

# DOCKLANDS NEWS

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## A “special place” on the water: New dragon boat club brings survivors together

Docklands’ newest dragon boat club has launched out of Victoria Harbour, and the team is made up entirely of breast cancer survivors and their supporters.

WORDS BY David Schout

PHOTOGRAPHY BY Murray Enders

SPORT

When Andrea Seers had lymph nodes removed from under her arms during breast cancer treatment she, like many women in the same position, recalls the “absolute agony” of moving her arms upwards.

She could not raise her arms above her head at all, and as part of physiotherapy had to train herself to creep her fingers up the wall “like a spider” to gradually gain her strength back.

There was another activity, however, that aided her recovery during this intensely difficult time.

Dragon boat paddling, a sport with now strong associations in Docklands, proved to be the perfect

recovery mechanism for Andrea for a number of reasons.

Physically, it was the ideal exercise.

“The constant repetition of every week going to gently paddle around Docklands and keeping those arms moving and keeping them strong is incredible,” she said.

But the activity is much more than a way in which to regain strength.

And as of recently, Andrea and a number of other breast cancer survivors have formed a new club called Dragons Abreast Melbourne Pink Phoenix (of which she is the president) based out of the Community Boating Hub in Victoria Harbour.

She told *Docklands News* that the importance of being surrounded by others who had experienced the same “attack” on their body simply couldn’t be understated.

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approved that allow us to progress the pier’s redevelopment, which we are planning to lodge in coming months.”

“Central Pier is a historic structure, and we are looking at a range of options for the pier – including removing the structure from the water as soon as practical given some parts are more than 100 years old,” Mr Ward said.

Mr Saleh, along with a host of other hospitality and tourism businesses that operated on the pier, are in the middle of suing Development Victoria for compensation over the shutdown and the losses they incurred of their leases which had several years remaining until 2026.

In a wide-ranging interview with *Dockland News*, Mr Saleh said their exit from the pier had been “horrendous” with his last communication with DV being January 10, 2020, when their lease was formally revoked, and “since then, it’s all been through lawyers”. But he said DV had “made no effort to see how we’re going” nor offered support.

“Essentially, at that night [during the shutdown of Central Pier], all of our turnover, all of our business, all of our assets, everything that we invested in there, was gone and we have nothing to show for it,” he said.

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## Future-shaping Docklands Summit mooted for August

WORDS BY *Sean Car*  
 COUNCIL AFFAIRS

The City of Melbourne has confirmed that it is on track to host a Docklands Summit in August, despite heading into July without having a confirmed date, location or scope for the high-level talks.

The council told *Docklands News* that ideas generated from the initiative would be used to develop a "Docklands Action Plan", which will "identify short-, medium- and long-term projects and programs to revitalise the precinct."

"The City of Melbourne is keenly progressing plans for a Docklands Summit – which is expected to take place in August," a council spokesperson said.

"Council officers have already begun consulting with key stakeholders from the local community, state government and business sector to define the scope of the summit and what success will look like."

"We look forward to releasing more details once plans for the summit are finalised."

At last month's Future Melbourne Committee (FMC) meeting hosted in Docklands, the council's CEO Justin Hanney reaffirmed its commitment to hosting a Docklands Summit, indicating publicly that the talks were planned for "late July-early August".

The council says the summit will be an "opportunity to hear from the community and key stakeholders on the challenges faced by the precinct and explore solutions to reactivate the precinct and drive visitation."

While a dedicated summit and ensuing plan for Docklands is welcome news for the precinct as it continues to grapple with the closure of Central Pier and the impacts of the pandemic, more details were expected to be confirmed by the council heading into July.

Docklands' other major authority Development Victoria provided *Docklands News* with no further update from its comments on the summit in June, saying it was still waiting for more concrete details from the council.

In 2020, Development Victoria engaged with stakeholders, including *Docklands News*, in compiling a Docklands Activation Strategy with the support of event consultants Alto Cubum.

However, the strategy was never shared with stakeholders nor publicly released and calls for a plan to reactivate and reimagine the precinct have continued throughout the pandemic.

*Docklands News* understands that as part of the summit, the council is "pushing hard" for Development Victoria to release its activation strategy to help inform its work for a Docklands Action Plan.

*Docklands News* will provide further updates on the summit in its August edition. ●



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## Change afoot in Victoria Harbour

WORDS BY *Sean Car*  
 WATERWAYS

Esplanade "Yanunung Quay" – a Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung word meaning "waterways".

But the *Lady Cutler*'s operator and Melbourne Passenger Boating Association president Jeff Gordon told *Docklands News* that the permanent move to North Wharf near the heritage fleet would have "major ramifications for our operation".

"This is a deathly blow to our business. We are clients of the City of Melbourne and pay our marina fees through the waterways team, but don't feel that the team is supporting us, or our message isn't getting through to higher decision makers," Mr Gordon said.

A City of Melbourne spokesperson said the *Lady Cutler*, which occupied one of four berths and "reduces facility capacity", had been permitted to berth at Harbour Esplanade temporarily since it first issued Mr Gordon with a notice to move in January 2021.

"We are acutely aware of the challenges caused by the limited capacity to berth vessels at key locations, including Harbour Esplanade," a council spokesperson said. "As we look to welcome and attract more people back to Docklands with increased ferry services, all four berths at the terminal are required."

While Mr Gordon said he had long requested his boat be granted permission to berth closer to NAB, the council said, "an engineering investigation found the location near NAB is not a suitable location to berth due to the large size of the vessel." ●

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# Firelight winter celebration to ignite Docklands

*Firelight Festival will light up Docklands on the first weekend of July and, after a two-year hiatus, is set to be bigger than ever.*

WORDS BY David Schout  
PHOTOGRAPHY BY Murray Enders  
EVENTS

The three-night winter celebration will take place from Friday July 1 to Sunday July 3 and feature light shows, fire pits, live music and a range of different pop-up food options.

Taking place across three Docklands precincts — Harbour Esplanade, NewQuay Promenade and Victoria Promenade — Firelight will for the first time deliver a carbon-neutral event.

The waterfront will be transformed with fire drums and flames, pop-up stages, large fire sculptures, and roving performers, and will take place on all three evenings.

And in a festival first, a new “liquid, light and laser” show (featuring lasers, LED lighting and water jets) will be performed at Victoria Harbour, each lasting seven minutes.

No booking is required for the free event, which includes all entertainment and attractions (food and beverages excluded).

Entertainment will run from 5pm until 11pm on Friday and Saturday, and 5pm until 10.30pm on Sunday.

Festivalgoers can also take advantage of the Docklands Dollars program, which offers up to \$210 cashback on spending on hotels, restaurants and entertainment in the precinct.

Lord Mayor Sally Capp said the event would be better than ever after a COVID-enforced hiatus in 2020 and 2021.

“After two long years, Firelight Festival is back in Docklands with awe-inspiring instal-



lations, mesmerising light shows, foodie feasts, fire twirlers, flaming trumpeters, live music and family-friendly entertainment to celebrate our city in all its wintry glory,” she said.

“Gather your family and friends, pop on your winter woolies and head on down to Docklands to enjoy everything that Melbourne has to offer during the cosy winter months.”

In a feast for the senses, pop-up food options offered at the festival will include smoked meats, soup, woodfired pizza and hot chocolate.

Musical performances from a range of genres, including audience favourites Mariachi Los Romanticos, local jazz group The Sugarfoot Ramblers, West African drummer Kofi Kunkpe, and The Brunswick Women’s Choir, are also set to feature.

Firelight Festival was last hosted in 2019 and

attracted more than 75,000 people over the three-day period.

City of Melbourne councillors endorsed the 2022 event, which was set to cost \$1 million, at a May 17 Future Melbourne Committee meeting held at The Hub at Docklands on Harbour Esplanade.

The 2019 event reportedly pumped \$4 million into the local economy, and the council’s City Activation portfolio chair Cr Roshena Campbell said a similar injection was required.

“Boy, do we know they need that now,” Cr Campbell said.

“We’re delighted that we’re proceeding with the Docklands Firelight Festival again, because we know that businesses across Docklands tell us one thing loud and clear, and that’s that they want visitors back.”

## 2022 Firelight highlights include:

- A seven-minute liquid, light and laser show with water jets, featuring a larger-than-life phoenix, playing every hour at Victoria Harbour.
- A new lighting installation that will “transform Buluk Park into a magical forest”.
- A 10-metre crystal lion.
- More than 100 performers, including fire breathers and twirlers, flaming trumpeters, roving entertainers, musicians and other artists.
- Forty fire pits and drums, 35 flame jets, two fire sculptures and two fire arches.

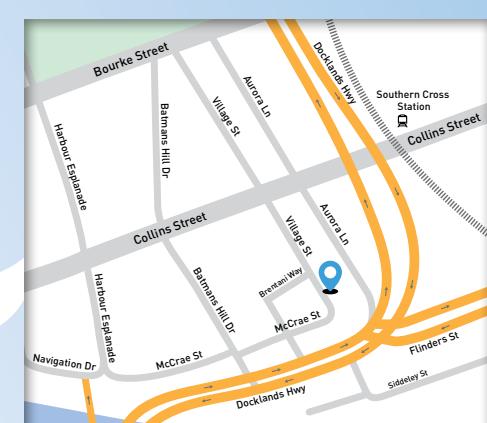
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# Development Victoria continues to “deny responsibility”

*Continued from page 1.*

Mr Saleh said he was due to appear at the Federal Court early next year – which raised questions as to whether the court case was holding up any development or recovery efforts of the pier, which has been labelled as an “eyesore” by the Docklands Chamber of Commerce.

However, DV maintained, “The ongoing court proceeding has no bearing on the use and development of the site.”

Mr Saleh said it was “heartbreaking” to see the once “significant attraction” hoarded up and sitting idle.

“It just sits there empty [and] derelict. And it hasn’t collapsed, which is interesting,” he said.

“At a time when Melbourne is trying to change, trying to rebuild itself and bring people back to the city, I guess it’s upsetting and frustrating to see such a landmark continue to stay closed.”

His comments come as the City of Melbourne’s CEO Justin Hanney earlier this year expressed the council’s concern with DV’s proposal to close the pier for a “longer period of time.”

Mr Saleh said as far as he was concerned, maintenance on the pier before its closure was “business as usual” and “to the best of our knowledge, they were maintenance works to maintain the asset.”

“We thought there was never any concern ... the fact that such a well-regarded, well-known asset was running, obviously doing well, but then, in the background, something so underlining could be going on, it’s pretty tragic,” he said.

“Surely the people in Victoria, in our opinion, deserve better, as do the people [who] run these businesses, as to the public. And as do the people [who] have essentially, taxpayers [who] have been paying for this asset over many, many years.”

Mr Saleh said had DV followed engineers’ advice and maintained the pier “as small steps at the time, it might have been less than a million



▲ Central Pier continues to sit idle in Victoria Harbour today, following its sudden closure by Development Victoria in 2019.

dollars.”

“It again shows to us that there’s a lack of regard to a process that should have been followed,” he said.

“One of the obvious things that comes to mind is if Development Victoria was doing safety checks on the pier, every two months, as it says it did, then how come they didn’t detect the issue in advance and how come it got to a position where it became an emergency evacuation situation?”

He said despite the knowledge of knowing the pier was deteriorating and had posed a risk to public safety, DV “didn’t take any immediate and any proper steps and largely ignored expert advice that it was receiving from its engineers

at a time. I can say that on record because it’s public knowledge.”

According to Mr Saleh, he and other tenants were of the understanding the pier would be fixed at the time and return to operations in January 2020.

“We were never really told about the real or present risk to the pier by Development Victoria and the time prior to the emergency evacuation.”

Asked how he felt about how DV had handled the matter and their communication with him, he replied, “unsatisfactory.”

“I just think if you take someone’s livelihood away, and you take businesses away from people that have worked really hard and invested all

their hard-earned money, that you’ve got a responsibility to resolve the issues and put people back in the same position that they were in, and we haven’t we haven’t had that luxury,” he said.

“Development Victoria pushed us into a position where we’ve disrupted a lot of people, our staff, our families, our clients and customers, brides [who] had weddings booked for two or three years in advance, and corporate customers that had annual events, which disappeared overnight.”

“I think it’s important for us to continue to share our story because people wouldn’t know what’s been going on at Central Pier unless we tell them.”

Toby, who was a beverage manager with

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*Surely the people in Victoria, in our opinion, deserve better, as do the people [who] run these businesses, as to the public. And as do the people that have essentially, taxpayers [who] have been paying for [who] asset over many, many years.*

”

Atlantic Group when the pier was thriving, said he took more than two years off work after struggling to come to terms with the pier's sudden closure, which he considered his home.

"I had no problem with the company, it was the way we were out of the blue, dumped," he said.

"It didn't need to happen that way, there was no warning. That was my livelihood."

"It was really upsetting in the way it was so sudden and we had no time to prepare."

Toby, who asked not to use his surname, said Atlantic Group had been supportive, and had recently taken up a casual position with the company working in a warehouse. He is now in negotiations to take on full-time work, an opportunity he is grateful for.

DV said in June that permanent hoarding remained installed around Central Pier while it undertook the planning and consultation phases to manage its future.

All key stakeholders, including the community, will have an opportunity to be involved

in consultation for the pier's future redevelopment, DV said in a statement in June.

In the meantime, works are continuing to remove the western tip of the pier and is progressing ahead of schedule. The western tip is no longer connected to the main pier structure.

The Docklands Representative Group (DRG) said the way the pier was redeveloped "will determine the tone of our neighbourhood and the liveability for residents."

"The DRG has expressed this to Development Victoria, and we have emphasised the importance of consultation to get Central Pier right," a DRG spokesperson said.

"Central Pier, as the name suggests, has been central to Docklands' past and must be central to its future."

The Melbourne Maritime Heritage Network has long advocated for Central Pier to house a Maritime Experiential Centre – a tourist attraction showcasing Melbourne's maritime heritage, industry, and trade.

Other ideas pitched by residents to *Docklands News* have been an Aboriginal centre, an organic market, a trendy restaurant, an art gallery, and an aquarium.

Meanwhile, Mr Saleh said his passion for Docklands had never faded despite his ordeal and would have "no hesitation" in making a return.

"I want it to be a fruitful and great experience for customers and I want people to be able to visit again."

According to court documents, the matter is set for trial after April 11, 2023. •



Brendan Rees

JOURNALIST

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▲ Hatem Saleh.

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This year's program is jam-packed with free, family-friendly fun, including:

- A new lighting installation, which

will transform Buluk Park into a magical forest with brilliant light stems and colourful petals standing six metres tall.

- A 10-metre-long crystal lion shimmering with thousands of LED lights, which will roam the festival emitting a spine-tingling soundscape.
- A seven-minute liquid, light and laser show with water jets featuring a larger-than-life fiery phoenix, playing every hour at Victoria Harbour.
- More than 100 performers, including dazzling fire breathers

and twirlers, flaming trumpeters, roving entertainers, musicians and other artists.

- 40 fire pits and drums, 35 flame jets, two fire sculptures and two fire arches.

More than 20 food vendors will offer seasonal delights to warm even the coldest winter nights, from smoked meats, soup and woodfired pizza to mulled wine, hot chocolate and roasted marshmallows.

Festivalgoers can take advantage of the Docklands Dollars program, which offers up to \$210 cashback on

spending on hotels, restaurants and entertainment in the precinct.

Firelight Festival is being delivered with support from the \$100 million Melbourne City Recovery Fund - a joint partnership between the City of Melbourne and the Victorian Government. The City of Melbourne also thanks festival partner Development Victoria for its support.

So gather the family and warm up at Firelight Festival this winter. For the full program, visit [melbourne.vic.gov.au/firelight](http://melbourne.vic.gov.au/firelight)

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## A “special place” on the water: New dragon boat club brings survivors together

*Continued from page 1.*

“When you’ve had those very invasive treatments of having your breasts removed and going through chemotherapy, and losing all your hair and your femininity, a lot of women including myself didn’t really start to feel that we could emote about these things until we were completely surrounded by other women who’ve been through the same thing. It’s a very special space that we have in the boat for that, to provide that friendship and support.”

The connection between dragon boating and breast cancer survivors is far from random.

In the 1990s, the prevailing medical thinking was that woman treated for breast cancer should avoid rigorous upper body exercise for fear of developing lymphoedema, a debilitating and chronic side-effect of treatment.

However, Dr Don McKenzie, an exercise physiologist and a professor of sports medicine at the University of British Columbia in Canada, challenged that notion.

According to the International Breast Cancer Paddlers’ Commission, Dr McKenzie developed a program to determine the impact of exercise on breast cancer survivors and chose dragon boat paddling as the epitome of strenuous, repetitive upper body exercise.

He trained 24 breast cancer volunteers in a gym for three months, introduced them to dragon boats and taught them paddling techniques.

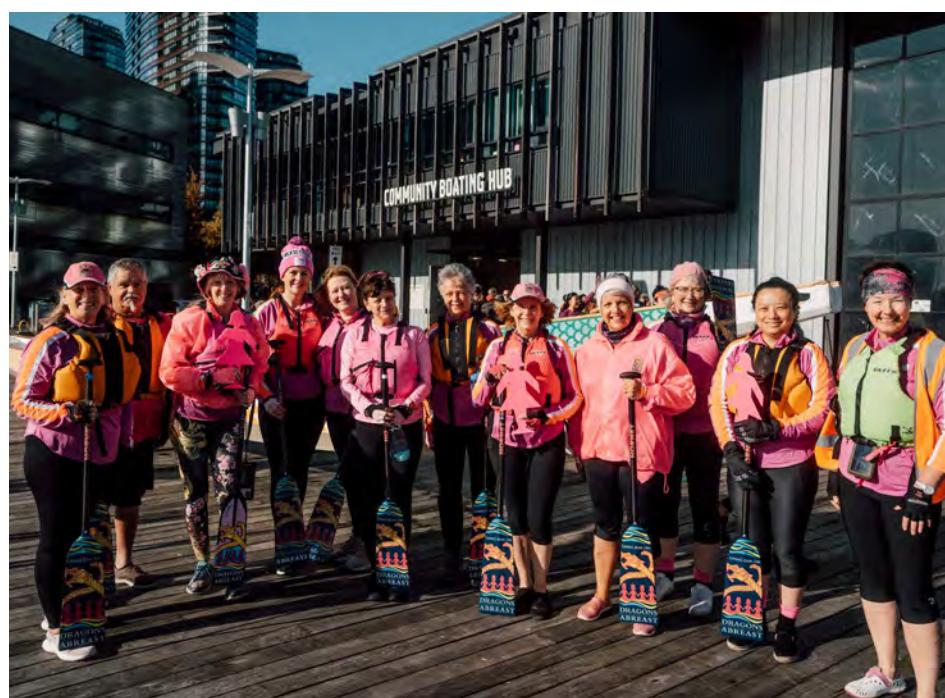
And, at the end of the three-month season on the water, none of the volunteers had lymphoedema.

The movement grew on the back of this, and there are now teams all over the world including locally under the Dragons Abreast Australia umbrella. For Andrea and her new team, the crew is made of up women at different stages of recovery, and there was “absolutely no pressure to paddle like a maniac”.

“We don’t anyway,” she said with a laugh.

And it’s not all exercise, anyway.

“After practice every week we go to Saluministi cafe and sometimes we’ll sit there



for an hour eating cakes and drinking and laughing.”

For her, however, the activity gave the added purpose to remaining fit and healthy.

“It’s very inspirational. You do it for yourself, but you also do it for the rest of your team because you don’t want to let them down. You keep yourself fit so that when we have new breast cancer survivors in the boat they can see where they can go with this. They can be happy and healthy, and supported.”

The team don’t just welcome survivors, too.

“We always invite anyone who is going through their treatments now to just come and sit in the boat, get that fresh air and see the incredible view of Marvel Stadium from the water. They always leave the boat smiling their

heads off and it just makes our day. If anything like that happened to me during my treatment, it would’ve made me cry.”

There are now plans for a national breast cancer regatta, pencilled in for Saturday, December 3 in Docklands. The “Pink Paddle Power Regatta” would be the first of its kind here and aimed to raise awareness of the benefits of dragon boating for breast cancer survivors.

The organising committee is now eagerly on the hunt for a grant to help support the event.

She said that it remained “a really hard sell to encourage women who feel like they’ve been physically and mentally attacked [through treatment] to come along” to paddle on the water, and urged anyone in this position to join what is an inclusive and supportive team.●

**For more information:**  
[damelbournepinkphoenix.com.au](http://damelbournepinkphoenix.com.au)



**David Schout**

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# Extraordinarily captured stories displayed at Magnet Galleries

WORDS BY *Kaylah-Joelle Baker*

ARTS & CULTURE

For the first time in 67 years the World Press Photo Foundation has chosen Melbourne, and Docklands' very own Magnet Galleries Melbourne, to present its renowned exhibition.

With a rich history of conducting a yearly tour in 130 countries and with an annual visitation of five million people, it is an event that Magnet president Michael Silver considered a "remarkable opportunity".

It is also surprising for Mr Silver and his wife Susanne that the event has never reached Melbourne, a city renowned for arts and culture.

"For me it was something I felt driven to try and do. I was surprised they allowed us to do it because I don't think the event has ever been done by anyone as small as us," Mr Silver said.

"But as soon as I found out it had never been done in Victoria, I thought it was a crime. We had to do something, and it is really quite amazing we made it happen."

With hard work, dedication and the support of generous people donating furniture and their time, the gallery has been transformed to accommodate the exhibition.

Expanded over two spaces, the first room is a wide open room filled with all the captivating images that have a story to tell.

Sydney-based storyteller and photojournalist Matthew Abbott is among one of the creatives with his heavily-researched visual story of Nawarddeken elder Conrad Maralngurra burning grass to protect the Mamadawerre community from late-season wildfires.

In the second room, Magnet conducted "Talking at Photography" events with some of the most internationally and nationally respected photographers and photojournalists who took time to share in various aspects of their work.

The visiting photographers from around the world have truly added to the space, as they tell



of many extraordinary stories that Mr Silver said had been "a revelation".

As an established photographer himself, Mr Silver said the magic of photography was something that needed to be talked about and respected more.

"We do a lot of preserving history and it's an endless task that we do a lot of and rarely for money, but it is something that has to be done," he said.

The exhibition hasn't been easy to pull off though with the pandemic delaying the exhibition twice and the gallery, which operates as a not-for-profit organisation, being unsuccessful in receiving funding from the council.

The World Press Photo exhibition has in the past, in other states, been at State Libraries that allow for more space, staff and budget.

Despite the obvious challenges, Magnet has proven that there is an irreplaceable charm that comes with being in a space that is built on the desire to prove photography matters and that it can make a difference in lives.

"We are not businesspeople, we work hard

because we want to help people [through photography]," Mr Silver said.

"You either do things with hard work or money and we tend to not have the money, but we managed to get enough to pay for the event and we borrowed some money which we still owe, but it was worth it."

While the exhibition has exhausted the couple, the connections and friendships formed and re-established in the community of photography have made it worth it all.

It's left the pair and their son Daniel, who handles the high-quality printing and scanning section of the gallery, more than pleased that they were cementing themselves as an integral part of Docklands' arts and culture scene.

Following the World Press Photo exhibition, which wraps up on June 30, Magnet will be gearing up for its July *Street Photography in Japan* exhibition, closely followed by more exciting prospects and plans that they are excited to share with the community as they evolve.

The Magnet Galleries Melbourne can be found on Wharf St at The District Docklands.



**For more information:**  
[magnet.org.au](http://magnet.org.au)

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# Create a home away from home for international students

WORDS BY *Kaylah-Joelle Baker*  
COMMUNITY

There is no denying international students contribute and add to the vibrancy of Melbourne, but unfortunately without locals opening their doors it can make a student's life a lot harder.

Putting in place a homestay program, Monash College in Docklands is asking for locals in the area to not only help change the life of an international student, but realise the benefits for themselves.

"It is a fantastic opportunity to share our culture and to support someone new coming to our country who has career aspirations they want to pursue," Monash College's Homestay manager Karen Taylor said.

"Some people can be anxious or concerned about having someone new in their homes but in a lot of cases we see people feel the rewards of learning about other cultures, supporting someone else and building an international relationship."

The blessings of the program have been constant, with many friendships formed between the students and host families during and after their homestay.

Ms Taylor stated that many host families have also reported how upon the student going

home they have visited them overseas for holidays or been at the student's wedding and had them come back to visit in Australia.

"The connection and continuing of the relationship becomes a lasting friendship in many cases," Ms Taylor said.

The Monash Homestay team places more than 2000 international students from Monash College and Monash University with homestay families each year, but more locals are needed to help continue this.

For the next intake of students, Monash College is asking for good quality hosts that could provide students with a safe and secure home and offer them three meals a day, seven days a week.

Hosts in an ideal location of being walking distance or within a reasonable travel distance from the campus would be ideal, as well as hosts who really want to invest in communicating and interacting with the student.

"When the students are first arriving the vast majority of them haven't been out of their home country before, so they're coming to a new country, having to study in English and adapt to a new environment and new norms," Ms Taylor said. "The benefit of staying with a local Australian family is really immense to helping them settle in and feel safe and secure and like someone has their back."



▲ Monash College student, Nanami Kandori and her Homestay host, Rebecca Bannister.

While hosts will receive a financial reimbursement for housing the student, this should only be an added underlying bonus for host families with the overriding reward coming from the friendship and connection that is formed.

As the process can take some time, the Monash Homestay team asks that locals interested in making a difference head to its website to read the information in further detail – a step that will make it easier on Monash Homestay staff who are getting back on their feet after COVID disrupted the sector.

"We currently have an abundance of students coming through, so people can read all the information online, register their interest and then we can start preparing for the next intake," Ms Taylor said. •

If you're interested in becoming a homestay host, please visit:



More information about the homestay program can be found here:



## Dogs set to have a ball as council considers new off-leash areas

WORDS BY *Brendan Rees*  
COUNCIL AFFAIRS

Popular parks in Docklands could receive off-leash dog areas under a plan being considered by the City of Melbourne.

Councillors voted unanimously in favour at their Future Melbourne Committee meeting on June 7 to consider designating eight new off-leash areas for dogs including Point Park and Ron Barassi Senior Park in Docklands.

Under the proposal, Point Park would see dogs run around off-leash between the hours of 6pm and 8am every day – with no fencing.

Ron Barassi Senior Park is planned to have off leash use but only outside of organised sporting activity – with no additional fencing.

The recommendation comes as



a review of open spaces in 2019 and two phases of community engagement in 2021 identified gaps in off-leash provisions across the municipality.

Docklands resident and dog owner Ayda Hornak said it made sense to have off-leash areas as the neigh-



bourhood was promoted as a family-friendly area.

"Over COVID we saw a significant increase of dogs in Docklands. It's become very much part of our community culture," she said.

"If you head over to Point Park at any given time, you will see that 90

per cent of people using the park have dogs beside them. If we are not catering for the residents and locals that use the parks consistently, then who are we catering for?"

The council will consider the proposed off-leash dogs parks at the end of June before councillors vote on putting recommendations into action.

Environment portfolio lead Cr Rohan Leppert said by reviewing a consultant's report before the end of June, it would ensure "we've done our due diligence" and explored the time-access properly before making a decision that the community "is comfortable with".

Cr Leppert acknowledged it was a difficult balance between the state government providing spaces for the growing dog population and individual responsibility for those living in the densest suburbs in Australia. •

While he believed pets had a "really important community and individual health function", "I'm not going to magic up \$30 million to buy a building and build a dog off-leash park. It's not as simple as that."

Cr Davydd Griffiths said dog ownership was "something that we want to encourage in the City of Melbourne" as pets were "fantastic for mental and physical health."

Other proposed new off-leash areas include portions of Kingsway and Moray St Reserve in Southbank; Eades Park in West Melbourne; Murchison Square in Carlton; Royal Park (Manningham Reserve) in Parkville; Riverside Park in Kensington; and Wellington Park in East Melbourne.

Councillors were expected to approve the proposal at their June 28 meeting, shortly after *Docklands News* published its July edition. •

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# Study lifts lid on polystyrene pollution in Yarra River

WORDS BY David Schout

ENVIRONMENT

Polystyrene is the most common item of litter in the Yarra River and a Docklands litter trap collected more pieces of the macroplastic than any other in inner-Melbourne, new research from the Yarra Riverkeeper Association shows.

The *Polystyrene Pollution in the Yarra River: Deep Dive* study also shone new light on how the plastic, which is widely used in the packaging and construction industries, finds its way into the river.

It found that construction sites contributed the highest amount of polystyrene pollution, followed by whitewoods retailers and markets.

Of 16 litter traps set up along the river from Docklands to Hawthorn from which samples were taken, a trap at Charles Grimes Bridge in Docklands captures the most pieces of polystyrene.

Yarra Riverkeeper Association (YRKA) litter officer Anthony Despotellis, who managed what was the group's second piece of research on polystyrene in the river, said the study proved where the common pollutant was coming from.

"What we found mostly proved our hypothesis," he told *Docklands News*.

"We suspected that construction sites have a large role to play, we suspected that whitewoods retailers and shopping centres had a role to play. And what we found was that the numbers backed that up. We hadn't yet been able to prove that it was happening regularly, but this time finally we were able to put numbers [and say] 'yes, this is happening constantly and it's happening in small to moderate amounts'. We're getting regular pollution, from many places in small amounts, and that's what is contributing to this problem."

The data collection involved going to the source of the pollution, which included inspecting 80 construction sites.

It found that 98 per cent of sites were confirmed to have polystyrene pollution either on site, just outside the site, on the nature strip, or in a drain within a few houses of the site.

On the river itself, a team of volunteers from the YRKA — an independent community of citizen advocates who work to protect the river — were tasked with sorting samples from the litter traps, which was no mean feat according to Mr Despotellis.

"What that involved was taking a whole lot of samples, and going through those and counting every bead of polystyrene that we could find. That was a really big effort because you're getting samples that have anywhere from 150 to well over 1000 pieces."

He said he was not overly shocked at the high figure seen from the Docklands litter trap.

"It was interesting to have a look at that when I mapped it onto the river there," he said.

"It gets a bit complicated in that area because there's so many drains coming out [onto the river]. The closer you get to the CBD there's a whole range of drains coming from all over



▲ A litter trap.

Picture: Karin Traeger, YRKA.

Melbourne ... in terms of that spot specifically, I wouldn't say it was overly surprising. Having seen how much plastic just ends up in our streets and how much gets into the river, not much surprises me."

He said the true extent of polystyrene pollution in the river was not immediately apparent to most, with the often small size of the litter and colour of the water hiding it from the naked eye.

"What I can say is that down in the city stretches, it doesn't look like it's polluted but then you look at the litter traps and it's another story."

Polystyrene is widely used as a low-cost, lightweight, moisture resistant and shock absorbent product that makes it great for packaging, however it has a considerable environmental impact.

It is easily transported by wind and water and can mimic fish eggs — a food source for a range of species. It can also leach toxic chemicals into the water.

In March 2021 the Australian Government released the National Plastics Plan, which included an action for government to work with industry to phase out certain problematic plastics.

This included polystyrene commonly used to package consumer goods.

Mr Despotellis remained hopeful the harmful pollutant which eventually be phased out, although acknowledged this would take some time.

"Ultimately the goal is focused on using sustainable alternatives. That's on its way but we've still got a few years before the average business that you encounter that is using polystyrene alternatives," he said.

"We've definitely got things that we could do today, tomorrow or next year, but generally what we need is better awareness. Once we can raise awareness and work with people who need it most, hopefully we can start to transition away from polystyrene. And we can — there's no reason why we can't." ●

# Riverkeeper travelogue

WORDS BY Rhonda Dredge

WATERWAYS

The first major bridge is the Charles Grimes and it marks the beginning of a journey to get to know the Yarra River better.

Charlotte Sterrett, the new Yarra Riverkeeper, is talking about the boat. The *Puggle* has a new canopy and is due for a service.

"I'm still getting to know this part of the river," she said.

The electric-powered boat arrived just before the COVID lockdown, and they weren't able to use it. It was delivered to Pier 35 from Western Australia.

She's interested in the big issues facing the river, particularly the four-kilometre Greenline trail planned from Birrarung Marr to the Bolte Bridge. "It's only six metres wide. How will they do it?"

The next bridge is the Spencer Street Bridge. Tony Isaacson is on his first trip on the *Puggle*, which he bought for the Riverkeeper.

"We've been sponsors of the Riverkeeper for eight years," he said. "We've given untied donations. said 'we want another boat'. Let's get them one." The winds pick up as the boat passes beneath the King's Bridge and reaches the original turning circle at Enterprize Park, which used to be all rocks.

"They used to turn at Queens Bridge when the Yarra Yarra falls used to be here and the freshwater divided from the salt. The original rocks are covered with graffiti," Ms Sterrett said.



As the boat approaches the Queens Bridge the canopy steams up and Tony talks about how he got involved.

"My interest in the Yarra was piqued by a campaign *The Age* ran in the '60s. The river was an artery of Melbourne. The whole of Melbourne was linked by the river."

Under the Sandridge Bridge, Charlotte is concerned that the jetties are all private. There's a tail wind and she's worried the boat will turn around into a lee wind.

The atmosphere is moody, and she begins talking about resilience. She's written a book on the topic. She thinks we are more like a developing country as we come out of lockdown.

She's impressed by the number of volunteers Kooyong Independent MP Dr Monique Ryan gathered for the election and would like to see the same happen with the Yarra.

"We should all be riverkeepers. It's what we do, that act of keeping and looking after."

As we pass under the Evan Walker bridge they begin worrying about access to the river.

One day Tony took out a kayak at Westgate Park and thought he would have morning tea near Flinders St. "There was absolutely nowhere we thought we could stop."



It's teatime on board when we reach the soft edges past Princes Bridge and Nicole Kowalezyk is serving.



The north side of the city is more prominent on the return trip. This is where the Greenline strip park will go.

"We want to be part of the process," Charlotte said. "We're waiting on the design brief. We don't want to be on anyone's team."

Tony used to run Kane Constructions and worked on the Plaza. "The worst thing is the shading on the river's edge. Developers have claimed the river's edge," he said.



The river team, comprising Nicole, Megan, Tony and Charlotte, moors back at River's Edge.

●



Rhonda Dredge

JOURNALIST

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# Council's night-time committee extended for another year

WORDS BY Sean Carr  
COUNCIL AFFAIRS

All 18 members of the City of Melbourne's first Night Time Economy Advisory Committee (NTEAC) have been reappointed for a further 12 months to continue supporting the city's recovery from COVID-19.

The NTEAC was established in 2021 in response to the devastation caused to the city's night time economy during the pandemic. NTEAC met for the first time on June 28, 2021 – just prior to Victoria's major Delta outbreak which wouldn't see lockdowns lifted until late October.

At a council meeting on May 31, 2022, councillors voted unanimously in favour to extend the committee's tenure for a further 12 months to push forward with its "high-quality strategic advice on revitalisation measures".

Councillors acknowledged the "very difficult" year of rolling lockdowns and restrictions since the committee was established and that the group "is continuing to embed its own corporate identity and styles of working".

As such, the recommendation from council management included minor amendments to the committee's terms of reference, with the final motion adopted by councillors "empowering the committee" to elect its own chair at its next meeting.

The NTEAC is currently chaired by Cherry Bar owner James Young who is one of 13 executive members representing the city's hospitality, arts and entertainment settings. Other members include academics, state government representative Max Coffman and councillors Roshena Campbell and Jason Chang.

According to the report by council management, 100 per cent of members recently surveyed regarding the NTEAC's performance recorded answers ranging from "somewhat sat-

“

*I know everyone has taken so much time out of their day and businesses to take part in this committee ...*

”

isfied" to "extremely satisfied."

"All members have indicated that they would be prepared to continue for a further term," the report stated, which also highlighted an "eagerness" among members to better understand night time economy best practices and trends from other leading cities.

Cr Chang told the meeting that it had been a "privilege" to serve on the committee but acknowledged that there was "still work to be done."

Cr Jamal Hakim, who seconded the motion on May 31, said that the extension would allow the NTEAC to move from advocacy into action.

"I know everyone has taken so much time out of their day and businesses to take part in this committee, so I really wanted to thank everyone," he said.

"The pandemic and the lockdowns that we had during the first year of this committee meant it was difficult for the committee to act on its terms of reference and responsibilities so this is an opportunity to actually move into action."

Since its establishment, the NTEAC has developed a number of "key milestones" including supporting the Melbourne Money and Project Night Justice programs. ●

# Residents at wits' end as blaring music from nightclub makes life a living hell

WORDS BY Brendan Rees  
SAFETY & SECURITY

A nightclub next to Victoria Harbour is making life miserable for a Docklands couple as loud DJ music constantly blasts until the early hours.

The residents said they could not get a proper night's sleep as the recurring noise and "excessive" base from the Watermark Docklands had reached the point of "beyond ridiculous".

They said loud music blared until 3am from the Bourke St venue every weekend, with one of them now seeking help for sleep insomnia.

"It takes me sometimes three days to recover, I suffer from migraines if I don't sleep," the resident said, adding they had spent thousands of dollars staying at alternative accommodation over the past few months.

To make matters worse, the couple said patrons also engaged in anti-social and aggressive behaviour, "often attacking each other in some violent form, screaming all night and playing loud music from their cars next to the residential area."

"Their patrons often litter the area around the club and urinate in the vicinity of our buildings."

Victoria Police said while it could not comment on individual businesses, it was aware of the current concerns around venues in Docklands.

"Victoria Police works collaboratively with the VGCCC (Victorian Commission for Gambling and Liquor Regulation) and the City of Melbourne, and together conduct joint highly visible patrols in and around licensed premises," a police spokesperson said.

"The Melbourne Divisional Licensing Unit also works closely with Victoria Police's state liquor unit, and regularly engages with local hospitality venues and local liquor accords to ensure safe practices are occurring at venues."

"Local uniform police are also tasked to run regular patrols of the area as part of their duties, to not only detect offences but disrupt them before they occur."

According to a VGCCC, the Watermark Docklands' late-night licence stated it was allowed to trade until 3am, but "the licensee shall not cause or permit undue detriment to the amenity of the area to arise out of or in connection with the use of the premises to which the licence relates during or immediately after the trading hours authorised under this licence."

The Docklands couple said they had reported the issue multiple times to authorities including Victoria Police and while there had been some "minor short-term improvements" the venue had reverted to creating the "same old issues" with the operators ignoring "the significant damage they create to people's health and wellbeing".

"We're not against the nightclubs, but they should be in an appropriate place. They're



trying to mix a lot of things in one place," they said.

"The nature of Docklands is meant for daytime family-friendly activities. We wish the peace and harmony would come back at night."

Watermark Docklands is advertised online as an Italian food and woodfired pizza restaurant, plus a wine bar – which the couple thought would cater towards family-friendly events.

In an email from the VGCCC to the couple, the Victorian gaming regulator acknowledged the couple's complaint and referred them to a Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal case in which CBD residents had opposed a bar/tavern due to amenity impacts.

"If noise levels and other disturbances are intolerable but still within limits set by permits and licences, then residents may need to consider residing in locations that meet their expectations," the VCAT response said.

But the couple said they felt "brushed off" and will consider leaving the area if the matter is not resolved despite their love of Docklands.

In the meantime, they have found used underwear, cigarettes, and broken alcoholic beverages thrown outside the club and around the residential area.

"A few weeks ago, two young guys who attended their function were stabbed violently not far from the club near the residential area at 3.20am," the couple said.

The couple's concerns come as residents in NewQuay recently voiced their frustration over loud music blasting from two nightclubs, which had impacted their sleep and quality of life.

The Docklands Representative Group (DRG) has also previously said that Docklands was "fast becoming a no-go zone" at night due to reports of increased violence, anti-social behaviour, and public intoxication.

A DRG spokesperson said it was a "sad fact" that many residents have expressed distress about the late-night venues in Docklands.

"We are hoping with Victoria Police's new Neighbourhood Policing model they will learn the nuances of Docklands and the needs of locals. We have discussed with Victoria Police the need for visible presence, particularly at night on weekends," the spokesperson said.

The City of Melbourne was contacted for this story but said issues arising from Watermark Docklands was a Victoria Police matter.

Watermark's owners were contacted for comment by *Docklands News*. ●

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## A market's hope for locals to support locals

WORDS BY *Kaylah-Joelle Baker*  
COMMUNITY

As the winter breeze takes over Melbourne, Docklands Promenade Twilight Market has transitioned to a day market.

Now taking place on the third Saturday of the month between 11am and 3pm at NewQuay Promenade, market organiser Grace Pryor said the new time slot had already seen the growth of varying clientele, something she hoped would continue.

"All clientele is welcome and the stallholders have a lot to offer," Ms Pryor said.

"It's a beautiful setting with the water right there and all the stallholders are so loving and provide so much culture."

After the first two Saturday markets in May and June, Ms Pryor noticed that there were still many people in the local community of Docklands who were unaware of the market.

With the next market day coming up on July 16, she is relying on Docklanders to spread the word and come together to support their fellow locals.

"Come down and support your locals and buy from your locals. A lot of the stalls are run by local Melbourne residents, and they are small family businesses and supporting them is so important," she said.

"We also have a mix of people who have struggled with mental health, health conditions and isolation during COVID, and they have honed into a talent of theirs and started these stalls."

Through the growth of the market and the support of locals, the plan of the market is for it to be able to actively support the Kinds of Happiness charity, through the Lifestyle Markets Australia Inc.

The charity is focused on creating a happy and healthy environment for all through supporting rural and regional youth from challenged backgrounds.

Ms Pryor said they were also currently in the process of reaching out to the City of Melbourne to help make the market a place "for all residents and visitors of Melbourne".

As well as any interested buskers wanting to provide entertainment, Docklands Promenade Twilight Market is asking for any local businesses wanting to get involved to reach out. ●

**For more information:**  
[lifestylemarketsaustraliainc.org](http://lifestylemarketsaustraliainc.org)



## Romance on the shortlist

WORDS BY *Rhonda Dredge*

ARTS & CULTURE

Jules is a software developer from the United States and she has come to Docklands for Christmas but there's more brewing beneath the surface.

She drops down from her high-rise for a coffee by the water. Cargo is her favourite haunt.

There's a romance about the café that she likes: the sea views and the open sky, but that's not all.

Like many of her fellow residents, she's been inspired to settle here, to throw away her old life.

Max, who runs a vineyard on the Mornington Peninsula, helps with her decision.

She realises that something is lacking. Could it be seafood platters, champagne and a tree in blue and silver?

The story is fiction, but it could belong to any of a number of locals.

Sandy Barker is the proud author of *The Christmas Swap*, published in 2020 by Harper Collins. She's a Docklands resident herself and is onto her eighth romance novel.

The bright and bold are attracted to the setting and it's beginning to turn up in novels ("she's not moving here for him. She's moving here for her").

"I write travel romances based on my travels. The characters travel because they're stuck in life," the author said over a coffee at Cargo, also



▲ Romance writer Sandy Barker in her element at Cargo.

her favourite Docklands haunt.

It's not quite Miami but the place appeals to sensibilities of the global traveller.

"I'm from Perth. We lived in Seattle. There were lots of waterways and marinas. We can see sunrise and sunset from our apartment and smell the brine off the river."

Sandy comes alive when she talks about her characters and the dilemmas of the modern career girl. "They're all different," she said, but added that they had one thing in common – many were resistant to love.

The vice-president of a public relations firm in *A Sunrise Over Bali*, released in June, travels from Miami to Bali. She's sassy and hard-nosed and it takes her ages to let down her guard. A teacher from Sydney travels to Santorini ...

“

I write travel romances based on my travels. The characters travel because they're stuck in life.

”

Sandy studied English, taught drama and works at Pearson four days a week as an educational publisher. She writes in the morning perfecting her first-person present voice.

"I'm talking directly to the reader," she said, throwing in parenthetical thought for good measure while avoiding info-dumping dialogue and head-hopping point-of-view.

She's very careful with vernacular and cadence and checks to make sure her American characters say, "hold on" while her Aussie ones prefer "hang on."

Her ironic patter has attracted attention, particularly her main character in *The Dating Game* who writes witty recaps of reality TV shows for a living.

The book has just been short-listed by Romance Writers Australia in the category of contemporary romance. ●

## Funding returns for Salvos' street teams

WORDS BY *David Schout*

COMMUNITY

A suspended program that helped distressed young people on Friday and Saturday nights has had its funding reinstated by the City of Melbourne.

After a request from the Salvation Army following the release of its recent draft budget, the council agreed to back the Youth Street Teams program to the tune of \$100,000 for the next 12 months.

The initiative, which began in 2010 in response to increasing alcohol-fuelled violence in the CBD and its immediate surrounds, was suspended at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic.

But now, with foot traffic in the city reaching pre-COVID levels on many Friday and Saturday nights, volunteer teams will return to the city streets.

Requesting the reintroduction of funding at a June 23 council meeting, Salvation Army Major Brendan Nottle told councillors that the program – which involved volunteer teams of three or four (supervised by a Salvation Army worker) working 11pm to 5am on weekends – had been crucial prior to COVID.

"Their role was to walk the streets of the city and engage with predominantly young

people who had come in from a suburbs for a night out," he said.

"Our teams would hand out bottled water, rubber thongs and Chupa Chups; but they were really used as engagement tools to have ongoing conversations with young people [saying things like] 'gosh, you've had a big night out, what are your plans to get home?' Our teams would then work to get the person reconnected with family or friends, or work to get them to the train station or an Uber or taxi, or for us to actually drive them home."

On most occasions the young person was usually drunk or emotional and merely required guidance, not the attention of the authorities.

"Rather than police resources being caught up with that, our team would take over, care for the person and the police resources would be freed up. Paramedics would also call us through the course of the night and refer young people to us who they checked and deemed not requiring hospitalisation. We made sure young people got home safely."

Major Nottle said the program was making a "significant contribution to ensuring that the city was safe" prior to COVID, and noted that it had been replicated in Sydney, Brisbane, Hobart and Darwin.

The level of funding sought by the Salvation Army is understood to be less than what is received prior to COVID-19 despite the fact

that, as Deputy Lord Mayor Nicholas Reece pointed out, on some Friday and Saturday nights pedestrian activity had returned to pre-COVID levels.

"Are you sure you've got your ask right of us this evening?" Cr Reece asked in relation to the funding request.

"This has never happened before," Major Nottle said with a laugh.

"No, I think we have. The Salvation Army actually sees the value of this program and they've made a significant contribution to the program as well."

Major Nottle revealed that in July, the Salvos would launch a related "Pink Car" program to specifically assist vulnerable young females get home safely on weekends.

The hot pink car, donated by the Collingwood Football Club, will be staffed by a female worker and a female volunteer with the aim of both connecting and thwarting opportunistic attacks.

"One of the major learnings is that of the 5000 engagements that our teams had with young people in 2019 just prior to COVID, 48 per cent of those engagements were with young women," Major Nottle wrote in his *CBD News* column this month.

"Our teams often see young women standing on their own waiting for an Uber or a taxi. Tragically, in recent times, some young women have not made it home safely." ●

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# CREATING CONFIDENCE IN DOCKLANDS



Community consultation on the City of Melbourne draft Budget 2022-23 and the draft Annual Plan 2022-23 has concluded.

Councillors were set to consider public feedback on the documents prior to the Council meeting on 28 June.

The Budget sets out how we plan to invest in Docklands to deliver core services, maintain and improve parks, public spaces and recreational facilities.

The Neighbourhood Statements in our Budget also outline the key initiatives we'll undertake in each suburb across the municipality.



## Our key priorities in Docklands in 2022-23

We'll continue to support businesses in Docklands who have endured the most difficult trading times over the past two years. We will deliver and manage the Business Precinct Program, and deliver the Shopfront Activation and City Activation Grants programs.

As we welcome more workers and visitors back to Docklands, we'll support increased visitation through initiatives to strengthen economic recovery, tourism and events, host a Docklands summit to elevate the urgent need for action and generate enthusiasm and outcomes for the

regeneration of Docklands, and continue to advocate to the Victorian and Australian governments for the redevelopment of Central Pier.

Melbourne is the arts and culture capital of the country and in 2022-23 we will provide accessible creative opportunities to everyone through expanded arts and library programming.

We know how important mitigating climate change is to our community, so as part of our work in this space in Docklands, we will facilitate integrated water management solutions to support increased greening, reduced flooding and reduced pollution to the bay, the Yarra River - Birrarung and Moonee Ponds Creek, and advocate for the implementation of the Moonee Ponds Creek Strategic Opportunities Plan, including exploration of creek improvements in the southern reaches, and reinstatement of the Docklands section of the Moonee Ponds Creek Trail.

Through our strategic work we will progress delivery of:

- Moonee Ponds Creek Strategic Opportunities Plan
- Docklands Urban Forest Precinct Plan
- Neighbourhood planning
- Disaster preparedness and resilience planning
- Municipal Planning Strategy.

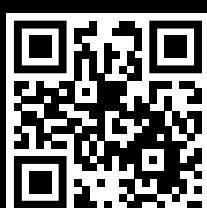


**Municipality map**



To find out more about our key projects in Docklands this year, visit [melbourne.vic.gov.au/ourplans](http://melbourne.vic.gov.au/ourplans)

*Information and events in this publication are current at the time of printing. Subsequent changes may occur.*



## KEEP IN TOUCH

To stay connected with all the latest news from the City of Melbourne, follow us on social media and subscribe to *Melbourne* magazine online at [magazine.melbourne.vic.gov.au](http://magazine.melbourne.vic.gov.au)

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*Some of our neighbourhood partners outside Melbourne Town Hall*

## MEET YOUR NEIGHBOURHOOD PARTNERS

From historic Carlton to the glistening harbour at Docklands, each City of Melbourne neighbourhood needs different services and support based on its unique demographics, strengths and challenges.

We're working to better understand and respond to community needs in a highly localised way through a new neighbourhood model.

Led by seven passionate neighbourhood partners, the model aims to "connect the dots" between council, residents and businesses to empower local people, build community capacity and guide city projects.

The neighbourhood partners recently completed in-depth community consultation and analysed the data to draft key priorities for each suburb.

This process is revealing opportunities for council to explore new projects, adjust upcoming work to respond to community needs, and better communicate our progress on existing work.

Neighbourhood partners will continue to engage with the community year-round, recording feedback into a central knowledge bank that will inform council projects with rich insights into the future.

New online portals will enable everyone to keep in touch with local news and share feedback more easily.

The interactive portals will deliver up-to-date information relevant to each neighbourhood, and connect community members with Council through the Neighbourhood Partners.

The portals feature:

- An acknowledgement of Traditional Owners, Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung places of significance and a link to the new, interactive tool for Mapping Aboriginal Melbourne
- An overview of each neighbourhood, including facts and figures about the area
- A list of local priorities, community feedback and Council plans in action
- A range of good news stories from the community

The Docklands neighbourhood portal will be live later this year.

# NEIGHBOURHOOD PARTNER SPREADS JOY IN DOCKLANDS

**As a passionate community-builder and sports fanatic, Fadi Qunqar feels right at home as the neighbourhood partner for Docklands and Fishermans Bend.**

It's no secret the area has had a mixed history, but those who venture to the glistening water's edge are treated to a vibrant lifestyle that Fadi loves, after only a few months on the job.

'There's no other place in Victoria, or even in Australia, like Docklands and Fishermans Bend,' Fadi said.

'It's so close to the city and offers so much: residential living, restaurants, Marvel Stadium, The District, the entertainment precinct with Hoyts, Archie Brothers Cirque Electriq and Imaginaria, and so much more.'

'Then of course there's the marina, with all the boat clubs that are so active, including dragon boat training almost every night of the week, and top fishing spots that the locals love.'

Fadi began his career working in Arabic welfare with newly arrived refugees, then moved on to roles developing community and sporting programs for organisations like Brimbank City Council and Reclink.

In his new role as neighbourhood partner, he's continuing his community-facing work alongside forward-planning to help make the neighbourhoods of Docklands and Fishermans Bend more connected and resilient.

'Perhaps it sounds selfish, but making other people happy makes me feel happy,' Fadi said.

'I've learnt so much working with different people, coming to understand what needs to be done in the background to help them in the future.'

'A good thing about our roles as neighbourhood partners is that we're not just making an impact on the people we meet on one day, but also in years to come with the plans we put in place.'

'It's all good for us to fix an issue when it arises, but it's even better if we can foresee it.'

Fadi is already getting to know the nuances of the local community, and its current and future needs.

'Yesterday I had a meeting with the school council for Docklands and it was great to be able to look to the future needs of the community, as the student population is doubling year-on-year,' Fadi said.

'Developing better community connections and relationships between businesses, residents and the school in the area is important to foster a more cohesive community.'

Our neighbourhood partners have been working hard to gather feedback from people across the municipality to create a suite of unique neighbourhood portals.

The ongoing insights and sentiments they gather are also being compiled into a live knowledge bank which, alongside other key city data, will help inform city projects with rich information.

'As neighbourhood partners, we play a key role in linking council, community, business and residents,' Fadi said.

'So if anyone in Docklands or Fishermans Bend has a query or a great idea that would benefit the community but needs funding, they are welcome to just reach out to me.'

'I'm that connector - when something comes to me I can deal with the issue or I can connect it to whoever needs to know.'



*Fadi Qunqar is the neighbourhood partner for Docklands and Fishermans Bend*

If you are yet to fully explore Docklands or Fishermans Bend, Fadi encourages you to come on down.

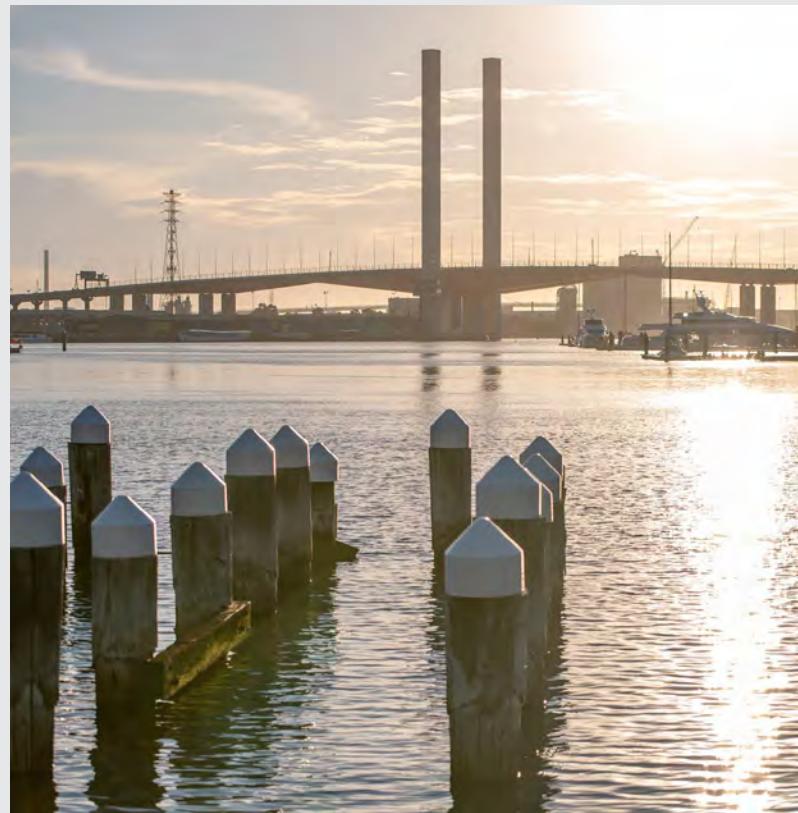
'One of the local places that has really surprised me is Library at the Dock,' Fadi said.

'It has an incredible makerspace with hand tools - which can be really great for people in apartments who want to fix something but don't have a shed - as well as music rooms, a recording studio and so much more.'

'The aura of being around the water and being able to see the city right behind you - it's a magical feeling. Especially when the sun is shining.'

'It's a really nice vibe just to lay back on the grass and watch the water and the boats coming in, or maybe even try to guess how much the latest superyacht in the marina costs.'

To find out more about neighbourhood planning, visit [participate.melbourne.vic.gov.au](http://participate.melbourne.vic.gov.au)



# Work starts on “Gateway to GMH” in Fishermans Bend, but concerns remain for “all road users”

WORDS BY *Sean Carr*

PLANNING

Work is underway to transform Turner St in Fishermans Bend into an active gateway to the precinct's future employment hub at the former General Motors Holden (GMH) site – the catalyst project that will help to deliver 80,000 jobs to the area by 2050.

But the Fishermans Bend Business Forum, which represents a number of large employers in the precinct, has expressed concerns that “future plans may not accommodate all road users”.

Lord Mayor Sally Capp joined Fishermans Bend Development Board chair Meredith Sussex at Turner St on June 3 to mark the beginning of the joint project between the City of Melbourne and the Victorian Government.

The “Gateway to GMH” project seeks to transform the corridor from the Fishermans Bend Innovation Precinct at the former GMH site on Salmon St into the CBD. With the University of Melbourne having already purchased land at the site for a new engineering and design campus to open in 2025, the initiative will cater for more active transport uses for future students and workers travelling to the precinct.

According to the state government's planning framework for Fishermans Bend, a new tram route is also mooted for construction along Turner St from the CBD.

Phase one of the gateway works, due for completion later this year, include a new walking and cycling path, new asphalt and recycled glass pedestrian pavement, the trial of new permeable surfaces to allow rain and stormwater to flow through the surface into the soil, and other traffic calming measures and drainage upgrades.

The project will also deliver new digital infrastructure, enabling the roll-out of 5G and real-time sensing networks using council-owned smart poles that can host 5G antennae, sensors, lighting and other technologies.

According to the City of Melbourne, the smart poles will “future proof the precinct and support innovation, including advanced manufacturing”.

Street greening works are already underway at the southern side of Turner St near the Australian Road and Research Board's (ARRB's) headquarters, with the Lord Mayor and Ms Sussex helping plant one of hundreds of new trees as part of the June 3 announcement.

But the provision of more space along the Turner St corridor for pedestrians, cyclists and tree planting continues to be the cause of concern for the existing business community in Fishermans Bend, many of which depend on heavy vehicle access.

Within the precinct's cement industry alone, there are an estimated 360 concrete truck movements between Lorimer and Turner streets every day, and many more from other large companies such USG Boral.

Some within the industry have described the council's plans as “half-baked”, with many expressing frustrations that the opportunity to cater for large vehicles, trams, cyclists and pedestrians now appears lost with the planting of new trees on the south side of Turner St.

One worker from the cement industry lamented the “total disconnect” between the plans and the needs of businesses, with many calling for the government to devise a freight plan for the growing precinct.

Following a \$3 million funding commitment towards a transport feasibility study for Fishermans Bend by re-elected Member for Macnamara Josh Burns, Fishermans Bend Business Forum vice-president Murray Nicol told *Docklands News* his organisation was looking to the consultative process to assess “all options”.

“While we're pleased to see works starting and beautifying of the area, our concerns are that future plans for Gateway to GMH may not accommodate all road users – businesses, residents, transport and students,” Mr Nicol said.

“We hope the trees can stay and trams, trucks,



▲ (Left) Meredith Sussex and (right) Lord Mayor Sally Capp help plant one of many new trees along Turner St on June 3.

Photo: Murray Enders.

cyclists and pedestrians are all looked after under the plans.”

While Turner St's current configuration allows for single lane two-way traffic with adjoining bike lanes, the street's southern edge boasts a wide nature strip which the council is utilising to create a new shared pathway and plant hundreds of new trees.

When the project was considered at the council's November 21 Future Melbourne Committee meeting last year, the report to councillors stated that its “officers met with the Concrete and Cement Aggregates Association (the CCAA) to provide a briefing on the project and discuss key feedback.”

“The CCAA then provided a formal submission via email indicating their support for the replacement of the existing on-road cycle lane with a shared path on Turner St,” the report from council management stated.

But with a new tram also proposed for the corridor, many within the industry have argued that there was an opportunity for a tram and bike route to coincide with increased road space.

The CCAA did not respond to *Southbank News* for comment before publishing.

Lord Mayor Sally Capp said the transformation of Fishermans Bend presented an “unprecedented opportunity for Melbourne” with the Gateway to GMH project to “set the precinct up for the next 50 years.”

“The National Employment and Innovation Cluster precinct will become a hub for advanced manufacturing, engineering and design, supporting Melbourne's innovation ecosystem and creating thousands of jobs within Fishermans Bend,” Cr Capp said.

“A key part of our innovation approach is running a Fishermans Bend Innovation Challenge to generate and foster transformative ideas that use data and technology to shape the future of the precinct.”

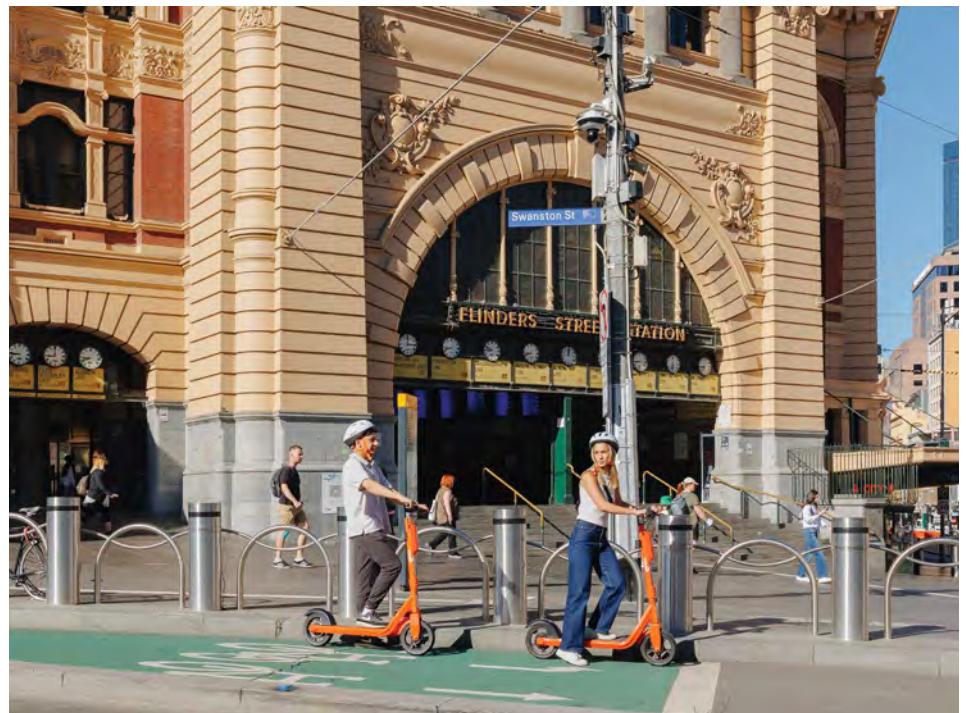
“We're building new shared paths for pedestrians and bike riders, improving kerbing, significantly increasing tree plantings, providing picnic and recreation areas, installing smart infrastructure and trialling new materials to showcase innovation and provide a taste of the future for Fishermans Bend.”

Ms Sussex said “improving accessibility” along Turner St would support the Victorian Government's plans for a “thriving hub for advanced manufacturing, engineering and design” at the former GMH site.

“The ‘Gateway to GMH’ project is an exciting sign of what's to come, including the \$179.4 million for stage one enabling works on the former General Motors Holden site. We're improving accessibility by delivering new cycling and walking paths, creating more green spaces and introducing innovative digital infrastructure to the precinct,” she said.

“Increasing cycling in Fishermans Bend is great for all road users by creating safer connections that separate cyclists and heavy vehicles.”

●



▲ Research indicates that 84 per cent of e-scooter rides within the City of Melbourne were taken within dedicated bike lanes.

## “One of the most successful trials worldwide”: E-scooter trips hit one million

WORDS BY *David Schout*

TRANSPORT

Melburnians have embraced the city's first shared electric scooter scheme, reaching one million rides after just four months of operation.

Since February 1, more than 5000 trips have been taken on average each day within the City of Melbourne alone, which has exceeded pre-trial predictions.

The strong early numbers compare favourably with other cities around the world; it took London, for example, a year to reach the one-million threshold.

The presence of orange and green scooters in the city — from companies Neuron Mobility and Lime respectively — is part of a 12-month, three-council trial that started earlier this year.

“We've reached the incredible milestone of one million e-scooter trips across the City of Melbourne, Yarra and Port Phillip,” Lord Mayor Sally Capp revealed.

“We're averaging 8600 trips per day since the trial commenced, with more than 5200 in the City of Melbourne alone. To put these astonishing numbers in perspective, it took Londoners more than half a year longer to reach this special milestone — with thousands more scooters available. It's great to see Melburnians embracing the benefits of sustainable, green-powered, fun modes of transport.”

On the back of the positive early numbers, the City of Melbourne's director of city strategy Sophie Handley was asked at a June 7 Future Melbourne Committee meeting whether the trial was likely to become permanent.

“They [e-scooters] are certainly popular. It's been one of the most successful trials worldwide,” she said.

“But the decision as to whether or not they become a permanent feature rests with the state government.”

“There is an evaluation that's part of this trial and we will participate, obviously, in the evaluation with the Department of Transport and our other partners.”

Since the introduction of 1500 e-scooters to inner-Melbourne earlier this year, their place in the transport network remains a point of contention, particularly about how they intersect with pedestrians.

Other conflicts range from where riders choose to travel, and where they park once their trip has concluded.

According to data from Neuron Mobility, 84 per cent of rides in the City of Melbourne were now taking place within the city's dedicated bike lanes.

*“To put these astonishing numbers in perspective, it took Londoners more than half a year longer to reach this special milestone — with thousands more scooters available.”*



The group's head of Australia and New Zealand operations Richard Hannah said Melbourne's cycling infrastructure had played “a big part in the program's early success”.

“Bike lanes are quickly becoming more like mobility lanes, carrying multiple different modes of transport including cyclists, e-scooters, e-bikes and others,” Cr Capp added.

“This is the same trend we are seeing in cities across the world like New York, London and Paris.”

Outside of the orange and green hire scooters, e-scooters remains a largely unregulated form of transport.

Private e-scooters that travel above 10kmh remain illegal under Victorian law.

While the Lime and Neuron e-scooters can travel at a maximum speed of 20kmh, private scooters can travel significantly faster.

Ms Handley said the council had identified a “latent demand for private scooter use” and that this, in addition to those used in the hire scheme, would increase the coexistence between cyclists and scooter users within the protected lanes.

“The terms of reference for the evaluation includes a requirement to understand how e-scooters could be safely incorporated into the transport networks. So, there will be a deliberate contemplation about how we can incorporate them in a more permanent fashion ... the formalisation [of the current trial into a permanent program], if that should go ahead, would mean the existing infrastructure that we have in the separated bicycle lanes; the demand for that space is likely to grow.” ●

# An unwanted tag: Singapore meeting exposes City of Melbourne's dilemma

*The City of Melbourne is coming down harder than ever on graffiti, yet street art remains one of the city's biggest selling points. Can the council have it both ways?*

WORDS BY David Schout  
COUNCIL AFFAIRS

It was a minor footnote in a council report that said so much.

A report presented to councillors proposing Lord Mayor Sally Capp travel overseas for an upcoming international engagement wouldn't usually garner any interest.

These trips, filed under opportunities for "international engagement", are par for the course in the city's top office.

Councillors generally spend little time speaking to the motion, and in 99.9 per cent of cases those in the chamber raise their hands to support the trip, swiftly moving onto the next item.

This occasion, on May 31, was no different.

Cr Capp's upcoming trip to the Word Cities Summit (WCS) in Singapore, which the council would partly fund to the tune of \$5000, was approved.

But a note at the bottom of the report from management raised eyebrows outside Town Hall.

Alongside key engagements as part of the July 31 to August 4 trip (including a presentation at the WCS Mayors Forum) was a planned meeting with Singaporean officials.

The subject of this meeting? How the Asian city-state deals with graffiti.



"City of Melbourne has increased activity and resourcing to tackle graffiti and street cleaning, to improve public spaces and ensure the city is sparkling as workers, students and visitors return," the report from CEO Justin Hanney noted.

Singapore is one of the cleanest cities in the world and meetings are proposed on Singapore's graffiti removal and street cleaning programs."

From a Melbourne-based perspective the meeting appears problematic, for a number of reasons.

The first, and perhaps most obvious, is that it is abundantly clear how and why Singapore is able to keep their streets mostly free of graffiti.

And that is, they employ draconian laws around vandalism.

Singapore has severe penalties, which can include corporal punishment and jail, for unapproved street art.

The second, more worrying reason is that the council is now actively looking for advice from a city that takes a zero tolerance approach to street art.

It's a dangerous side to be on.

Especially when you consider how crucial the promotion of "laneway art" is to Melbourne visitation and tourism.

As renowned local artist and Blender Studios director Adrian Doyle noted in his column for sister publication *CBD News* last month: "Urban art culture is used as one of the main marketing tools of Melbourne and Victorian tourism ... marketing teams are quick to push it as true urban Melbourne. It's in every magazine and all over the airport in every terminal."

The council itself spruiks the city as boasting a "world-renowned street art scene".

So why, then, would the city look to one of the world's strictest, most tightly regulated street art scenes for advice?

Of course, the council does not have a say in criminal laws and can't throw anyone in jail for illegally using a spray can in one of its many laneways.

Further, it will argue that there is a difference between street art (which it defines as "artistic work done with the permission of the person

who owns the wall that the work is being done on") and graffiti ("any writing or images on property without permission and typically includes tagging, writing, etching, stencilling, images or scribbling").

But whichever way you dice it, the optics aren't great on looking to Singapore for guidance on dealing with graffiti.

The planned meeting with Singaporean officials follows the recent release of the City of Melbourne's draft 2022-23 budget where the council will spend \$28.2 million to "clean up our streets and keep them free from graffiti" in the next 12 months.

This is more than it has ever spent.

But who decides which graffiti goes, and which stays?

Ugly, indiscriminate tagging across the State Library presented a clear case for the former and was swiftly removed.

But reports have also surfaced in recent months of notable street artists having creative works quickly taken down.

Doyle wrote in his column about the problem with "graffiti removalists becoming the unwitting curators of the street".

The predicament the council finds itself in is difficult. The city is finally welcoming back hordes of visitors after a two-year lull due to the pandemic and, understandably, Town Hall wants to present the best version of Melbourne for visitors by keeping it as clean as possible.

This is an admirable move that few would disagree with.

But Melbourne and Singapore should be at opposite ends of the spectrum when it comes to regulating graffiti.

One celebrates it as one of the city's defining features, while the other takes a zero-tolerance approach.

One would hope our city can formulate a more nuanced viewpoint. ●

## DOCKLANDER

# Peter Mitchell: an honorary Docklander

*This month's Docklander doesn't require much of an introduction. While he may not live in Docklands, the Seven Network's leading news anchor of 21 years Peter Mitchell reckons he's "one of the longest serving employees in Docklands", having read the news from Harbour Esplanade since March 2002.*

WORDS BY Sean Car

Having marked 21 years this year reading the network's six o'clock Melbourne bulletin, nearly all of his time at the news desk has been served right here in Docklands with Seven one of the first major employers to relocate to the precinct in 2002.

"We premiered Seven News from here in March 2002, so 20 years and we've seen all of this [Docklands] grow – none of this was here," Mr Mitchell told *Docklands News*. "I reckon I'm one of the longest serving employees in Docklands. I love working here, I think it's great."

With the urban renewal of Docklands having first started in 1997, what was formerly a working dock has undergone incredible transformation in a short space of time.

And having been a witness to much of that change during his time working in Docklands, Mr Mitchell said he could still recall his first experience reporting ahead of the first-ever game at what was then Colonial Stadium – an early victim of rapid development.

"The first match [was] at the then Colonial Stadium and, believe it or not, Port Adelaide played Essendon in the first game and Essendon was given a training session on Colonial Stadium on the Wednesday afternoon before the first match," he said.

"[Former Essendon coach] Kevin Sheedy said to the guy from the stadium, 'just tell me where the coaches' boxes are .... They looked at each other and he replied, 'uh, just leave that with us' ..."

"They [the stadium] didn't plan for coaching



boxes, so what they did was quickly rip out some seats and put up these ply coaches boxes which are in the positions where the current coaches boxes are now!"

Reflecting on 21 years as the trusted face of one of Melbourne's leading prime-time news bulletins, having started with the network as a reporter in 1988, he said it had been "a privilege to be the person at the end of the day who puts the icing on the cake from everyone else's hard work."

"I've just been fortunate enough to be in the right place at the right time, and had some lucky breaks, and once I got the job it's been fantastic because for a guy who takes an interest in what's going on around him, it's a fantastic job," Mr Mitchell said.

"People sometimes say, 'yeah but you're reading the news every night, how boring!' and I'll say, 'well, it's not boring – no two bulletins are ever the same, there's always something happening, and it's that curiosity that we have that keeps us going – the breaking news and all that sort of stuff is when the adrenaline kicks in.'

"My main job is just to not stuff it up and make sure you just present it well and do it justice."

With the Seven News bulletin renowned for nearly always leading with a local story, the worlds of it and *Docklands News* are perhaps not as far apart as what many might think! Mr Mitchell said when it came to prioritising local news, its newsroom had "quite a consensus over that."

“

*... no two bulletins are ever the same, there's always something happening, and it's that curiosity that we have that keeps us going.*

”

"Our newsroom is very egalitarian that way in that we all put our opinion in and say, 'no, perhaps this should lead' and mainly we focus on local news, and if you want international news, you're probably perhaps better off going elsewhere," he said.

Proud of the opportunity his profile provides him to do good in the community, Mr Mitchell pointed to the examples of Seven's long association with the Royal Children's Hospital Good Friday Appeal and the FightMND Big Freeze as the sort of inspiration that helps keep him going in the top job.

And at 62, Melbourne's (and Docklands') leading anchor is showing no signs of slowing down any time soon; here's to many more in Docklands, Peter! ●



## Queen Victoria Market online provides welcome boost for traders

*Despite the challenges and evolving landscape presented by the COVID-19 pandemic, Queen Victoria Market (QVM) has defied challenges being faced by other markets with the success of its online delivery service.*

WORDS BY Sean Car

In response to the pandemic, QVM Pty Ltd said it sought to implement a number of creative initiatives to help build “a stronger, more resilient market for our traders and community.”

QVM Online service was one such initiative, allowing customers to shop for fresh and specialty food from multiple market traders in one online checkout.

Considered “an important step” for the market to maintain a competitive advantage in the current retail and e-commerce environments, QVM Online has fulfilled more than 15,000 individual online orders since launching in November 2020.

As the only service of its kind remaining in operation today, the success of QVM’s online produce delivery service has gone against the wave of other major Melbourne markets which launched online services during the pandemic, which have all now closed.

And the service continues to go from strength to strength. Beginning with 2000 unique products, it now offers more than 3500 products across fresh meat, fish, poultry, fruit and vegetables, bread, eggs, deli, nuts, ready-made meals, organics, coffee, tea, wine, craft beer and gin, flowers, vitamins and more.

With more than 50 of the market’s traders operating on the one platform, it has proven to be a resounding success and much-needed boost amid ongoing challenges many small businesses have faced during the pandemic.

Having originally delivered within 15 kilometres of the market in December 2020, it now delivers to 220 postcodes within 30 kilometres around Melbourne, with the CBD, North Melbourne, Flemington, Fitzroy and Carlton making up the top five suburbs.

QVM Pty Ltd said there was also a strong customer base in the western suburbs across Werribee and the Point Cook area.

Customers can collect their goods from the designated click and collect zone in the market car park or have their shopping delivered directly to their home or office, with two delivery windows available every market day (1pm to 5pm or 4pm to 8pm).

Delivery is \$15 per order and customers can order by 10am on a market day for same-day service. Orders are delivered in cardboard boxes with minimal to no plastic packaging. •

For more information:  
[qvm.com.au/shop](http://qvm.com.au/shop)

## A year for the ages at Lucas Real Estate

*As a specialty Docklands agency, Lucas Real Estate has long held a stranglehold over postcode 3008’s residential property market.*

WORDS BY Jack Hayes

So much so, record breaking sales have become somewhat second nature for an agency which celebrates two decades of service to Docklanders next year.

It may not surprise you to know Lucas Real Estate has posted its most successful 12 months on record with more than 200 properties sold this financial year.

What will surprise you is just how far the gap is between Lucas Real Estate and its nearest competitor when it comes to sales in Docklands.

During the past 12 months, Lucas Real Estate sold 152 properties in Docklands, while its nearest competitor sold 46.

Its other significant stats from the past year include conducting 1962 open for inspections, facilitating 1332 private inspections and 15,948 calls made.

The agency also generated 11,000 new enquiries, posted 48 new blogs, saw 154,797 social media impressions, and eager property hunters saw over one million online sales property views. There were 130,000 unique visitors to its website, with over 600 hours of video viewership and the Lucas E-newsletters are read on average 70,000 times per month.

Lucas Real Estate director Baden Lucas told *Docklands News* his agency’s success over the past 12 months was credited to an “incredibly hard-working team” which “specialises in the sale of inner-city apartments.”

“Our agents are able to give a high level of comfort to buyers because of their local knowledge,” Mr Lucas said. “They are able to continually answer the questions asked of them; to have a local agent who specialises in the sale of apartments is so important to choose for this local market.”

“It comes down to communication, it comes down to understanding buyer behaviours, the way buyers interact with properties and the depth of the conversations our team has with them to understand what they ultimately want to achieve. That gives our vendors the ultimate advantage.”



“One of the things we learned [during the pandemic], is that we need to be faster. Faster to market, faster to respond, faster to book appointments and service buyers, and we needed to make sure we had the right technology behind us.”

With the median apartment price in Docklands approximately \$600,000, Mr Lucas said the flurry of activity in the currently owner-occupier-dominant market was due to Docklands’ affordability with proximity to the city, convenience of transportation, attractiveness of lifestyle and accessibility to quality early and primary school education.

Another driving factor continuing to influence Docklands’ residential market is first home buyers’ stamp duty savings and concessions for properties up to \$750,000 coupled with the Victorian Government’s “Homebuyer Fund” – a shared equity scheme where eligible homebuyers can receive a contribution of up to 25 per cent towards the purchase price of their property, reducing their minimum required deposit to five per cent.

“We are seeing a lot of tenants who were previously renting with Lucas Real Estate coming to open for inspections with the intentions to buy,” Mr Lucas said.

“There aren’t many places in Melbourne where you can get a great lifestyle, where you can find great childcare and education for your kids, where you can get around without the

need for a car, all for around \$600,000,” Mr Lucas said.

“People who are selling properties in Melbourne’s CBD, Southbank, West Melbourne, Port Melbourne, North Melbourne, they want agencies that specialise in the sale of apartments.”

“Those people who are coming through our open for inspections are seeing the enthusiasm and the professionalism [of] our team, they are then calling us to sell their property in those suburbs.”

As one of the strongest performing independent brands in the inner-city, Mr Lucas said his agency’s record-breaking numbers had been a testament to the proactive nature of his sales agents and the fact they were able to speak and deal with buyers or serve vendors with industry leading professionalism.

According to Mr Lucas, Docklands’ rental market has continued to bounce back from the dark days of mid-2021 when vacancy rates sat between five and eight per cent, and now they are at near pre-COVID levels of one per cent.

“We have seen rental prices recover, not quite to the point of pre-pandemic levels, but a swift return. Over the six months our team have never seen the level of [rental] enquiry,” Mr Lucas said.

“I have one piece of advice for landlords who are with other agencies: if you have leased your property over the last two years during COVID-19 speak with a member of our team about getting a price update.”

While the agency has its eyes firmly set on opening a second and third office, it is also on the hunt for a new generation of Lucas Real Estate sales executives, property managers and administration staff.

If you are interested in a career in the residential property industry, get in touch with the Lucas Real Estate team. •

For more information:  
[lucasre.com.au](http://lucasre.com.au)

## Children blossom at high-rise oasis

*Stepping off the elevator at the first floor and into Gowrie at The Harbour, the first thing you notice is a distinct lack of concrete and plastic. Instead, you’re greeted by open spaces in earthy hues and natural materials.*

Everywhere you look, there are welcoming displays of nature and children’s artwork inspired by a connection to Country. At the heart of this inner-city centre is a flourishing outdoor sanctuary.

The early learning long-day care centre runs an indoor-outdoor program every day, rain or shine, allowing children of different ages to flow between the rooms and sprawling verdant garden.

Centre manager Rukmini Bose-Rahmen describes it as an oasis.

“It’s quite unique to find on the first level of an inner-city building,” Rukmini said. “We’ve been here for 13 years now, and the outdoor space is very established. The trees are glorious. A lot of our families live in high-rise apartments, and they really cherish the space.”

Sandpits, vegie gardens, native grasses and mature trees are dotted throughout the space and every room opens to it, in a circular fashion.

“The doors are open first thing in the morning and the children can move indoors and outdoors very seamlessly,” Rukmini said. “The

outdoor area is one of the main learning spaces for us and it’s the perfect environment for children. They’re able to mix with different age groups, so older children can learn empathy and how to help younger children. This allows them to develop life skills very early on.”

Education leader Sam Fernandez said the flow between indoors and outdoors extended to each of the rooms, allowing children to move between learning spaces.

“It feels really organic and natural to have an open space for all,” Sam said. “It means siblings can visit each other throughout the day ... a fence divided the space during COVID and it really cut that culture. The fence recently came down and we all breathed out. It’s been wonderful.”

Early childhood educator Carla Beslagic said the established outdoor area and the focus on materials foraged from nature offer a great opportunity to explore connection to Country as part of Gowrie Victoria’s First Nations Perspectives Program. This also extends to the classrooms and broader community.

“We are right next to Birrarung, the Yarra River, and we use this as a place to explore local First Nations perspectives,” Carla said. “The place is rich with First Nations knowledge, stories, histories and truths that we share with the children.”

This focus on Birrarung is incorporated into the Docklands service and nearby kinder, and Carla said the children had created their own “small world Birrarung play area” in the classroom, using ideas from their excursions into the Docklands community and a library session they recently had with Kirrae Whurrong/



Gunditjmara author and illustrator Aunty Fiona Clarke.

A connection to Country is reinforced through everything from the resources available through to the names of each classroom.

“We were very fortunate to have Boonwurrung elder Aunty Fay Stewart Muir visit the service and she gifted us the names of our rooms in the Boonwurrung language, which are local animals that the children chose,” Carla said.

“At the front of every room is an acknowledgement of where its name came from and this is something we’re all very proud of.”

Gowrie at The Harbour is currently enrolling for places in 2022 and 2023. •

For more information:  
[gowrievictoria.org.au/childrens-programs/docklands](http://gowrievictoria.org.au/childrens-programs/docklands)

# Your Melbourne Greens team continues (and grows by one!)

*I have some news: at the time of writing (early June), my baby is due in one week! And before I embark upon a short period of maternity leave, I wanted to "officially" announce that I'm putting up my hand to continue as your state MP for Melbourne at the Victorian election in November.*

There's no denying that the last few years have been a rollercoaster. But after the recent federal election, I am feeling very hopeful.

The election saw big swings towards candidates pushing for strong climate action and integrity in our parliaments, sending a strong message to the new government that this is what Australians want (and need!).

With more Greens in the federal parliament our MPs will push the government further and faster on climate change, integrity, women's representation in parliament and affordable housing.

As someone who has worked my whole adult life for action on climate change, the results gave me a new spring in my step. They gave me hope about what we can achieve, together with the



▲ State Greens MP Ellen Sandell (right) with re-elected Federal Greens MP Adam Bandt (left).

community, at the state election in November.

With just a few Greens MPs in the Victorian Parliament, we've already been successful at pushing Labor to change its position and implement a ban on toxic gas fracking, stopping the polluting East West toll road, and getting a cap on political donations.

When China stopped taking our waste a few years ago, it was the Greens-initiated parliamentary inquiry that pushed the Government to adopt new solutions like a 10c refund on bottles and cans, a ban on single-use plastics and an overhaul of our recycling system.

And during the pandemic we were able to stand up for public housing residents affected by the hard lockdown – with new support programs now in place – as well as successfully advocate for rent relief for people struggling to pay rent and support for casual workers and international students.

But of course, we're not done yet.

Unfortunately, the Labor Government has opened up huge new areas of Victoria for gas drilling, including right near the 12 Apostles, has put a tax on electric cars and extended the life of our polluting coal-fired power plants.

## ABORIGINAL MELBOURNE

### *Still Sacred and Golden: A reminder of the true gold*

*An exhibition focused on celebrating plants and cultural practices is being presented at the Koorie Heritage Trust, but while not blatantly obvious from first glance, the work actually explores deeper themes.*

WORDS BY Kaylah-Joelle Baker

Behind the *Still Sacred and Golden* work is award-winning multimedia visual artist and proud Wadawurrung woman Dr Deanne Gilson, who through her work hopes to share how the objectification of Aboriginal women has resulted in deep pain – a topic she closely examined in her PhD at Deakin University.

"I am looking at the objects of our daily lives and as a First Nations artist responding to the objectified and yet showing us as still here, and our culture is still sacred to us," Dr Gilson said.

"The flowers are all about honouring the beauty of Country and our women with the knowledge held in the baskets I will be painting."

The exhibition has 17 new paintings and each speaks about how Aboriginal women who were subjected to objectification by both the male and female colonial gaze, particularly within Dr Gilson's ancestral line, lost their spiritual connection to place, Country and each other.

"I hope my artwork aids in some small way towards the awakening of my women's spirit once again. The bond for me is still sacred and it is not broken, but it has been just quietly resting until now," she said.

Dr Gilson grew up in Naarm – Melbourne – before relocating back to her Ancestral Country, which includes Ballarat and surrounding areas, with her family.

As an experienced artist, Dr Gilson's previous work has surrounded deep themes of colonial disruption, loss of family, culture, language and



traditional women's practices and the continuing impact of loss on Aboriginal women today.

Through the self-reflective aspect of her contemporary art she hopes people can take time to heal, and disrupt and challenge the gaze.

The concept of celebrating both the plants, cultural practices and contemporary women's business comes through within the exhibition's title of *Still Sacred and Golden*. A strong title with an even stronger meaning behind it, similar to Dr Gilson's work.

"The gold references two things for me, the gold fields in which I live and that our knowledge is golden and important and worth more than gold," she said.

"My ancestors had no use of gold itself, it is just a metaphor. The true gold isn't the gold from the gold fields, it's us."

*Still Sacred and Golden* opens Saturday, June 18 and continues at Koorie Heritage Trust in Federation Square until Sunday, September 18. ●

## PRECINCT PERSPECTIVE (YARRA'S EDGE)

### **Big political changes**

*There has been significant change politically since my last article with the Albanese Labor Government voted in with a huge vote for Teal Independents, a strong showing from The Greens and our federal MP for Macnamara Josh Burns pushed to retain his seat by local Greens candidate Steph Hodgins-May.*

The reason for me mentioning this is because Josh Burns and Labor promised \$3 million for a transport inquiry into Fishermans Bend. It has been quite unfair and unsettling for residents with the proposed tram bridge on the drawing board since prior to the 2014 Victorian Election. I have to say I am quite disappointed with our local member Josh Burns as I have sent three emails and not received so much as an acknowledgment. However, I do accept two of these emails were sent during the election campaign but the third was after, and I am trying to get an appointment to discuss our local concerns on the tram bridge. Also there have been major changes to the Andrews' Government Ministry with our local MP Martin Foley retiring from parliament at the November State election. I can understand his decision having held the critical health portfolio during the past two years of the COVID pandemic. It's been a demanding role and he has done a pretty good job. But I must point out that Mr Foley told local residents on November 18, 2014, that Labor would not support a tram bridge, yet as we well know, the state government has since provided \$500,000 for further inquiries into the tram bridge. To my knowledge the government has not canvassed the views of local residents and it appears it intends to proceed, which, in my opinion, would be an expensive disaster when there are better alternatives available. On a brighter note, after having had extensive communication with Minister for Transport Infrastructure Jacinta Allan I am pleased that she has been elected Deputy Premier while also taking on the role of Minister for Commonwealth Games Delivery as if she wasn't already busy enough. I am grateful to the City of Melbourne having had the opportunity to address the Future Melbourne Committee (FMC) meeting in Docklands in May and offer my alternatives to the tram bridge but sadly at this stage the

council still supports the tram bridge proposal. I am at least encouraged that Lord Mayor Sally Capp and the council are supportive of bringing forward Metro 2 and providing trains to Fishermans Bend with two new stations proposed for Turner and Fennell streets, as identified in the Fishermans Bend framework. While on the topic of the council, it was good to catch up with Cr Kevin Louey and have him follow up planter boxes for the boardwalk at Yarra's Edge – a long overdue beautification of the area. Also there is some concern from residents between Towers 1 and 2 that the area is being neglected by the council as it has become particularly untidy with bins and business deliveries. A big thank you to the council for finally changing the parking bays between Towers 5 and 6 to very short-term. This had become a major problem with trades and some residents thinking it was for long-term parking and creating obstacles across the footpaths with no concerns for residents' wellbeing. I can only hope the area will now be better monitored by the council. The residents and visitors of Yarra's Edge are loving the *Wild About Babies* and are grateful for the partnership between Mirvac and international artists Gillie & Marc's bronze sculptures, which have become quite a drawcard. I hope they will become a permanent fixture.

I love the competition of naming our newest residents – it seems to be creating a great deal of interest. This really is inspiring our connected community. ●



Keith Sutherland  
YARRA'S EDGE RESIDENT  
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## OWNERS' CORPORATION LAW

**Taking the plunge on owners' corporation plumbing defect claims**

*Victorian consumers of plumbing services might be surprised to learn that they are protected by the most comprehensive statutory protections in Australia.*

The Victorian Building Authority (VBA) requires that plumbers cannot be licensed to carry out any work unless they hold insurance coverage against defective plumbing work, trade practices liability, and the non-completion of work as well as public liability insurance.

The *General Insurance Order 2002* that applies to these matters ((known as the "Ministerial Order") also provides full coverage for legal and expert costs incurred by a property owner in making a claim against a plumber.

Multiple occupancy dwellings such as apartment buildings can suffer from quite serious plumbing defects, ranging from pan siphoning and water pressure issues, to crushed pipes and installation of faulty metering, through to roof guttering and defective designs and/or installations of downpipes.

There is a strict time limit of six years to bring a claim under these warranty insurance provisions, and consideration and advice should be taken from a lawyer to ascertain the exact date as to when the policy coverage commenced.

One of the advantages of this warranty system over the other schemes in Australia is that the plumber does not have to be dead, disappeared, insolvent or not practicing anymore before any claim can be made against the insurance policy.

True enough, the insurer has rights to compel the plumber to rectify any defective plumbing work, but that doesn't limit or stop the claim from being accepted if the plumber refuses to do so.

The interesting part about all this is that many of the insurers that offer these policies seek to limit their exposure by setting an upper limit of \$50,000 per apartment or up to \$5 million in total. However, the Ministerial Order makes it clear that any monetary limit on the indemnity is prohibited for loss or damage, error of design and the costs of inspecting and repairing the plumbing work.

The *Building Act 1993* also confirms that the Ministerial Order trumps the terms of any insurance policy, to the extent of any inconsistency.

What this means is that consumers have access to an unliquidated liability insurance policy for the rectification of defective plumbing work.

But does all this sound too good to be true? Well, yes, yes it does. The insurers would certainly never have offered these insurance policies to plumbers in the first place if it thought they were exposed on an unlimited basis.

However, there may be a reason why the Ministerial Order has never been challenged in an open court or tribunal decision, despite the Order being around for 20 years. Insurance claims in these matters are mostly settled well before the proceedings are heard in court. So, it seems that insurers are reluctant to seek guidance from the court about the application and interpretation of the Ministerial guideline.

As always, committees should "plumb to new depths" by seeking advice from a lawyer on these matters and should consider whether they might have a claim against the original builders via its sub-contracted plumber for either faulty workmanship or design issues.

I would also recommend "fauceting the issue" by engaging a properly qualified forensic plumbing consultant on these issues, as it tends to be a highly specialised field. ●



Tom Bacon

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## WE LIVE HERE

**Consumer watchdog sues Airbnb after thousands complain**

*The federal government's consumer watchdog, the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (ACCC), has instituted proceedings in the Federal Court against Airbnb for allegedly misleading consumers.*

In court documents, the ACCC alleges that from 2018 to 2021, Airbnb made false or misleading representations to thousands of Australian consumers by displaying prices on its website or mobile app for Australian accommodation using only a dollar sign (\$), without making it clear that those prices were in US dollars.

The ACCC website alleges that the behaviour went further: "When thousands of consumers complained to Airbnb about being charged more than the displayed price, the ACCC alleges that Airbnb engaged in further misleading or deceptive conduct by telling many of them that it had displayed prices in US dollars because the user had selected this currency, when this was often not the case."

"We allege that Airbnb's misleading conduct meant that consumers were deprived of the opportunity to make an informed choice about whether, and at what price, to book their holiday accommodation on the Airbnb platform," ACCC chair Gina Cass-Gottlieb said.

"Despite thousands of consumers complaining to Airbnb about the way prices were displayed, Airbnb didn't amend its booking platform until after the ACCC raised the issue."

The watchdog is suing US-based Airbnb Inc. and Airbnb Ireland UC, seeking declarations, injunctions, pecuniary penalties, orders for the compensation for affected consumers.

The ACCC legal suit follows another year of bad press for Airbnb.

Last year Airbnb was forced to suspend a Victorian host for banning guests who had received the COVID vaccine and for falsely claiming vaccinated people were infectious. The host refused to accept bookings from guests who had been vaccinated with "experimental C-19 gene therapy vaccines".

In the Moorabbin Magistrates' Court last month, the owner of an Airbnb property in Hepburn pleaded guilty to a charge of harassing a guest with a message saying she would "burn in hell". The host was angered by the guest who left a review on a travel website saying his Airbnb rental was "just OK".

**Four years of the "damp squib"**

In 2018 the Victorian Government passed the weakest regulatory restrictions for short-term letting ever seen in Australia, to the delight of Airbnb.

After the tragic stabbing death of a young woman at a party in a short-stay apartment in the Melbourne CBD at EQ Tower in July 2018, Premier Andrews stated that his government would look into tightening regulations for short-stay apartments.

Despite this promise, in August 2018 the government passed the same legislation word for word that had been rejected by the Upper House as inadequate more than 12 months earlier.

The government stated in its policy response that it would conduct a review in 2021 to see whether the new regulations were working and would seek feedback from stakeholders and resident groups at that time. However, this review was not inserted into the Bill and the Labor Government has not conducted the review.

The former Shadow Minister for Planning David Davis once addressed Parliament to slam the government for reintroducing the same legislation which he labelled "weak", "pathetic" and a "damp squib." The Liberal Party told Parliament that it would seek to have this legislation amended if it were to form government at the next election. Ultimately however, the Liberal Party did not block the passing of the Bill when it came time to vote on the legislation and was absent from the chamber when it was put to the vote.

The outcome ranked as one of the worst cases of politicking and back-room deals seen in Parliament.

Tom Bacon, CEO of Strata Title Lawyers said at the time, "The legislation is not worth the paper it is written on. These regulations are the lightest feather of a touch, and do not provide owners' corporations with any meaningful way of regulating the issues associated with short-term stays. I would not advise owners' corporations to use these regulations; it would be a costly exercise and a waste of time."

**What do we want?**

We Live Here calls on the Andrews government to announce a policy overhaul before the November state election:

**1. AMEND the Owners' Corporation Act 2006 to regulate the short-stay industry – far beyond the scope of the woefully inadequate pro-Airbnb "party" bill that was shamefully passed just before the election. The Airbnb "party" bill made it even harder for owners' corporations to recoup costs of damage and it completely ignored issues of security, amenity and community development – these issues must**

be addressed.

**2. INTRODUCE a registration system to manage the burgeoning short-stay industry.**

**3. RESTORE POWERS to owners' corporations to make decisions about use of a lot, lost in Justice Riordan's Supreme Court decision in July 2017.**

**4. ENGAGE with We Live Here. Talk to us – we represent more than 350 buildings in Melbourne, Victoria, Australia and globally. More than 80 per cent of Melbourne's resident population lives in strata buildings. We can help you understand how to look after strata communities.**

Mr Andrews, you must be aware that governments around the nation and around the world are grappling with the issue of short-stays and the lack of affordable housing; and the various means of regulation being adopted by NSW, Tasmania, Western Australia, South Australia, Canberra, New York, Paris, London, Amsterdam, Berlin, etc.

Local councils in Victoria, tired of waiting for meaningful action from the state government are starting to implement their own versions of the most basic regulations to protect the community: Councils in the Yarra Valley, Frankston, and the Mornington Peninsula have each developed regulations around issues such as registration, day limits and accountability.

COVID provided a brief respite from short-stays due to the significant drop in visitors. Disturbingly many commercial operators with swags of apartments, not just Airbnb, are now beginning to flood the market. Forget about the industry spin that it's just "Mums and Dads wanting to a rent out a room in their own home" – we are witnessing a large-scale commercialisation of the residential market.

Right now, the government has an amazing opportunity to put Melbourne on the map by proactively implementing regulation before the whole short-stay issue gets totally out of hand once again.

You have seen what happens to a leader who does not listen to the electorate.

**Please, Mr Andrews listen to your community. Talk to us. Hear us. Stand up for us.**

**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 [welivehere.net](http://welivehere.net). We Live Here does not accept donations from commercial tourism interests. ●

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Rus Littleton

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LEARN MORE AT  
[WELIVEHERE.NET](http://WELIVEHERE.NET)



## CHAMBER UPDATE

**Stepping in for Docklands**

*Well, my brother is out of action for a while so I'm ghost writing for him.*

WORDS BY Monique Wylie

NEWQUAY RESIDENT SINCE 2002

Some of you may know me as Monique, others might know me as the crazy dog lady! You might know my sheepdogs, or potentially my old girl Gidget (black chow chow) who passed last year. I can always be found walking NewQuay Promenade and I've been a resident of Docklands for 20 years now. I'm also Shane's sister.

I've seen a fair bit of social media clutter and gossip that Docklands is descending into an area of crime, gangs, drugs and violence. I've lived here for 20 years, and I've always felt safe.

There was a period just after COVID lockdowns ceased that saw an influx of people to the precinct. Interactions were a little different for a few weeks but as a single woman I still go out every single night to walk my dogs – at any

time of the night – and I haven't witnessed any of this.

It's actually starting to annoy me when I see this gossip so regularly repeated. I know Shane feels the same and until someone can show me some empirical evidence that there is more crime in Docklands than in any other suburb, I'm not going to alter my actions or thoughts.

By the time this is printed we will have seen Firelight come and go.

It's a hard time for Docklands right now. The corporates aren't returning to the office so splashes like this are important but not the long-term answer.

Each day I look out into the harbour and see a pier basically degenerating before my eyes. I don't have the same relationship with the governing bodies my brother does so I can speak a little more forthrightly – bloody do something!

Any other city around the world would have removed it and put out an expression of interest for the next idea. Development Victoria, City of Melbourne and Heritage Victoria: get your act together.

The residents' version of Docklands Dollars has just closed. I'd like to thank Lendlease,

*Each day I look out into the harbour and see a pier basically degenerating before my eyes.*



Mirvac, MAB and The District Docklands for their investment. Obviously, I'm proud of my brother and his administration of it but it would not have been possible without four stakeholders coming to the table.

Great work and I hope it's not the last time we see such collaboration. ●

## HISTORY

# A Clapp of approval

*It is November 17, 1937. Australia is climbing out of the Depression as Melburnians gather at Spencer Street Station to celebrate the launch of a new train that would become a feature of the railways for the next half-century, the Spirit Of Progress.*

The man giving the speech in the photo is the then Victorian Premier, Albert Dunstan. The man looking downwards to Dunstan's right does not need an introduction; it is Sir Robert Menzies, who later became our longest-serving Prime Minister. At the time of this ceremony, he was attending as a representative of the Commonwealth Government, being Australia's Attorney-General and Minister of Industry. However, his history with Victoria's railways had run deep before this; while serving as Victoria's Attorney General and Solicitor General in the 1930s, he also served as the Minister of Railways.

The lanky, bespectacled man on Dunstan's left, by comparison, isn't familiar at first glance. However, to those in the railway community, he is a well-known and influential figure, the Chairman of Commissioners at Victorian Railways, Harold Winthrop Clapp.

Harold was born in St Kilda on May 7, 1875. His father, Francis Boardman Clapp, was the owner of the Melbourne Tramway and Omnibus Company, which operated the first cable tram services in Victoria. Harold shared his father's passion for rail transport, working at his father's Brisbane Tramway Co. as a superintendent of motive power. He then moved to



America, where he worked for General Electric in Schenectady, New York, then became involved in various railway projects, serving as the vice-president of the Southern Pacific Railroad Co., as well as railway companies in Columbus and East St Louis. When he heard that Victorian Railways had an opening for Chairman of Commissioners, he successfully applied and was back in his home state by September 1920 on a hefty wage of £5000pa.

Upon his return to Melbourne, he set the tone for the next two decades, explaining to *The Argus* (September 16, 1920) that "I am all for efficiency and teamwork, and want to know my men and my men to know me." Throughout his tenure he got to know thousands of his co-workers by name, and he was reputedly fastidious, inspecting the shelves of station offices for dust whenever he visited, while keeping himself well-groomed and encouraging his fellow workers to do the same. Referring to Victorian Railways as the "Great Railway Team", he improved conditions for workers with abulation houses and new cafeterias. While the 1930s Depression saw more than 8000 workers laid

off, and those remaining had to reduce their wages, Harold also willingly took a substantial £1500 pay cut from his own salary.

During his 19-year tenure, Clapp achieved a lot for Victorian Railways. He oversaw the completion of the electrification of the railways and sought to improve train services. Stricter timekeeping was encouraged, so more trains ran on time, and other services were adjusted to run faster. VR was able to introduce new innovations to its lines, from automatic couplings to electric headlights. While giving passengers the best service possible, Clapp also believed railways could benefit the state's economy, including the rural workers of Victoria. In 1922 VR introduced The State Resources Train (affectionately known as the "Reso train"), allowing business leaders to travel around regional Victoria to promote business. This was followed by the Better Farming Train in 1924, a co-project with the Department of Agriculture, which went to rural regions to promote new ways to improve farming. Described as "an agricultural college on wheels" (*North Eastern Ensign*, August 14, 1925) the train supplied agricultural displays and demonstrations of dairy farming, produce, cooking and infant welfare.

Another, though unorthodox, component of Harold's campaign to help rural workers was the advertisement and promotion of fruit. Throughout the 1920s and '30s, one couldn't stop at a station in Melbourne or Victoria without seeing a poster advertising "Eat more fruit", a fruit stall, or a fruit drinks stall. The drinks in question weren't particularly healthy (as the fruit juice was mostly sugar and soda), but they became a hit with thirsty patrons on summer days. In 1923 the Victorian Railways' newly opened bakery on Dudley St produced raisin bread, at the time a novelty made by just three bakers in Melbourne, to improve dried fruit sales. It proved such a hit by decade's end that 350 bakers were making raisin

bread.

Arguably Harold's crowning achievement was the *Spirit of Progress*. In 1934, he went on a journey to America and Europe to research improvements to the railways, especially as road vehicle sales increased. When he returned, he declared that to keep passengers' posteriors on carriage seats, they needed to be absolutely comfortable. Soon an S-class train was built for the Melbourne to Albury journey, made of a lightweight but durable and cheap Corten steel, and fitted out with individual lamps, soundproofing, and, most importantly, air conditioning to mitigate the heat and dust. Painted in navy blue and gold, the train was formally launched on November 17, 1937, and made its first trip to Albury on November 23, a sight that became commonplace to all Victorians for the next 49 years.

Harold Clapp's 19-year reign ended on June 30, 1939. With a war approaching, he was assigned the general manager of the Aircraft Construction Branch of the Commonwealth Department of Supply and Development. In this position, Harold oversaw the construction of Bristol Beaufort Bombers. In his later years, he became director general of land transport, and advocated for the standardising of gauges in Australia (at a time when gauge widths varied between states and passengers had to swap trains at state borders). Even at the ripe old age of 77 in July 1952 he was able to come on board the first diesel-electric train in Victoria, fittingly named the "Harold W. Clapp". A few months later, on October 21, he passed away. ●

Ashley Smith

RESEARCHER  
ROYAL HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF VICTORIA

Victoria Port became too small, will Port Phillip Bay and The Heads be judged too prohibitively shallow for mammoth bulk vessels? Already we hear speculation about the next-phase Freight Hubs away from the central city. Will the idyllic Blue Lake actually return? Not as a food source perhaps – but as a marvellous aquatic recreational play space for Melburnians?

The Royal Historical Society of Victoria recently held an excellent exhibition called *The Swamp Vanishes*. Catch this exhibition online – the images are wonderful. Visit [historyvictoria.org.au](http://historyvictoria.org.au) for more information.

Public records are the "stuff of heritage" and the importance of a new Public Record Office Victoria (PROV) project, *Ports and Harbours: An Astounding Records Transfer Story*, provides a Docklands precinct treasure trove. Melbourne Maritime Heritage Network encourages you to check out this wonderful PROV project capturing the historic public records of Ports Victoria and predecessor agencies including the Melbourne Harbour Trust Commissioners, the Ports and Harbours Branch of the Public Works Department, the Port of Melbourne Authority and the Geelong Harbour Trust. The entire collection is now available via Open Access and can be viewed and copies ordered from the PROV North Melbourne Reading Room. See: ●



Jackie Watts

CHAIR OF MELBOURNE MARITIME HERITAGE NETWORK  
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# Tale of transition

“

*Make no make mistake – the lovely vista you see across the waters of Victoria Harbour came at a cost. By that I am not referring to the cost of your apartment!*

”

What we now see as the wonderful aquatic amphitheatre of Victoria Harbour is described by some historians as a "casualty of remorseless modern civilization". Perhaps this is an overly dark and catastrophic lens through which to understand the forces that shaped the Docklands Precinct – a tale of transition.

Prior to European settlement in 1835, this area between the Yarra River and the Moonee Ponds Creek was a bountiful and beautiful wetland. The blue shimmering shallow "lake", or "lagoon", teemed with animals, birds and plants which served as rich food sources and sustained the cultural traditions of the people of the Kulin Nation. This wetland was an important meeting place for the traditional owners who would come together in large gatherings for trade, celebrations and other social activities.

Time passed, the colony grew, and the Blue Lake came to be known by European settlers as merely a swamp – first "Batman's Swamp" and later "West Melbourne Swamp". With increasing population and manufacturing it degen-

erated further – ugly, polluted, odorous from noxious trades, the area was considered to be unhealthy and was avoided by the prosperous settlers as a refuge for the poor. In the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century the swamp transitioned into a vast contaminated bog absorbing the industrial effluent of a fast-growing urban settlement.

A growing city needed adequate port facilities and with ambition, foresight and funds, later in the 19<sup>th</sup> century this wasteland came to be perceived as a site of opportunity and the swamp transitioned into the vast excavated expanse of Victoria Harbour. At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century the powerful decision-makers in the relatively rich colony embarked on ambitious civil engineering works and with an abundance of cheap labour amid a depression, changed the very shape of, not only the swamp, but also the surrounding lands.

The intermittent Blue Lake/swamp was drained and excavated. Existing water courses were re-routed, channelled into what is now known as the Dynon Road Tidal Canal, parallel to Dynon Rd. The once extensive swamp was reduced to a small wetland area. Spoil from the excavation was heaped into new earthworks along the Yarra River and shaped into what became Collins Wharf, and Coode Island was created. Melbourne now had a world-renowned port, known as a civil engineering marvel, largely hand excavated. All of this greatly added to Melbourne's available port space and supported a burgeoning maritime trade economy.

The Blue Lake had successfully transitioned into the major, and tremendously important, international Victoria Port. New maritime and rail infrastructure filled the harbour and this efficient, extensive and bustling port powered Melbourne's and Victoria's prosperity.

Inexorably, transition continued. Mid-20<sup>th</sup> century technological advances in refrigeration and containerisation, together with the sheer



▲ Hydrographic Survey Plan of River Yarra and Victoria Dock from Queen's Bridge to Coode Island PROV VPRS 18781 C1 474731A.

volume of maritime trade, resulted in port operations shifting away to the west of Victoria Harbour, to the newly created Swanston and Appleton Docks.

There are clear parallels to be drawn between the transition of the Blue Lake from a bountiful and rich wetland to a large, contaminated bog, and the success and redundancy of Port Victoria, of an industrial wasteland transitioning into a swank brownfield renewal site replete with property developments which is the Docklands precinct today.

History indicates that transitions are constant – reclamation, reimagining, repurposing and revitalisation will continue. What are we now facing? More logistical capacity, more automation, gigantic vessel tonnage. Just as the

# Nothing compares to Zambi

*I knew it was going to happen. I had no doubt. In fact, when I arrived, I was welcomed by the comment, "you're with your people now". They could tell by the look on my face, the excitement and energy that was bursting out of me. It was clear to everyone. I am in love.*

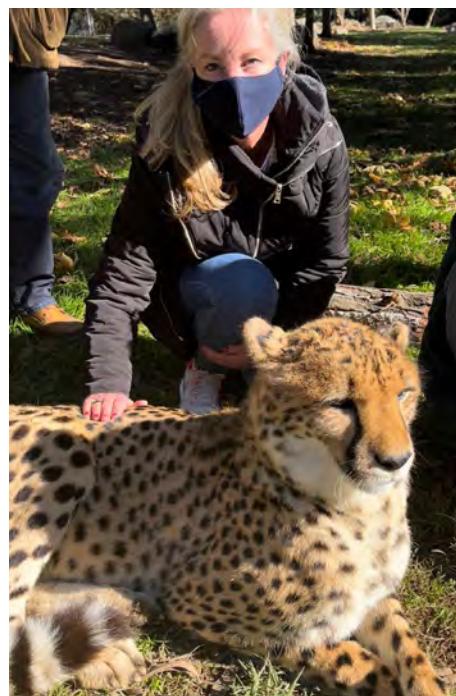
You know when you truly find your calling. You can't hide it. It doesn't mean you immediately know what to do with it, where to take it, how to protect it, or how to share it. You want to scream it from the top of all the buildings, "listen everyone – I have something important to tell you!". You know there are millions of people also screaming the same message, just as in love as you are, just as desperate to protect their love. You know you're not alone, yet sometimes it feels like you are.

I knew it was finally time. That after nurturing (don't you love how mums can reflect on 18 years of child raising as "nurturing" lol) my child through to adulthood, I would have time to listen to my own soul. To have room in my heart to love again, and to love fiercely. To be ready to be swept up in my next adventure. To know what was important to me.

The moment I touched him, the heat from his body, the muscles twitching under my fingers, his eyes fixed to a tree in the distance, I was

captivated. And when I heard him, the sound reverberated through my body and caught me by surprise. I wanted to throw my arms around him and never let him go. Of course, I didn't. I just kept patting him, transfixed by the consistent rumbling of this purr – the purr of a wild Cheetah named, Zambi.

Cheetahs are the world's fastest land animal and can run up to 110km an hour and there I was, patting him. His two brothers (he's a triplet) and he arrived from South Africa as cubs. They, Zambi, Asani and Viking, are the hope of their species' future with more than 6000 left in the wild. They are part of a regional breeding program, striving to ensure their survival. Sadly, as a last resort their only survival may be in captivity. I stayed at Jamala Wildlife Lodge in Canberra – their focus is on the conservation of animals through cash donation to international strategies and breeding programs. Their animals are all rescued from private owners or corrupt circuses and are unable to return to the



wild.

I also fed a Sun Bear, and a Tiger. They captured my heart. All the animals, and their stories of being on the brink of extinction, cap-

tured my heart. I knew they would. And I knew their plight would stir every ounce of my being into wanting to help. They are the victims of our growing population, our greed to feed our materialistic needs. We must do all we can to protect them. It's time to turn our attention to the environment, to the animals that need us. There are millions of us wanting to help, wanting to do something. And together, maybe we can.

If something is important to you, grab it with both hands. Research it, participate in it, talk about it. When something is important, it requires both your heart and your head to make a difference. Know what you stand for and know who stands with you. Because life should be full of the things we love, and our pursuits should be for the good of all. Fall in love, with all that is good in this world, and help make a difference.

Until next month, Abby x •



Abby Crawford  
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## CRITIC

# A pop novel with a big heart

*There's a passage in When Jokers Were Kings just near the end where the voices of the two main characters lock in a "lyrical embrace" singing an Elvis Presley tribute song.*

One is a lowly mailroom clerk and the other the PA to a dodgy bank executive under investigation.

They work for one of the big Docklands banks before the lockdown.

The bank inquiry is underway and Melbourne's nouveau financial district is not looking good with its cavalier attitude towards staff and customers.

This novel by John Tesarsch is a timely reminder of how the corporate sector once behaved with execs getting all the limelight and employees seeking solace in fantasy, such as tribute bands.

The talented Mr Tesarsch, a musician and a lawyer, has written four novels and has a good feel for sad sack characters.

Bertie Jones, the mail clerk, joins a long line of tribute characters to the "soggy" protagonist of Annie Proulx's *The Shipping News*, published in 1993.

Bertie is overweight and fearful, like *The Shipping News* prototype, but luckily comes under the wing of an entrepreneurial type who is feeding the press inside information about the bank.

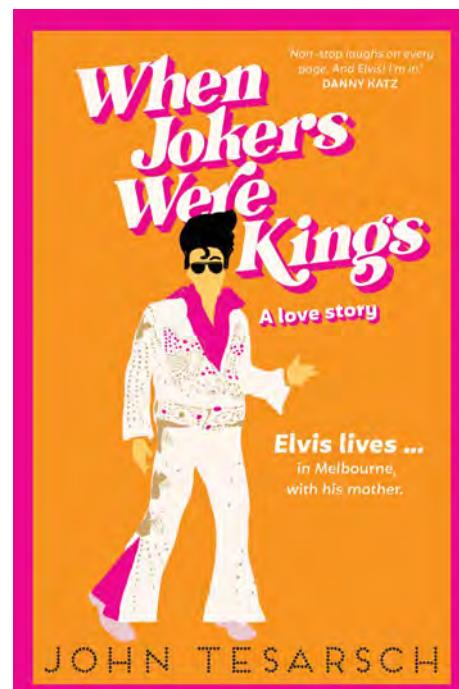
The whistle blower scenario is clever, if undeveloped, and emerges quite slowly as the corporate and musical narratives intertwine.

The Southern Cross Bank, the site of all these repressed talents, could have been rendered more closely. There is not much grounding detail about the everyday workplace nor the offending financial practices.

Tesarsch's heart is clearly more attuned to the intricacies of the music scene and the difficulties of making it and staying sober while on tour.

There are some hilarious scenes such as the one when the heroes seek cover in a hot dog stand on a country road and are forced to serve a group of truck driver regulars.

Tesarsch has excellent command of the "old-school loser who falls into scrapes and eventually makes good" kind of narrative.



On the negative side, Bertie is fairly basic and generic. The only thing really going for him is his feel for music.

He has the ability to win over crowds in country pubs, even those steeped in outlaw myths.

This is pretty typical Aussie vernacular and the Docklands connection is more of a launching pad than an exploration of banks and all of their practices.

The bad guys eventually get their comeuppance, and the hero rescues the heroine from "cancel" culture. Michael Jackson is her celebrity cover.

This is a pop novel with a big heart that ends, quite fittingly, on the Gold Coast.

*When Jokers Were Kings*, John Tesarsch, Affirm Press, 2022. •



Rhonda Dredge  
JOURNALIST  
RHONDA@CBNEWS.COM.AU

## HEALTH

### HOW TO LOOK AFTER YOUR LUNGS IN POLLUTED AIR



## How to look after your lungs in polluted air

*Having had COVID this year and now battling the after-effects and possible asthma as a result, I thought I would share a few lung and breathing tips this month. So, I have written about our lungs and pollution as this relates to us all.*

Our lungs are responsible for breathing life into our bodies. But what happens when the air we're breathing isn't as clean as it should be? Air pollution in its broadest terms describes any substance present in the air that can cause harm or has poisonous effects. In real terms, it can range from car exhaust fumes and industrial gases to fires, cigarette smoke, and everyday household cleaners.

Our lungs are the head honchos of our body's oxygen intake and carry it to the bloodstream to support our organs' primary functions – critical to living. So, in a world seemingly packed with pollutants, how do you look after and protect your lungs in the long run?

#### Try to beat rush hour

Whether you're walking, cycling, catching public transport, or driving, the more time you spend away from traffic fumes, the more your lungs will thank you for it. Vehicle fumes are a big factor in air quality, so getting where you're going a little earlier than everyone else will reduce the level of fumes you're exposed to. Even taking a less congested route can make a difference!

#### Get your sweat on

People regularly exercise to maintain and build muscle strength. Like your other muscles, your lungs are strengthened by exercise as they're working harder to fill the demand for more oxygen in your body during a workout. The more they work, the more efficient they become at their jobs over time.

Other strength exercises can also target areas of the body responsible for the power of your

breath intake such as the diaphragm. Just a few of the countless benefits to regular exercise!

#### Ventilate your home

We often don't consider simple household tasks as generating much air pollution, but when you combine everything you do and use in one day, it can become very stuffy pretty quickly!

Frying your food, using gas stovetops, spraying bugs with repellent, cleaning the bathroom, spraying deodorants ... these activities start to add up when it comes to filling your home with aggravating pollutants.

Regularly opening windows (where clean, fresh air is accessible) and using kitchen and bathroom ventilation systems will help to keep your air quality as healthy as possible.

#### Use an air purifier

Where getting regular clean air into the home isn't a viable option, air purifiers can provide the next best thing. Air purifiers work by sucking air into a filter to neutralise or remove some pollutants, then recirculate the cleaner air back into your home. These are a great option for offices, housing apartments, and other more confined areas that don't have proper access to good ventilation. •



Dr Mike Edgley  
CHIROPRACTOR  
DOCKLANDSHEALTH.COM.AU

# Taking pride in Docklands

*I think it's a fairly widely held opinion that Docklands is not what it could have been had developers not been dealt such a freewheeling hand.*

An urban planning professor at RMIT has said that Docklands could have been one of the most desirable places in the world to live had it been better planned with a coherent vision (my summary of his words).

I have mixed feelings about that; I would have loved to see a lower rise, more community-oriented, coherently planned Docklands, but if that had come to pass, I would probably not have been able to afford to buy here ... and I do love living in Docklands.

Instead, we are left with a not quite so good outcome which we now have to remediate to make the most of what is still a pretty desirable place to live in my opinion.

Batman's Hill is lucky in that it has some of the most significant historical buildings in Docklands; the Goods Shed, the Queens Warehouse (now housing the Fox Classic Car Collection) and the Victorian Railways building on Spencer St. They ooze character and add significantly to the spirit of place. Unfortunately, the same can't be said for most of the newer developments.

Wandering around the precinct it has struck me that while architects seem very focused on designing buildings that look good from a distance, when it comes to street level, they complete their design after they've been to the gym at the end of the day and have exhausted their energy and imagination. I would argue that what is going on at street level is much more important than what's going on tens or hundreds of metres up, even if the higher rise stuff is much more visible from a distance.

It's at ground level where people engage and develop their feel for an area ... where they get the "vibe". That's the level that attracts people back; think some of the old laneways

in the CBD such as Degraves St. Unfortunately, Docklands architects seem to have a love affair with aluminium and glass shopfronts which is fairly ubiquitous (with some minor variations) around the precinct. If they were shooting for attention-stifling bland, they have hit the nail right on the head.

It's difficult to believe that in many of these very expensive buildings a bit of variation in colour, material and form at ground level would add significantly to the final bill if money has been the issue. Don't architects and developers have enough pride in their work that they want it to stand-out everywhere?

One exception which I praise is the lower couple of floors of the Melbourne Quarter building on Aurora Lane which have been built of brick and are obviously meant to reflect the brick of the Goods Shed on the opposite side of the road. Unfortunately, that is about the only ground level architecture of that very large development I can be positive about.

I remember going to an open house a couple of years ago where they talked enthusiastically about Gunpowder Walk which is a small laneway in the development just off the (very pleasant) plaza area. They enthused about the character it would have and yet, you guessed it, more aluminium and glass storefront. Yawn.

There's another building currently being erected in Melbourne Quarter and it's way too early to know how it's going to look at street level, but I reckon I'd be pretty safe in betting that we'll be getting more of the same.

I could provide similar examples involving many or most other buildings in the precinct (or in Docklands for that matter), with the same issue but I think you have probably got the message. If not, take note when you are walking



*Having vented and raged, I now call on all Docklands lovers to rise up and be counted. March in the streets to demand more of our unimaginative corporate architects, crash architect dinner parties to make your feelings known, make your voodoo dolls and fill them with pins, unfurl your protest banners from the tops of the highest building. Or if none of that appeals, you could just write to the council and planning ministry to urge a change. It's true that the squeaky wheel gets the grease.*

around, and I'd be surprised if you didn't agree.

I would urge building owners to take a bit of pride in the area and invest a bit of money to tart up their street level shopfronts. I'm sure there would be a financial return. Lots of factors contribute to attracting people to Docklands but I reckon a widespread change of this nature would provide a significant stimulus.

People go to art galleries to be stirred by a variety of art, not to see picture after picture of largely the same ordinary piece of art hanging on the wall which only generates boredom. When people have been stimulated, they are attracted to return. I don't see why a similar attraction couldn't be generated by a stimulating urban environment.

Having vented and raged, I now call on all Docklands lovers to rise up and be counted. March in the streets to demand more of our unimaginative corporate architects, crash architect dinner parties to make your feelings

known, make your voodoo dolls and fill them with pins, unfurl your protest banners from the tops of the highest building. Or if none of that appeals, you could just write to the council and planning ministry to urge a change. It's true that the squeaky wheel gets the grease.

In case you can't tell, this is one of my soapbox issues! I could continue squeaking but you probably get the message. I'll finish up on a completely unrelated note by saying it is so good to see the streets of our suburb becoming busier and busier. They're still not back to pre-pandemic levels but I am definitely noticing a big difference. Go Docklands. •

Tim Martin  
BATMAN'S HILL RESIDENT  
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## DOCKLANDS NEWS



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# Pet's Corner

## Harry the helper

“

*Harry is Docklands local Terrence's lovable dog who also opens all kinds of doors for him.*

”



WORDS BY *Rebecca Broadhead*

Harry was adopted and coincidentally already had the same name as one of Terrence's favourite film series – *Harry Potter*.

Harry also has some magical qualities about him – including the ability to create job opportunities for Terrence.

“He's helped me get jobs in the past,” he said.

Terrence said through conversations he has had during dog park interactions, he had been referred to employers and even landed a job.

“He's really changed everything,” Terrence said.

Terrence is a member of the “Doggies of Docklands” Facebook page and says it's a great place to be online because “we have a really active local dog community in Docklands.” ●

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10 YEARS ON

## *Looking back at Docklands News - 10 Years On*

JULY 2012 | ISSUE 77

Docklands NEWS

### Wheel spins towards completion

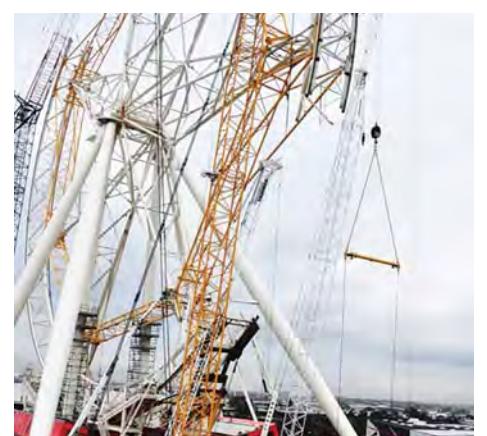
*As construction continues on the Southern Star Observation Wheel, the Docklands precinct can start preparing for an eyecatching launch and dazzling light show to announce the emergence of a major tourist attraction for Melbourne.*

Adverse weather, an extremely complex construction and demanding occupational health and safety restrictions continue to make it difficult for the manufacturer to provide an exact opening date for an expectant Docklands community.

But it will occur – representing a valuable part of the Waterfront City development project comprising a range of retail, leisure, entertainment, residential and commercial assets. The Southern Star comprises the largest single investment in a tourism attraction in Australia for 20 years and is expected to inject tremendous impetus into the entire Docklands precinct.

After operating for an initial period, a routine inspection exposed a structural design flaw which could have led, over time, to performance issues.

Following a comprehensive design review led by the manufacturer Sanoyas Rides Corporation, in consultation with a group of national and international engineering experts, it was decided that the Southern Star should be redesigned and rebuilt under the existing man-



ufacturer's warranty.

It will incorporate one of the largest linear LED lighting installations in the world. More than 3 kilometres of tubing will be capable of creating over 15 million different light combinations, which can also be synchronised to music.

Just to be in Docklands to watch the light show will be an unforgettable experience.

An onsite incident in November 2011 required the method of winching and rotation of the Southern Star to be reviewed and resulted in a revised work method procedure being implemented. The new methodology was used in the installation of the fourth large section of the outer rim in June and is being used currently in the installation of the final three large outer rim sections.

The positioning of the 21 air-conditioned glass viewing cabins will follow the completion of the outer rim. ●



# 港区峰会8月举行

墨尔本市政已确认，将于8月举办 Docklands港区峰会，尽管即将进入7月，但还没有确定这次高级别会议的日期、地点或范围。

*Sean Carr*

市政告诉本报，这次峰会将讨论制定“Docklands港区行动计划”，“确定振兴港区的短期、中期和长期项目和计划”。

市政发言人指出：“墨尔本市政正在积极推进港区峰会的计划，预计将于8月举行。”

“市政官员已经开始与当地社区、州政府和商界的主要利益相关者进行磋商，以确定这次峰会的范围以及成功的前景。”

“我们期待在峰会计划最终确定后公布更多细节。”



上个月在Docklands港区举行的未来墨尔本委员会(FMC)会议上，市政首席执行官Justin Hanney重申了举办Docklands港区峰会的承诺，并公开表示峰会计划在“7月底至8月初”举行。

市政表示，此次峰会将“听取社区和主要利益相关者对港区面临挑战的意见，并探索重新激活港区，推动游客来访的解决方案。”

由于港区仍然在艰难地应对中央码头的关闭和疫情大流行的影响，因此这个专门举行的峰会和随后的计划对港区来说是个好消息。预计市政将在7月份确认更多峰会细节。

港区的另一个主要权威机构，维多利亚发展局在6月份并没有向本报提供对峰会评论的进一步信息，称仍在等待来自市政的更多具体细节。



## 新辟无牵绳放狗区域

本市正考虑一项计划，允许Docklands港区的公园可以无牵绳放狗。

*Brendan Rees*

在6月7日举行的未来墨尔本委员会会议上，市政议员一致投票赞成考虑八个新的无牵绳放狗区域，其中有港区的Point公园和Ron Barassi Senior公园。

根据该计划，Point公园将在每天下午6点至早上8点之间在没有围栏的情况下无牵绳放狗。

Ron Barassi Senior公园也计划在没有围栏的情况下无牵绳放狗，但不包括在有组织的体育活动时间。

该提议是在2019年对开放空间的审查和2021年两轮社区参与活动中提出的，以确定城市无牵绳放狗的规定。

港区居民和狗主人Ayda Hornak表示，随着我们社区被提升为适合家庭居住的区域，设置无牵绳放狗的区域是有意义的。

她说：“在COVID疫情期间，我们看到港区狗的数量显著增加，已经成为我们社区文化的一部分。”

“如果你在任何时间去Point公园，你会发现90%的人身边带着狗。如果我们不断使用公园的居民和当地人服务，那我们为谁服务呢？”

“让我感到困惑的是，为什么需要作出如此努力才能进入我们所在区域的无牵绳放狗公园。”

市政将在6月底审议无牵绳放狗公园的提议，然后议员投票将提议实施行动。

## 特殊的划船俱乐部

一个完全由乳腺癌康复者及支持者组成的新龙舟俱乐部在Docklands港区的维多利亚港成立。

*David Schout*

乳腺癌患者Andrea Sees回忆起在治疗期间从腋下切除淋巴结时，她和许多相同患者的女性一样，向上移动手臂是“极为痛苦的”。

她根本无法将手臂举过头顶，作为物理治疗的一部分，她不得不训练自己的手指“像蜘蛛一样”爬上墙壁，以逐渐恢复体力。

在这个极其困难的时期，还有另一项活动帮助她恢复了健康，就是龙舟划桨。

目前在港区有很多人参与这项划桨运动，在很多方面完美地证明了对Andrea恢复其机能的作用。

从身体上来说，这是最理想的锻炼。

她说：“每周不断重复在港区轻轻划桨，保持手臂运动，并持续使其强壮，这令人难以置信。”

这项活动不仅仅是恢复体力的一种方式。

最近，Andrea和其他一些乳腺癌康复者在维多利亚港的社区划船中心成立了一个新的划船俱乐部，名为(Dragons Abreast Melbourne Pink Phoenix)，她任主席。

她告诉本报，与有过同样“艰难”经历的康复者一起运动意义重大。

“当你接受了那些侵入式的治疗，比如切除乳房、接受化疗、失去头发和失去女性气质时，很多女性包括我自己，都无法确切表达自己的痛苦感受，现在和其他经历相同



的女性在一起，能真正开始觉得我们可以对这些事情表达情感了。这是我们在船上的一个非常特殊的空间，可以建立这种友谊和提供支持。”

欲了解有关这个墨尔本划船俱乐部的更多信息，请访问：[damelbournepinkphoenix.com.au](http://damelbournepinkphoenix.com.au)

## 为国际学生提供异乡之家

众所周知，国际学生为墨尔本这座城市作出了贡献并为之增添了活力，但如果当地民众敞开欢迎的大门，他们的留学生生活就会非常艰难。

*Kaylah-Joelle Baker*

在Docklands港区的蒙纳士学院推出了一个家庭寄宿项目，要求该地区的居民不仅能帮助改变国际学生的生活，还能让他们自己受益。

蒙纳士学院的家庭寄宿经理Karen Taylor说：“这是一个绝佳的机会，不仅能分享我们的文化，还能支持那些来我们国家追寻职业抱负的留学生。”

“有些人可能会对家里有新人入住感到焦虑或担心，但在很多情况下，我们看到人们会感受到这种学习其他文化、支持他人和建立国际关系的回报。”

这个家庭寄宿项目的好处是可持续性

的，在寄宿期间和之后，许多寄宿家庭和学生之间建立了友谊。

Taylor女士表示，许多寄宿家庭反馈，留学生回国后，寄宿家庭会去他们的国家度假或参加他们的婚礼，而且回国的留学生也会再访澳大利亚。

蒙纳士学院家庭寄宿团队每年为就读蒙纳士学院和蒙纳士大学的2000多名国际学生安置寄宿家庭，但是还需要更多的当地人来帮助支持这项工作。

对于下一批学生，蒙纳士学院正在寻求优质的寄宿家庭，为学生提供一个安全可靠的异乡之家，并且每周7天，每天为他们提供三餐。



理想的寄宿家庭将是距离校园比较近或是步行距离的，或是真正希望投入于与国际学生交流和互动的家庭。

虽然寄宿家庭将获得为学生提供住宿的经济补偿，但这应该只是寄宿家庭的额外奖励，最重要的回报将来自于他们之间所建立的友谊和联系。

如果您有兴趣成为寄宿家庭，请访问：



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## Community

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Email: [vicharbourpharmacy@nunet.com.au](mailto:vicharbourpharmacy@nunet.com.au)

**southern cross pharmacy**

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Saturday 10am-6pm

Southern Cross Station  
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Ph: 03 9600 0294 Fax: 03 9600 0594  
Email: [southerncrosspharmacy@nunet.com.au](mailto:southerncrosspharmacy@nunet.com.au)

## Shopping

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about how to customise your campaign to our audience every month.

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11,000 new  
enquiries  
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e-newsletter  
read 70,000  
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