritime heritage that few of us feel that we have been “locked-in” or “locked-out” completely.

Emerging tentatively from various levels of “ISO” it’s time to come outside and look around Docklands with fresh eyes. For example, as you look about with fresh eyes, check out the many maritime references in the names of your streets, lanes and land spaces.

Few Docklanders would be aware that Hubbuck Lane, takes its name from the vessel S.S. *Hubbuck*, the first commercial ship to enter Victoria Dock on February 20, 1893. Some Docklands names are obviously nautical but others less so. If you are puzzled by the names you see or if you can share information of “strange” names email info@mmhn.org.au.

Take a look at look at Central Pier - notice the “art”? A long-term Docklands resident worried about deterioration of the murals on the walls prompted Melbourne Maritime Heritage Network (MMHN) to investigate. We questioned Development Victoria (DV) about deterioration of the murals which initially formed part of a DV “History Walk of Docklands” launched in 2002 to celebrate the maritime and industrial history of Docklands.

In 2009 and 2015, DV undertook a retouch of the images but they plan to leave them on the Pier for the time being but have reassured MMHN that the originals are in safe keeping should other copies be required at a later date. Central Pier has been, of course, an iconic stevedoring presence in Victoria Harbour since 1916-17. At the very centre of Docklands, the harbour has significant heritage value in its own right. It was excavated 125 years ago largely by hand and steam shovel and is a body of water which is an astounding example of 19th century civil engineering – the second largest excavated harbour in the world.

MMHN member and Docklands resident Tony Bryer has compiled a brief history of Victoria Dock in his blog (tonybryer.com/2018/02/). It’s hard to comprehend today that much of Melbourne’s and Victoria’s prosperity has emanated from trade via these docks in the modern precinct of Docklands. By 1908, Victoria Dock was handling 90 per cent of Victoria’s imports. And it grew. To increase the amount of wharf space available to hand cargo, Central Pier was constructed in 1916-17. By the 1950s Melbourne claimed that its port was the most mechanised in the Commonwealth. Containerisation, larger ships and technological changes in the stevedoring industry changes led to the docks gravitating to the new down-river Swanson Dock with its massive container cranes opened in the late 1960s.

But it’s important to understand that



▲ Picture from Public Records Office of Victoria.

Docklands heritage extends beyond Victoria Harbour and turning towards the CBD you will find another fascinating heritage “docks” precinct on the north bank of the Yarra. Keeping the river on your right hand side, wind your way along Australia Wharf dating from 1855, the wharf was an important loading facility, especially for the now demolished gasworks. The area was used as a wharf up until the construction of the Charles Grimes Bridge in 1975. See vhd.heritagecouncil.vic.gov.au/places/13853/download-report.

Walk or cycle on towards the CBD along the Jim Stynes Bridge, built in 2014, suspended parallel to the Yarra River linking Docklands with the CBD via Northbank. Once you reach the small pocket park, pause and look up. Dramatic change will confront you. The recently revealed skeleton of a truly vast Goods Shed stretching way along the wharf towards the CBD. This Shed and the now restored heritage-listed electric crane (1948) on the wharf alongside it form the last intact example

of an “integrated wharf-shed-crane berth” in the Port of Melbourne making this one of Melbourne’s most significant heritage waterfronts. Developer, maritime enthusiasts, and MMHN member Riverlee has now commenced restoration of the iconic Goods Shed No.5. The roof is being dismantled and this wharf has countless links to Melbourne’s maritime heritage, including an enduring relationship with Australia’s Antarctic ships.

This photo was taken on March 17, 1971 onboard *Thala Dan* alongside North Wharf No.5/6. She is looking aft and west towards *Nella Dan* with port side alongside on North Wharf No. 7/8 with a Melbourne Gas Works silo to the right north of North Wharf No. 9 ●



Cr Jackie Watts
CHAIR OF MELBOURNE MARITIME HERITAGE NETWORK AND COUNCILLOR AT THE CITY OF MELBOURNE

HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Five things to remember when working or studying from home

Here are some simple tips to ensure your home office set up is safe.

With many people working from home now, it’s important to take some steps to ensure that your workspace is healthy. Keep reading to see how you can make these simple changes that may keep you feeling energised, while preventing unnecessary soreness and strain.

Set up a desk

This is the one you are most likely to be familiar with. While it can be nice to sit on the couch with your feet up while you work, it’s unhealthy for your back, neck and shoulders. Ideally, your computer screen should be positioned between 50 and 70 centimetres away from your eyes (about an arm’s length) and your screen should be at eye level. Looking down puts strain on your neck and causes your shoulders to hunch. To avoid this, it is beneficial to have a separate key board and mouse if you work from a laptop, so you can raise the laptop on a stand to ensure your screen is at eye level.

Take breaks

With less distractions when working from home, it’s easier to sit for long periods of time without taking a moment to move your body and recalibrate. Try to practice the 20-20-20 rule. Every 20 minutes take a 20 second break; stand up and look about 20 metres in front of you.

Remember your eyes

Looking 20 metres ahead of you isn’t just about taking your gaze away from your emails or assignment, it’s to prevent eye strain. By remembering to look up from your screen and focus on the view outside your window, you’re allowing your eyes to relax – this technique is also proven to be good for your neck, shoulders and stress levels.

Blink regularly

Sometimes when you’re engaged with a screen, you don’t blink as often as you should. This can cause dryness, leading to irritation and headaches. Try regularly closing your eyes for 20 seconds as part of your break routine to give your eyes the attention they deserve.

Drink water

Put a big bottle of water on your desk and take note of how often you need to replenish it. Or aim to have a drink of water every time you follow the 20-20-20 rule to try and stay hydrated right throughout the day.

Need a reminder? Download the Straighten Up app which will send you regular notes to stand up, move around and take care of yourself when working from home ●



Dr Mike Edgley
PHYSIOTHERAPIST
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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Step up to the mark!

I was pleased you ran this open letter [to Minister for Planning Richard Wynne], which sums up the concerns of Docklands residents.

Why don’t you run with these issues by pursuing the politicians and developers referred to?

Docklands News used to be more campaigning, but seems to have become a bit sycophantic with politicians and developers lately.

As you are aware, Docklands residents have no voice in the planning and political process as the process is completely run by developers (as the letter said).

I personally have tried to contact Wynne and Mr Du of Capital Alliance re the planning extensions on the Marriott hotel, with no response from either.

As usual they do whatever they want with non-existent planning laws.

An independent newspaper could play a valuable role.

Please step up to the mark. It would be a great public service.

Daryl Mead



Please help!

PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE, can someone address the signals ringing out across Victoria Harbour and the Docklands precinct DAY and NIGHT!!! I acknowledge the importance of work done at the docks, and of even more the importance the safety of the workers onsite. Having had some experience I know that an adjustment as simple as slightly redirecting the signal downwards can make a huge difference to the unwanted far reaching noise, while actually being a more effective warning to those workers on the ground in the area where the warnings are needed. Surely, I’m not the only one being kept awake! WHAT ABOUT YOU SALLY CAPP???

Lea Young

Advertisement

LETTER - STOP DOCKLANDS HIGH-RISE

28 April 2020
Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning
1 Nicholson Street
East Melbourne
Victoria 3002

Attention: The Hon. Victorian Minister for Planning Richard Wynne

Dear Minister,

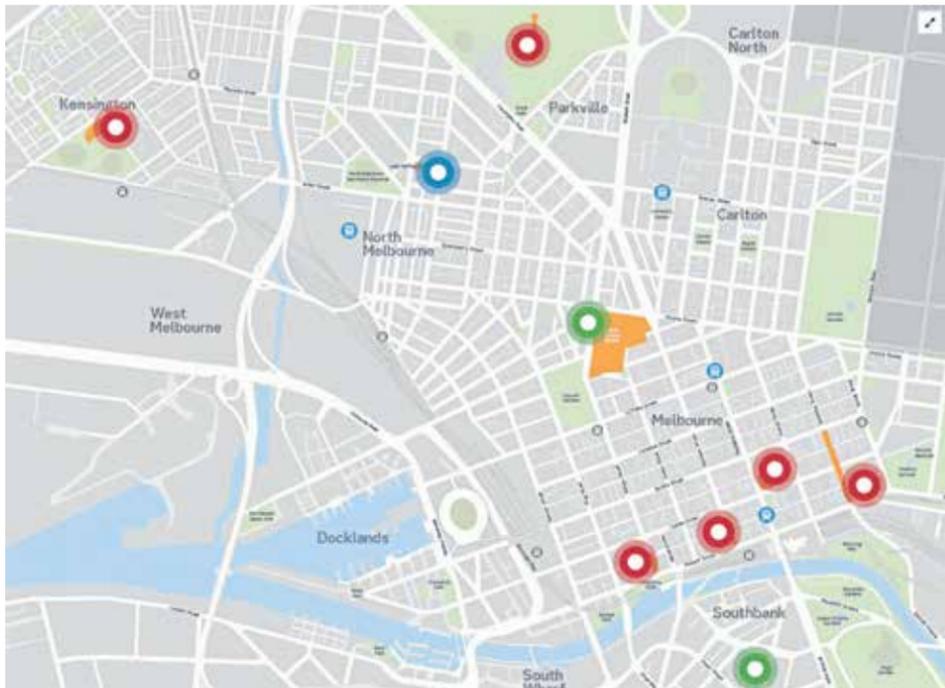
I am writing to you regarding the high-rise development at West Quay Docklands. This development includes a 220-metre-high, 30-storey development for mixed-use including residential, office, and retail. I am writing to you regarding the high-rise development at West Quay Docklands. This development includes a 220-metre-high, 30-storey development for mixed-use including residential, office, and retail. I am writing to you regarding the high-rise development at West Quay Docklands. This development includes a 220-metre-high, 30-storey development for mixed-use including residential, office, and retail.

I would appreciate your assistance in this matter.

Yours faithfully,
Daryl Mead



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滨海港区 预算菲薄

撰稿: David Schout

墨尔本市政最近发布的2020-21年预算草案中,虽然对周边地区的关键项目都有资金分配,但对滨海港区基础设施的投资似乎很少。

最近几个月,市政的预算重新作了定位,以应对与COVID-19疫情有关的短期措施的需求。

这个称之为“复苏预算”,是30年来市政首次陷入赤字状况。

虽然用于“创造就业机会和扶持墨尔本经济”的1.685亿澳元基础设施计划仍能超过去年“创纪录”支出的1.66亿澳元。

但是这个预算似乎没有给滨海港区带来多少具体的支持。

这个预算的亮点是对维多利亚女王市场重建、南岸大道重建、市政厅翻新和中央商务区自行车道的巨额投资。

但是市政网站上的一张图片(如下)显示了滨海港区内缺乏固定的建设投资。

而且,期待已久的港区滨海大道升级的资金细节也不见了,可能市政在等待州政府和AFL对有关Marvel体育馆的更新动议。

但是在其2020-21年的计划草案中,确实承诺了“激活以维多利亚港为重点的滨海港区”。

该文件写到:“鉴于中央码头的关闭,与维多利亚发展局合作,确定一些具体举措,这些举措将增加对维多利亚港的客流访问量,以及增加对整个滨海港区的酒店和零售业的投入。”

文件中还承诺“探索水上运输和旅游业的机会,与维多利亚发展基金会和维多利亚遗产组织合作,就海洋遗产博物馆体验进行战略可行性研究”。

市政已经承诺,一旦有关COVID-19疫情最糟糕的限制解除,将吸引游客回滨海港区,尽管具体细节尚未公布。

正在考虑举办一个特别大型的街头派对,可能会在卡尔顿(Carlton)延伸到滨海港区和南岸,以庆祝重新开放。

六月份的火光(Firelight)节被取消了,港区居民及市长萨利·卡普(Sally Capp)说,市议会很理解当地工作人员的困境。

“我们知道滨海港区的许多商业都在艰难地经营,所以当限制解除后,我们将与商界和所在区域的领袖一起,积极推动滨海港区的客流访问量。”



港区购物中心恢复营业

根据政府和卫生官员的新建议,滨海港区购物中心的许多零售商店已经重新开业。

这些商店包括UNIQLO、Hype DC、Cotton On、Miniso、Skechers、Oz-mosis、H&M和Kathmandu都已重新开张,以及周边的食品餐饮店都在疫情流行期间也以调整经营的方式开张。

港区购物中心的开放时间仍然是每天上午10点到下午6点,目前提供90分钟免费停车。为了支持重新开放,还启动了5澳元全天停车的优惠停车活动。

所有的商店都实行了安全规则,以确保其员工、顾客及当地社区的安全。规则还包括店内顾客数量的限制,进出口处的洗手消毒液以及地板和窗户的贴字,有助于社交距离。

滨海港区购物中心还发起了一项“呼叫与取货”计划,将已购买的商品直接送交到

客户的车上,无论是汽车、踏板车还是自行车,或其它所选择出行的方式。

从5月1日起,顾客可以选择非接触式访问他们所喜爱的商店和服务。顾客可以通过电话订购和付款,也可以在取货时点击付款。

港区购物中心首席执行官乔治·卡拉巴特索斯(George Karabatsos)说:“对我们来说,重要的是创新我们提供的商品,以确保墨尔本人仍然可以进入他们最喜欢的商店和餐馆,同时保持我们社区的安全。”

“我们的‘呼叫与取货’服务让客户能够继续充分利用港区购物中心和市场巷(Market Lane)提供的一切,并让我们能够在这一困难时期为经营商提供支持。”



社区生活 恢复更新

在疫情期间,滨海港区的“弹出式社区之家”一直致力于保持对当地社区的支持。

现在,该中心正期待安全地重新开放,并要求与社区成员取得联系,以帮助恢复和重建当地的社区生活。

社区发展工作者杰森·布彻(Jason Butcher)告诉《滨海港区新闻》,我们的“社区之家”在整个疫情期间,一直关注社区的需求,并适当地改变运作方式。

他说:“我们建立了一个社区照顾护理登记册,上面写有所有志愿者的名字,并且已

经准备好让社区居民与我们联系,或者我们了解有人很危难需要帮助。

“在过去的几周里,我们和这些志愿者一起在我们的区域内保持有社交距离的步行,这也是在最初的限制解除时开始的。”

“我们的志愿者非常兴奋,因为离我们‘社区之家’的重新启动和运行的日子越来越近了。”

布彻先生说,滨海港区有一个庞大的群体,其中有些人可能很脆弱。

他说:“当他们在这里几乎没有家庭或

社区支持时,尤其感到困难,比如国际学生和新移民,这些社区成员在滨海港区具有很突出的代表性。”

“由于封锁,很多人丢失了工作,有些人得不到任何支持措施的保护。”

他说,“弹出式社区之家”有望在接下来的几周内重新开放,并调整结构以适应目前的限制措施,希望扩展到社区的更大范围。

他说:“我们确实知道很多人受到了相当严重的打击,也有很多人在谈论复苏,我个人也认为有很多积极的复苏机会。”

图书馆重新开放

墨尔本市政确认,维多利亚滨海港区的图书馆将于6月9日星期二重新开放。

市政于6月1日宣布,鉴于COVID-19疫情在全州范围内的限制得以放松,市政对图书馆、娱乐中心和社区运动场所正在实施分阶段的重新开放。

市长萨利·卡普(Sally Capp)说,经过严格的容量和社交距离规定,一些特定的市政

设施将开始重新开放。

市长说:“我们知道人们一直在惦念图书馆和游泳池等社区设施,但是安全是我们的首要任务,因此我们将采取分阶段的方式重新开放这些设施。”

“过去一周,本市的行人人数比三周前增加了20%以上。”

“然而,我们不能急于回到过去的样子。重要的是我们要共同努力,遵循社交距离原则,并保持良好的卫生习惯,以确保我们社区的安全。”

除了港区图书馆以外,墨尔本城市图书馆、凯瑟琳·赛姆(Kathleen Syme)图书馆、北墨尔本图书馆、南岸图书馆和东墨尔本图书馆将于6月9日重新开放。

市政知识城市部门主管杰克·瓦茨(Jackie Watts)博士说,图书馆重新开放,顾客数量会受到限制,开放时间会减少。

她说:“当我们重新开放这些备受喜爱的图书馆时,我们的员工和社区的安全乃是至关重要的。”

“无法在家上网的、面临社交孤独和经

济困难的人将优先使用我们的图书馆。”

“对于那些无法返回到我们图书馆的人来说,我当然鼓励他们继续使用我们的数码图书馆服务。”

“自从COVID-19疫情的限制实施以来,对电子图书馆服务的需求有了巨大的增长,包括电子图书借阅量增长了76%,电子图书使用率增长了59%。有证据表明,图书馆被广泛认为是我们社区的基本资源。”

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THE DISTRICT
DOCKLANDS

An update from The District Docklands

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With safety protocols and social distancing measures in place The District welcomes back over 20 of your favourite brands including H&M, UNIQLO, Kathmandu, Cotton On, BONDS, Skechers, Cycles Galleria, Hype DC along with Toyworld, EB Games, Miniso plus many more.

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