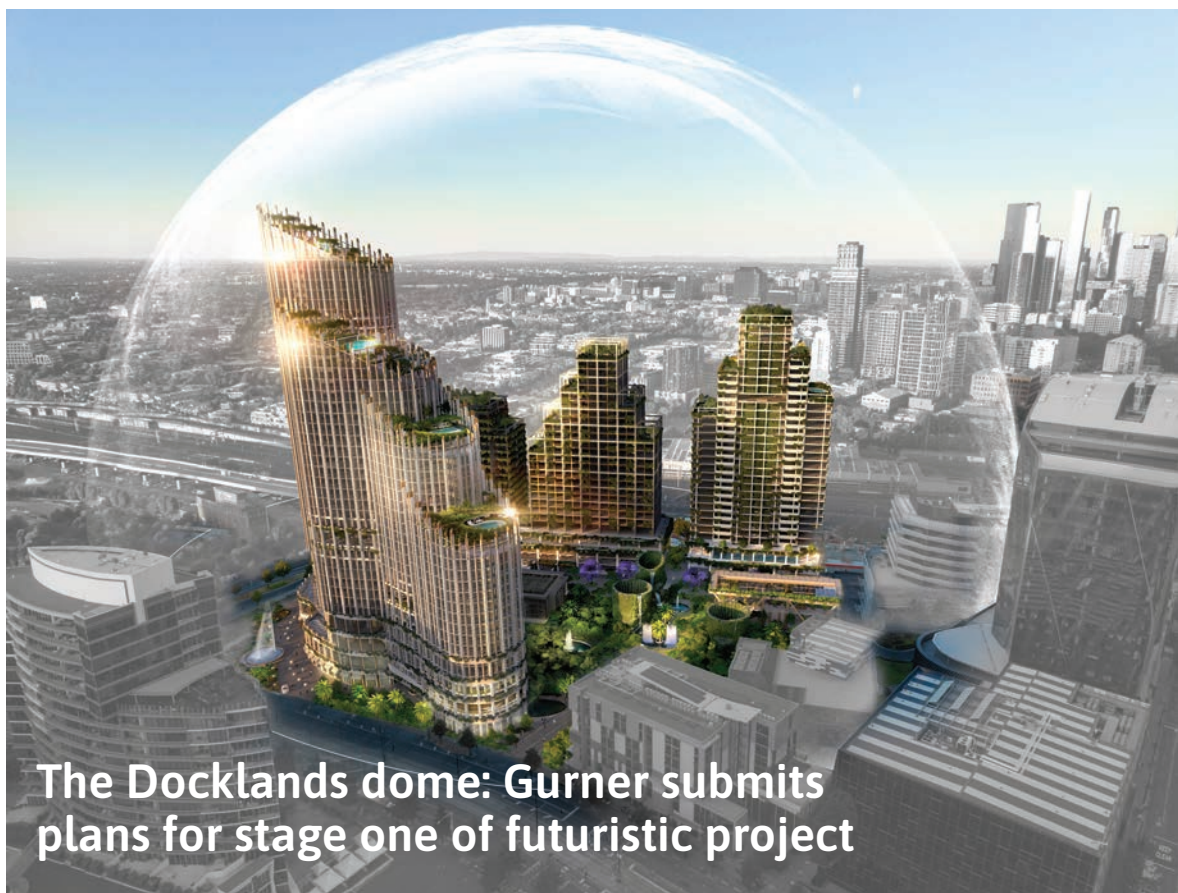


APRIL 2024 EDITION #206

PUZZLES & TRIVIA P18



The Docklands dome: Gurner submits plans for stage one of futuristic project

The dome portrayed in this render may only be conceptual for the purposes of illustrating a “utopian afterlife”, but developer Tim Gurner’s mega-vision for his 27,000 sqm Harbour Esplanade site does, in fact, include plans for a “stunning, futuristic glass dome.” Find out more on page 6.

Soul of Docklands campaign launched

“

A new marketing campaign aimed at shining a positive light on Docklands and celebrating everything there is to love about our community has been officially launched.

”

WORDS BY
SEAN CAR



In a bid to help those who don’t live or work in Docklands better understand its true character, the *Soul of Docklands* campaign shares stories of those who make it the special and diverse community that it is – Docklanders themselves.

In response to the often-negative perceptions many people have about Docklands, the new campaign celebrates the people, businesses and community groups that are helping shape the area by giving those who love it the opportunity to tell their story.

To kickstart the campaign, which was launched on March 19 at an event held at Berth in NewQuay, *Soul of Docklands* is sharing the stories of nine Docklanders via a dedicated website – soulofdocklands.org.au – as well as social media and *Docklands News*.

The community will also have the chance to nominate individuals, community groups or businesses whom they’d like to see profiled in the future, and the public will be invited to share photography of their favourite moments or places to visit in Docklands.

The project is a collaboration between the Docklands Chamber of Commerce (DCC), Docklands’ four major developers – Lendlease, MAB, Mirvac, The District Docklands – and the North & West Melbourne Neighbourhood Centre (NWMNC).

Docklanders profiled have been interviewed by NWMNC’s Jason Butcher and photographed by Magnet Galleries’ Michael Silver, with the campaign’s design by Sylvia Hungria of Studio Vico.

Speaking at the campaign launch on March 19,

Continued on page 3.

CRIME, PAGE 05

Police continue to investigate ATET arson attack

COUNCIL AFFAIRS, PAGE 07

Government put on notice over Moonee Ponds Creek



BUSINESS, PAGE 08

Marvel Stadium upgrade’s tasty unveiling

Docklanders can now enjoy a range of new food and beverage options thanks to Marvel Stadium’s redeveloped city edge, as a number of new restaurants and retailers were unveiled as part of a tasting tour hosted by the AFL on March 21.

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New Docklands Primary campus opens at the District

A brand-new learning space campus for Docklands Primary School has opened at The District Docklands shopping centre, providing an environment for students to thrive.

WORDS BY
BRENDAN REES



The new space, which spans an entire first level, was officially opened by Labor Member for Northern Metropolitan Region Sheena Watt on March 26.

It features modern learning environments to help “creative thinking, promote STEM literacy, and inspire learning for life”.

The newly refurbished space also includes an exciting indoor play space complete with a much-loved gaga pit designed for a fast-paced ball game.

“The new Docklands Primary School

campus is officially open, featuring modern, world-class learning spaces and a fun, interactive indoor play area,” Ms Watt said.

Docklands Primary School opened in 2021, but after it experienced rapid enrolment growth in its first two years of operation, the Department of Education established a temporary campus at level one in The District, situated 200 metres from the school’s existing site.

“The site has been leased for an initial term of five years, with a further five-year option exercisable by the Minister of Education, should demographic demand analysis show that this is required,” a statement from the government said.

Deputy Lord Mayor Nicholas Reece expressed his enthusiasm for the new campus.

“We were delighted to work with principal Adam Bright to facilitate the introduction to [The District developer] Ashe Morgan that led to the identification of this new classroom space,” he said. “Congratulations to Sheena Watts and Education Minister Ben Carroll for getting behind the project.” ●



Sports Day success

Close to 100 people attended a sports day on Sunday, March 24 at Ron Barassi Snr Park hosted by Docklands Athletic FC, offering a range of sporting activities for families to enjoy.

Soccer, volleyball, and cricket were among the highlights for the kids, while the Sunday Metro 3 men’s side of the recently established Docklands Athletic FC also played a practice match on the day against Albert Park FC.

Members of the Docklands Athletic FC’s State 3 women’s side also attended, as locals were given the chance to interact with the new club and find out how to get involved in upcoming clinics and junior team trials.

The City of Melbourne’s Docklands neighbourhood partner Fadi Qunqar also set up an information stand at the event, with a free barbecue on offer for those attending.

Docklands Athletic FC president Matthew Tate told Docklands News the event was a “great outcome” for the new club, which received a lot of great feedback.

After kicking off its new season on Saturday, March 23, Mr Tate encouraged Docklanders to head along to Ron Barrassi Snr Park on Saturday, April 2 for the club’s first official home game against the Moonee Valley Knights. The reserves team will kick off at 1pm, and seniors at 3pm. ●

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Soul of Docklands campaign launched

Continued from page 1.

DCC president Daniel Hibberd said that Docklands was all too often dismissed as a “lifeless concrete jungle” and the campaign sought to tell the true story about our beautiful waterfront home.

It marks the second time the DCC has collaborated with Docklands’ four major developers following the success of the Docklands Dollars 3008 initiative in 2022, which was launched in response to the local impacts from COVID lockdowns.

Mr Hibberd said he was thrilled that *Soul of Docklands* was the spark that brought this working group of competitors, a business committee, a retail centre and a not-for-profit together again.

“DCC is truly proud to support this project on behalf of our member businesses, and we hope it helps to raise awareness of Docklands as a must-visit destination on the map,” he said.

Mirvac’s general manager for residential Victoria Elysa Anderson added that the project was unique: “It’s not often you get Australia’s largest property companies coming together to create an authentic experience for the local community.”

“For the second time, our shared goal is to showcase the personalities and heart and soul of this thriving waterfront community and support local businesses by encouraging people to visit,” Ms Anderson said.

Local business owner, artist and sculptor Lucas Guilbert is one of the project’s participants. Originally from Montreal, Quebec, he has lived in Melbourne for 15 years and opened his sculpting studio in collaboration with the Renew Australia project in Docklands in 2023. Subsequently, he joined a pilot project with MAB, progressively improving his space and art.

“As a Docklands community member, I’m proud to be part of its soul and to be a face of this campaign. [It’s] not only a place that has enabled me to develop my craft and grow my business, but there is so much that makes it a special place to work and live, such as the incredible diversity of the locals, the nature, and the open space. I’m excited to showcase my community’s individuality,” he said.

MAB’s general manager marketing and communications Ben Earl said the campaign was “full of personality”.

“The interviews are authentic, entertaining and the stories behind the people profiled are fascinating,” he said. “We are hopeful this project will inspire others to contribute and share their Docklands experience or nominate individuals to be featured on the site.”

Lendlease social impact manager Jacquelin Saultry said she hoped the campaign could foster ongoing relationships and help to create positive social outcomes.

If you, a friend or a colleague would like to be interviewed and profiled in *Soul of Docklands*, please fill out the expression of interest form, which can be found at soulofdocklands.org.au ●



Meet Dr Brenda Holt

“When we told people we were looking at [moving to] Docklands, they were like, ‘That’s crazy’, but in the end, we love Docklands, and we chose to live here.”

American-born Dr Brenda Holt has lived in Melbourne for so long now – 34 years to be exact – that she says her family in Texas now thinks her accent sounds rather Australian.

Since she and her husband Simon moved to Docklands, the career educator said they had grown attached to living so close to the water, noticing how quiet it was, and how everything was “really at your fingertips”.

As one of many Docklanders inspiring positive change in our community, Dr Holt currently works for a charity called State Schools Relief, which provides uniforms and shoes for disadvantaged kids in state schools. ●

Read Dr Holt’s full profile:
soulofdocklands.org.au



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Whether you're new to your neighbourhood and want to make friends or have been in your area for a while, many people still want the same thing: to feel more connected to neighbours.

But how do you make it happen?

Here are 10 ways to make meaningful connections with people who live in your area. During March and April, the City of Melbourne is offering up to \$150 to help you put on an activity which promotes community connection in your neighbourhood.

Have a look at the ideas below, then head to your Neighbourhood Portal to apply.

Set up a walking group

Solo walks are nice but sometimes it's even better to walk with other people. Together, you might discover something new about your neighbourhood.

Ask your neighbours to help with a clean-up day

Roll up your sleeves and help beautify your neighbourhood. Hosting a litter clean up activity is a great way to make a difference, have fun and bring local people together.

Start a reading party

Do you like the idea of book clubs but never have time to read? How about a reading party where people mingle, read in silence, and chat about books afterwards?

Organise a picnic with pups

Do you and your dog enjoy socialising with other humans and pups? Why not organise a picnic or a morning tea to get together.

Try a board game social

Making conversation with someone new can be awkward but when there's a fun game in between you and that someone, it can be easier.

Ask your neighbours for a day out

Going to events together is a great way to spend time with friends and meet new people. There are plenty of free or low-cost events all year around.

Plan a potluck meal

Do you enjoy trying something new to delight your taste buds? Is there talk about there being amazing cooks in your building or neighbourhood? This is your calling to organise a potluck meal.

Organise a storytelling night

Through stories, we make sense of the world and connect with each other. Why not host a storytelling event and honour the stories we carry.

Start a neighbourhood tools and skills library

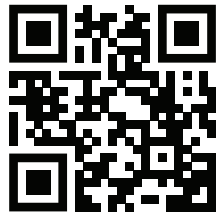
Got a collection of tools that could be used more? Do people in your area have knowledge and skills? Build a community ready to trade these, creating a neighbourhood tools and skills library.

Host a neighbours day in the park

What better way to meet your neighbours than a low-key picnic or barbecue in the park? Choose a park then put a call-out on social media or a local noticeboard.



There's so many ways to connect with your neighbours. Head to your Neighbourhood Portal at participate.melbourne.vic.gov.au/neighbourhoods to apply for a voucher and to contact your Neighbourhood Partner by 30 April.



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Police continue to investigate ATET fire

Victoria Police is still hunting those responsible for the arson attack on floating events space ATET in January last year, but *Docklands News* understands detectives are confident that it was a paid job.

WORDS BY
SEAN CAR



Since the attack took place at around 4.30am on the morning of January 31 last year, a lot has happened surrounding ATET's operations in Docklands, which ultimately ended with its sudden closure in June after the City of Melbourne terminated its licence.

That termination, which ATET claims was "unlawful" having demonstrated compliance with its permit, is now the subject of a legal dispute after the business filed proceedings against the council and the landowner Development Victoria (DV) with the Supreme Court in December.

But while the venue was no stranger to controversy having been a magnet for complaints from local residents affected by noise since its opening in October 2022, the arson attack marked the flashpoint in its short eight-month lifespan.

The incident on the morning of January 31, which forced ATET into closure for a number of weeks, occurred just three months after it opened, and many anticipated a brief investigation after the alleged arsonists were captured on e-scooters on CCTV.

Despite up to 16 cameras believed to be located around the North Wharf-Victoria Harbour area, police have still yet to release any CCTV images or public appeals for information relating to the incident.

However, while earlier news reports suggested those responsible fled the scene on e-scooters after setting fire to the barge, *Docklands News* understands that the perpetrators were captured fleeing on foot.

One source, who requested anonymity, confirmed with *Docklands News* at the time of the incident that



▲ Image taken by a resident of the fire at ATET on January 31.

e-scooters were, in fact, captured on CCTV hours prior to the incident, allegedly scoping out the venue.

The arson attack, which eventually took place at around 4.30am, is believed to have been carried out on foot.

When contacted by *Docklands News*, ATET's owner Jake Hughes was unable to comment on the police investigation other than to say he was still awaiting further information.

While police continue to hone in on their suspects, ATET remains closed to business in Victoria Harbour while the venue's management progress their legal case against the council and DV.

Mr Hughes said it was disappointing that the venue sat unused at North Wharf after he claimed the business had attempted to negotiate with the council for months to change the venue's operations prior to its licence being terminated.

ATET's legal representatives are still awaiting the City of Melbourne and the DV to file their defences to its legal action, with the case due for mediation in September. ●

Footscray Rd and Wurundjeri Way reopen

Footscray Rd and Wurundjeri Way have reopened to traffic as part of the step in the West Gate Tunnel Project (WGTP), much to the relief of motorists.

WORDS BY
BRENDAN REES



The major thoroughfares reopened on March 8 after closures caused extensive delays within and surrounding Docklands in recent months.

But a busy summer campaign saw multiple works completed, including stage one of a new walking and cycling bridge over Footscray Rd.

The new bridge will ultimately connect to the 2.5km veloway that crews have been building above Footscray Rd between Shepherd Bridge in Footscray and the city side of Moonee Ponds.

According to the WGTP, the veloway will give cyclists a safe express off-road route to and from the city and remove six intersections to make trips safer and quicker.

The new bridge and veloway are part of more than 14km of new and upgraded paths being delivered by the WGTP that will make it safer and easier for more people to cycle.

Work has also been completed on the second stage of the new Wurundjeri Way city bypass that

will take up to 5000 vehicles a day off Spencer and King streets.

Other works saw the completion of new bridges and the intersection with Dudley St.

Remaining works on Footscray Rd will be undertaken in overnight closures, with lane closures also over Moonee Ponds Creek while crews continue to widen the bridge to make way for new connections.

From late April there will be additional lane closures on Footscray Rd while crews build the new veloway.

Overnight closures will occur on Wurundjeri Way as crews continue works to widen the link by one lane in each direction between Dudley St and Flinders St.

WGTP executive project director Peter Lellyett said the summer campaign saw vital works completed but added "there's still plenty to be done on this vital project that will slash travel times between Melbourne's west and the city".

"We are getting on with completing an extension of Wurundjeri Way over Dudley St, creating a city bypass and reducing the number of vehicles on Spencer and King streets," he said.

"We thank the community for their continued patience as we get on with remaining works".

The WGTP is expected to be completed in 2025, providing an alternative to the West Gate Bridge and removing more than 9000 trucks from residential streets. Travel times between Melbourne's west and the city are tipped to be slashed by up to 20 minutes. ●

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Gurner submits plans for first stage of Docklands vision under a “futuristic glass dome”

Docklanders could soon be peering into a new botanical garden under a giant glass dome as part of a project its developer said would “need to be seen to be believed”. But don’t fear ... the dome in the render is not quite to scale!

WORDS BY
SEAN CAR



Developer Gurner has submitted plans for the first stage of its Docklands mega-project “Elysium Fields” on Harbour Esplanade, which it has described as a “futuristic wellness and anti-ageing utopia”.

A joint venture between Gurner and City Harbour – the consortium holding the development rights to the precinct formerly known as “Digital Harbour” – the project is estimated to be worth \$1.7 billion.

The company’s founder and executive chairman Tim Gurner, a former resident of Docklands, said at the time the project was first announced in October 2022 that he’d always “wanted to put my own stamp on it [Docklands], but we needed a site that was large enough to be transformative.”

Speaking about the project in March, Mr Gurner said its aim was “to completely transform and revitalise the Docklands, re-energising it with public gardens, greenery and an unprecedented connection to health and wellness.”

“There will be absolutely nothing like this in Australia. This precinct will need to be seen to be believed and we can’t wait to launch it to the market later this year.”

The 27,000sqm island infill site located at 208-226 Harbour Esplanade and bordered by Dudley St and Wurundjeri Way is one of the few still undeveloped in Docklands, presenting the perfect opportunity for Mr Gurner’s “utopian community”.

“When you enter Elysium Fields you will be stepping into another world – one that is serene, clean, vibrant and grounding, and when you’re among the project’s forest and landscape you’ll feel like you could be anywhere in the world, while being right on the doorstep of the CBD,” he said.

“Elysium Fields is going to be akin to a utopian community, where residents can access the world’s best reverse ageing and health treatments while breathing in filtered air and drinking filtered water.”

The development will include more than 1350 build-to-rent and build-to-sell apartments, a retail and hospitality precinct, a 4-star short-stay hotel and another premier 5-star hotel with conference facilities, a business club and hospitality.

The first stage of the project submitted to the Victorian Government in March includes three towers comprising 640 dwellings. Gurner plans to launch the first tower, a build-to-sell project offering 231 apartments, during spring this year. Construction is also due to begin at the same time.

But it’s the “lifestyle developer’s” wellness vision underpinning this new precinct that Mr Gurner said would instil “a sense of true tranquillity” among its future residents in an “inspiring oasis in the heart of Docklands”.

“Given the significant scale of the 27,000sqm site, the team prioritised a private community look and feel to create a self-contained biosphere-like design – the likes of which has previously only been seen in sci-fi movies,” a Gurner press release reads. “The concept brings together Tim Gurner’s personal wellness journey and the latest in science-backed health and wellness, to deliver a regenerative anti-ageing and wellness experience that has been based on American neuroscientist Andrew Huberman’s five pillars of health being: sleep, sunlight, movement, nutrition, and social connection.”

“At Elysium Fields, residents will have access to advanced anti-ageing protocols and equipment like cryotherapy, IV infusions, dry and infrared sauna, red light therapy, grounding and PEMF [pulsing electromagnetic field] beds.”

The vision also boasts plans for an “ancient bathhouse” offering “15 different types of enriched water” and an Elysian Reverse Ageing Medical Clinic that “will provide medical-grade treatments including MRIs, DEXA scans, brain scans, blood testing and personalised health plans.”

The plans include 3700sqm of new public landscapes and gardens, including its own botanical gardens “geared for a 24/7, interactive retail, dining and entertainment experience”, which Gurner said would include “a stunning, futuristic glass dome over the site, modelled on the concept of Elysium being the utopian afterlife.”

“This precinct will be not just a place, but an immersive experience that will rival other destinations not just within Australia but globally,” Mr Gurner said.

“We want to create a destination for flagship retail and transform the entire precinct into a premium and immersive extension of the CBD. A place where live performances, gallery exhibitions and public events can come together with a permanent focus on wellness, holistic health, greenery, and connectivity to nature.” ●

Sean Car

EDITOR

SEAN@HYPERLOCALNEWS.COM.AU



“There will be absolutely nothing like this in Australia. This precinct will need to be seen to be believed ... ”
Tim Gurner



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"Outrageous": council puts government on notice over Moonee Ponds Creek

City of Melbourne councillors have lashed the state government for its lack of progress in revitalising the city section of the Moonee Ponds Creek and have again called for answers as to when the trail in Docklands will be reopened to the public.

WORDS BY
SEAN CAR



Councillors unanimously endorsed a new advocacy plan for improvement projects at the Future Melbourne Committee meeting on March 19, which namely demanded the "immediate release" of the Moonee Ponds Creek Implementation Plan.

That plan, endorsed by councillors back in 2019, has remained on the shelf for the past five years and Deputy Lord Mayor Nicholas Reece described the delay in releasing it for public exhibition as "unacceptable".

As part of its own advocacy efforts, the council has launched a new interactive map on its website, which highlights all the projects earmarked as part of the Moonee Ponds Implementation Plan.

The council has also requested the appointment of a lead government department or agency to coordinate governance of the creek corridor, and for the Lord Mayor to write to the Minister for Planning in relation to the "extensive delays" in releasing the implementation plan, and the exhibition of planning controls for Macaulay.

In addition to two new active transport crossings in Macaulay, the council has also sought a renewed commitment from the government as to when the Moonee Ponds

Creek trail in Docklands will be reinstated after it was closed in 2020.

Development Victoria (DV) temporarily closed the Docklands section of the trail to allow for the expansion of Docklands Studios, however, despite that project having been completed, DV is still yet to provide a timeline for when the trail will reopen.

Cr Rohan Leppert described the government's behaviour as "outrageous".

"The biggest problem we've got at the moment is that the state government is not working cohesively with the council on the range of projects that are needed to unlock public access to the Moonee Ponds Creek. Not only that, they're removing public access," he said.

"The Docklands Trail was closed in November 2020, and to this day there is no plan from the state government as to when that trail will be reinstated. That is outrageous."

"[There are] tens of thousands of new residents [to come] and rather than helping to expand the open space in accordance with government policy – state and local – public access to the Moonee Ponds Creek bed is being removed. We must overcome this problem."

The Lord Mayor will also write to Treasurer Tim Pallas in relation to West Gate Tunnel Project contractors not implementing the state government's own commitment to replace removed trees within the municipality at a rate of five to one – an issue which was highlighted by the Friends of Moonee Ponds Creek.

Cr Reece said he hoped the council's efforts could help drive the revitalisation needed along the creek corridor to unlock the area's true potential, and undo generations of neglect.

"The Moonee Ponds Creek is one of the most significant waterways in metropolitan Melbourne, but unfortunately it is also one



of the most neglected. I would go so far as to say it's the most abused waterway in all of Melbourne," the Deputy Lord Mayor said.

"When John Batman arrived in Melbourne, he actually described thousands of birds flying from the west, coming from a large water mass which was the legendary Blue Lagoon, which extended out across where West Melbourne currently is."

"It was a place that was home to thousands of swans, ducks, geese, frogs and fish. And over the last 200 years, we have degraded and degraded that area, turning what was a fruitful paradise into a poisoned dump scape."

"It really is very beautiful through the southern reaches of the Moonee Ponds Creek but through decisions made over

generations it's now an awful example of urban blight and a spaghetti bowl of elevated roadways. It's simply unacceptable."

Docklands resident Cr Jamal Hakim also referenced recent calls from the community to transform the Costco site into a new secondary school to highlight opportunities for future students to connect with the creek environment.

"It occurs to me that there's a lot of discussion around a high school in Docklands right now, which is very close to part of the creek. How awesome would it be to connect the conservation work and training as part of that high school?" Cr Hakim said. Perhaps at the soon to be vacant Costco site? I think that would be a really awesome alignment of the stars." ●



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Marvel Stadium upgraded unveiled



A new and improved Marvel Stadium is ready for fans following a \$225 million upgrade featuring Stadium Square and City Edge turning the stadium into a seven-day-a-week precinct for both residents and workers.

WORDS BY
JACK HAYES



Melbourne chefs. Pioneer in Melbourne’s plant-based scene, Shannon Martinez (Smith and Daughters and Lona Misa) will head a new two-level restaurant. Friends of Fire is a fine diner, occupying the top floor, with an accompanying bar, Amphora, downstairs. The menu will consist of a combination of American-inspired vegan and meat-based dishes. Other new food options you’ll find at the Stadium are Hunky Dory fish and chips, pizzas from 400 Gradi, souvlakis from Yammis, and fresh sandwiches and snacks from Earl Canteen on ground level. Minister Dimopolous said the stadium was one of Melbourne’s “biggest drawcards to help pack” its “major events calendar every year.” ●

Cat curfew review under way as community input is sought

Community consultation on whether a 24-hour ban or night-time cat curfew should be implemented within the City of Melbourne will be launched later this year.

WORDS BY
BRENDAN REES



The council is considering introducing a ban on cats roaming outside their homes to ensure their safety and protect local wildlife, which could affect nearly 4000 households across the municipality. The proposal was raised at a council meeting last October in a motion successfully moved by councillor Dr Olivia Ball, who said a containment law had many

benefits including protecting cats from injury, disease, dog attacks, snake bites, poisoning, road accident trauma or other misadventures. In response to the motion, councillors voted unanimously at their March 19 Future Melbourne Committee meeting to integrate cat containment into the community consultation activities already planned for July this year on the mandatory desexing of cats under the Domestic Animals Act 1994. Council management will also work with Animal Welfare Victoria and the Australian Veterinary Association to undertake a review of cat containment measures in Victoria. According to the council, the Domestic Animals Act prohibits cats from being on private property without permission. “In public places, cats are currently not collected or impounded due to health and safety risks,” it said. “Cat traps are not left in public



places due to the risk of capturing animals other than cats.” The reported also noted as of February 2024, there were 3980 cats registered in the City of Melbourne with 74 per cent

registered to apartments and 103 cats not desexed. In 2023 the council received 103 reports of roaming cats, most of these were reported in North Melbourne, Kensington and West Melbourne where there are known unowned or semi-owned cat colonies, the report said. Michael Johnston, a research scientist who specialises in the management of feral cats, addressed the council meeting saying, “the two main points I’d like you to consider is animal welfare responsibilities and responsibilities of landowners to look after their pet so that their pet can live a longer happier life”. “I’m requesting that Melbourne City Council provides some deep consideration on whether this will be a good fit for them,” he said. “The reasons why you might like to consider it are more around improving the animal welfare impacts for domestic cats themselves but also wildlife species that inhabit the area.”

According to the council, it can make orders under the Act requiring all domestic cats to be confined to the property of their owner and prohibiting domestic cats from environmentally sensitive areas but noted “further work is required to understand community sentiment or the likely effectiveness of the implementation of such orders”. Cr Dr Ball referred to two statistics; one being that council officers found a dead cat on average once a month in the municipality, and the other was that the Westgate Park boasted 168 different species of birds and “it’s clearly not a place where cats should be”. Between 2020 and 2021 the council impounded 355 cats, a jump of 62 per cent between 2016 and 2017 when 219 cats were found wandering the streets. A report will come back to council in March 2025 with an update and advice on the role of cat containment in council’s next Domestic Animal Management Plan in December 2025. ●

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MEMBER FOR NORTHERN METROPOLITAN REGION

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Authorised by Evan Mulholland MP, Member for Northern Metropolitan Region, Unit 10, 2 Graystone Court Epping Vic 3076. Funded from Parliamentary Budget.

Greens preselect lead City of Melbourne councillor candidates

The Greens have preselected current councillor and Carlton resident Dr Olivia Ball as its lead candidate ahead of the City of Melbourne elections in October, with West Melbourne resident Karl Hessian revealed as its second candidate on the ballot.

WORDS BY
SEAN CAR



With current sitting Greens Cr Rohan Leppert not recontesting for what would have been a fourth consecutive term on council, many had expected that Cr Dr Ball would be elevated to the number one position on the Greens ticket.

With the Greens having been historically successful in getting two councillors elected to the



▲ Karl Hessian and Cr Dr Olivia Ball.
Photo: Julian Meehan.

City of Melbourne, Cr Leppert's departure has opened the door for a likely new face to join Cr Dr Ball in 2024.

That person is Karl Hessian – a resident of West Melbourne who works in IT in the early childhood education and care sector who hopes to translate his interest in local government and commitment to the community by winning a seat on council.

Cr Dr Ball told Docklands News that she was honoured to have been chosen to lead the party's ticket and was looking forward to working with the rest of her team to "increase the Greens' representation on council".

"The role of city governments in this time of climate and biodiversity emergency, and an acute housing affordability crisis, is more important than ever," Cr Dr Ball said. "Melbourne could be among the great sustainable cities of the world, so we are asking Melburnians to elect a Greener council in October."

"Due to the youth and mobility of the inner city, this will be

the first local election in which many people living in the City of Melbourne will be eligible to vote. My message to everyone is make sure you are enrolled at your current address now so you can have your say."

The Greens will hold further preselections to determine its candidates for Lord Mayor, Deputy Lord Mayor, and other council seats in the months ahead, with preselections conducted by ballot of all members residing in the City of Melbourne.

Cr Dr Ball said she was pleased that the "outstanding" Mr Hessian would be joining her for the upcoming election campaign.

"I could not be more pleased that Karl has been chosen to join me on the Greens ticket in October," she said.

"He is a profoundly decent human being, broad-minded, capable, and hard-working, with an uncanny interest in local government and a passion for his community. I know he will make an outstanding councillor."

Karl Hessian will be well-known

to many in the North and West Melbourne community for his decades of community action and leadership, including as chair of the board of the local neighbourhood house, chair of the committee of management of a community-run childcare centre, and his active engagement with the council on local issues.

"I am deeply honoured to have been chosen to fill the vacancy created by Olivia's promotion to lead candidate. Both Rohan [Leppert] and former councillor Dr Cathy Oke have made extraordinary contributions to this city and have set a high bar for what electors can and should expect from their representatives," Mr Hessian said. "If elected, I look forward to working with Olivia to connect the work of city government with local communities, that we may tackle the significant challenges facing the city together."

"I have a deep understanding of how the City of Melbourne operates and I have the skills and experience to hit the ground running if elected." ●

New programs set to empower Docklands residents

A farmers' market and a new community group are among four exciting new initiatives set to be launched in Docklands, bringing residents and businesses together.

WORDS BY
SEAN CAR



The City of Melbourne has worked closely with a newly created Docklands Stakeholder Group (DSG) – a key action from the 2022 Docklands Summit – which will deliver ongoing programs and events, giving the community a greater voice.

This includes establishing a community 3008 group, which will focus on grassroots activations and local issues while bringing together passionate individuals who care about their neighbourhood.

This group has existed as an online network and will expand to conducting in-person activities and engagements.

A spokesperson from DSG said, "Having a considered forum in a respectful space will make a huge difference for a community trying to build connections whilst living and operating under ongoing residential development, DV and The Docklands Act (1991)".

"The new community group will be run by Docklands residents for Docklands residents, local businesses are also welcome to join," the spokesperson said.

"Once established, the group will give residents a place to raise, and work on, community concerns, and effectively get 'a seat at the table' at many meetings that previously have not been open to us."

The spokesperson added the group, which will have an executive committee of at least five people, will also enhance connectivity between already established community groups while encouraging new groups and social connections to be formed.

A community meeting will be held on April 17 at 6.30pm at The Hub at Docklands, where all residents are welcome to attend and to provide their input into the community group.

To register your interest in attending the meeting email, fadi.qunqar@melbourne.vic.gov.au or yourcommunity3008@gmail.com.

Another new program to be created will be a monthly Docklands Farmers Market to be held at a central location where shoppers can access fresh fruit and vegetables and support the farmers of Victoria.

"The community will also be able to build connections, friendships and engage with local activities such as the heritage boats in Docklands," the council said.

Another huge boost to enhance community engagement will be an inclusive and accessible arts and crafts program for adults called "The Cauldron – Craft Connect".

Initially sponsored by the DSG, and run by Docklands residents, the spokesperson said the program would cater for people of all skill levels, allowing people to "come together, connect, support, share and learn".

There will also be guest speakers from the crafting world to come and share their craft stories, skills, and knowledge.

"The teaching component will harness the skills and talents of some of our local residents who are keen to knowledge share their particular skill set, be it knitting and crochet, hand quilting and design, card making, recycled toy making, cross stitch and embroidery or other specialist crafts," the spokesperson said.

"The program is keen to hear from any residents who would like to 'knowledge share' or teach in any crafting capacity, as well as hear from residents who would like to learn a specific craft – this input will help shape the program to suit community needs."

A gold coin donation is requested of social crafting attendees. For more information visit thecauldroncraftconnect@gmail.com

And in a wider push to engage Docklands' youth, a fourth program see the launch of a "D-Zone" featuring a series of technology

and performing arts activities aimed at fostering innovation, leadership, and community connection.

The program will run weekly at various venues including the Saras.Care office and at the Library at the Dock. According to council, it is planned to ensure a balanced approach to skill development, creative expression, and community building.

Lord Mayor Sally Capp said the council would continue to invest in the Docklands community, "empowering residents to deliver the events and activations that matter to them".

"From neighbourhood social events to the Docklands Farmers Market, we've worked closely with the DSG to fund events residents have been calling for, and we look forward to seeing them come to life," she said. "The establishment of a new resident group, Docklands 3008, will help us deliver services, events and support which we know the Docklands community truly need."

The DSG, which is being funded by the council, had its inaugural meeting last July and is made up of representatives from different parts of the community, including Docklands Primary School, resident groups, and small businesses.

Information will be shared via the online Docklands Neighbourhood Portal, as well as through the council's neighbourhood partner for Docklands Fadi Qunqar.

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What’s it like to experience homelessness in Melbourne?



Jason Russell

Hear Jason’s story as we launch our draft City of Melbourne Homelessness Strategy to help end homelessness.

The rituals that helped Jason Russell survive on the streets of inner-city Melbourne for nearly two decades are hard to shake.

In the abandoned inner-city factory where he took shelter for years, Jason learnt to leave no trace of himself. Nothing that could be linked back to him.

“I was hard wired to living in a squat,” Jason said.

Even though he moved into permanent housing two years ago, he still can’t bring himself to hang photos on the walls.

And he still wrestles with the idea of keeping a “bug-out bag” handy, in case he needs to run at any moment.



“When I first got the keys to the new place, I was terrified. I slept in the lounge room. I didn’t know there was a bedroom. I wouldn’t cook in the kitchen.

“Now my place is like an Airbnb. I could put my wallet in my pocket and walk out the door and nobody would know it was me living here, apart from the didgeridoo ... that might be a giveaway!”

Inside an “18-year bad day”

In his former life on the northern coast of NSW, Jason was a firefighter and a family man with a wife and three kids. A proud member of the Birabri Nation.

Things started to unravel when an underlying mental health condition worsened, leading to an honourable discharge from NSW Fire and Rescue.

“As a firefighter we know how to stabilise a body ... but an injury to the mind, I didn’t know or understand it. Everything fell to pieces. My career, my world, my family life.”

Jason left his community behind, thinking this would help him escape his “demons”.

After roaming the country for a decade, he eventually found the anonymity he craved in inner-city Melbourne.

Ever since, he’s been unlearning the compound stresses of what he describes as an “18-year bad day”.

While Jason lurched from squat to crisis accommodation to transitional housing and back again, his instincts as a first responder never left him.

“I wanted to see how the homeless in the city were faring.”

Jason volunteered at soup kitchens and drop-in centres. He got to know the workers, the agencies. He made friends among those who were also experiencing homelessness.

He began to notice discrepancies between what he saw on the streets and the statistics on homelessness quoted in the media.

“So I started to walk through the city, counting heads. I wanted to remove the variables on who was counted and who wasn’t.”

Jason’s efforts and insights caught the attention of the sector.

Through the Council to Homeless Persons, he started advising the homelessness sector on ways to improve the collection and sharing of data.



“Knowing what it meant to be homeless has made me such a great advocate.”

Helping others while waiting for housing

As Jason waited to have his housing needs prioritised on a growing waiting list for permanent housing, he also campaigned for caseworkers to act as “emissaries” for their clients.

A good caseworker, he argued, can spare people the trauma of having to tell their stories over again each time they present at a homelessness service.

Jason has a knack for sharing insights that resonate with first responders. Together, they find ways to better connect with people experiencing homelessness.

Two years ago, Jason finally got the keys to a new house in a suburb that put some distance between him and the squats where demons still lurked.

“I’m housed in a beautiful property. I know that home is where the heart is. I passionately want to make this my home. Is it ‘home sweet home’? Not yet. I’m working on that.”

HELP END HOMELESSNESS

Homelessness is something that people experience – it is not who they are.

We’re working to end homelessness in Melbourne by securing affordable and sustainable housing for all.

Join us in being part of the solution. Have your say on our draft Homelessness Strategy at participate.melbourne.vic.gov.au/homes-melbourne by Sunday 7 April.



Our toy libraries are free to visit and to borrow toys.

TOY LIBRARIES SPREAD JOY IN YOUR NEIGHBOURHOOD

Our three neighbourhood toy libraries are hives of excitement, laughter and discovery.

New toys and old favourites – trucks, slides, a miniature post office box – the City of Melbourne toy library collection spans 2000-plus items for ages zero to eight.

Bernadine Nolen, a team leader in our Library and Children’s Services branch, said that beyond a centre for fostering play and curiosity, the libraries have become social spaces for kids and their parents.

“We watch kids develop their social skills through learning to share with others, especially in a new environment,” Bernadine said.

“They’re free, they’re a social space for kids and families, they give parents the chance to trial toys before they

commit to buying them, and they’re good for the environment because they reduce waste.

“The collections are carefully curated and reviewed – informed and updated with the help of feedback from the experts, children. We focus on toys that are fun, help to develop skills and imagination and support brain, muscle and language development.”

City of Melbourne’s toy libraries are free to access – all you need is a library membership, which also provides access to books, digital content, makerspaces and digital devices.

It’s free to join and free to borrow from our toy libraries. Since July 2023, there have been more than 8000 toy loans to 654 members, and memberships have steadily increased since Council removed annual membership fees.

TOY LIBRARY OPENING HOURS

Carlton

The Chapel, 469 Cardigan Street
Monday: 3pm to 6pm,
Wednesday: 9.30am to 12.30pm,
Saturday: 10am to 2pm

North Melbourne

Hotham Hub, 113 Melrose Street
Tuesday: 9.30am to 12.30pm,
Thursday: 3pm to 6pm,
Saturday: 10am to 2pm

Docklands

Library at The Dock, 107 Victoria Harbour Promenade
Click and collect

To access the toy libraries, join up to the City of Melbourne libraries network at melbourne.vic.gov.au/libraries

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Your City of Melbourne community update



Park ranger Isaac Dodd with some of his colleagues

A WILD LIFE: PARK RANGERS RESCUE ROOS AND REPTILES

A roo on the hop in Carlton. A blue-tongue lizard basking in a laneway. Ducklings in distress. Our park rangers have seen it all and know just what to do. So – before you step in – give the experts a call.

Our park rangers do important work – helping visitors, keeping our parks safe and protecting the City of Melbourne’s urban ecosystems through a range of programs.

The team members have diverse experience in fields including conservation, environmental science, outdoor education, and wildlife rescue and rehabilitation.



Isaac with the sedated kangaroo

It’s just as well the rangers are multi-skilled, because they often have some wild encounters. Like tailing a lost young kangaroo that was reported to be hopping up Lygon Street, as ranger Isaac Dodd explains.

“I was driving the ranger ute, snaking my way up through Carlton following reports of the roo,” Isaac said.

“He’d ended up in an apartment block backyard, highly distressed, cornered in by a resident’s dogs, trying to dig under a pool fence. I was first on the scene.”

Ranger Isaac helped remove the dogs to calm the kangaroo down, and called in reinforcements from Vets for Compassion, Wildlife Victoria, Victoria Police and other agencies. Meanwhile, residents helped hold up a roo net.

The vet team arrived and swiftly darted the kangaroo, sedating him for an in-field assessment, while another local helped by acting as a makeshift stand for an IV bag.

“It was a real team effort, with so many people and agencies working together. Thankfully the vets found the kangaroo was in great health, just overheating from the stress,” Isaac said.

“Once he’d cooled down, he was released to join up with a mob of roos out at Plenty Gorge. A volunteer patiently stayed with him throughout a three-hour nap, then after a groggy wake-up he hopped away to join his new family.

“It was a perfect outcome, even if it left him with a nasty hangover.”

Wild animals that are sick, injured, displaced or orphaned may need our help, but Isaac encourages you to think carefully and get an expert’s advice before you capture or move a creature.



The kangaroo waking up at Plenty Gorge



Many native Australian birds – like lorikeets and magpies – fledge on the ground, so they might look like they’re in distress. But removing them from their parents’ sight could be the wrong choice.

“Some birds fledge on the ground. After leaving the nest they can spend a few weeks unable to fly, building their strength and learning ‘how to bird’ while their parents protect and feed them from overhead,” Isaac said.

“Often these young fledglings can be hard to differentiate from their parents.”

Escaped pets can also cause a fuss in the middle of the city, like when Isaac received a report of a blue-tongued lizard in one of our iconic laneways.

“Although blue-tongues are native to Melbourne, this one had the colours of a Queenslander and was precariously basking in a busy CBD laneway,” Isaac said.

“He was very comfortable being handled, indicating he was an escaped or released pet. We contacted Reptiles Victoria and the team ensured he went to a special rehab and rehoming program.”

Our rangers’ other adventures include fishing a group of ducklings out of a deep drain with a long pool net and caring for a concussed sacred kingfisher before releasing the bird at Ron Barassi Park in Docklands.

HOW TO CARE FOR LOCAL WILDLIFE

Call an expert before taking action

If you spot an animal in trouble, report it to Wildlife Victoria by visiting wildlifevictoria.org.au or call their 24-hour hotline on 8400 7300. They’ll call in our park rangers to help if needed.

Understand natural behaviours

Get to know local species to recognise natural behaviours, like birds that fledge on the ground.

Don’t feed wildlife

Human food isn’t meant for animals. For example, ducks can’t digest bread – it causes severe illness. Animals who are fed can also become dependent and forget how to find their own food.

Keep your cats indoors

Cats are by far the biggest killers of local wildlife.

Leave water out for wildlife when it’s hot

Not all creatures can balance on the rim of a bowl, so add a rock for smaller creatures like lizards to drink from, and sticks so they can easily climb out.

KEEP IN TOUCH

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New smart poles rolled out in Fishermans Bend

New smart poles featuring weather sensors, transport sensors, LoRaWAN connectivity and smart lighting will be activated as part of a 12-month pilot program in Fishermans Bend.

WORDS BY
BRENDAN REES



The City of Melbourne is partnering with the state government to trial eight smart poles on Turner and Graham streets as a part of the “gateway” to the General Motors Holden (GMH) project in Fishermans Bend.

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, creating a future employment hub.

The smart poles will host different types of sensors, as well as low range wide area networks (LoRaWAN) gateways, smart lighting, transport sensor/car and bike counting and a pedestrian counting sensor, that will help gather data on transport, noise, electric weather, air quality and more.

“The rise in smart technologies has increased the potential for many new devices, creating visual clutter in the streetscape. We are exploring how to solve this challenge using innovative technologies,” the council said.

“We are trialling smart poles in Fishermans Bend to understand the efficiency, impacts and opportunities they bring. The outcomes of this pilot will help inform the expansion of smart poles to other parts of Melbourne.”

“Sensors help collect important data about how the city functions. Smart poles enable us to install various sensors in one location without over cluttering our streets.”

The smart poles were installed from last September to March, with the piloting of pole sensors to be trialled until April 2025 before an analysis is undertaken.

According to the council, data is stored permanently for records and analysis, but noted “we are not collecting any data that could personally identify anyone”.

The council’s education and innovation portfolio lead Cr Davydd Griffiths (pictured) said the trial of smart poles would create “more connected and efficient open spaces”.

“We’re putting this technology to the test and will use its data to inform future projects and improve the way people move around.”

Fishermans Bend is Australia’s largest-ever urban renewal project and is locally governed by the City of Melbourne (north of the Westgate Freeway) and the City of Port Phillip to the south, covering 480 hectares.

The area is made up of five precincts including Montague, Sandridge, Wirraway, Lorimer and the Employment Precinct.

By 2050, Fishermans Bend is expected to be home to approximately 80,000 residents and provide employment for up to 80,000 people.

Smart poles are also being used in Geelong, City of Yarra, Sydney, Brisbane, and Darwin. ●

For more information:
participate.melbourne.vic.gov.au/smarter-streets



Ballet school opens in Docklands

A new ballet school opened its doors last month, becoming the first of its kind in Docklands.

WORDS BY
MARILYN TAN



Collins Street Ballet, which is part of the Push Fitness Gym, offers classes for adults and children.

Andrew Ward, owner of The Push Group, said it had decided to open a ballet school in Docklands to provide more after-school activities for families in the area.

“There’s some football, soccer, and baseball, but there’s limited activities especially for girls, young women, and anyone who wants to learn to dance,” he said.

The school has seen strong demand since it opened its doors, with Mr Ward describing the community’s response so far as “fantastic”.

The classes are run by Cindy Leung, a Royal Academy of Dance qualified teacher. She graduated from the Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts with a major in Ballet Performance and minor in Choreography.

Ms Leung said that it was “exciting” to start a new ballet school in the area and is passionate about nurturing the love for the sport.

Her initial goals are to teach students proper technique, and how they can find enjoyment in ballet as a hobby.

Mr Ward shared his excitement for having Ms Leung on the team.

“It’s very rare to have someone of that standard teaching,” he said.

Principal of Collins Street Ballet Jean Ward said that the school’s goal was to support current dancers, with the long-term goal of starting classes for different dance genres.

“Right now, I think the focus is just to get this group started ... and to get them into a routine,” she said, adding that they were considering opening more children’s ballet classes to meet increased demand.

For now, the school encourages interested children and adults to try its classes.

The school is running an Open Day on April 20 at 10.30am, where children can try the class for free.

Adults can also try classes, with free trials available for Docklands residents.

People of all levels are welcome to join the classes, which run on Monday evenings at 7.30pm for adults, and Saturday mornings at 10.30am for children.

Jean Ward said that some students had danced when they were children, while others were completely new to ballet.

“I think everybody just comes here for the love of movement, of dance,” she said.

“They really enjoy themselves a lot”.

Collins Street Ballet is located at 833 Collins St, Docklands. ●

Derryn Hinch to run for Lord Mayor, declaring: “Make Melbourne proud again”

Derryn Hinch, the broadcast legend and former senator, has announced he will contend for the position of Lord Mayor of Melbourne later this year.

WORDS BY
BRENDAN REES



Photo: Natwick

He has vowed to shake things up and ensure the city comes back to its best by tackling graffiti, illegal e-scooter behaviour, people experiencing homelessness, and traffic issues.

Mr Hinch confirmed with *Docklands News* that he would run for Lord Mayor, saying he still has the “fire in my belly” to take the reins of the city’s top job.

“I was approached by people at the City Council who said, ‘do you want to be Lord Mayor,’ and I thought ‘give me a week, I’ll think about it,’” he said.

“Stealing from the NT [tourism logo], I thought well, you’ll never, never know if you never, never go.”

Despite being 80, Mr Hinch said he was in good health, and was “going to hospital next week [early March] just for a check-up to prove that I’m as good as I say I am”.

The City of Melbourne’s council election is set to take place later this year, with current Lord Mayor Sally Capp yet to reveal if she will run again.

Mr Hinch, a popular media personality who is known for his outspoken nature and relentless pursuit of justice, said there was much to do to “Make Melbourne proud again”.

He said he wants to see more graffiti gone, and while he believed Lime and Neuron hire e-scooters should not be banned, rider rules should be enforced to improve safety.

“You’ve got to work out better ways to control them. I walked out and nearly fell over one the other day; it was sitting right on a pedestrian crossing,” he said.

“I think we have to educate the users to be more responsible and also the operators.

“I’m seeing school kids in their uniforms five at a time, scooting along with the helmets on top of handlebars, which is nuts.”

Mr Hinch also believes councillors need to go back to basics and not be debating the crisis in Gaza for four hours, which was the “best example where we’re going wrong in my view”.

“It’s a very important issue, but it’s not for a council. I grew up with the three Rs, which are rates, roads, rubbish. That’s what we should be concentrating on.”

“I think people get a bit too woke at times ... stick to your knitting. We’re not the United Nations. We’re trying to make the city a better place for the people of Melbourne.”

He said that when he grew up, “city councillors were councillors. You didn’t know what their politics were”.

“You didn’t have the Labor politicians on the City Council or Liberal or National. You were just the City Council because you believed in the city, and I would love to see that again.”

Mr Hinch said the city had to improve traffic flow, and while he supported bike lanes, “we don’t need them everywhere”.

Furthermore, he is keen to explore an idea proposed by a former Lord Mayor, which was to install lockers for people experiencing homelessness “where they can put their gear and their bedding at nighttime and have some sort of pride instead of walking around with their life in a Coles basket”.

Mr Hinch said he also promised to cut out travel junkets, saying “if it’s a genuine trip, maybe to a sister city and to achieve something that is fine, but if it is just a junket, no way”. ●

Dynamic musical project strikes a chord in Docklands

A new songwriting endeavour will seek to harness the power of the Docklands community and bring locals together through the power of music.

WORDS BY
GEMMA GRANT



Diverse Docklands is a project led by Jonathon Welch AM, an ARIA award-winning singer and conductor of The Choir of Hard Knocks. He wants to enlist the help of local residents and businesses to create a song which is reflective of Docklands' identity.

"We thought this was just a really great way of promoting Docklands and the community," Jonathon told Docklands News.

The area is no stranger to musical ensembles. Jonathon's THECHO!R group has been based in the suburb for the past five years and The Choir of Hard Knocks also rehearses out of the Community Hub at The Dock.

The conductor emphasised how the project was only possible through the help of locals – particularly through the lyric-writing phase. It's this input that he hopes will showcase the diversity within the Docklands community.

"We'd like to engage and hear from residents, businesses, and the community about why they like the area, and why they choose to live there," he said.

The recording aspect of the song is supported by Johnathon's musical education company Play it Forward. A similar song created by the organisation was a huge success in the community of Wyndham. The composition is being used in local schools, at dance performances, and even songwriting competitions.

In addition to "supporting and promoting" the local community, Jonathan and his team hope that Diverse Docklands will be a "project that has a legacy." The song will be premiered at a live performance in Docklands once it is completed.

For more information and to get involved, email Johnathon and the team. ●

For more information:
info@playitforward.org.au



Pet's Corner

Billy soaks up the harbour life



Meet Billy, the 15-year-old border collie, who has adapted remarkably well to his new surroundings after moving from the UK a year ago.



WORDS BY
BRENDAN REES
PHOTOGRAPHY BY
HANNA KOMISSAROVA



While he may be slow these days, it doesn't stop Billy from enjoying his daily walks along the waterfront and visiting the many cafes in the area including Cocobei Docklands which is "very pet friendly".

His owner Kerrin Chapple said Billy loved the chance to meet new people and dogs



while soaking up the bustling atmosphere and sea air.

"He's really happy for an old boy. It's nice and easy to get around and though he can't really climb stairs anymore, all the buildings have ramps which certainly helps," she said.

Despite his age and having lived in the UK for four years, Kerrin, who is pictured with her daughter Ashleigh, said Billy had a zest for life and enjoyed every moment in Docklands.

"You don't have a backyard, so you're always out and about and it's a great way of meeting people, which is really nice." ●



From docks to desks: fostering family-friendly futures in Docklands

As Docklands continues to flourish into one of Melbourne's most dynamic and vibrant communities, the absence of a local high school becomes increasingly obvious.

WORDS BY
CR JAMAL HAKIM



The need in Docklands and our city isn't just a matter of convenience; it's a cornerstone for building a truly integrated, family-friendly community. Drawing from the spirited discussions in recent Docklands News articles, it's clear I'm not alone in thinking this way. So, here's my two cents ...

Docklands is a unique suburb, boasting a diverse mix of residential, commercial, and recreational spaces. Its evolution from an active port to a bustling urban precinct has been an incredible journey, and it's still evolving. However, as we plan for the future, it's essential to consider not just the infrastructure that supports businesses and tourism, but also the amenities that nurture and sustain our community. At the heart of this is education.

Imagine a high school that not only serves the educational needs of our young residents but also becomes a beacon of innovation and environmental stewardship. The proximity of Moonee Ponds Creek and the waterways offers an unparalleled opportunity to integrate environmental science into the curriculum, fostering a generation that is not only academically proficient but also deeply committed to sustainability and



conservation.

Moreover, with world-class film studios within our reach, Docklands is perfectly positioned to offer a specialised curriculum focusing on the film and digital arts. This could cultivate a unique niche for our high school, attracting a diverse student body passionate about storytelling, animation, film production, and new media.

Perhaps we can incorporate Year 6 students from the primary school into the high school site, not just to alleviate space constraints; but also to create a seamless educational journey. This transition can significantly ease the often-daunting leap from primary to secondary education, fostering a sense of continuity and community among students.

What about sports? Our proximity to the O'Brien Icehouse presents a unique sporting opportunity. Integrating ice hockey and

other ice sports into the school's physical education curriculum could not only enhance the physical wellbeing of students but also establish Docklands as a hub for ice sports, further enriching our community's recreational landscape.

Establishing a high school in Docklands is also a strategic move towards cementing the neighbourhood's reputation as a family-friendly community. The presence of a local high school addresses a critical component of urban family life, making Docklands an even more attractive option for current and prospective residents. This isn't just about providing education; it's about creating a cohesive, supportive environment where families can thrive.

The call for a Docklands high school is more than just a logistical necessity; it's a vision for a comprehensive, integrated community. It's about recognising the unique

assets of our location and leveraging them to provide a multifaceted, enriching educational experience. By focusing on environmental science, film, and ice sports, we're not just offering academics; we're preparing our youth for a future where creativity, sustainability, and physical wellbeing are paramount.

As a councillor and a Docklands resident, I am deeply invested in the future of our community. The establishment of a high school in Docklands is a critical step towards ensuring our suburb continues to grow as a vibrant, inclusive, and family-oriented community. It's a step we need to take together, advocating for a facility that meets the diverse needs of our young residents and supports the continuing evolution of Docklands as a dynamic urban space.

The conversation about a Docklands high school has been ongoing, but the time for action is now. We have a unique opportunity to retrofit an existing facility like the Costco site or another unused site to design a school that reflects the values and aspirations of our community, a school that stands as a testament to our commitment to education, sustainability, and the arts.

Let's unite in this vision and make the Docklands high school a reality for our families, our children, and the generations to come. ●

Cr Jamal Hakim

CITY OF MELBOURNE

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MELBOURNE.VIC.GOV.AU





QUESTION:
What brings you to Docklands?

Faces of Docklands



FAYE
Shopping.



HARVEY
Visiting my friend and out for exercise.



KATHLEEN
I go to school in Docklands.



ADAM
We just did some shopping and now going back to our hotel.



\$1.3m raised in spectacular Run for the Kids

More than 25,000 people gathered in Docklands in a heartwarming display of community spirit to participate in the Herald Sun/Transurban Run for the Kids, raising an incredible \$1.3 million.

WORDS BY
BRENDAN REES



Families and individuals from all walks of life made their way out of the Docklands precinct and over the Bolte Bridge, with those on the long course also running through the Domain Tunnel on March 17.

All funds were raised for the Good Friday Appeal with Transurban adding \$80,000 to the \$1.22 million raised by everyday



heroes and families. Transurban CEO Michelle Jablko said the start/finish line area in Docklands was abuzz with supporters and sponsors giving the area a festive atmosphere and the celebration of a community united for the event, which is now in its 18th year.



"It's a privilege to open up CityLink in support of a cause that provides life-changing assistance for our community, often on their most challenging days," she said. "This year's massive crowd was amazing, and we hope everyone enjoyed the course – especially those views from the Bolte Bridge." Good Friday Appeal executive director Rebecca Cowan said her team was grateful to everyone who participated and generously donated. "Your support ensures The Royal Children's Hospital continues to provide world class medical care for sick kids and their families." This year's men's winner Andy

Buchanan was the fastest on the long course with the Bendigo teacher clocking in 42 minutes and 28 seconds. Charlotte Wilson collected her third crown with the osteopath racing home in 51 minutes and 47 seconds. "This year I had a bit of an injury and I've been focusing on a marathon later this year, so I was pretty excited to come and run today, it was good fun," Mr Buchanan said. Ms Wilson said, "I really love this event with everyone supporting you – it's such a great atmosphere and I'm glad to be back doing it." "The work that we put in is nothing compared to what these kids have to fight against". ●

Building dispute resolution centre not in the business of resolving disputes lately

Domestic Building Dispute Resolution Victoria (DBDRV) was set up by the state government to provide homeowners with access to a free service to resolve building disputes without having to first go to the courts or tribunals and endure the high costs and long-time frames associated with those jurisdictions.

However, just like a number of other government departments that have suffered from a staff cleanout and pay freezes in recent years, the DBDRV is struggling with its caseload and a shortage of qualified conciliators to perform the role.

The conciliation model which the DBDRV uses is most effective: once an application is lodged by a homeowner or owners' corporation (OC) in respect of building defects, a case officer will contact the builder against whom the complaint is made and conduct their own enquiries about whether a negotiated solution could resolve the issues.

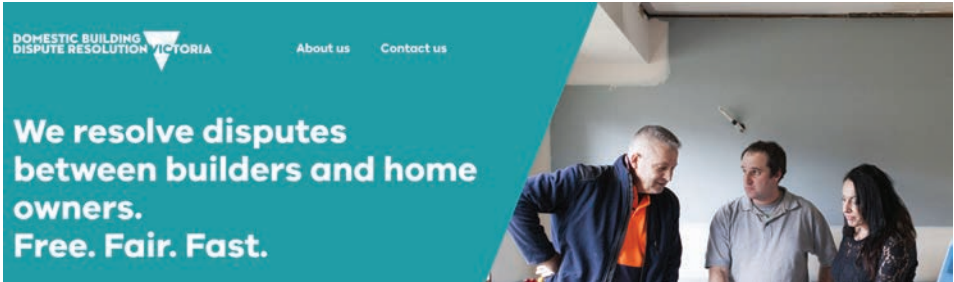
Once an opportunity has been made for site visits, testing and experts to provide reports, the DBDRV will appoint a conciliator and will host a conciliation to hear the dispute and engage in a structured round of settlement discussions with the aim of resolving the dispute with a simple written agreement, usually for the builder to return to site and carry out repairs.

If no resolution has been reached, then a certificate gets issued by the DBDRV which allows either party to then file a claim in a court or tribunal.

Certainly, for many OCs, it is exceedingly difficult to pass a resolution (51 per cent of lot owners) or a special resolution (75 per cent of lot owners) to file legal proceedings. This is required under the *Owners Corporation Act 2006*. For a building of more than 200 apartments, it is almost impossible to pass these resolutions.

Over the past 24 months, the DBDRV has increasingly decided not to accept applications from OCs and have instead elected simply to provide them with a certificate of conciliation to allow the OC to file at court or VCAT.

The justifications for doing so are often spurious – sometimes the answer will be



that the matter looks complicated, or costly. Other times the DBRV will say that a Council Building Notice complicates the process of conciliation.

In truth, none are proper justifications for the DBDRV failing to do its job, which is to attempt to resolve a building dispute. It doesn't matter if it is too hard, or too expensive or too technical. It doesn't matter if it involves cladding, or other complex weatherproofing and structural elements of the building. There is rarely a building dispute that is not technical.

The plain reality of the matter is that for many homeowners, the DBDRV's practice of closing its file without attempting resolution is blocking access to resolving disputes

by failing to enforce the builder to conciliate and negotiate.

This is forcing OCs to instead engage in the tribunal and court processes which are incredibly expensive and time consuming (two years at least to get a hearing date).

Pretty ironic, and pretty poor form from a department whose sole purpose and role is to conciliate and resolve disputes. ●

Tom Bacon

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DOCKLANDS REPRESENTATIVE GROUP

Strife in strata: shedding light on conflicts of interest

The recent exposé aired on ABC's 7.30 program has left many Docklanders reeling, unveiling a troubling reality of embedded conflicts of interest within strata management services.

The bombshell segment thrust into the spotlight allegations of exorbitant fees and a concerning lack of transparency. While the focus was on a single company based in NSW, the implications reverberate nationwide, casting a shadow over the integrity and legality of practices within the strata services sector.

Such is the perceived magnitude of this issue that the ABC has issued a public plea to apartment owners, body corporates

(owners corporations), strata managers, and regulators, urging them to share their experiences. Submissions can be made to:



Beyond mere revelation, the ABC's report has also given voice to organisations that have long sounded alarms about systemic failures in the residential strata sector. Notable among these are the Owners' Corporation Network of Australia (OCN), Australian Consumers Insurance

Lobby (ACIL), and Unit Owners' Association Queensland (UOAQ), which have collectively called upon regulatory bodies such as ASIC, ACCC, and the Strata & Property Services Commissioner of New South Wales to launch investigations into these questionable practices. It is regrettable that Victoria lacks an equivalent office.

In tandem with these calls for action, Amanda Farmer of Your Strata Property hosted an online session featuring Professor Cathy Sherry from Macquarie Law School. The session emphasised that the ABC's report and ensuing investigation mark just "the beginning of a long, hard – and very necessary – journey for the people who choose to serve strata owners".

Also identified as part of the

problem are apathetic owners and inexperienced and/or overwhelmed committees as, together, they create fertile ground for exploitative practices to thrive.

This underscores the importance of organisations like the OCN, particularly its efforts to raise awareness and build capacity within the sector.

Most recently their efforts took the form of a free webinar on *Strata Disaster*, where the work of researcher Megan Chatterton was discussed with representatives from the Insurance Council of Australia, CHU Insurance, Facilities Management Australia, and other strata specialists.

Insights from a national survey on emergency preparedness underscored critical issues, ranging from committees' limited powers during emergencies to the

imperative for accessible registers of vulnerable residents.

In the face of these deep and wide-ranging strata challenges, collective action and informed engagement are imperative to effect meaningful change within the strata management sector.

To stay informed about forthcoming residential strata webinars and events, owners can subscribe to the OCN Strata Newsletter & Events at ocn.org.au. ●

Janette Corcoran

MEMBER
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Parks Victoria’s litter management under the microscope

People tend to be drawn to live close by to waterways, whether these be rivers, harbours or beaches. The Docklands community is evidence of this universal attraction.

Docklanders are likely to be more conscious than many around Port Phillip Bay that that we need to pay close attention to our waterways and our beaches, which form the critical interface between the land-side waters – riverbanks, the port harbours, the beaches and the Bay.

The question arises: Are we doing a good job in cleaning-up the collective “mess” – of water-borne (rubbish aka litter) sluicing into Port Phillip Bay from Victoria Harbour, commercial Port Docks and Birrarung/Yarra and Maribyrnong rivers and creeks?

Urban waterside residential areas such as the CBD, Docklands and bayside beaches are places to evaluate most visible whether a decent job is being done? As a Docklands resident – what do you see?

Parks Victoria is the primary government agency responsible for cleaning-up the “mess” before it reaches the ocean.

First, the good news! A litter audit by Parks Victoria Depot in Burnley in January 2024, found litter collected by the Automatic River Cleaner is significantly more effective than earlier litter-traps described by PV as “next-to-useless”.

So, is the problem of waterways litter collection around Docklands and the CBD solved? Visibly, absolutely not!

This month MMHN wrote to Parks Victoria and the City of Melbourne (CoM) registering



a complaint about the appalling and persistent practice adopted by Parks Victoria of parking a full litter collection device for extended periods alongside a popular CBD riverside walking path in the CBD adjacent to the Convention Centre (aka Jeff’s Shed).

In this most prominent place adjacent to a major facility makes a mockery of Parks Victoria’s claims of success in its recent litter audit. Unlike PV, the CoM promptly acknowledged MMHN’s complaint and sent it on to address. PV is yet to respond.

PV is not responsible for coastal

municipalities, which also perform sub-standard litter management practices. A Mornington Shire councillor described mechanical beach-raking of bay beaches as so useless as to be counter-productive. Raking actually exacerbates the environmental litter problem by breaking plastic objects on beaches to microplastic fragments which upon raking, are re-buried in the sand only to be washed away into the ocean as the tides fluctuate. Such microplastics are a dangerous scourge on the ocean, and a serious risk to bird and marine life. An environmental disaster, a by-product of wrong-headed inefficient first world litter management.

Both PV and bayside councils clearly need to follow the lead of Mornington Council in re-thinking the hidden environmental cost of inadequate litter management. Mornington Council is to be commended for convening an internal working group and considering a potential research project to better understand the impacts and options for an alternate approach to beach cleanings. Let’s use these findings to inform other councils and Parks Victoria litter programs.

The Docklands community is, of course, situated at the critical interface between the inland waterways and the Bay. Please look closely at what is, or what is not, happening with litter on the water’s edge. Docklands and the City of Melbourne deserve a better performance by PV. Current PV litter management would simply not be tolerated in any comparable state capital city.

As part of Australian Heritage Week, MMHN invites the Docklands Community to forthcoming event on April 20 at 10.30am, which we hope will be of interest to Docklands residents.



Now you see it. Soon you won’t! Heritage Shipping Control Tower, Victoria Harbour

An informal on-site presentation which is MMHN’s contribution to the 2024 Australian Heritage Week. This impressive maritime infrastructure asset owned by state government is highly significant in the evolution of Melbourne. It now languishes, devoid of heritage protection, neglected and left to rot.

MMHN will share what we know of its history, the regrettable disregard for its cultural value and perhaps its future?

Where: Gather at the tip of North Wharf, Docklands. Take the Collins St tram to the last stop, then walk towards Docklands library. Continue walking along the North Wharf Rd towards the Bolte Bridge. ●

Jackie Watts

CHAIR

JACKIEWATTS@NETSPACE.NET.AU



HEALTH & WELLBEING



In the hustle and bustle of our daily lives, finding balance can often feel like a distant dream, a fleeting oasis amid a desert of obligations and responsibilities.

Yet, amid the chaos, lies the promise of a harmonious existence, a life guided by intention, purpose, and wellbeing.

From nurturing our physical health to nourishing our soul, we explore the transformative power of intentional self-care and the profound impact it can have on every facet of our lives.

In a world filled with endless distractions and demands, carving out time for self-care and wellness can feel like a luxury reserved for the privileged few.

However, the truth is that prioritising our wellbeing is not a luxury – it’s a necessity. It’s about acknowledging our inherent worth and recognising that we deserve to live a life that is balanced, fulfilling, and aligned with our deepest values.

Creating a wellness routine that works for us is not about adhering to rigid rules or following the latest trends in health and fitness. It’s about tuning into our inner wisdom, listening to the needs of our body, mind, and spirit, and crafting a routine that honours our unique essence.

The first step in creating a personalised wellness

routine is self-awareness. It’s about taking the time to reflect on what truly nourishes and sustains us, what brings us joy and fulfillment, and what drains our energy and depletes our spirit. By cultivating a deeper understanding of ourselves, we gain clarity about the habits, practices, and rituals that serve our highest good.

Once we have identified our core values and priorities, the next step is to design a wellness routine that aligns with our vision for health and wellbeing. This may involve integrating a variety of activities and practices into our daily lives, such as physical exercise, mindfulness meditation, healthy eating, creative expression, and meaningful connection with others.

However, it’s important to remember that creating a wellness routine is not a one-size-fits-all endeavor. The key is to experiment, explore, and adapt our routine based on what resonates with us on a deep level.

Finding balance is also about recognising that wellness is not just about the absence of illness; it’s about nurturing all dimensions of our being – physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual.

Moreover, creating a wellness routine is not about striving for perfection; it’s about embracing progress over perfection. It’s about recognising that every step we take toward greater wellbeing, no matter how small, is a victory worth celebrating.

Finding balance by creating a wellness routine that works for us is a journey of self-discovery, self-compassion, and self-empowerment.

So let us embark on this journey with open hearts and open minds, knowing that the path to wellness is as unique and beautiful as we are. ●

Dr Mike Edgley

CHIROPRACTOR

DOCKLANDS HEALTH



10 YEARS ON

APRIL 2015 | ISSUE 107 |

DOCKLANDS NEWS

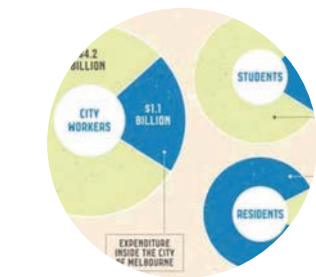
Residents are the big spenders

City of Melbourne residents spend four times as much as city workers in Melbourne’s shops, cafes and bars, new research has revealed.

SGS Economics & Planning research shows that residents each spend \$10,000 on retail and hospitality each year within the city. Workers spend \$2500 each year on retail and hospitality, while students spend just \$1800.

The research was commissioned by the City of Melbourne as part of its recently released Retail and Hospitality Strategy First Year Report. The research shows that, as a group, workers spend the most in the city on retail and hospitality – \$1.09 billion annually.

But there are about 500,000 workers and only 105,000 residents. Despite their numerical disadvantage, residents spend only slightly less than workers – estimated by SGS at \$1.04 billion. Students were estimated to spend \$459 million as a group on retail and hospitality within the city each year. The Retail and Hospitality Expenditure Study, City of Melbourne/SGS Economics & Planning 2014 research also showed that visitors to Melbourne



spend an estimated \$885 million.

The researchers also looked at “leakage” and found that, again, residents were the most loyal group of retail and hospitality customers within the city. Residents expend 85 per cent of their total spend within the city and forked out only \$150 million (15 per cent of their total spend) on retail and hospitality in other places.

In contrast, students and workers were found to spend four times as much as they spent in the city in other places. Workers annually spend \$4.2 billion elsewhere, while students spend \$1.6 billion in places other than the City of Melbourne.

The researchers pointed out that there was considerable overlap between these groups. The Year One Report showed Melbourne’s CBD was home to 18,221 businesses and had a weekday population of 844,000 people and a weekend population of 579,000 people. ●



Double dose of a Docklands favourite

It may have been four unstable years in the making, but it has been worth every cent, hour and stress for Peter Mastro, co-owner of Saluministi, who has recently opened his second Docklands store at Melbourne Quarter.

Famed for their made-to-order paninis that have been filling the stomachs of Docklanders since 2016, Saluministi will bring their usual fare to the growing Melbourne Quarter precinct, a move that is already reaping rewards four weeks in.

"To see the response we've have had is unbelievable, completely overwhelming. It's pretty special," Mr Mastro said.

"When you open up a shop, you spend a lot of money, it's quite risky and you hope the reward is going to be there, but you just never know for sure."

"There's obviously a need in the area for what we do. Part of it is because the market wants something and part of it is because it's us. We have quite a strong following now."

While you'll find great coffee and breakfast options at Saluministi, there's no doubt the star of the show is their line-up of paninis.

The Porchetta, with house seasoned and rolled free range roast pork, artichoke paste, pecorino and rocket; the Pollo, with crumbed chicken breast, roasted peppers, provolone dolce, chilli and rocket; and the Calamari, with fried squid, salsa verde, lemon tartare and rocket, form the popular trinity of their renowned Italian sandwiches.

"Above everything, we couldn't do what we do without the crew that we have ... they are incredible," Mr Mastro told Docklands News.

"For us, 2020 and 2021 was about staying afloat, 2022 was about recovery and 2023 was about what's next?"

"We used that time [COVID lockdowns] and built a team that was ready for shop number three ... that's what gave us the confidence to do it."

The plans to open a new store at Melbourne Quarter stem back on the eve of the pandemic. Mr Mastro and his business partner, and brother-in-law, Frank Bressi, were just days away from signing a new lease when the world shut down.

Now, with his second Docklands location, and third in the small Saluministi empire open, Mr Mastro is looking to renovate his Bourke St café, which is expected to begin construction and be completed in the coming months. ●

For more information:
saluministi.com.au



Music to guide you through school holidays

The Melbourne Recital Centre is putting on a show like no other these April school holidays with *Music Play*, a two-day festival of musical run, laughter and play.

With various activities, performances, and musical installations, *Music Play* promises something for mini-music lovers, festival-loving families, and friends.

Across two days, April 3 and 4, expect performances, installations, workshops and more, with each activity held multiple times a day, so no need to rearrange nap schedules.

Across both days, the main stage at the Recital Centre hosts a revolving roster featuring acts like Teeny Tiny Stevies, Bunny Racket and Conduct Us, while the Ground Floor turns installation haven with works like *Pivot* by Madeleine Flynn and Tim Humphrey, *HEXADECA* by Pulsing Heart, *Melodius* by Thomas Campbell and *Rainbow Paths* by Helen Kwok and Chad Toprak.

Level Two will turn into a home of discovery with ultra-participatory workshops like ABC of Beatboxing with LC Beats, Kidstruments with Playable Streets and the Wall of Sounds.

Andy Walker from Bunny Racket told Docklands News his show was "like a rock and roll party, for everyone in the family."

"It's a meeting place for people to rock out together and have absolute freedom to do so. It will put a smile on everyone's face," he said.

"I know what music has given to me as a

Bunny and I want to see that spread through other people's lives. It has been one of the most constant, awesome things in my life, is having rock and roll around, and if I can help continue that legacy then I'm doing a great job."

"If you care about the music your kids listen to or the things they are exposed to, then Bunny Racket or other cool people doing interesting things for children makes a huge difference."

Alongside performances, workshops, and installations, you'll find musical face painting, a music-themed photobooth, Eliza Shephard as a roaming musical pixie, food trucks, pram parking, quiet zones, and, for parents: coffee.

Music Play is run over Wednesday, April 3 and Thursday, April 4 with entry available every half hour between 9am and 1pm.

Tickets are \$40 or \$36 for Recital Centre members. ●

For more information:
melbournerecitalcentre.com.au/events/2024/music-play



Jack Hayes

BUSINESS EDITOR

JACK@HYPERLOCALNEWS.COM.AU



The 2024 Docklands Directory is out now

The Directory is a guide to, and celebration of, business throughout Docklands, as well as our world-class waterfront surrounding Victoria Harbour.

To explore all that the precinct has to offer or find a local business, visit docklandsdirectory.com.au.

To get your copy, advertise, contribute or feature your business, please contact jack@hyperlocalnews.com.au



WHAT'S ON
April

Autumn is here and with it welcome a huge month in Dockland's event calendar. Keep up-to-date with everything happening in postcode 3008.



HOLI FESTIVAL MELBOURNE
Celebrate unity in diversity on the occasion of Holi – festival of colours. Enjoy three days and nights of celebrating with colours, music, dancing, multicultural performances, food and drinks, and much more.

Ron Barassi Snr Park (West)

MARCH 29 - 31, 11AM - 10PM



ANZAC DAYS EXHIBITION
A collection of photographs by Collin Abbott of Anzac Day parades in Melbourne during the 1970s. Abbott's interest was to record the last of the World War I diggers.

MAGNET Galleries, SC G19 Wharf St

APRIL 25 - MAY 25, 10AM - 4PM



SOUTH ASIAN FESTIVAL
The South Asian Festival returns in collaboration with the City of Melbourne. This day-long free event celebrates the New Year of South Asian countries in a colourful display of their rich and vibrant culture.

Newquay Promenade, Docklands

SUNDAY, APRIL 18, 11AM - 9PM



PORT PHILLIP FERRIES: DOCKLANDS DISCOVERY CRUISES
Includes a relaxing one-hour cruise through Victoria Harbour, along the Yarra River, and under the Bolte Bridge and Westgate Bridge – with some historical commentary.

portphillipferries.com.au

TUESDAY, APRIL 2 AND 16



BEHIND THE SCENES OF THE ALMA DOEPEL RESTORATION
Alma Doepel is an Australian built three-masted tall ship. Built in Bellingen NSW and launched in 1903 by Frederick Doepel and named after his youngest daughter.

2 N Wharf Rd, Docklands

SUNDAY MAY 5, 10AM - 3PM



MAKERS MARKET AT THE DISTRICT
Enjoy live entertainment and creative, colourful market stalls showcasing art, craft, jewelry, fashion, homewares, gifts, and delicious homemade produce

Outside H&M, The District, 440 Docklands Dr

SUNDAY APRIL 28 AND MAY 26, 11AM - 4PM



CREATURE VOICE: CREATIVE ASIA FOUNDATION
Step into the captivating realm of Creature Voice, an art exhibition meticulously curated ahead of Earth Day.

Gallery, Library at The Dock, 107 Victoria Harbour Promenade, Docklands

UNTIL APRIL 28, 10AM - 6PM

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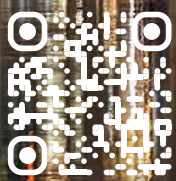
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