

Farewell *Docklands News*,
next month, we welcome ...

The Melburnian

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CBD

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East
Melbourne

Kensington

Docklands

West
Melbourne

Farewell *Docklands News* – where it all began

“

After more than two decades documenting the rise, setbacks and stubborn spirit of Melbourne's waterfront suburb, *Docklands News* is signing off – but its voice will continue through *The Melburnian*.

”

WORDS BY
SEAN CAR



This one feels different.

Docklands News is not simply one of five local mastheads now coming together under a new citywide publication. It is where our entire journey began.

Long before *Southbank News*, *CBD News*, *Inner City News* or *North West City News*, there was *Docklands Community News* – an early attempt to give a voice, identity and sense of connection to a place that, at the time, barely existed.

The earliest versions can be traced back to 1997, and later 1999 with *Harbour View*, when John Tabart's vision for Docklands was beginning to play out across former port land, sheds and largely empty waterfront spaces.

There was a stadium, a handful of early apartment towers, plenty of ambitious plans and no shortage of scepticism.

My predecessor, the late Shane Scanlan, headed Mediation Communications when it won a tender through the former Docklands Authority – later VicUrban, Places Victoria and now Development Victoria – to design and lay out those early publications.

Peter Crowley, one of the original architects of community and place-making at the authority, helped establish some of Docklands' earliest civic foundations, including the Chamber of Commerce, the original Docklands Community Association, and *Docklands News*.

When the opportunity arose to purchase the newspaper's rights, Shane – a lifelong print journalist who never needed much encouragement to back a local paper – put up his hand.

The first official edition under our ownership appeared in 2003, and the monthly *Docklands News* known today truly began.

Since then, this newspaper has documented almost every chapter of one of Australia's largest urban renewal projects.

We have covered new towers, public spaces, businesses, events and community groups, alongside the less glamorous but equally important matters of governance, planning, transport, infrastructure and the recurring question of who, exactly, is responsible for fixing what.

Continued on page 2.

THE DISTRICT
DOCKLANDS

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THURSDAY TRIVIA NIGHT & HEAPS MORE OFFERS.

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MORE INFO



HYPERLOCAL

NEWS

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The deadline for edition 1 of
The Melburnian is September 4

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Farewell *Docklands News* – where it all began

Continued from page 1

We reported the closure of Central Pier and the Melbourne Star, and now the Star’s unlikely return. We followed the long-awaited opening of Docklands Primary School, the tram bridge and freight bridge sagas, and the bureaucratic struggles that continue to shape the precinct.

During COVID, when Docklands was among the hardest-hit communities in Australia, we documented a suburb emptied of workers, visitors and events almost overnight.

Through all of it, *Docklands News* advocated for and championed this place when few others would.

Shane summed up that position with a phrase he repeated at almost every speaking opportunity: “I think Docklands is beautiful.”

It was a simple but emphatic response to the years of criticism directed at the suburb by commentators, “knockers” and mainstream media outlets that rarely seemed interested in understanding the place beyond its latest setback.

Shane, like Docklanders themselves, understood that the suburb’s real character was found in its people.

When I first arrived as an intern in 2013, I immediately recognised the newspaper’s staunch advocacy and its role in bringing people together. As someone already passionate about community building and local media, that facilitative approach resonated strongly.

Shane and I went into business together in 2018 to form Hyperlocal News, before he retired in 2019. Since then, we have expanded our coverage across the City of Melbourne and part of the City of Port Phillip, but Docklands has remained our foundation.



It is bittersweet to send this final edition to print while so many longstanding issues remain unresolved.

Harbour Esplanade still falls well short of its potential. Victoria Harbour remains underused. The community continues to wait for vital infrastructure, including a secondary school, and the suburb desperately needs more greening and better public spaces.

Yet recent developments give me genuine confidence.

Community3008 has emerged as a strong and constructive residents’ voice, while the renewed Docklands Chamber of Commerce has demonstrated what local businesses can achieve through initiatives such as its highly successful waterfront market.

Docklands is now home to nearly 20,000 people, with more to come. Its future will depend on residents and businesses continuing to organise, collaborate and drive change together.

Perhaps the return of the Melbourne Star’s lights is a fitting symbol. It is quirky, unmistakably Docklands and closely tied to the suburb’s changing fortunes.

May its return signal brighter days ahead.

There are too many people to thank properly, but I will try.

Thank you to our readers, who picked us up, wrote to us, corrected us, encouraged us and occasionally gave us a very direct piece of their mind.

Thank you to our advertisers, whose support made this work possible.

Thank you to the City of Melbourne, community groups, traders, residents, artists, advocates and contributors who trusted us with their stories.

And thank you to my team, past and present – Lauren, Kate, Jenny, Chris, Hanna, and our amazing distributors who have canvassed every corner of this city to make sure the paper gets where it needs to go.

Our team has been proud to play a role in this community’s growth. *Docklands News* may be ending, but our commitment to Docklands is not.

From September, that work continues through *The Melburnian*.

We have loved the journey.

And we look forward to continuing it.

Sean Car - Publisher and Editor
Hyperlocal News ●

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Melbourne Star lights up Docklands again

“After nearly five years in the dark, the Melbourne Star has lit up the Docklands skyline once again, marking a symbolic milestone in the long-awaited return of one of Melbourne’s most recognisable landmarks.”

WORDS BY
SEAN CAR



The 120-metre observation wheel, which has been unlit since September 6, 2021, switched its lights back on at The District Docklands on July 30 in front of thousands of onlookers, offering the clearest public sign yet that the major attraction is edging closer to reopening to passengers in 2026.

While the wheel is not yet ready to carry passengers, the return of its lights has been widely welcomed in Docklands, where locals have spent recent weeks sharing photos and speculation in community forums as testing has taken place.

For a suburb that has endured a turbulent period since COVID – from empty shop-fronts and reduced foot traffic to the long closure of major attractions – the sight of the Star glowing again is more than a technical milestone. It is a reminder that Docklands’ recovery is continuing, and that one of the precinct’s most visible pieces of identity still has a future.



The relighting was also given a deeply personal touch, with 12-year-old Charli-Koko Vance and her mum, Mel Olsen, invited to switch the lights back on through children’s charity Very Special Kids. Charli-Koko lives with a rare chromosome deletion and complex health conditions and is a regular patient at the Royal Children’s Hospital, while her mum is living with terminal cancer.

When the Star’s lights went out in 2021, families and staff from the hospital reportedly reached out to ask whether they could be turned back on, because children watched the Docklands landmark from their wards at night.

“When you’re spending time in hospital, those lights become more than just lights,”

Ms Olsen said. “They’re something familiar and comforting to look for. Being asked to switch them on together means the world to us, and it’s a memory we’ll treasure forever.”

Skyline Attractions, the Melbourne-based family business managing the wheel’s return, said the story reflected the emotional significance of the Star beyond its role in the skyline.

“When we learned children at the Royal Children’s Hospital used to look out for Melbourne Star’s lights from their hospital rooms, we knew we had to make this moment for them,” Skyline Attractions managing director Jay Jones said.

“People often talk about what Melbourne Star means to the city’s skyline, but the messages we received reminded us that for

some families it was much more personal than that.”

The return of the lights follows extensive engineering and refurbishment work aimed at bringing the attraction back safely after years out of service.

According to Skyline Attractions, an observation wheel of this scale cannot simply be switched back on. Major control systems have been rewired, drive towers restored, and 32 motors and their running gear removed, replaced and serviced. Inside the cabins, clutches and motors have been removed, inspected and remanufactured, while air-conditioning, CCTV and intercom systems have been replaced or restored.

The pneumatic system has also been replaced, fire systems brought back to compliance, lifts serviced, CCTV upgraded, and new interiors are being installed at the entry and loading areas, including a bar, café and gift shop.

The lights themselves are not the same system Melburnians remember. The original lighting network has been fully replaced with a new system capable of full-colour animation and synchronised sequences, allowing the Star to be programmed for events, seasons and moments of civic significance.

When passengers return, the cabin experience will also be refreshed with a new voiceover, in-cabin screens and updated storytelling developed with First Nations voices to better reflect Melbourne’s landscape and cultural history.

Mr Jones said the focus had been on safety, compliance and bringing the landmark back “the right way”.

“While there is still work to do before we welcome passengers back, the lights are a testament to the progress being made and our commitment to delivering an attraction Melbourne can be proud of again,” he said. ●

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Lendlease’s Docklands build-to-rent tower reaches full height

Lendlease’s latest build-to-rent development has topped out at 899 Collins St, marking a major construction milestone for the 24-storey waterfront project.

Delivered in partnership with Nippon Steel Kowa Real Estate and Tokyo Tatemono, the development will provide 499 rental apartments spanning studio, one-, two- and three-bedroom configurations.

The tower is being built within Lendlease’s Victoria Harbour precinct and is expected to welcome its first residents in early 2027.

Planned resident amenities include a 25-metre heated outdoor pool overlooking Victoria Harbour, a rooftop barbecue area, sauna, steam room, gym, co-working lounge, home theatre, pet spa, podcast studios and private dining rooms.

The project will also deliver Bourke Dock, a new waterfront public park comprising 1000 square metres of open space and a major public artwork by First Nations artist

Reko Rennie.

The all-electric development is targeting a 5-Star Green Star Building rating and a 7-star NatHERS rating.

Lendlease development chief executive Claire Johnston said reaching full height represented an important milestone for the project and its partners.

“We’re proud to be partnering with NSKRE and Tokyo Tatemono to deliver 499 new homes for Melbourne, increasing housing choice in a well-connected waterfront location while reflecting continued confidence

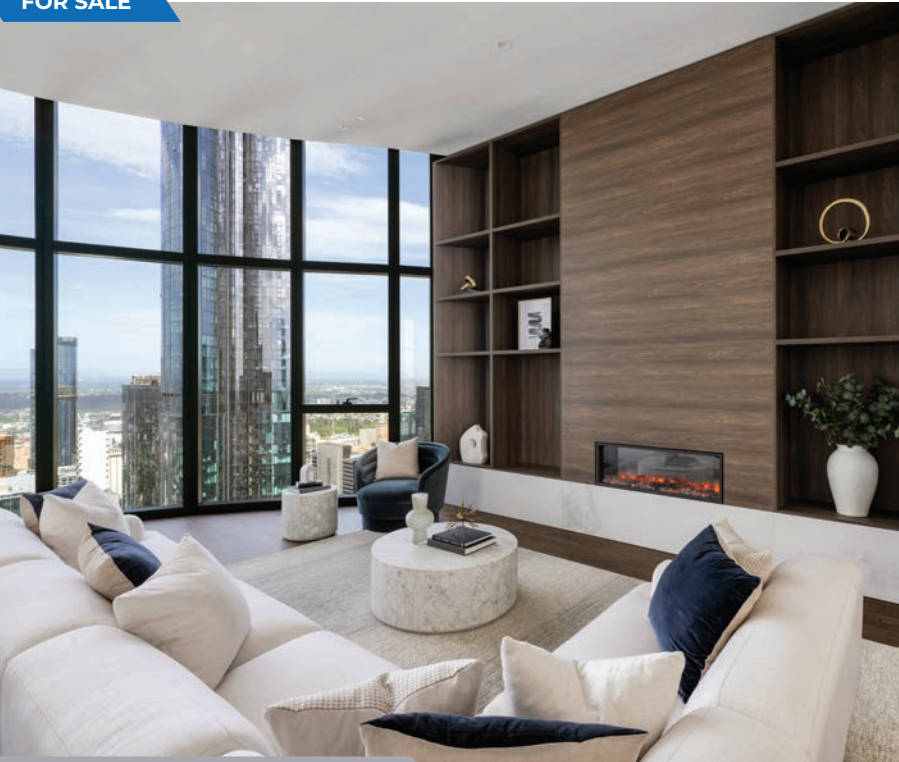
in Australia’s growing build-to-rent sector,” Ms Johnston said.

The project represents Nippon Steel Kowa Real Estate’s first entry into the Australian market and Tokyo Tatemono’s first rental housing development investment in Australia.

Lendlease is acting as developer, builder and investment manager for the project. The company has more than 4600 build-to-rent homes either under management or in development across Australia and the United States. ●



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Why Melbourne Matters

Ahead of November's state election, Melbourne is back in the political spotlight – and we want to make the most of it.

We've launched a new advocacy campaign: Melbourne Matters. Because when Melbourne does well, Victoria does too.

Many of the decisions that will shape Melbourne's future sit outside Town Hall – including housing, schools, transport and other essential infrastructure needed to support growing communities.

Our campaign focuses on 3 priorities: supporting Victoria's growth, creating safe and healthy communities, and protecting Melbourne's place as Australia's cultural capital.

MELBOURNE MATTERS FOR VICTORIA'S GROWTH

Melbourne is one of Victoria's fastest-growing areas and generates 22% of the state's economic output, but we need the right investment and policy support to help that growth succeed.

- We're calling on the Victorian Government to give Melbourne the same level of support and policy attention as other major growth areas as our population continues to grow.
- We also want to work with the Victorian Government to unlock public land and create more green space for our growing community. The Moonee Ponds Creek corridor is one example: 1.3 hectares of locked-up land unable to be accessed by 60,000 nearby residents.

MELBOURNE MATTERS FOR SAFE AND HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

We know that people in our community are currently under pressure to make ends meet, and we're seeing crime and antisocial behaviour escalating in our public places.

Melbourne must remain a city that feels safe, welcoming and accessible for everyone, including the most vulnerable members of our community.

- We need continued support from the Victorian Government

to help keep Melbourne's streets safe, including a more visible and consistent safety presence in busy areas and known hotspots.

- Many people experiencing homelessness are also living with complex mental health challenges. Too often, when someone reaches crisis point, there are only 2 places for them to go: hospital or jail. We're calling for greater investment in crisis accommodation and proven programs like Street to Home that help break the cycle.

MELBOURNE MATTERS AS AUSTRALIA'S CULTURAL CAPITAL

Melbourne's arts, music and events scene is a huge part of what makes this city special – and with the creative economy contributing more than \$41 billion to Victoria each year, it's also a major economic driver.

- Major events like our New Year's Eve celebrations play a huge role in bringing the city to life and attracting visitors from around Australia and beyond. An extra \$1 million in state funding

would support the expansion of programming and offerings.

- We're calling on the Victorian Government to restore funding to organisations like Creative Victoria and Visit Victoria. Creative Victoria's funding has fallen by almost one third since 2022, with cuts starting to take a real toll on Melbourne's creative sector.

As we approach the state election, Melburnians should expect ambition from all sides of politics – and politicians should expect to hear directly from the people they represent.

Call your local MP. Visit their office. Ask them what their vision is for Melbourne and whether they are prepared to fight for it.

That matters, because Melbourne matters.



Events like Moomba Festival are major economic drivers for Victoria



Melbourne at dawn, courtesy of Visit Victoria



Scan the QR code for more information.

Saluministi celebrates 10 years in Docklands

A much-loved Docklands institution has celebrated 10 years in the best way it knows how – by serving up its signature porchetta panino at 2016 prices.

WORDS BY
SEAN CAR



Saluministi marked the milestone on Thursday, July 23 and Friday, July 24 by offering its iconic Porchetta Panino for \$12, down from its usual \$22, across its three locations in Docklands, Melbourne Quarter and Flinders Lane.

The promotion wound the clock back to July 2016, when founders Peter Mastro and Frank Bressi opened Saluministi's first permanent shopfront on Bourke St in Victoria Harbour, opposite Buluk Park and Library at The Dock.

What began as a leap of faith has since become one of Docklands' most recognisable hospitality success stories.

Over the past decade, Saluministi has built a loyal following on the strength of great coffee, generous food and its warm, neighbourhood feel. For many workers, residents and visitors, the Victoria Harbour shop has become more than a place to grab lunch – it has become a community hub.

That role was especially felt during COVID, when much of Docklands was emptied of office workers and visitors. Saluministi remained open throughout, helping keep spirits alive in the precinct at a time when many local businesses were under enormous pressure.

Its original Porchetta Panino remains central to the story. Made with hand-rolled free-range roast pork, asiago, rocket and



fennel salad in house-made focaccia, the panino has become the brand's signature dish and a favourite among customers.

As part of the anniversary celebration, each discounted porchetta panino will be wrapped in custom "Grazie" paper featuring a handwritten love letter to Melbourne from the Saluministi family.

Co-founder Peter Mastro said reaching the 10-year milestone in Docklands was a

proud moment.

"Melbourne has backed us from day one, and we've met some amazing people along the way," he said.

"Bringing our Porchetta Panino back to its original 2016 price isn't a promotion, it's simply our way of saying thank you for 10 incredible years of support."

Since opening in Docklands, Saluministi has expanded to Flinders Lane in the CBD

and Melbourne Quarter, strengthening its connection to the Batman's Hill pocket of Docklands while continuing to champion Italian flavours, quality ingredients and in-house preparation.

Saluministi's two Docklands venues are located at 892 Bourke St and Melbourne Quarter, Shop 3, 697 Collins St. It has a third venue in the CBD and 388 Flinders Lane.

For more information: saluministi.com.au ●

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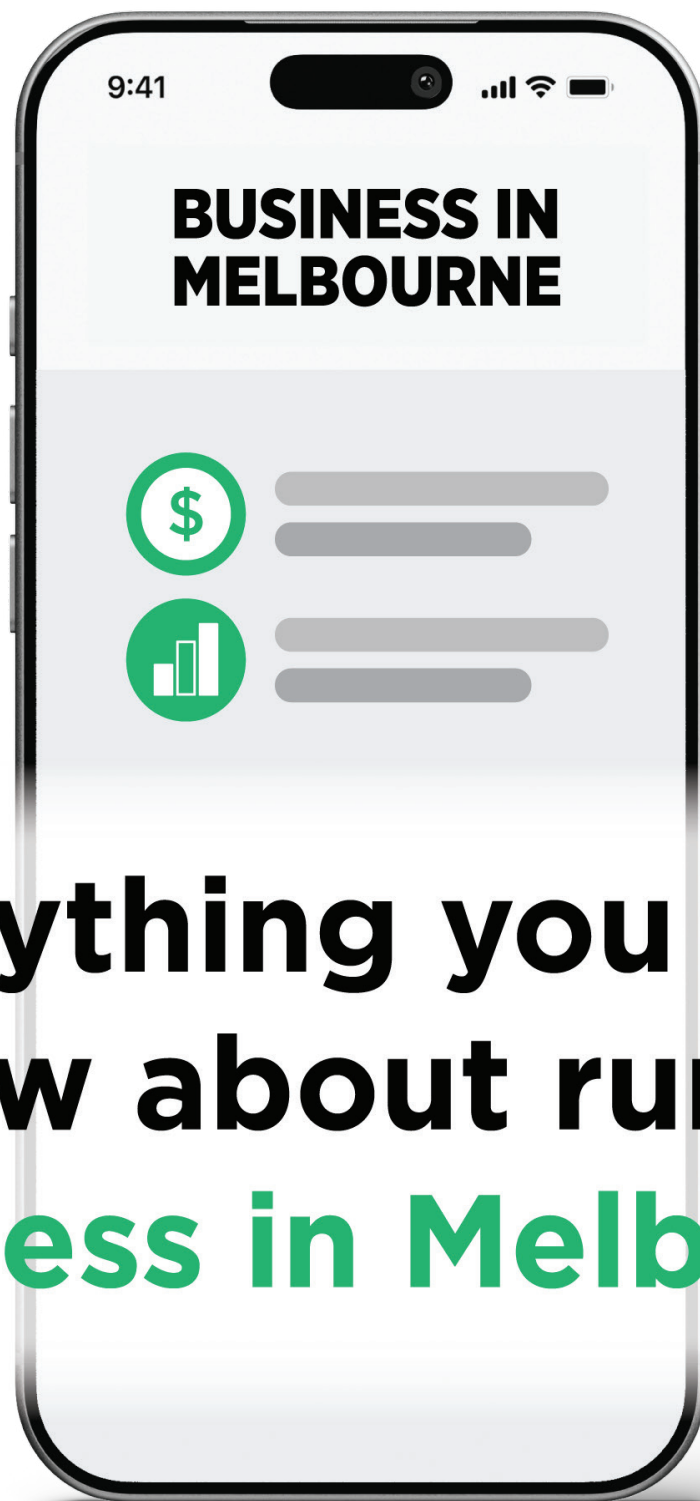
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Pam the Bird disappears from Bolte Bridge following chaotic Docklands scenes

For weeks after Docklanders watched a man descend from the Bolte Bridge and surrender to police at Collins Wharf, a giant Pam the Bird remained painted high on one of Melbourne's most recognisable pieces of infrastructure.

WORDS BY
SEAN CAR



The image, sprayed onto the eastern pylon of the 140-metre bridge during an audacious early-morning stunt on July 7, became impossible to ignore for motorists, residents and anyone looking back towards Docklands from across the city.

But after weeks of visibility, Transurban began the painstaking task of covering it over – a job that has highlighted both the scale of the incident and the ongoing debate about whether Pam the Bird is vandalism, street art, or something more complicated in Melbourne's visual culture.

As reported by the ABC, the clean-up took several days and required around 100 litres of surface preparation, primer and paint.

Rather than attempting to remove the image, crews painted over it. The work involved painters climbing the internal stairs of the pylon – a process that takes around 40 minutes – before abseiling down the outside of the structure to reach the affected area.

Transurban general manager of road operations Peter Munro told the ABC the task covered around 200 square metres, describing it as "an area the size of a typical family home".

For Docklands, the clean-up brings to a close one of the more bizarre public spectacles witnessed in the precinct this year.

On the morning of July 7, police were called after a man allegedly forced entry into the eastern pylon and climbed the bridge, where he later refused to come down. One inbound lane was closed during the operation, affecting thousands of vehicles during the morning peak.

Water police and uniformed officers were deployed, while media and the public were urged not to fly drones in the area due to safety concerns.

The standoff ended before 11am when the man climbed down from the tower, crossed the rocks below and emerged near the tip of Collins Wharf, where he raised his hands and was arrested by waiting police.

Twenty-two-year-old East Geelong man Jack Gibson-Burrell was later charged with 13 offences, including burglary, criminal damage, conduct endangering life, conduct endangering serious injury, committing an indictable offence while on bail, contravening bail conditions and graffiti-related offences.

The incident immediately reignited debate about Pam the Bird, the cartoon-like tag that has appeared across Melbourne in recent years on trains, rooftops, freeway signs, silos, infrastructure and heritage buildings.

To some, the bird has become a kind of unofficial folk symbol – absurd, recognisable and strangely Melbourne. To others, it is straightforward vandalism, imposing clean-up costs, safety risks and damage on public and private assets.

The Bolte Bridge episode has made that debate harder to separate from questions of danger and consequence. Whatever one thinks of the image itself, scaling a major bridge pylon and triggering a police operation during the morning commute placed



workers, emergency services and road users in the middle of a high-risk incident.

Transurban made it clear that leaving the image in place was not an option. Mr Munro told the ABC the Bolte Bridge was "an iconic piece of infrastructure for Melbourne" and

that the company's role was to keep it "clean and free from graffiti".

Pam the Bird may now be disappearing under layers of primer and paint, but the questions it raised are unlikely to vanish as quickly. ●



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Development Victoria pressed over Docklands' unfinished business

Development Victoria has faced direct questions from Docklands residents over the future of Central Pier, Victoria Harbour safety issues and whether the precinct's public infrastructure is keeping pace with its growing population.

WORDS BY
SEAN CAR



At a Community3008-led Docklands Community Forum at The Hub on July 8, Development Victoria's executive general manager of precincts Niall Cunningham fronted residents for a wide-ranging discussion about the state agency's role in the next phase of Docklands.

Mr Cunningham provided updates on the former Central Pier site, temporary activations along Harbour Esplanade, fencing around Victoria Harbour and the broader challenge of managing a precinct that remains only partly complete.

He said Development Victoria had heard clearly that many residents were enjoying the open waterway created by the removal of Central Pier and that some preferred nothing be rebuilt there.

"We have nothing in advance for anything there at the moment, so there's nobody working on any plans to put anything back there in the near term," Mr Cunningham said.

He described the current controversial \$150,000 Echo light installation at Central Pier as a temporary artwork and said Development Victoria was continuing to test temporary uses across the waterfront before determining longer-term plans.

Recent activations have included play stickers on the ground along Harbour Esplanade, food trucks linked to Marvel Stadium events, support for Firelight Festival, the relocation of markets and involvement in the Melbourne Boat Show.

Mr Cunningham said some of the simplest ideas had proven unexpectedly popular.

"We're actually surprised with how such a simple interaction gets so popular," he said of the play stickers, adding that the agency was trying to understand "what works well", what people loved, and what might be more divisive.

But residents made clear that while activations were welcome, Docklands also needed the basics of a functioning neighbourhood: shade, safer walking surfaces, public toilets, places for children and a clearer long-term plan.

One resident said Development Victoria did not need to "stretch the imagination too far" to understand what was missing.

"Walk from NewQuay Promenade to this



side of the harbour between September and April in the mid-afternoon, you'll know exactly what you're thinking – the shade," one resident said.

"The last thing, personally, I think we need is more activations. We need the basic foundation of a suburb, such as liveability, having some shade, somewhere to take a kid, somewhere to walk where you don't trip over."

The most pointed questioning came over fencing along Victoria Harbour, which was installed after inspections identified potential structural issues with parts of the wharf.

Mr Cunningham said the decision to restrict access had been made in the interests of safety after a small representative sample indicated possible issues.

He said Development Victoria was now undertaking a much larger investigation, involving divers inspecting piles and taking samples to obtain a more complete picture of the harbour's condition.

"What we're trying to do is build a more complex picture as to the condition of the wharf," he said.

The fencing is expected to remain in place until at least the end of the year while investigations continue, though Mr Cunningham

said Development Victoria would seek to reopen areas if they were found to be safe.

Residents questioned why the issue had not been identified earlier, given regular inspections had been undertaken over many years. Mr Cunningham said inspections typically occurred every 12 months to two years, depending on the asset, but that the most recent work had identified a potential safety concern requiring further investigation.

He also acknowledged the current temporary fencing was unattractive and not always effective, with Development Victoria and the City of Melbourne working on a more suitable barrier and better signage.

Safety concerns also extended to Harbour Esplanade and the former Central Pier surrounds, with residents raising concerns about uneven surfaces, old tram tracks, puddles and poor visibility during major events such as Firelight Festival.

Mr Cunningham said some land remained state-controlled, but Development Victoria paid the City of Melbourne an annual fee to maintain parts of the precinct. He encouraged residents to report surface hazards to the council where it was responsible for maintenance.

The discussion again highlighted Docklands' complex governance arrangements, with residents asking whether future concerns should be directed to private developers, Development Victoria, the state government or the City of Melbourne.

Mr Cunningham said planning for future social infrastructure and amenity was a joint initiative between Development Victoria and the council, particularly as Docklands continued to grow.

He described Docklands as being "about 70 per cent of the way through its regeneration" and said the precinct was "not yet finished".

Community3008 co-president Peter Lardner said the forum had exposed a broader need for more strategic engagement between residents, Development Victoria and the City of Melbourne.

He said Community3008 would write to both agencies to reflect the themes raised and seek further discussion on how the community could help shape solutions.

Mr Lardner also pointed to recent community-led work on floating wetlands and greening Docklands as an example of how residents with ideas and passion could work constructively with agencies. ●

Sarah Witty

Member for Melbourne

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Meals with Impact launches free Docklands food market

Docklands café and catering social enterprise Meals with Impact is launching a new initiative to help tackle food insecurity in the neighbourhood and beyond.

WORDS BY
JENNY DENTON



From August 15, it will hold a monthly free food market as a form of culturally sensitive food relief in its Collins St building.

Open to everyone, the "Inclusive Community Market" will provide fresh produce sourced from Queen Victoria Market's Food Rescue Network, Josh's Rainbow Eggs, and Fruit2Work.

The pilot project also has the backing of SecondBite, the The Purpose Precinct, City of Melbourne and Docklands Primary School.

"It's amazing how much good quality produce is left over after the market," Meals with Impact's CEO Rachel Hua told Docklands News.

"We plan to lay it out, market style so people can take what they need, alongside our individual halal friendly ready meals."

Beyond food, the café aims to be a community hub.

"We'll have hot tea, coffee, and a space to chat, plus helpful resources available for those that need it," Hua added.

Individual cooked meals to take away would also be available, Ms Hua said.

Set up in Docklands in 2023, Meals with Impact was established during the pandemic with the mission of empowering migrant and refugee women through



hands-on training and support to find and maintain food-related work.

It has a secondary goal, that of providing culturally appropriate food relief.

CEO Harris Ryan said the extent of local need might come as a surprise to some people.

"The Inclusive Community Market addresses a critical but often overlooked reality: behind the corporate façade of Melbourne's central business district lies a diverse residential community facing significant economic and social challenges," he said.

"While Docklands is predominantly associated with large corporations and commercial activity, the lived experience of its residents tells a different story."

Mr Ryan, a chef, pointed to council statistics showing food insecurity affecting 47 per cent of City of Melbourne residents.

The need for multicultural food supplies was evident from the 77 per cent of Docklands Primary School families that come from culturally diverse backgrounds, he said.

"Our mission is embedded in our name, Meals with Impact."

"We create meaningful change by ensuring disadvantaged communities access culturally appropriate, fresh food, not salvaged waste or leftovers but dignified, nutritious meals that honour diverse food traditions and dietary requirements."

Meals with Impact is located at the corner of Batman Hill Drive and Collins St in Docklands.

The Inclusive Community Market will be held on the third Sunday of the month from August until December.

For more information: mealswithimpact.com.au

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Renewed push to reclaim Moonee Ponds Creek in Docklands

Docklands residents are being urged to help renew pressure on the state government to restore public access and improve the neglected mouth of Moonee Ponds Creek, following an address by former federal MP and long-time creek advocate Kelvin Thomson.

WORDS BY
SEAN CAR



Speaking at a recent Docklands Community Forum on July 8, Mr Thomson said the lower reaches of the creek – where it meets the Yarra River beside Ron Barassi Snr Park – should be recognised as one of the precinct’s most important but underused natural assets.

Mr Thomson, who founded Friends of Moonee Ponds Creek in 1989 and now works as the Chain of Ponds Litter Action Officer, said the creek’s shared path was a “well-loved and well-used public open space asset” further upstream, but entered Docklands in a far less celebrated condition.

“As it enters the Yarra, adjacent to Ron Barassi Snr Park, it is neglected, battling litter, homeless encampments with little signage or recognition,” Mr Thomson said.

“Cyclists don’t know that they’re at the end of their destination.”

He said while Docklands had many urban qualities, the creek corridor represented scarce natural open space in a suburb still searching for more greenery, shade and public amenity.

“Residents of Docklands won’t need to be told of the importance and value of vegetation and public open space, not only as a



wildlife corridor, but also for our physical and mental health,” he said.

“And although it’s not large, nevertheless the Moonee Ponds Creek, adjacent to Ron Barassi Park, is just about the most significant piece of open space that Docklands has.”

A major frustration remains the closure of the Docklands section of the Moonee Ponds Creek Trail, which was fenced off during the pandemic to enable the expansion of Docklands Studios.

The path now diverts through local

streets, breaking the creekside connection at precisely the point where advocates say the waterway should be most visible and celebrated.

Mr Thomson said Friends of Moonee Ponds Creek and the Chain of Ponds collaboration were seeking local support for the reinstatement of the trail.

“During the coronavirus pandemic, the Victorian Government handed over this open space to Docklands Studios, who fenced it off and put razor wire on the fence as an exclamation mark to the point

that the public no longer had access to the path,” he said.

“The path now notionally runs through Docklands streets, where it’s hardly in Moonee Ponds Creek though.”

He said land managers, including the City of Melbourne and the Port of Melbourne, appeared to support reinstatement, while Development Victoria had also been doing work on options.

“But time is not on our side,” Mr Thomson said. “Unless there is a serious, ongoing push to reinstate the path, we fear that access to this area will be permanently lost.”

The call follows years of frustration for the City of Melbourne and community groups over delays to the state government’s long-awaited Moonee Ponds Creek Implementation Plan, which remains unreleased.

The plan has been seen as critical to creating a coordinated governance and funding pathway for the creek’s lower reaches, particularly as Docklands, Arden and Macaulay continue to grow.

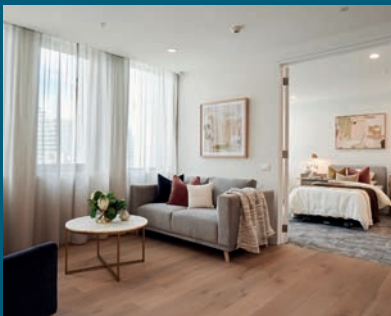
At the forum, residents also discussed the creek’s litter problem and opportunities for Docklands-based businesses to contribute through corporate volunteering.

Mr Thomson said his “Adopt a Creek” model had already seen between 70 and 80 individuals and families adopt sections of the creek, alongside community groups and workplace volunteers.

He said the approach was based on the idea that people were “hyper-local” and cared most about the places closest to them.

“It’s not rocket science,” Mr Thomson said. “It’s based on the philosophy that many hands make light work.”

He encouraged Docklands residents and community groups to advocate directly to councillors, state and federal MPs, and to work with land managers on practical improvements. ●



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Firelight shines despite promenade closure

Docklands has again enjoyed one of its biggest weekends of the year, with the City of Melbourne's annual Firelight Festival drawing around 100,000 people to the waterfront despite long-term closures along Victoria Harbour Promenade.

WORDS BY
SEAN CAR



Held from Friday, July 3 to Sunday, July 5, this year's festival was largely centred around Harbour Esplanade and extended towards Docklands Park, after sections of Victoria Harbour Promenade remained closed to the public due to ongoing safety concerns.

While the closure changed the way crowds moved through the precinct, it did little to dampen the atmosphere, with fire installations, live entertainment, roving performers and winter food offerings bringing strong numbers into Docklands across all three nights.

Lord Mayor Nick Reece said Firelight remained a major drawcard for the precinct and a crucial event for local businesses.

"Firelight is the biggest weekend of the year for many Docklands traders – with 100,000 people visiting the waterfront this year to enjoy fiery installations, live entertainment and winter treats from local businesses," Cr Reece said.



"We're home to Australia's fastest-growing night-time economy, and events like Firelight are a huge part of the reason why. They bring people into the city, give local businesses a boost, and showcase Melbourne at its best."

More than 130 performers took part in this year's program, which featured fire shows, live music, roving entertainment and several new attractions.

Among the program debuts were glow-in-the-dark pickleball, performances by Circus Oz, a special feature fire show on Harbour Esplanade, and a 90-metre laser and light



show across Victoria Harbour featuring 20 choreographed water fountains and 30 laser projections.

Development Victoria also presented Echo, its illuminated on-water artwork on the footprint of the former Central Pier.

Cr Reece said he attended the festival on the Friday night and praised the atmosphere.

"I was at the festival on the Friday night and had the best night out," he said.

"The music, fire shows, lasers and hearty winter food – it was Melbourne at its most Melbourne, Docklands style."

Tourism and Events portfolio head Cr Mark Scott said the event showed Melbourne's ability to draw crowds year-round.

"Firelight Festival is proof that Melbourne shines in every season," Cr Scott said.

"Even in the middle of winter, people fill our streets, back local businesses and demonstrate why Melbourne is our nation's capital of events."

With Victoria Harbour Promenade unavailable, Harbour Esplanade carried much of the festival energy this year, reinforcing its role as the precinct's key civic spine and event space. ●

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Successful Community 3008 Forum

Community 3008 conducted another successful forum in July with many residents attending. They got to discuss concerns and ideas with representatives from Development Victoria, City of Melbourne, Parks Victoria, the AFL and Friends of Moonee Ponds Creek.

WORDS BY
PETER LARDNER



Community 3008 co-president Jamal Hakim opened the July forum by providing an overview on recent activities of Community 3008, including the provision of feedback to the City of Melbourne in relation to their proposed budget. Predominately the feedback related to the need to increase how much of the budget was allocated to Docklands to address infrastructure issues and enhance “greening”.

A specific submission was also made to the council in relation to the “urban forests” initiative. The submission highlighted the limited “green canopy” in Docklands and the need for a more comprehensive and targeted approach for areas where trees can provide greater shade and shelter, and for more understorey planting.

An AFL representative provided an overview on planned activities at Marvel Stadium. They also acknowledged concerns of residents in relation to traffic congestion during major events and advised that the AFL was working on options to improve traffic management.

Parks Victoria, City of Melbourne Waterways and Active Melbourne did a joint presentation. Parks Victoria spoke to what they had achieved to acquit undertakings provided at the March Community 3008 forum. This included engaging directly with various community groups associated with Docklands’ waterways. As a result, maritime exclusion zones in Victoria Harbour have been significantly reduced to allow greater use for recreational activities.

This presentation was a very positive outcome from an earlier Community 3008 forum, as previously there was no apparent collaborative approach between agencies

with responsibility for service delivery and infrastructure within Docklands. The previous forum had also identified the need for greater community consultation by the agencies, which this joint presentation indicated had now improved.

The Docklands’ Neighbourhood Partner from City of Melbourne, detailed several initiatives being progressed in Docklands. These initiatives can be found on the council’s website “neighbourhood” page. He also indicated that there are several small grants available for residents wishing to conduct their own community-led programs or activities. The grant application process can be found on the council’s website. Residents may also seek support through Community 3008.

In response to concerns raised about parking, especially around building sites, the council indicated that a review of parking across Docklands is under way.

Cr Rafael Camillo was also in attendance. He spoke of the benefits of the “Snap, Send, Solve” app and encouraged residents to use it to report any graffiti and rubbish dumping.

The executive general manager at Development Victoria provided an update on the condition of Victoria Harbour Promenade. Due to the significance of the

works required he was unable to provide a timeframe for rectification. Development Victoria are considering options for more visually appealing fencing to replace the current temporary structures.

Development Victoria confirmed they are aware that at the March Community 3008 forum the community had indicated its preference to retain as open water the area where Central Pier had been. He also indicated that the contentious Echo light installation was temporary.

The Hon. Kelvin Thomson spoke to the background of the Moonee Ponds Creek Trail and activities undertaken by the “Friends of Moonee Ponds Creek” over the past three decades. Specifically, he spoke to the Docklands section at the mouth of the creek, expressing concern about the closure of the trail at the rear of Docklands Studios.

He indicated that community support, through Community 3008, would assist in getting the trail reopened. Kelvin also called for support from the Docklands community to engage with the Chain of Ponds “Adopt-a-Creek” initiative.

I highlighted Megan Healy as one of the great outcomes from the previous Community 3008 forum. Megan at that time was not a member of Community 3008, but came to the forum with a passion to enhance

the “greening” of Docklands, increase local biodiversity and protect its wildlife.

Community 3008 provided Megan with a framework, network and support to progress this interest. She has passionately progressed the activities and supported Community 3008 more broadly, in the interests of Docklands residents. She is a role model for other residents who may have an area of interest they wish to pursue in the interest of the Docklands community.

Megan provided a brief overview on the council’s new Garden City Community Guidelines encouraging residents and businesses to create gardens along their local streets, laneways, nature strips and tree plots, without the need for a permit. Further information is available at: melbourne.vic.gov.au/garden-city-guidelines

In conjunction with the council’s Gardens for Wildlife team and Bili Native Nursery, Megan announced that an inaugural Balcony Gardening Workshop will be held on September 12, 2026 at the Library at the Dock, specifically for Docklands residents. Bookings available at: Balcony Gardening for Wildlife | Gardens for Wildlife Melbourne | Participate Melbourne

The forums conducted by Community 3008 are vital in ensuring residents have input into shaping the future of Docklands. High levels of Community 3008 membership and attendance at forums, increases the commitment of relevant agencies to attend forums, consult on emerging matters and answer resident’s questions. We look forward to seeing even more residents at the next forum.

Please visit community3008.org.au and select the “Join Our Community” tab on the home page. ●

FEDERAL MP

Docklands is continuing to grow – and so should the services that support it

Every time I’m in Docklands, I’m reminded that it’s one of Melbourne’s fastest-growing communities.

WORDS BY
SARAH WITTY – FEDERAL MP



New apartment buildings continue to welcome residents, more families are calling Docklands home, and every day thousands of people come here to work, study and enjoy everything the waterfront has to offer.

It’s a vibrant part of our city, but as the community grows, so too does the need for the services and infrastructure that help people thrive.

One issue I hear about regularly is access to affordable healthcare. That’s why it’s encouraging to see more investment in strengthening Medicare and making it easier for people to see a GP without worrying about the cost. Whether you’re raising a family, studying, working long hours or

enjoying retirement, being able to access affordable healthcare close to home makes a real difference.

Docklands is also becoming more family-friendly every year. More young children are growing up here, which means parks, playgrounds, childcare, schools and community spaces become even more important. These are the places where neighbours meet, children make friends and communities are built.

One of the things I enjoy most about representing Melbourne is meeting the people who make communities like Docklands so welcoming. From resident groups and local businesses to volunteers and community organisations, there are so many people working to make the neighbourhood an even better place to live.

I’m also committed to making sure Docklands has a strong voice in Canberra.

Whether it’s advocating for better local services, supporting local businesses, investing in cleaner energy or ensuring our growing community gets the infrastructure it deserves, I’m focused on delivering practical outcomes that improve everyday life.

Docklands has transformed enormously over the past two decades, and it’s exciting to think about what comes next. With thoughtful planning, continued investment and a strong sense of community, there’s every reason to be optimistic about the future.

If you see me out and about in Docklands, please come and say hello. I always appreciate hearing your ideas, your concerns and what you’d like to see for our community. Your feedback helps shape the work I do every day, and together we can continue building a Docklands that is an even better place to live, work and raise a family. ●



(L-R) Cary Thornton and Dylan Emmett from Lucas Real Estate, with school captains and principal Adam Bright. Photos: Huda Shehzad.



Another fun Docklands Primary School Athletics Day

Recently, Docklands Primary School had an Athletics Day at Ron Barassi Snr Park. It was an extremely fun day for the Grade 4s, 5s, and 6s.

They participated in the track events like 100 metres and hurdles. They also did multiple field events like high jump and discus.

Everyone learnt that winning is not what Athletics Day is all about.

Here are the highlights from some students that joined in the events ...

Kaya from 6A said, "My highlight of the day was sack races because everyone had fun."

Sam from 6A said, "100 metres [was my favourite event] because I think I might go

to district."

Arden from 5D said, "I improved from last time and I got my first second place ribbon."

Chloe from 4B said, "Long Jump was my favourite because I love to be in the sand." Ms Hill, 6A's teacher, said, "My favourite part was teaching the 12-year-old girls, who had a positive attitude towards everything."

Our principal Mr Bright said, "To see everyone improve their personal bests and persevere was the best part of my day."

In summary, this day was undoubtedly a memorable day of hard work for everyone. Thanks to Lucas Real Estate who donate to this event every year and to our teachers, other staff and volunteers who made the event so great!

Thanks for reading.

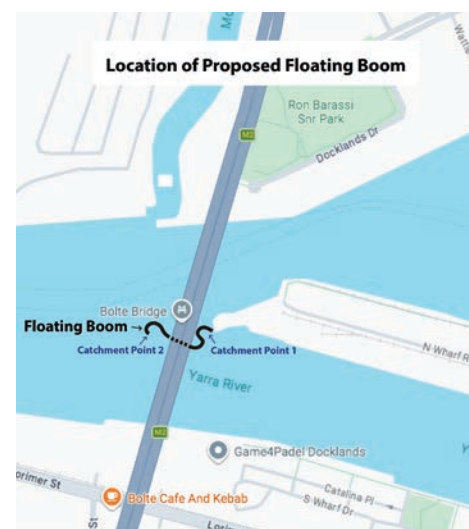
Alayna and Alice – 6A 2026 ●

LITTER UPDATE

"Schematic of the floating boom"

The schematic depicts the 80-metre section of water through which litter enters Victoria Harbour, particularly during southerly and easterly winds.

WORDS BY
HARVEY CLEGGETT



The proposed floating boom would span this area and direct rubbish towards two distinct collection points. The schematic is not to scale.

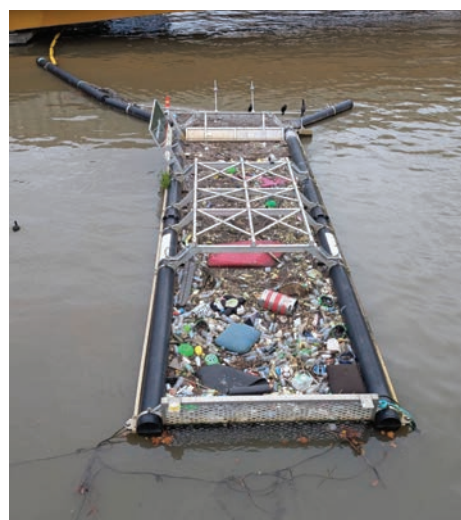
Due to the Yarra River's constant flow, litter that passes beyond the boom would rarely enter through the main entrance of Victoria Harbour, regardless of wind direction. While the boom would dramatically reduce the amount of litter entering the harbour, it would collect only a small proportion of the rubbish moving downstream.

It should be noted that more than 1000 tonnes of litter bypasses the Yarra River's 12 existing traps each year, continuing downstream and ultimately entering Port Phillip Bay.

On June 26, I participated in an on-air interview with ABC Radio Melbourne presenter Raf Epstein. While I was able to outline some pertinent facts, the limited duration of the interview meant other important details could not be discussed.

Mr Epstein said he would attempt to conduct a follow-up interview with Parks Victoria. To assist him, I forwarded the following background information, together with a series of questions that I believe should be put to the authority.

I also sent the questions to Parks Victoria representatives in advance, avoiding any suggestion that the organisation had been ambushed.



Background information provided to Raf Epstein

Parks Victoria's litter traps

Parks Victoria has installed 12 litter traps along the Yarra River, which it says capture around 100 tonnes of rubbish annually.

Government documentation states that 1.4 billion items of litter, representing around 2000 tonnes, enter Port Phillip Bay from the Yarra and Maribyrnong rivers every year. It is estimated that more than 1000 tonnes of this total travels along the Yarra River.

If the Yarra traps capture 100 tonnes annually, this represents around 10 per cent of the total litter travelling along the river.

The movement of fresh and salt water

Fresh water floats above salt water. The fresh-water layer in the Yarra River is between 200 and 400 millimetres deep.

Rubbish floats within this upper layer, which continually travels towards Port Phillip Bay. This occurs even when the incoming tide forces salt water from the bay beneath the fresh-water layer.

The Yarra therefore flows in both directions simultaneously: the fresh-water layer rises with the incoming tide while continuing to move towards the bay. Surface water near the bridge rarely exceeds one knot, or approximately 1.8 kilometres per hour.

Litter entering Victoria Harbour

Parks Victoria does not capture litter in the Yarra River south of the Charles Grimes Bridge at Wurundjeri Way, other than at Yarra's Edge Marina.

A proportion of the estimated 1000 tonnes of uncaptured litter enters Victoria Harbour through an 80-metre section of open water beside the Bolte Bridge, particularly during easterly and southerly winds.

Questions for Parks Victoria to be raised by Raf Epstein

1. Does Parks Victoria dispute the findings of the 2001 consultancy report, *Victoria Harbour Litter Management Study*, which identified the 80-metre section of open water near the Bolte Bridge as the point through which significant quantities of Yarra River litter enter Victoria Harbour?

2. Why does Parks Victoria now state that a floating boom would merely divert litter rather than capture it, when Parks Victoria director Sarah Auld wrote to me in April 2026:

"Staff time spent dealing with rubbish collected by the boom would reduce availability for environmental works, asset maintenance and public safety activities."

3. Parks Victoria has installed a litter trap near the Bolte Bridge. However, I have been informed that its collection arms are too short and that the bankside arm sits between 20 and 25 metres from the riverbank, allowing rubbish to flow past without being collected.

Given that the existing traps capture only around 10 per cent of the total rubbish travelling along the Yarra, how can one additional litter trap substantially reduce the amount entering Victoria Harbour?

4. Why is the Parks Victoria litter barge no longer used in Victoria Harbour when, in 2008, Parks Victoria was contracted to provide 28 hours of on-water rubbish collection each week throughout Docklands' waterways?

5. Parks Victoria was one of the signatories that authorised the installation of 145 lights in Victoria Harbour for six months at a reported cost of \$150,000.

Why not spend \$30,000 on a proof-of-concept floating boom to properly test whether the proposal would be effective? The \$150,000 spent on the lighting installation would have represented around 30 years of boom protection for the harbour.

6. Other than installing one additional litter trap, what is Parks Victoria's broader plan for addressing the continuing litter problem in Victoria Harbour? ●

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Changing tack in Docklands

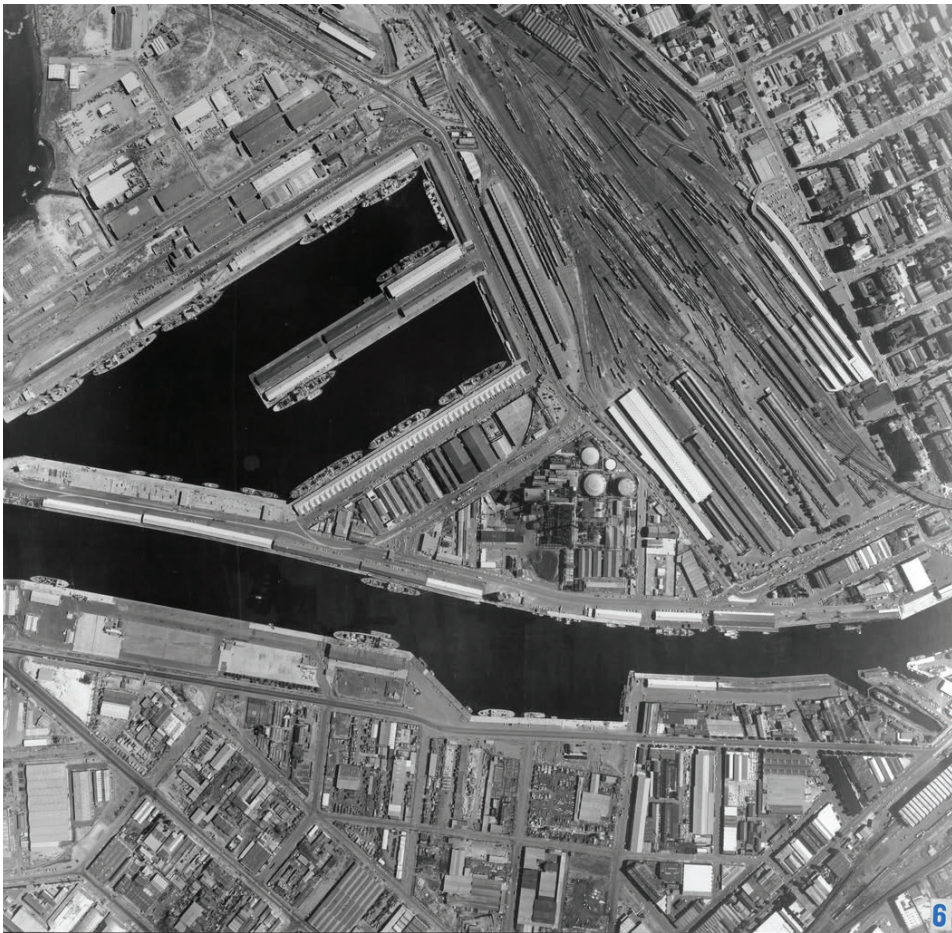
We see plenty of “changing tack” in action in Victorian state politics currently. Nautical terms bob up in common use across aspects of life. Sailors change tack by using the wind to turn the vessel in a new direction.

Melbourne Maritime Heritage Network’s (MMHN) monthly column is both changing tack and continuing the full-steam-ahead approach, moving forward from wind power to coal power to go forward in an optimistic new direction and to sail forth under a new masthead – *The Melburnian*.

Curiously, the publishing term “mast-head” originated from the nautical term for the top of a ship’s mast, where a vessel would fly its flag or colours. From the early 1800s, masthead in the United States came to refer to a newspaper’s name or motto on its front page, while in the United Kingdom the term has traditionally been used for the newspaper’s title and, in some publications, the page listing editorial and publication details.

Other nautical terms have also found their way into the publishing world. “Scuttlebutt” is derived from a hole (the “butt”) cut into ships’ water drinking casks around which sailors gathered to gossip and share news. In a similar way, journalists today gather in newsrooms today to share scuttlebutt – gossip, news and rumours.

The modern information source, the blog, perhaps evolved from the ship’s log, which was used to record a vessel’s speed and daily events. When journalists try a new angle or approach in an investigation, this is often described as taking a different tack.



MMHN warmly acknowledges and congratulates Hyperlocal News for publishing *Docklands News* with professionalism, integrity and a steadfast commitment to the Docklands community over many years. We are especially grateful for the opportunity Hyperlocal News has provided

MMHN to share Melbourne’s rich maritime heritage through our regular column, helping connect residents and visitors alike with the unique maritime story of the Docklands precinct. Although *Docklands News* has now reached the end of its voyage, MMHN’s

monthly column will continue online and, from time to time, in print in *The Melburnian*. We eagerly anticipate the launch of its inaugural edition.

In keeping with the nautical theme, we are confident that *The Melburnian* will prove to be “first-rate” – of the highest quality; “yar” – nimble, lively and ready for action; and “shipshape and Bristol fashion” – well ordered, polished and impeccably prepared.

Finally, this fascinating archival footage of the Port of Melbourne in 1961 was sent recently to MMHN. It presents a wonderful behind-the-scenes footage of the routing of a ship upriver, allocation of berths and tugs, harbour traffic control, cargo handling from ship to rail and road truck, future planning for the harbour, routine inspections and dredging, and a first aid and rescue squad in action.

MMHN would be delighted to hear from members of the Docklands community. If this video sparks a memory, raises a question, or inspires a thought, we’d love you to share it with us. Scan:

We wish the editorial team every success and look forward to continuing our partnership in bringing stories of Melbourne’s maritime heritage to a wide and appreciative readership. ●



Jackie Watts

CHAIR
INFO@MMHN.ORG.AU



HISTORY

Craning its neck for all to see

For nearly half a century, a steam crane stood over the Yarra, a hulking reminder of the river’s working life.

WORDS BY
ASHLEY SMITH



Sitting on its bluestone throne west of Queens Bridge, the iron behemoth was photographed by Charles Nettleton, probably sometime in the late 1870s. By then, the south bank of the Yarra had been transformed from swampy ground into a growing port precinct, as boats hauled cargo in and out of the city.

During this period, work continued on the development of South Wharf, later known as Prince’s Wharf, while the river was widened to make it easier for ships to navigate.

Among the major additions was the steam crane, which was instigated by the Chamber of Commerce and the city’s merchants and shipowners, and authorised by then-premier James Francis.

It was built by British company James Taylor and Co. at Birkenhead, England, for £6000 before being exported to Melbourne. By unfortunate coincidence, its parts and



Photo: Royal Historical Society of Victoria.

fittings were involved in three separate accidents at sea.

Some were aboard the *Dunmail*, which sank in the Mersey River in October 1873, while others were on the *John Kerr* when it was dismantled by storms in May 1874.

The most tragic incident involved fittings carried aboard the *British Admiral*, which sank in Bass Strait on May 23, 1874, killing 79 of the 88 people on board.

With these disasters delaying progress, Taylor reportedly had to borrow parts from

a crane on the Clyde River in Scotland.

Back in Melbourne, construction of the crane’s foundation began in January 1874. The masonry work was contracted to a Mr Cornwall, though some sources spell the name “Cornwell”.

According to the *Australasian Sketcher with Pen and Pencil* on March 20, 1875, the base required an excavation of “44ft by 38ft and 17ft deep” and up to 42,000 cubic feet, or 3360 tons, of bluestone.

With the foundation work costing close to

£8000, *The Age* raised concerns on June 20, 1874 that not all of the masonry below the counterpoise was necessary.

The installation of the crane was eventually contracted to a Mr Forman of the Yarra Boiler Works. Its jib, or long arm, measured around 62 feet, or 18.89 metres, and soon towered over the river.

The crane was powered by a steam boiler that controlled two engines: one for hoisting and the other for turning. Its horizontal length was 93 feet, and by February 1875 it was being tested to lift as much as 63 tons before being approved for use as a 50-ton crane.

Soon afterwards, it began work, with its first job reportedly moving the yacht *Janet*, according to *The Herald* on February 14, 1922.

The crane was used to lift boilers onto ships and handle other heavy objects as required. By the 1900s it had been reclassified as a 70-ton crane, with an average annual income in 1908 of around £200.

The Harbour Trust eventually took possession of the crane from the State Government in the early 1920s, and in 1922 it was moved to No. 20, later No. 16, North Wharf near Victoria Dock.

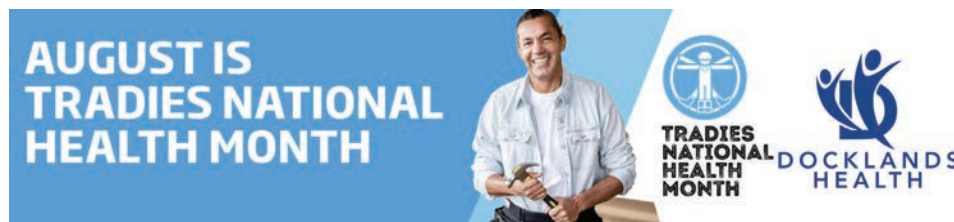
Positioned close to the railway tracks, it remained in use as a 60-ton crane until the 1950s, a period that included lifting locomotives, before being withdrawn altogether in 1962. ●

Don't play through the pain: Why Melbourne's tradies need to prioritise their physical health this August

Every August, Australia marks Tradies National Health Month, an initiative established by the Australian Physiotherapy Association (APA) to shine a light on the unique physical and mental health demands faced by trade professionals.

From carpenters and electricians to plumbers and site labourers, tradies keep Melbourne built and running. However, the relentless physical toll of manual labour often comes at a high personal cost.

Recent data paints a stark picture of the challenges facing Australia's skilled workforce. According to the APA's latest survey, 68 per cent of tradies report experiencing pain or discomfort in their back, neck, or shoulders. Even more concerning is the long-term outlook for younger workers: more than half of surveyed tradies, including nearly 40 per cent of Gen Z and over a third of millennials lack confidence that their bodies will allow them to work in their trade until retirement age. Repeated strain, heavy lifting, awkward postures, and everyday wear and tear are constantly taking a toll.



Despite the high prevalence of daily discomfort, preventative care remains vastly underutilised. Only 10 per cent of tradies regularly see a physiotherapist to proactively prevent work-related pain or injury. Many adopt a "she'll be right" attitude, pushing through aches until a minor twinge turns into a debilitating condition that forces time off work.

Yet, taking action early makes a dramatic difference. Studies show that nearly two-thirds of tradies who consult a physiotherapist experience significant pain reduction or total eradication of their symptoms.

Moving beyond "She'll be right"

At Docklands Health, the clinical team sees first-hand how early intervention can extend a tradie's career and restore their quality of life outside of work.

Physiotherapy isn't just about treating an acute injury after it happens – it's about proactive maintenance. Key strategies that can keep tradies safe on site include:

- **Preventative care and screening:** Identifying muscle imbalances and joint restrictions before they lead to severe injuries.
- **Ergonomic and lifting technique coaching:** Fine-tuning daily movement patterns on site to reduce load on the spine, knees, and shoulders.
- **Targeted strength and conditioning:** Building the specific core, back, and shoulder strength required to handle heavy gear and repetitive overhead work.
- **Footwear and equipment optimisation:** Proper boot fitting and lacing techniques to protect ankles, knees, and hips from hard concrete surfaces.

Invest in your health, protect your career. In an era of high infrastructure demands and trade shortages, a tradie's body is their primary asset. Caring for your physical health isn't just about avoiding a sick day; it's about making sure you can enjoy your

weekends and stay strong for the long haul.

Whether you're managing a nagging lower back ache or want to build resilience against future workplace injuries, the practitioners at Docklands Health are here to help you move better and work pain-free.

Prioritise your health this Tradies National Health Month. To book an assessment or learn more about injury prevention strategies tailored to your trade, visit docklandshealth.com.au or contact the team at Docklands Health today.

Finally, on a personal note, it has been an absolute pleasure to write for *Docklands News* and into the future, *The Melburnian*.

Having spent the past 16 years practicing in Docklands, the change and development of the suburb and community has been amazing.

Docklands News has been pivotal in keeping the community connected and informed from Shane and now to Sean. The community will be forever grateful for the newspaper and wish it every success. ●

Dr Mike Edgley

CHIROPRACTOR

DOCKLANDS HEALTH



OWNERS' CORPORATION LAW

New laws set to reshape debt recovery for owners' corporations

For lot owners and committee members in Melbourne apartment buildings, the *Consumer Legislation Amendment Bill 2026* proposes some of the most significant changes to owners' corporation debt recovery in recent years.

If passed, these reforms will affect owners' corporations (OC) by (i) changing how it can enforce payments from lot owners, (ii) introducing a new framework so that lot owners in financial difficulty can seek temporary relief from debt recovery, and (iii) ensuring that debt recovery steps are paused while a payment plan is in place.

The more wide-ranging change is the introduction of a formal payment plan framework. After receiving a fee notice or final notice, a lot owner may request a payment plan from their OC in writing. The OC then has 28 days to accept or refuse that request. If it fails to respond within that window, the payment plan is taken to have been accepted on the terms the lot owner proposed.

No fee can be charged for offering a plan. Information disclosed in support of a request must be kept confidential and must not appear in meeting minutes in a way that identifies the applicant. These provisions will apply to all OCs except those in the smallest category under the Act – tier five schemes.

The strongest protections are reserved for owner-occupiers. An OC can only refuse a payment plan request from someone living in the lot as their principal place of residence on specific, limited grounds, such as whether the payment plan would threaten the OC's financial position, or if

the owner-occupier has failed to honour a previous plan within the past two years, or if the term of the payment plan requested exceeds twelve months.

While a payment plan request is being assessed, or a compliant plan is running, recovery action stops. The OC cannot issue a final notice, charge penalty interest, or apply to VCAT to recover the debt. A lot owner who is complying with an agreed plan is also treated as not being in arrears for voting and committee eligibility purposes.

These reforms are well-intentioned, but OCs operate on fixed, collective budgets funded entirely by the lot owners. A prolonged pause in recovery action can create genuine cash flow pressures, particularly in smaller schemes with fewer contributors.

Much will depend on regulations yet to be finalised – including the evidence a lot owner must provide to support a hardship request and the financial thresholds at which an OC may lawfully decline.

The intent behind these proposed changes is clear. Whether they strike the right balance will become apparent as the detail emerges.

Finally, on a personal note, it's been 13 years that I've been writing *Owners' Corporation Law* for *Docklands News*.

I'm proud to have contributed to this masthead's wonderful legacy, and I look forward to continuing under *The Melburnian*. ●

Tom Bacon

STRATA TITLE LAWYERS

TOM@STRATATITLELAWYERS.COM.AU



DOCKLANDS REPRESENTATIVE GROUP

Vale *Docklands News* – welcome, *The Melburnian*

In late 2016 – nearly 10 years ago – I wrote my first *SKYPAD Living* column for *Docklands News*.

At the time, I was intrigued by the possibilities of vertical living and explored topics on innovative apartment design, smarter ways to use smaller spaces and promises of "vertical sustainability".

But it quickly became clear that successful apartment living wasn't just about well-designed buildings. It was about creating well-connected communities.

My columns evolved from discussing "clever ideas" and innovation to tackling the realities of owners' corporations, building management, governance, neighbourly connections and the everyday challenges – and opportunities – of living together in higher-density communities.

In many ways, this change mirrored the evolution of *Docklands* itself.

Over the past decade, this precinct has continued to transform from an urban renewal project into a genuine neighbourhood.

Our community found their voice – in no small way due to the support of the community focused, *Docklands News*, first led by Shane Scanlan and then Sean Car.

This publication has been far more than a newspaper. It has been our community noticeboard, our advocate, our historian and, often, the thread connecting people who otherwise would have remained isolated.

I've been equally fortunate to contribute to the *Docklands Representative Group*, whose own journey reflects this evolution.

While originally grounded in local issues, its focus has expanded to recognise that apartment living is a national conversation. Stronger connections with the Owners' Corporation Network (OCN) reflect a growing understanding that the lessons learned in Docklands can help shape better apartment communities across Australia.

So, while it is time to say vale to *Docklands News*, the evolution continues with *The Melburnian*, carrying forward the vital role of independent, hyperlocal journalism in telling the stories that matter to our communities.

Our communities never stop changing – and neither should the conversations that help shape them.

Thank you for allowing me to be part of that conversation over the years. Whether you've agreed, disagreed or simply reflected on my columns, you've made the effort worthwhile.

As Melbourne continues to grow upwards, the next chapter of vertical living is only just beginning. I invite you to continue that journey with me by subscribing to OCN: ocn.org.au.

Together, we can keep advocating for apartment communities that are not only well built but well connected – places where people don't just live, but truly belong. ●

Janette Corcoran

MEMBER

JCORCORAN@DOCKLANDS.ORG.AU



1. Queen 2. Deekard Shaw 3. Firelight Festival 4. Stalagmite 5. Geograph Street 6. Vinegar 7. Studio Ghibli 8. Century 21 City Dock 9. Around 5000 people 10. 20th century 11. E-Gate 12. Around eight per cent

No. 326

B		S		S
	E		A	
A		O		A
	I		E	
H		E		S

BESTS, RECAP, AROMA, SIREN, HEEDS

August, 2026

No. 061

EASY

8	6	1			3			
	2			8				
4	5		1					
	9	6	3				1	7
7				1				3
1	3				4	6	2	
					1		4	9
				7			5	
			5			7	3	8

HARD

	2	8		4			7	
5		7	6				3	
								1
	3			2				6
6			3		8			2
8				9			5	
9								
	8				5	7		9
	6			3		2	1	

SOLUTIONS

EASY

8	8
6	6
1	2
3	5
9	3
2	9
7	7
4	5
9	6
3	1
5	6
6	7
9	4
3	8
8	2
2	1
1	9
5	4
7	5
3	8
8	3
4	1
9	2
6	4
3	9
8	7
2	5
1	6
7	3
4	8
5	1
9	2
6	5
3	8
2	1
8	9
4	7
9	3
7	6
5	4
1	2
3	8
8	3
2	1
9	5
4	6
7	3
8	8

HARD

8	4	6	5	7	3	9	2	1	8
9	7	1	2	8	4	5	6	3	9
8	3	1	6	5	7	4	9		
8	1	2	4	9	6	3	5	7	
6	9	5	4	3	7	8	1	9	2
7	3	6	8	5	7	9	2	1	8
5	9	7	6	1	2	8	3	4	
1	2	8	9	4	3	6	7	5	

Theme: Beverages

The leftover letters will spell out a secret message.

C	E	E	T	O	M	A	T	O	E	F
B	O	I	E	C	I	U	J	D	L	I
Q	E	C	H	F	U	E	A	R	T	Z
M	N	E	K	T	F	N	C	E	T	Z
C	I	S	R	T	O	O	H	D	O	Y
W	O	X	T	M	A	O	C	I	B	I
A	L	R	E	I	C	I	M	C	N	G
T	A	L	D	R	R	I	L	S	Y	O
E	G	E	U	I	G	I	N	G	E	R
R	E	R	T	T	A	H	P	O	I	R
O	R	A	N	G	E	L	S	S	T	T

LAGER

WATER

Secret message: Quenching your thirst

No. 061

DOWN

- 1 Very old pieces of furniture etc (8)
- 2 Micro-organisms (8)
- 3 Device used

1		2		3		4		5			6	7		8
									9					
10				11										
12									13					
14					15			16						
				17								18		19
				20							21			
22		23									24			
25								26						
						27								
28												29		
30						31								

- | | | | |
|-----------|------------------|-----------|-------------------|
| | to connect to | 18 | Type of pasta (8) |
| | WiFi (6) | 19 | Having multiple |
| 4 | Superfluous (9) | | wives or |
| 5 | Rescue (4) | | husbands (8) |
| 7 | Soccer team, | 22 | Metal disc |
| | Manchester – (6) | | under nut (6) |
| 8 | Larger (6) | 23 | Daze; stupor (6) |
| 9 | Occurs (7) | 24 | Brook; creek (6) |
| 16 | Examined | 27 | German |
| | again (9) | | automobile |
| 17 | – Monroe (7) | | manufacturer (4) |

SOLUTION

[illegible]

No.031

20	9	6	20		13	25	7	13	20	25	4	7
13		7		14		4		25		4		20
19	3	20	23	10	6	7		1	20	7	16	7
10		11		18		3		1		6		2
6	4	3	12	5	3	14	16	3	13	23	21	
8				23		16		8		20		26
4	20	15	25	3	7		22	3	25	8	13	10
7		25		12		26		4				13
	2	10	8	25	24	10	4	16	20	23	23	21
14		23		10		7		25		20		22
23	3	20	8	4		7	2	20	18	5	10	10
3		16		3		3		23		3		8
1	25	3	4	13	25	7	2		1	23	20	17

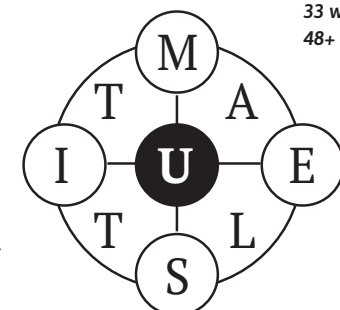
SOLUTIONS

1	F	2	H	3	E	4	N	5	P	6	U	7	S	8	R	9	Q	10	O	11	G	12	X	13	D
14	C	15	V	16	T	17	K	18	M	19	J	20	A	21	Y	22	W	23	L	24	Z	25	I	26	B

No. 061

Using the nine letters in the grid, how many words of four letters or more can you list? The centre letter must be included and each letter may only be used once. No colloquial or foreign words. No capitalised nouns, apostrophes or plural nouns ending in 's'.

Reference:
Macquarie Dictionary



SOLUTIONS

SOLUTIONS

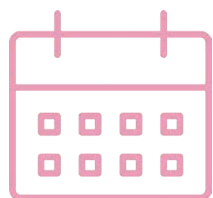
Today's Focus:

22 words: Good

33 words: *Very good*

48+ words: Excellent

WHAT'S ON August



From workshops to markets and festivals, you'll find something to float your boat this August in Docklands.

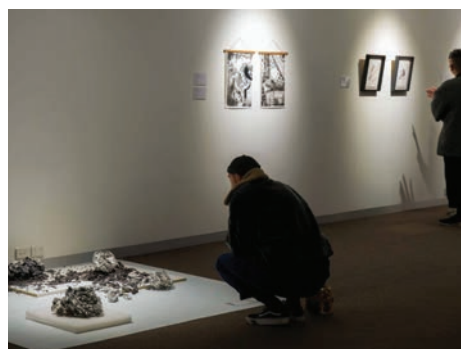


COMMUNITY SOCIAL CRAFTING

Have you been looking for an inclusive, supportive, creative community crafting group? The Cauldron is a fabulous creative community space in Docklands hosting weekly social crafting sessions.

The Cauldron, The District Docklands

EVERY WEDNESDAY, 5PM – 7PM



IN BETWEEN EXHIBITION

In Between brings diverse artists together to explore identity, belonging and connection through contemporary art, performances and collaborative participation.

Creative Asia Art Centre, Docklands

UNTIL 9 AUGUST, 10.30AM – 5PM



AKOMA
The Heart

BOÎTE SCHOOLS CHORUS 2026: AKOMA – SONGS AND STORIES FROM GHANA

Boîte Schools Chorus presents Akoma at Melbourne Town Hall, celebrating Ghanaian songs, stories and culture through vibrant performances.

Melbourne Town Hall

TUESDAY 11 AUGUST, 1PM & 7PM



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1 Hotel Melbourne, Docklands

SATURDAY 15 AUGUST, 10AM – 11AM



BOURNE LOCAL MARKET

Collins Square's Bourne Local Market invites visitors to discover handmade crafts, artisan treasures, gourmet treats and unique gifts while supporting local makers and small businesses.

Collins Square, Docklands

THURSDAY 27 AUGUST, 10AM – 2PM



DOCKLANDS WATERFRONT FARMERS' MARKET

Docklands Farmers' Market will run monthly at Harbour Esplanade, featuring Victorian produce, artisan goods, seafood, entertainment, and direct farmer sales.

Harbour Esplanade, Docklands

SUNDAY 16 AUGUST, 10AM – 3PM



SONGBIRDS

Interactive songs, rhymes, and stories engage newborns to 18-month-olds, introducing language, rhythm, and early literacy. Programs run during school terms only.

Library at The Dock

UNTIL 9 DECEMBER, 10.30AM – 11AM

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