

Very impressively unwrapped

A highlight of the Spring Fling Unwrap, the best of North and West Melbourne week, was the Unwrap Open Mic Night. The Centre held the event to unearth and unwrap the hidden talent of North and West Melbourne. Just ask anyone pouring your coffee or pulling your beer and they will tell you where their 'other' talent lies. One hundred and twenty locals came to find out. Families, business owners and friends shared a home cooked meal while being entertained by singers, performers and comedians. The Open Mic Night was hosted by local musician Mike Cole. A surprise performer was Lee Walters, wife of local businessman Ray Walters. When Lee was asked what she was performing, she said, "I will know when I get the microphone in my hand."

The audience showed their appreciation for every act, but overwhelmingly voted for Very Impressive. Self described living artwork, local artist, performer, queer individualist, environmental activist, photographic enthusiast and novice saxophonist. Very built audience anticipation by missing his curtain call while popping home to add to his already decadent performance outfit. His performance piece took the theme literally.

His on stage prop of a human sized wrapped cardboard box had all wondering what this act would hold. He burst out of the wrapped box to take the audience on a journey of meandering thoughts, diatribe and some pretend 'saxophony' from the self confessed novice. There was something strangely moving about the saxophone being played in a non musical way. "I would like to play the sax. In the early 90s, I saw a show on TV about an international group which plays in Venice, hundreds at a time. Different styles and shapes of saxophones—I envisaged that I should learn how to play at some time in my life," said Very. He goes on to say, "I created the monologue as I unwrapped my clothing amorphously. Then there was a structured plan in my head which devolved into an act that most people thought to be utterly hilarious."

Very Impressive was born in Renwick, New Zealand and spent his formative years enjoying a range of career paths and interests, including lead singer of Sex Trash Automobile, 'Humanequin' in Christchurch and Sydney, running for parliament and a mayoralty for The McGillicuddy Serious Party, and impersonating Santa and the Easter Bunny.

The first prize for the Unwrap Open Mike night was a \$200 novelty cheque from Commonwealth Bank in Errol Street, 6 hours recording time at Living Music in Little Baillie Street and a feature article in the *North and West Melbourne News*.

Di Schmidtke

Photos: Pictures on the left by Jim Weatherill
Pictures on the right by David Absalom



Above: Very at the start of his act amidst the ruins of a very large gift box

Right: the end of the act and totally unwrapped

Top right: Very with Commonwealth Bank Manager Matthew O'Grady and the winner's cheque



Prize winners: Lee Walters (above) and Maree Wesols (right)



NOTICEBOARD

The North and West Melbourne News is a quarterly publication produced by volunteers from North and West Melbourne and the inner city. It is now in its 32nd year of production. Readers' contributions are welcomed. Where relevant the *News* may seek alternative opinions in the interests of balance. Contributors' opinions are their own, however, and the *News* takes no responsibility for them. We reserve the right to edit or omit articles considered unsuitable or when space is limited.

Finance

The *News* is a non-profit organisation working as a program of The Centre. It is partially funded through the City of Melbourne's funding agreement with The Centre. Other income derives from a limited quota of advertising, subscriptions and occasional donations.

News subscriptions

If you would like to receive the *North and West Melbourne News* by mail, the rate is \$10 for four copies sent anywhere in Australia or pro rata for part of the calendar year. The *News* is distributed free throughout North and West Melbourne. Further copies are available from The Centre and the North Melbourne Library.

Advertisement sizes and rates

60 mm W x 92 mm H \$50 plus GST
 124 mm W x 92 mm H \$100 plus GST
 188 mm W x 92 mm H \$150 plus GST
 252 mm W x 92 mm H \$200 plus GST
Community announcements are published free of charge.

For more information phone 9329 1627.

Please note: Advertisements now receive online exposure at <www.centre.org.au>, where the latest edition of the *North and West Melbourne News* is displayed.

Volunteers

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

Content Coordinators: Jennifer Boyce and Tom Kramer

Production Coordinator: Allan Hood

Section Editors: Sodany Chea (Youth & Education), Irina Fainberg (Arts & Entertainment), Janet Graham (Advertising and Noticeboard), Patricia Lew (Sport & Health), Kate McDonell (History and Community), Shannon Newley (Travel & Food), Linden Smith (The Centre), Amanda Vandenberghe (Community), Alecia Wonsack (Politics & Environment)

Production team: David Apostol, Jennifer Boyce, Leni Dixon, Janet Graham, Renee Heeps, Allan Hood, Tom Kramer, Jim Weatherill



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 58 Errol Street, North Melbourne 3051
 Email: thenews58@gmail.com
 Telephone: 9328 1126

**Copy deadline for March 2010 edition:
 Wednesday 10 February**

Planning meeting: Tuesday 5 January 6.00 pm
 at The Centre, 58 Errol Street, North Melbourne

New contributors welcome

Many thanks to our newspaper deliverers

Our hardy team of delivery volunteers has traipsed up and down the streets and laneways of North and West Melbourne to bring copies of the *News* to letterboxes and homes.

I thank Martin Brennan and Maggie McCormick for their many years (in fact decades) of help and trust that they still have time to read the best newspaper in the district. To May, and her baby son, welcome aboard, and to everybody else listed here thank you for another year's participation in the *News* team.

Helen Lew Ton

Verena Augusti, Ann Brady, Jim Brady, Martin Brennan, Nicky Capriolo, Margaret Carlton, Bill Cook, Jenny Cook, Brendan Ferrari, Kaylene Ferrari, Carolyn Fyfe, Alba Gatto, Agnes Girdwood, Janet Graham, Denys Harraway, Nancye Hawkins, Michael Hearn, Sally Hearn, Jan Lacey, Helen Lew Ton, Pat Lightfoot, Carol Lowe, Maggie McCormick, Kathleen McPherson, Helen Michell, Nancye Nankervis, Kaye Oddie, Kay Oke, Rob Oke, Robyn Phelan, Catherine Rouse, Madeleine Scully, Jocelyn Sellers, Linden Smith, Gabby Stannus, Beth Stevenson, Angela Williams

... but we need more people to help!

Discover houses and letterboxes in the most unlikely of places! Go for a walk with a purpose; volunteer to deliver the *North and West Melbourne News*.

The newspaper is published four times a year, and in

general people manage to get their deliveries done within a couple of hours. I try to allocate delivery areas that are close to your home.

For more information please contact me on 9329 9757 or at <hmlawton@gmail.com>.

Spread some cheer a little further

Why not spread some cheer a little further this festive season by supporting your local charitable organisations? It's easy to donate online or by telephone.

Humanitarian organisations:

Australian Red Cross

www.redcross.org.au
 FREECALL: 1800 811 700

To donate clothing: place in bins outside Red Cross head office at 23-47 Villiers Street, North Melbourne

St Vincent de Paul Society

(Ozanam House and Ozanam Community Centre)
www.vinnies.org.au/vic
 National hotline: 13 18 12
 To donate goods: 1800 621 349

The Salvation Army (Flagstaff Crisis Accommodation)

www.salvationarmy.com.au
 For one-off or ongoing donations, also home collection of goods: 13 SALVOS (13 72 58)

To donate clothing: place in bins outside Salvos Store at 19-23 Errol Street

Animal welfare organisations:

Lort Smith Animal Hospital

www.lortsmith.com
 9321 7217

The Lost Dogs' Home and Western Suburbs Cat Shelter

www.dogshome.com
 9321 8700
Gifts of \$2 or more to any of the above are tax-deductible.

**Celebrate Chanukah in the City
 Federation Square**

Thursday 17 December 5.00 pm-10.30 pm

Chanukah, or the Festival of Lights, commemorates an ancient victory by the Maccabees and the subsequent miracle when a menorah, or temple candelabra, remained alight for eight days on a flask of oil sufficient for only one day.

Rides and activities for children, Israeli dancing and guests including Renee Geyer and Fifi and the Flowertots

9.30 pm: Lighting of the eight-branched Chanukah menorah following an address by Lord Mayor Robert Doyle

Presented by the Jewish Community Council of Victoria and supported by the City of Melbourne

Christmas 2009 services in North and West Melbourne



St Alban's, Anglican

55 Melrose Street, North Melbourne

Details unavailable at time of going to press

St James' Old Cathedral, Anglican

Corner King and Batman streets, West Melbourne (opposite Flagstaff Gardens)

Sunday 20 December 10.00 am Service of Lessons and Carols

Thursday 24 December 11.30 pm Christmas Eve Service

Friday 25 December 10.00 am Christmas Day Service

St Mary's, Anglican

Corner Queensberry and Howard streets, North Melbourne

Friday 18 December 6.00 pm Carols on the Corner, with BYO picnic and sausage sizzle, in the church grounds

Thursday 24 December (Christmas Eve) 6.15 pm Christingle, a short, lively service especially for children; 11.00 pm Carols around the Crib; 11.30 pm Midnight Sung Eucharist, followed by a Festive Supper

Friday 25 December (Christmas Day) 9.00 am Sung Eucharist

Sunday 27 December 9.00 am Sung Eucharist

St Mary Star of the Sea, Catholic

Corner Victoria and Howard streets, West Melbourne

Thursday 24 December (Christmas Eve) 11.45 pm Christmas Carols, followed by Midnight Mass (confessions 10.30-11.45)

Friday 25 December 10.30 am Mass of Christmas Day in English (confessions 9.45 am onwards); 12.00 noon Mass of Christmas Day in Lithuanian

St Michael's, Catholic

456 Dryburgh Street, North Melbourne

Tuesday 15 December 9.30 am Advent Reconciliation

Wednesday 16 December 7.00 pm Advent Reconciliation

Thursday 24 December (Christmas Eve) 6.00 pm Mass

Friday 25 December 10.15 am Christmas Mass

Saints Peter and Paul, Ukrainian Catholic

35 Canning Street, North Melbourne

Friday 25 December (Nativity of Jesus Christ-New Calendar) 10.00 am Divine Liturgy

Wednesday 6 January (Christmas Eve-Fast) 9.00 am & 5.00 pm Divine Liturgy

Thursday 7 January (Nativity of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ) 8.00 am & 10.00 am Divine Liturgy

The Eighth Day (a Baptist Community)

4 Miller Street, West Melbourne

Sunday 20 December 5.30 pm Christmas Service of celebration and carols

Uniting Church, Mark the Evangelist

51 Curzon Street, North Melbourne

Services held in Elm Street Hall, 4 Elm Street, due to repairs to the church

Sunday 20 December 10.00 am Service of Carols and Lessons

Friday 25 December (Christmas Day) 9.30 am Eucharist

Sunday 27 December (Christmas 1) 10.00 am Eucharist

Strategic Plan for Moonee Ponds Creek

Over the years, local resident and community groups have helped with plantings to revegetate the creek's environs between Racecourse Road and Footscray Road.

Copies of a draft Strategic Plan for Moonee Ponds Creek will be placed in the North Melbourne Library in late December or early January. Comments are welcomed, with submissions to close end January or early February 2010.

**Contact for further information:
 Friends of Moonee Ponds Creek Inc.
www.mooneeponds.org**

Kaye Oddie

Member, Friends of Moonee Ponds Creek Inc.

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Desperate for children's books

North Melbourne Language & Learning (NMLL) is celebrating 20 years of service teaching English and life skills to adult migrants on the public housing estate on Alfred Street, North Melbourne. Inspired by work at the Children's Zone Baby College in Harlem, New York and in response to Australia's National Preventative Health Strategy on early childhood intervention, NMLL is setting up a *Baby Book Borrow Program*.

NMLL is asking members of the community to trawl through their bookshelves and donate any quality children's books in reasonable condition. They are focusing on board books (fiction and non-fiction) and picture story books suitable for babies, toddlers and pre-school age children.

Why NMLL Needs Books

NMLL teaches English to adult migrants from the Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) communities of North Melbourne and Flemington. They have students from 15 countries in total, with the largest groups coming from the Horn of Africa (Somalia, Ethiopia and Eritrea), Vietnam and China. This year the school enrolled its first Southern Sudanese students. In addition to the school's 150 students, there are a further 4 000 residents on the estate who are able to access the school's services and facilities.

NMLL has worked in the community for several decades and has become aware that many families do not have any books in their homes. Many students have little or no formal education in their country of origin due to poverty, gender inequality or inter-

rupted schooling caused by war, civil unrest and extended time in refugee camps.

The chances are you grew up in a house full of books, and you read to your children from their earliest months. Even if you read one book a day from infancy, your child will have had over 1 800 literature-rich experiences before they even start school. NMLL wants to give its students and their families the same opportunities.

Aisha, for example, is a wonderful 32-year-old mother of six children who arrived from Ethiopia six months ago. She can't read or write in her first language Oromo, but she is working hard in the Beginners' English Class. Achol is a vibrant 22-year-old with two young children. She and her husband came to Australia from southern Sudan two years ago; they both have very low literacy in their first language Dinka. If their children are to participate in a happy, successful and fulfilling life in Australia, NMLL believes that parents like Aisha and Achol should be provided with the means and the skills to provide opportunities for them.

The NMLL Baby Book Borrow Program aims to establish a reading culture and a love of books from the early months of a child's life. For many years, NMLL has encouraged students to visit local libraries, but their success rate has not been great. They now believe location and ease of access may be the answer—they understand that the school needs to make it easy for parents and their children to drop in at least once a week (every day if they want to) and borrow a bag of books. The program will run from the Student Community Room in the hub of the



'The pleasure of reading—can you help provide it?'

Photo: courtesy of North Melbourne Language & Learning

estate. Importantly, students will be actively involved in establishing and running the program.

In addition to lending books, there will be Baby Rhyme Time and Story Time sessions similar to those held in local libraries. These sessions will demonstrate interactive reading, storytelling and promote a love of reading. Most importantly, they will emphasise the importance of reading to children from infancy and every day.

Natalie Warren

Collection

Books can be dropped at the school on the ground floor of 33 Alfred Street, North Melbourne.

NMLL couldn't run without volunteers and there are opportunities to help with the Baby Book Program, Gardening and Knitting groups.

If you are able to help, please contact Natalie Warren on 9326 7447 or admin1@nell.org.au.

North Melbourne Legal Service celebrates 30 years: 1979–2009

In 1979, four young lawyers, Will Houghton, Rahul Singh, Peter Collinson and Peter Almond founded the North Melbourne Legal Service. From its humble beginnings in the Uniting Church on Brougham Street, the service has grown and prospered.

For 30 years, devoted staff, volunteers and members of the organisation have worked tirelessly to reduce the unmet legal needs of the community. Despite limited funding, NMLS continues to strive to make a valuable contribution in the local community be reaching out to disadvantaged and vulnerable individuals.

The many achievements of the NMLS were recognised at the service's 30th birthday celebrations held on Friday 30 October 2009. Present at the celebrations were Lindsay Tanner MP, Federal Minister for Finance and Deregulation, two of the four founding members, past and present staff, student and practitioner volunteers as well as valued supporters.

The service would like to thank the community for its continuing support and is looking forward to the next 30 years.

Janet Tan

Getting past your past

How do I find out if I have a police record and what it says? How could it affect my future in paid work, volunteering, or travel? These sorts of questions are often asked by many people in the community, including people who have been charged with a criminal offence and by family and friends of people they know may have a police record. North Melbourne Legal Service (NMLS) has put together a new edition of a publication titled 'Getting Past Your Past: Moving on from a police record in Victoria', which NMLS originally produced in October 2005. Both editions have been generously funded through grants from the City of Melbourne. This popular publication provides legal information regarding disclosure of a police record—if seeking employment, volunteer positions, or registration for

a trade or profession. In response to popular demand and community need, a new edition of this publication has been produced to reflect current laws and to respond to a clear demand in the community for reliable legal information. The publication, complete with photography by a local photographer, will be available from December 2009.

Sandra Wendlandt, Project Officer
(Community Legal Education)

North Melbourne Legal Service is your local community legal centre offering free legal information, advice and casework to people who work, live or study in North Melbourne, West Melbourne, the CBD, Parkville and Carlton.

DO YOU KNOW SOMEONE IN NEED?

**Ozanam House,
North Melbourne**

Working with homeless men in Melbourne since 1953

Ozanam House provides crisis supported accommodation for homeless men over the age of 18 years with complex needs.

We aim to provide a safe, secure and supportive environment enabling residents to actively address the issues that have resulted in them becoming homeless.

If you know someone who is homeless, in crisis and needs assistance please call SVDP Housing Services on Tel: (03) 9300 2977
1800 618 468 (toll free)



St Vincent de Paul
Aged Care & Community Services

أتعرف شخصا يحتاج إلى مد يد العون إليه؟

أوزانام هاوس،
شمال ملبورن

نقوم على دعم الرجال المشردين في ملبورن منذ عام 1953

يقدم أوزانام هاوس السكن الطارئ المدعوم
إلى الرجال المشردين ممن هم أكبر سنا من 18 عاما ولهم احتياجات معقدة.

نحن نسعى إلى توفير بيئة آمنة مأمونة وداعمة
تمكن المقيمين لدينا من معالجة المشكلات التي أدت إلى
أن يصبحوا مشردين بفعالية.

إذا كنت تعرف شخصا مشردا، أو يمر بأزمة ويحتاج إلى المساعدة
فالرجاء الاتصال بخدمات SVDP للإسكان على الهاتف (03) 9300 2977
1800 618 468 (مكالمة مجانية)



St Vincent de Paul
Aged Care & Community Services



North & West Melbourne Association

Future development of La Trobe Close

Although this site has been earmarked for redevelopment for several years, locals may not be aware that there is movement afoot and things are progressing swiftly.

The Office of Housing and the North and West Melbourne Association agree that La Trobe Close is a prime site in central North Melbourne, bounded by Chetwynd and Courtney Streets, on which there are currently 52 social housing units. Beyond that point our views seem to diverge.

A proposal has been developed under the Nation Building Economic Stimulus Plan: Social Housing Initiative which combines social and private housing. Rothe Lowman is the architectural firm engaged to develop the plans. On 19 October 2009 a planning application was lodged with Minister Justin Madden and the Melbourne City Council was notified the same day.

The Association has grave concerns about the proposed development and has written to the Minister as follows:

"I am writing on behalf of the North and West Melbourne Association to express our grave concern about the lack of consultation with the local community about the proposed construction of 220 units (a mix of public and private housing) at La Trobe Close. The proposal has severe height, scale and density impacts, insufficient open green space and

not enough car parking.

The proposed development will create a new height limit for the area that is contrary to the planning scheme administered by the City of Melbourne. Despite the area being a residential 1 zone with a preferred height limit of 9 metres, at the centre of this proposal is a seven-storey development (building C-59 public housing units). Building C is located on the highest point of the block, further exacerbating problems in appropriateness of scale. In addition, the Chetwynd Street frontage includes a four-storey development (building B-46 public housing units) that sits harder to the street than many of the surrounding properties. These are not low-rise buildings and are therefore not in keeping with neighbourhood character. The overdevelopment of this site is a poor precedent for the future.

In addition, the stage 1 buildings are developed over what has been used as public space. This is an area that, in the past, we have written and spoken to our local member, the Honourable Bronwyn Pike, expressing our concern that it was being used as a car park without the necessary permits and requesting that we were consulted on any future re-development of the area. We have consistently urged that it should be maintained as green space and believe that the landscaping of the proposed development



La Trobe Close

Photo: courtesy North and West Melbourne Association

does not afford the existing local community any gains in their amenity. The open green space for this proposal is insufficient for a proposal of this size as it is merely the landscaping of the connecting pathways and is located in the interior of the site.

The retention of a small fragment of green on Chetwynd Street includes an inadequate exchange for the existing green space. These losses combined with minimal setbacks on Chetwynd Street exacerbate the poor integration with the neighbourhood.

Minister, we urge you to halt the process. Allowing for proper consultation will improve the long-term design for everyone. The Department of Human Services has a positive history of community consultation on large-scale housing projects. However,

this has been jettisoned in the name of 'nation building' in circumstances which are not justified and will lead to problems in the future."

The Association appreciates the support from our local MLA, Bronwyn Pike. Bronwyn has written to the Minister for Housing seeking further, meaningful consultation with residents and reiterating the importance of development being undertaken in a sensitive way which respects the character, history and environment of the surrounding area.

If you would like to get involved in this issue, please contact the Association by mail at PO Box 102 North Melbourne VIC 3051 or by email at info@nwma.org.au.

Update on North Melbourne Station footbridge

Regular readers will be aware of the Association's work over many months advocating that the welcome redevelopment of North Melbourne Station should maintain public access to the footbridge across the railway lines.

The Association has received a letter from Connex dated 19 October advising that "the informal footbridge that connects the station to the Capital City Trail and Docklands will be permanently closed to the general public from 16 November 2009" due to changed access arrangements for the new station, including the closure of the existing entry and exit, and the need to maintain public safety.

The letter states that, "This footbridge and its pathways have never been meant for public access as they cross active rail tracks used by freight and interstate trains and are not appropriately protected or lit for public access".

Connex proposes that pedestrians access the Capital City Trail and Docklands via the

shared path along Dynon Road. Association members have responded to Connex (and other relevant bodies) as follows:

- Redevelopment of the Station does not necessarily entail closing public access to the footbridge; rather, there has been a choice to do so.
- Many bridges in Melbourne pass over active rail tracks, with no apparent proposals to limit access to them
- Lighting can easily be improved
- The suggested alternative, the shared path along Dynon Road, is neither a Connex responsibility nor a safe option

Melbourne City Council has for some time sought clarification as to what could be done to make public use of the footbridge acceptable to Connex but without success.

We haven't given up hope yet. If you would like to contribute to this debate, please contact the Association by mail at PO Box 102 North Melbourne VIC 3051 or by email at info@nwma.org.au.

MAKE A NOTE OF OUR NEXT BREAKFAST EVENT IN 2010!

**WEDNESDAY
24 FEBRUARY
2010**

7AM - 10AM

NORTH & WEST MELBOURNE PRECINCT ASSOCIATION AND THE CENTRE

BREAKFAST #3
SHOWCASING LOCAL FASHION & DESIGN

FASHION NEVER SLEEPS

HOSTED BY
JASONGRECH STYLE OFFICE
29 - 31 LITTLE LEVESON STREET
NORTH MELBOURNE







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*homewares
children's clothing
jewellery*

*113 Errol St
North Melbourne*

*ramonatienda@gmail.com
ramonatienda.blogspot.com*

Pharmacist's four esses

Safety, Security, Style and Substance

Casting a line, flexing a jib and hoisting a main sail are not exercises readily envisaged with Errol Street traders, yet these pros' intense work lives surely demand extra-curricula relief.

Many professionals can best be read through their eyes: these intellectually compelling, academically coercing, pharmaceutically correct, yet oh-so-playful eyes tell our chemists' customers their symptoms shall disappear, their bodies do eventually recover and those dreadful pains will retreat, one day soon.

Dedicated pharmacist Gary Bohmer, BPharm, MPS, offers far more from his Errol Street premises than mere drugs, gifts and toiletries. His intuitive grey-brown eyes zeroing in on clients' needs as we offer him doctors' prescriptions and tales of bodily pain. Constantly waving away our frequent praise, this humble guy drops a quiet recommendation and offers his good wishes for a quick recovery.

Following his 1977 graduation from Parkville's Pharmacy College Melbourne, Gary extended his education at a series of clinical and retail practises, developing an awareness of presenting conditions and confirming him as a superb diagnostician. Those 'interenship' days also saw him master his adult angling skills as 'offsite expertise'.

After operating a Kyneton pharmacy for 10 years, Gary moved into his Errol Street premises in August 1994 because his children were growing up. "I saw North Melbourne was going to go through a big change, which it did," he explains, noting the area's contrasts over the past 15 years. "The whole psycho-demographic changed about five years later, but those early stages had some rough and tough times. There were prolonged periods where several shops stayed vacant for a long time ...," he remembers, his voice trailing away.

Those early years presented further extended challenges for the young pharmacist, his wife Pamela and five children. "When I first took over the pharmacy, that was when her breast cancer was diagnosed and she had a couple of horrendously low periods, then part recoveries up until she died in January 2001. I had my hands full supporting her, trying to compensate with the kids and run the business. I think I made a reasonable dad, but a lousy mum," he squints, looking away. We'd reckon his five offspring, now aged 28, 26, 25, 21 and 18 probably agree, but lovingly so—it'd be hard to ignore his blatant pride in them.

Yet those early years must have been so hard. "I was reasonably well prepared for her

death. She was ill for six or seven years, so I had time to grieve her loss of vitality, which in turn prepared me for her death," he says, not so matter-of-factly. Then the magic eyes bring his soul back to life: "But the community spirit here has been a real strength," he says, noting it was strongly cultivated by The Centre.

"One of the things that keeps me interested in North Melbourne is the whole variance in clientele. I get the famous to the infamous—the total economic spectrum—and I like to deal with them all on a one-to-one basis because, as human beings, the only difference between Brighton and Footscray is the money!"

Gary's astute evaluation of market needs explains his membership of the North & West Melbourne Precinct Association for the past five years or so. "The group reflects the essence of this area," he says. "It's quite individual, as are Melbourne's other precincts, like Chinatown and Docklands. North Melbourne is highly multicultural with all the extremes of the economic scale, but I'd say over the past 10 years the psycho-demographic profile has constantly lifted," he observes.

Does he believe pharmacy sales of consumer goods reflect current eco-socio pressures? "Yes, they do—when I started there was no baby market here; now it's quite strong, and the pushers have really improved since my kids were young ... they're GT racers now! Seriously though, multi-level car parking is critically needed for all of our businesses to survive, and that means not just for customer ease, but for customer access—it's fundamental to the survival of our trade," he emphasises.

In keeping fit to reduce stress levels, Gary escapes to his fishing paradise. "I always loved fishing as a kid—it was just me and my dreams—so I managed to team up with this group of fly-fishermen about six years ago, and I've never looked back. We enjoy both salt-water and fresh-water fly-fishing, favourite spots being Weipa for salt-water and the New Zealand rivers for trout," he gleams.

Casting a pretend line from our coffee table, Gary praises 'fishies' mateship'. "Now numbering eight, the group is very close. Our next vacancy will be when someone dies. We have a mix from accountancy, real estate, building, a retired principal and one pharmacist ... we're tight!" But does it keep him fit? "Nah," he guffaws. "Generally, everyone puts on weight with the grog, but that's a real distraction for us because fly-fishing is very absorbing; it requires a lot of focus."



Gary with a prize catch

Photo: Gary Bohmer Pharmacy

And then the memoris flood back, "My hottest fishing was one morning we left the boat harbour at seven, took 20 minutes to reach the hot spot, then had a cuppa tea at 9.30 after catching more than 30 fish ... and they were stunning salmon. "But I've also had two entire days where I've not had a bite, and I know it's two whole days 'cos the guys've reminded me, often!" Open water barramundi is his favourite fish catch. "They taste a level better than the ones in the mangroves, but they're much harder to catch. My biggest so far is three-quarters of a metre, but my dream is catching one over a metre," he whistles, joyful at the thought. "And I'd like to catch Permit Fish—they're like Snapper on steroids in shallow water," but that's another

challenge.

Viewing himself as the household fishmonger, Gary regrets some of his family doesn't even like fish, but that couldn't be on environmental grounds. "We practise catching enough to eat and throw the rest back. We emphasise an eco-friendly approach—that way they're in better nick to be caught next year," he says, a philosophy reflected back home with market retention for his pharmacy—Safety, Security, Style and Substance, all of which Gary confirms in his life plan. "I love North Melbourne and I plan to see out my working career right here."

Katrina Sharkey

enhancing life's celebrations

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'Roos' 'New Era' a boon for community



Concept drawings of the completed facilities at Arden Street

Photo: North Melbourne Football Club

New North Melbourne coach Brad Scott attracted attention when he declared—boldly in the eyes of some—that there is no reason why his young side can't play AFL finals in 2010. "We're going to give everyone an opportunity to show what they can do," Scott said on November 2, "but I think one of the risks with having a young team is that you put limits on them and people accept that it can be a development year for the club. We don't want to use that term."

While some may question Scott's faith, it points at the very least to a new-found confidence within the club that was epitomised by two decisions: its rejection of a move to the Gold Coast in late 2007 and the decision to revitalise its Arden Street home. That development is nearing completion, giving players and club staff access to a \$15 mil-

lion training and administration complex that will cement North's status as one of the few remaining suburban clubs in the AFL.

It's not only the players and the club in general that will benefit from the redevelopment. From the beginning, the local area was very much part of the planning. In this respect, 2010 is not a development year; rather, it represents the culmination of a series of strategic decisions and the beginning of a new relationship with the local community.

One of the most tangible aspects of this will be the Learning and Life Centre (LLC), a collaboration between the NMFC, Scanlon Foundation, and the Australian Multicultural Foundation that aims to build upon the club's local ties by combining sport and education to make a positive impact on the local community. Comprising one-third of

the Arden Street redevelopment, the LLC will include meeting rooms, a theatre, an indoor sports stadium with gym facilities, and a modern, open educational facility known as the 'Learning Centre' which will house 30 computers and other educational amenities.

The LLC will run after-school programs including homework classes (in collaboration with the homework club run by The Centre on Errol St) as well as sports activities, nutrition and healthy living programs, and mentoring for disadvantaged children—many from migrant communities in nearby Kensington and Flemington. During the day it will host excursions for about 100 government schools from Melbourne's north-west corridor, with the aim of having each student visit four times over the course of a school year. Programs will also be run during the school holidays, while specific programs will be targeted at secondary students from years 10 to 12. The LLC will employ teachers and community workers and hopes to offer curriculum including literacy and numeracy.

According to NMFC chief executive, Eugene Arocca, the LLC will be "a world-first community facility embedded in a sporting club with a mantra of education and social cohesion". Up to eight North

Melbourne team members will work in the centre one day a week, assisting with programs but also undertaking structured programs that will build on their own professional and personal skills.

For James Demetriou, the executive director of the LLC, the unique combination of a centre which seeks the best for its players and its community will be an example to others wanting to positively impact their neighbourhoods through sport. "Through the Learning and Life Centre, we have the opportunity to create not only an industry-first, but a world-first model. A community and educational facility within an elite sporting club, with qualified staff and players involved in delivering programs, has enormous potential to address some pressing social issues and become a national model for community engagement."

The Essendon Football Club has apparently taken notice, announcing plans to augment its community engagement strategies. This indicates the need many feel for a facility such as that planned by the NMFC. Indeed, 2010 is not a development year for the club; it is shaping up to be the beginning of a particularly strong era, led by a confident coach and management team.

Tom Kramer

Christmas exciting but dangerous time for pets

It's almost summer! We're all warmed up and the festive season is looming large. Maybe you're taking some time away from work and with daylight saving extending our evenings, we should have more time to share with our pets. Old dogs can slowly stretch out their arthritic limbs on long leisurely evening walks. Young cats go crazy over games of tag and keepings-off in the garden. Native flowers are the perfect treat for pet native parrots. And what could be more relaxing than an extended afternoon tea, or perhaps a gin and tonic, in the garden with the hens pecking around you?

It all seems wonderfully relaxing until Bella the Labrador starts shaking and foaming at the mouth after getting into the snail bait that was left out on the laundry bench earlier in the day. She is rushed to the vet clinic and survives the ordeal but only after some very unpleasant procedures and several days in hospital on a drip. It is easy to see that Christmas preparations and changes in routines for holidays cause distractions and can result in disasters for your pets. Have a think about what you plan to do over Christmas. Will there be human guests who don't know the rules and leave gates and doors open allowing pets access to the dangers of roads, garden sheds, compost and other potential risks? Is there a toddler offering all the chocolate to your little Maltese terrier? Maybe your aunt is giving chunks of fatty ham to your cocker spaniel that is prone to pancreatitis. Are the in-laws coming to visit? Has this resulted in a cleaning frenzy? Look out! Because Tasha, your Burmese cat, is going to walk over the bathroom cleaning agent while it is still wet. It will sting her feet, and she'll jump up onto the stove top, which is soaking in oven cleaner, to groom it off. A few hours later she'll be drooling and crying because of the burns in her mouth and won't let you touch her because of the burns on her feet and her bottom! Off to the vet again!

Lort Smith becomes even busier than usual over the Christmas period. We see all sorts of injuries due to road accidents, especially when there have been fireworks the night before and frightened pets have escaped from their usual confines. Chemical burns due to cleaning agents and poisonings due to snail bait, rat bait and compost

increase along with the spring cleaning frenzy. Then, there are the dangers posed by Christmas decorations. We have removed all sorts of strange objects from the intestines of dogs, cats and ferrets. Kittens love to chew tinsel and sparkly baubles. Dogs come in with cooked bones lodged anywhere from the roof of their mouth to their bowel. Our pets eat all sorts of things they shouldn't. I suppose we don't set a good example! However, many things that are treats for us can be toxic to animals, and it is important to be aware of these. Chocolate and onion are toxic to all pets. Grapes have been found to be toxic to dogs. Cooked bones are a great hazard. And avocado can cause poisoning in parrots.

I love pets to be involved in parties and special events. One of the best ways you can show your pet you love them is to spend time playing with them and grooming them. Let all your guests know the rules for keeping your pet safe and healthy or arrange for them to stay with a friend if you can't be sure they will be safe. Make sure you plan some treats specifically for them. You can even bake them special food treats and meals. Give them a safe and joyful Christmas.

A great food treat for your pet Broccoli and Oatmeal biscuits for dogs, birds and rodents

70g plain flour
40g almond meal
85g oatmeal
½ teaspoon baking powder
1 egg

85g steamed mashed broccoli
Preheat oven to 180C. Grease an oven tray with oil.

Beat the egg. Mix all ingredients together and knead into stiff dough.

Place in the freezer for about 20 minutes.

Roll dough out to 1cm thick.

Cut into Christmas tree shapes.

Bake for 10 to 15 minutes.

Serve cool.

Recipe from *Nibble, Munch, Chomp. The Art and Science of Feeding your Pet*, by Dr Sasha Herbert.

Available online via www.lortsmith.com and at all good bookstores.

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NMFC Learning and Life Centre

As construction of the North Melbourne Learning and Life Centre (NMLLC) at Arden Street nears completion, its Executive Director James Demetriou has been working behind the scenes to attract a strong team to help support and drive the project.

Three significant appointments have been made recently, setting the scene for the centre's opening in early 2010 and the commencement of school, sport, homework and community programs that will cater for up to 5,000 people each year.

Sash Herceg joins North Melbourne as Multicultural & Community Officer, Mairead Hannan takes up the position as Education Programs Coordinator, and Celeste O'Keefe comes on board as Homework Program Coordinator.

"These individuals will make an enormous contribution to the development of the centre, its programs and the thousands of people we will engage," Mr. Demetriou said.

In developing the NMLLC, our intention is to create a unique environment within an elite sporting club, which apart from offering community facilities, will also provide relevant and professionally designed programs for children and adults from all walks of life. These programs will meet the centre's primary aims and objectives of promoting

education, health and sport as a means to enhancing community spirit and social cohesion.

As a result of extensive community consultation carried out on our behalf by Myriad Consultants, the Centre for Multicultural Youth, and Ahmed Ahmed, we believe the aims and objectives of the NMLLC will best be achieved by focussing on providing the following:

1. Programs developed for young people which incorporate curriculum-based school topics for visiting students. These programs, involving teachers and NMFC players, will provide positive educational, multicultural and healthy living programs in an engaging and unique environment.

2. After-hours 'homework classes' for local youth with qualified tutors and teaching aides. The Global Homework program will be delivered in partnership with The Centre.

3. Engaging relevant community organisations to run programs at the LLC in partnership with the NMFC and Australian Multicultural Foundation. These will include North Melbourne Language & Learning, Melbourne Aboriginal Youth Sport and Recreation, Victoria Police, and the Heart Foundation. NMFC will provide access to the facility and supporting resources.



The new Arden Street redevelopment at the Arden Street Oval Photo: courtesy North Melbourne Football Club

4. The opportunity for community groups to book parts of the facility, including the Learning centre, theatre, indoor stadium and meeting rooms, for use which is consistent with the aims and objectives of the centre.

North Melbourne chief executive Eugene Arocca, who initially conceived the idea with Peter Scanlon of the Scanlon Foundation and Dr. Hass Dellal of the Australian Multicultural Foundation, said that the development of the Learning and Life Centre was

a crucial part of the club's plan to build a sustainable future in Melbourne.

"Thanks to the Scanlon Foundation and the Australian Multicultural Foundation, we're in a position to create this outstanding community resource, which will ultimately ensure that the North Melbourne Football Club is a relevant and respected part of the Melbourne landscape well into the future."

Sash Herceg
Multicultural & Community Officer, NMFC

New station keeps North Melbourne moving



Forty million dollars has brought North Melbourne station into the 21st century Photo: David Apostol

As I'm sure many of you are aware, the new North Melbourne Train Station was opened recently. This signalled the completion of the \$38.6 million upgrade to trans-

form one of Melbourne's busiest rail interchanges.

The upgrade is a fantastic addition to our local community and will dramatically

improve passenger flow and convenience to the 11,000 people who pass through the station each day.

The new North Melbourne Train Station is a sleek, shining modern construction yet still complements the station's heritage sections. Especially appealing is the stunning view of the city that passengers can now enjoy from the brand new concourse.

The new concourse, with lifts and escalators, enables commuters to move around easily in additional space. This has also improved access for the elderly and people with disabilities. The new canopies mean people are protected from the weather, and the resurfaced platforms and digital CCTV mean passengers are much safer.

While people formerly struggled to know where their train was leaving from, the new passenger information displays and better broadcasting speakers will make each trip much easier. By improving passenger flows, there is a reduction in the time that trains remain at the station between stops, resulting in a more punctual service.

I'm thrilled that we can now say goodbye

to the 'North Melbourne shuffle' once and for all. I would like to thank all commuters who use North Melbourne Train Station for their patience and understanding while work was taking place.

A key priority of the Brumby Government's Transport Plan is ensuring that practical steps are taken for a sustainable future. I recently opened Melbourne's first bike pod in the City Square, which provides members of the public with shower and changing facilities as well as 32 bike parking spaces. This is in addition to our \$100 million cycling package, which will improve cycling infrastructure and encourage Melburnians to choose healthy, sustainable transport options.

The North Melbourne Train Station upgrade has been a tremendous success, and it is an accomplishment that speaks volumes about the modern, efficient transport system that the Brumby Labor Government is working to deliver for you.

Bronwyn Pike MP,
Member for Melbourne

Bronwyn Pike
STATE MEMBER FOR MELBOURNE

New Electorate Office: 146-148 Peel Street, North Melbourne, 3051
Phone: 9328 4637 Fax: 9326 8747 Web: www.bronwynpike.com

We extend an invitation to join us for breakfast
Call Maggie Goodge on 0419 116 471

North Melbourne Rotary Club
Meet at the Metropolitan Hotel
cnr Blackwood & Courtney streets, North Melbourne 3051
Fridays @ 7.30am for 7.45

Free community BBQ in Errol Street Friday 11 December 11am to 2pm

Harmony garden

North Melbourne Language & Learning held its Harmony Garden opening celebrations on Thursday 14 October in chilly conditions. The garden is situated on-site at the learning centre in Albert Street and was well received by the many who attended.

Pride was the focus of the day, with the beaming faces of the staff and students reflecting the result of countless hours of voluntary work to create the garden. NMLL has been at its present location for over seven years, and this year decided to work on a much needed revamp of the communal gardens.

Included is a kitchen garden, with staff and students able to make use of the fresh produce. Native trees were used where possible to ensure the garden was eco-friendly. A donated water tank will help the garden to thrive during summer. The centre has formed a gardening club to ensure that all of their hard work is maintained.

Joanne Goodman, manager of NMLL, formally welcomed guests to what was an exciting day for the centre, a culmination of staff and students' hard work to see the garden grow from blueprint to reality.

The vast extent of the community that

utilises the NMLL centre came to light when a selection of students welcomed guests, each in their first languages.

Guest speakers included Natalie Warren, Teacher and Community Development Worker, and the main driver of the Harmony Garden project. "We wanted a place where students and staff could enjoy... where we could have outdoor classes and to celebrate a term of good work."

Not only benefiting the students of NWLL centre, the garden is open to the wider community. Ms Warren said, "We wanted to create a nice place for families to come and use."

The highlight of the day was the moving performances from various cultural bands from around the city. To finish off the opening, a medley of classic Australian songs emerged, creating a harmony of proud voices.

The garden was made possible by donations from various generous sources, including government, retailers and community minded individuals. Norma Leslie and staff at the centre were among those given special thanks by Councillor for the City of Melbourne, Jennifer Kanis. She said that it



Proud creators of the kitchen garden from left Phuong, Ban, Dinh, Dung, Hanh, Despina (ESL teacher), Nookuij, Genet and Xu-Ha

Photo: courtesy North Melbourne Language & Learning

was not just a garden and that, "I think about the real joy that the garden is going to bring to the community". The Harmony Garden was an important project, Ms Kanis noted, as "gardens are a wonderful place to meet and enjoy community".

The garden itself is symbolic for the community that gathers at the learning centre. As Ms Warren said, "Gardens are about patience and care", a description which truly encompasses the NMLL centre as a whole.

North Melbourne Language & Learning

St Alban's Op Shop

What can people donate?

Items which can be donated include clean clothing for all age groups, shoes, handbags, household goods, linen, ornaments, toys and games, etc. Items which we cannot accept are all electrical goods including TVs and computers, as well as bike helmets, baby capsules, cots, prams, highchairs, mattresses and pillows.

Where and when?

Items can be donated at the shop (attached to St Alban's Anglican Church on the corner of Melrose and Mark streets) Tuesday to Friday from 9am to noon, and Saturday from 10am to noon. We ask people not to leave items on our doorstep as they are often scattered over the pavement and so go to waste.

How long has the Op Shop been open?

The Opportunity Shop opened in April 1968, in a small shop on the corner of Melrose and Erskine streets, and moved into the church building during the 1970s.

How did the Op Shop start?

In an article published in the *SEE* in April 1968, Reverend Harradine was quoted as saying that the shop was opened to give local parishioners the opportunity to buy inexpensive goods which they needed and provided a means for the stalwarts, with more time than money to spare, to help

the church money-wise. Forty years on, nothing has changed.

Describe the community the shop seeks to assist.

The community we seek to assist comprises mainly local residents of North Melbourne, including the Housing Commission estate, and from all ethnic backgrounds. Many are pensioners or single parents. Some customers come from further afield, particularly university students. We often serve students moving into local accommodation for a period of time, and sometimes receive the goods back as a donation when they finish their studies and leave the area. We also sometimes assist people moving into the Housing Commission estate to set up their new homes with kitchen items, etc.

Other services provided to the community through St Alban's include a food co-op and free homework club. Free piano and guitar lessons are also due to begin soon. The Romanian community also provides services from our building.

Dorothy Bache

If you'd like to donate to the food co-op, non-perishable contributions can be given to the Op Shop between 9am and noon Tuesday to Friday and 10am to noon on Saturdays.



The Op Shop's Dorothy Bache

Photo: courtesy of Jennifer Boyce

Osteopath Now in North Melbourne



Dr Paul O'Keefe (Osteopath)
B.Sci(Clin Sci), M.Hlth.Sci(Osteo)

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Back in the Chorus

Hmm ... Lasagne and toffee apples; fairy wings and Congolese dancing; poetry and football; song and good cheer; maracas and 'Edelweiss'; Abba and fresh fruit salad; saxophone and striptease; helium balloons and teacups; determination and courage; commitment and sponsorship; community and belief; sun and moon and stars and dreams.

If you were there, then you'd know what I am talking about ... Not some strange colourful Kubla Khan vision but actually The Centre's annual general meeting followed by Open Mike Night. And what an utterly awesome night it was. Over 100 people packed into the Lithuanian Club.

The AGM started at 5 pm, and we heard all about the many things The Centre has done over the last financial year — the Spring Fling Festival, the programs, courses, homework club, and traders' breakfasts. We heard The Centre has had a 70% reduction in funding from the City of Melbourne and is in the process of trying to find new sources of support and partnership.

Instead of focusing on the negative, The Centre is actively seeking new opportunities. The North Melbourne Football Club announced that it is entering a partnership with The Centre to provide a homework program for grade three to year 12 over two campuses (the library and the new Living and Learning Centre at the football club).

It was really exciting to hear that the North Melbourne Football Club is committed to working with and for the community of North Melbourne. And it has recognised the importance of reconnecting with the legends of its past. James Demetrious spoke of the 'shinboners' of old.

It is such a real joy to hear that the club wants to involve and support the community that it grew out of all those years ago. The Kangaroos have become North Melbourne again, and we are back in the chorus. And damn it feels good.

Diversity and community are such buzz words, but it feels so good when you see what they mean in action. Each of the committee members spoke of why they are on The Centre board, and the range of backgrounds, perspectives and talent was inspiring.

And the Open Mike Night? Well all I can say is the sun and the moon and the stars and dreams won hands down! Who can beat a man tearing up a giant cardboard box, stripping off layers of clothes while mournfully and soulfully ruing his talent on the saxophone? North Melbourne unwrapped alright!

Actually, I reckon the only thing that can beat it is a little three-year-old boy running up on stage during the Congolese dancing and joyfully boogieing to his own beat behind the performer.

Cathy Mitchell



Passi Joe got everyone's feet tapping and one of the youngest members of the audience couldn't resist joining him on stage

Photo: Jim Wetherill

Hungry for breakfast



Photo: Leni Dixon

The second Centre and North and West Melbourne Precinct Association Breakfast Event went off with an early morning bang at The Leveson in October. Following on from a very successful first edition in May, 85 breakfast-goers heard from Christine Nixon, Chair of the Victorian Bushfire Reconstruction and Recovery Authority, during Fire Action Week, the first dedicated fire preparation week of its kind in Australia. Christine shared with the group the events

surrounding Black Saturday, community and government response, and what's on the go now, nine months on.

Black Saturday was a day of extremes, most of Victoria experienced temperatures 12-18 degrees higher than average, there were strong gusty winds, and humidity was low. Seven hundred fires started that day, exerting energy equivalent to 1,500 bombs the size of the one dropped on Hiroshima, emitting smoke and debris into the air that

can be seen from satellite photos. All in all, 173 people were killed, 2,133 properties were destroyed, 1,500 properties were damaged and 430,000 hectares were burnt.

Christine covered the three-stage response, from fighting the fires to emergency relief, and then onto recovery and rebuilding. Of the \$341m raised in the Victorian Bushfire Appeal, two-thirds of the money has already been allocated or spent in the rebuilding stage of response, coordinated by the Victorian Bushfire Recovery and Reconstruction Authority. The authority is using a four-pronged approach to recovery, focusing on people and communities; reconstruction; local economies; and environment to ensure the process of recovery and rebuilding is done as smoothly and quickly as possible.

Six months on, there have been many achievements; however, there is still a lot of work to do. Three temporary villages have been erected in Marysville, Kinglake and Flowerdale, 8,500 volunteers have undertaken clean up and repairs to 1,917 kilometres of boundary fences on 1,142 properties, and 30 communities have created

individually tailored plans for rebuilding. Ongoing support from the Victorian Bushfire Recovery and Reconstruction Authority should ensure the rebuilding process continues as smoothly as possible. Christine shared about the lessons learnt about communities working together and how those lessons can be translated to our local community.

After Christine, business returned to business with Anthony Turner from the Small Business Mentoring Service. Anthony gave the group a snippet of his program, designed to get everyone in the room thinking about how effectively they conduct their business and how things could be done better with the professional support of the Small Business Mentoring Service.

The third breakfast event will showcase local fashion and design. It will be held on Wednesday 24 February. It will be hosted by Jason Grech at his Style Office in North Melbourne. Entitled 'Fashion Never Sleeps', it will commence at 7am. Tickets are available from The Centre and will sell out quickly.

Linden Smith

Homework Club Tutors Needed

The Centre, in conjunction with the North Melbourne Football Club Learning & Life Centre and the North Melbourne Library, run a free homework tutoring program for students in years 4-12.

Held at the North Melbourne Library on Tuesdays and Wednesdays for Year 4-9 and starting in 2010 Mondays and Thursday at the Learning and Life Centre, North Melbourne Football Club for Years 10-12.

Great fun for tutors and local children! No teaching qualifications required.

Please contact The Centre on 9328 1126 to register if you are interested in volunteering or for further information



The Centre
58 Errol street
North Melbourne
ph: 9328 1126

The North Melbourne Library
66 Errol Street
North Melbourne

North Melbourne Football Club Learning & Life Centre
Arden Street
North Melbourne

Homework Club 2010

The Centre, in conjunction with the North Melbourne Football Club Learning & Life Centre and the North Melbourne Library, run a free homework tutoring program for students in years 4-12.

- Years 4-6 North Melbourne Library Wednesdays 4pm-6pm
- Years 6-9 North Melbourne Library Tuesdays 4pm-6pm
- Years 10-12 Learning & Life Centre, North Melbourne Football Club Mondays and Thursdays 4pm-6pm

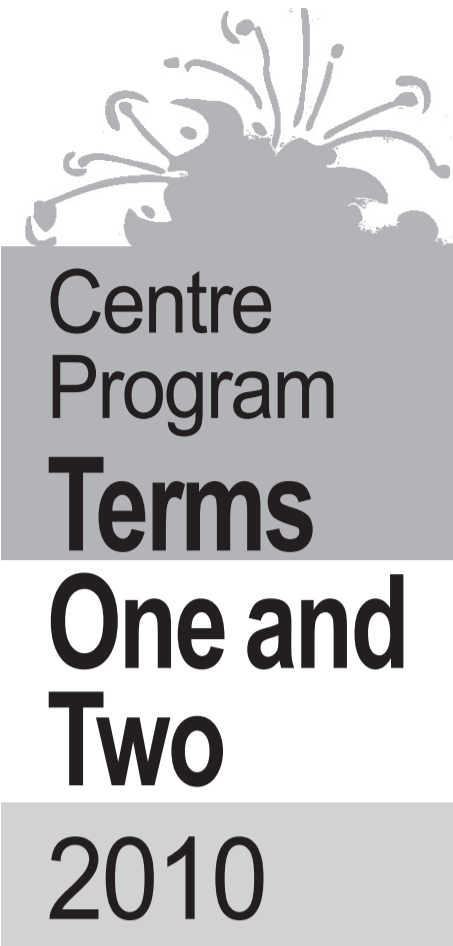
Great fun for tutors and local children! Please contact The Centre on 93281126 to register child/student if you are interested or for further information



The Centre
58 Errol street
North Melbourne
ph: 9328 1126

The North Melbourne Library
66 Errol Street
North Melbourne

North Melbourne Football Club Learning & Life Centre
Arden Street
North Melbourne



Centre Program Terms One and Two 2010

Brickworks AFI

Sally O'Dwyer

Where: The Centre
 Cost: \$4 per session concession

T1 Mon 1 Feb–22 Mar
 7 sessions 1.30pm–3.30pm
 No class Labour Day 8 Mar
 T2 Mon 12 Apr–21 Jun
 9 sessions 1.30pm–3.30pm

No class Anzac Day 26 April & Queen's Birthday 14 June

Brickworks AFI is an adult art program which is self-run and provides a relaxed, informal and supportive environment in which to create and explore your artistic self. Participants work with a variety of media (including paint, clay or textiles) to create individual projects in a group environment. All abilities welcome, enthusiasm encouraged! Materials provided, or you are welcome to bring your own. Occasional workshops run by known artists are included, as well as a chance to exhibit your work in a community setting. Low cost framing possible. *This is an ACFE funded course providing foundation skills to concession card holders, migrants and refugees from non-English speaking backgrounds.*

Calligraphy

Stephen Wright

Where: The Centre
 Cost: \$97 or \$88 concession

T1 Tue 2 Feb–23 Mar
 8 sessions 7.30pm–9.30pm
 T2 Tue 13 Apr–1 Jun
 8 sessions 7.30pm–9.30pm
 "I've always wanted to write like that"—well, now you can. Even if you are a complete beginner you'll soon be beautifying your cards, envelopes, scrapbooks and more with your new found writing artistry. Advanced students are equally welcome to explore different scripts, illumination, family trees etc., or just to freshen up their skills. All this in a super friendly atmosphere. Ask for a materials list when you enrol.

Computer Basics

John Louey New!

Where: The Centre
 Cost: \$25 (includes 5 x 2 hour sessions)

T1 Mon 18 Jan–15 Feb
 5 sessions 6.30pm–8.30pm
 T2 Mon 31 May–5 Jul
 5 sessions 6.30pm–8.30pm
 No class on Queen's Birthday 14 June
 How do I switch it on? Over the last two decades the personal computer has morphed from the domains of commerce and science, past the home study and into the living room. Increasingly it is seen as a preferred means for communications and information distribution. This course aims to develop the understanding and intuition vital for confident PC use. It is designed for people with little or no prior PC experience. Classes are flexible and adapted to the interests of participants.

Computers—Beginners

Michael Burville

Where: North Melbourne Library, 66 Errol Street, North Melbourne
 Cost: \$80 concession

T1 Fri 5 Feb–26 Mar
 8 sessions 9.30am–12.30pm
 Computers are here to help and also provide a bit of fun in the process. This course takes you through the basics of your personal computer (PC) with the aim of giving you confidence and understanding in the practical use and benefit of computers. Each lesson will introduce you to new topics to give you a taste of the common tasks computers are used for. Areas covered include the Windows operating system and navigation, word processing and document creation, the internet and email, spreadsheets and numbers, multimedia and more. Emphasis is on practical and interactive learning. You'll also receive a guided overview of services and resources available at the North Melbourne Library.

This is an ACFE funded course providing foundation skills to concession card holders, migrants and refugees from non-English speaking backgrounds.

Computers—Beginners Plus

Where: North Melbourne Library, 66 Errol Street, North Melbourne
 Cost: \$80 concession

T2 Fri 23 Apr–11 Jun
 8 sessions 9.30am–12.30pm
 This course builds on skills learnt in the beginners' course. The tutor will provide practical examples of applications for your computer skills, introduce you to the more advanced features of Microsoft Office and overall PC management. This course will give you confidence to create your own presentations and enhance your skills in all aspects of PC use. Emphasis is on practical and interactive learning. You'll also receive a guided overview of online services and resources available at the North Melbourne Library.

This is an ACFE funded course providing foundation skills to concession card holders, migrants and refugees from non-English speaking backgrounds.

Creating Inspired Kids

Davia McMillan

Where: The Centre
 Cost: T1 \$64, T2 \$88

T1 Tue 2 Feb–23 Mar
 8 sessions 3.45pm–5.15pm
 T2 Tue 13 Apr–22 Jun
 11 sessions 3.45pm–5.15pm
 A creative play experience for children from Grade 1 to 4, this class offers an imaginative range of artistic and creative activities to inspire and motivate children to extend and develop their own natural creative abilities. The environment is warm and welcoming and a great place to meet other creative kids and have some messy fun. Children must be signed in and out by a parent or nominated guardian.

Cupcakes

Ainslee Smith New!

Where: The Centre
 Cost: \$54

T1 Tue 16 Feb–23 Mar
 6 sessions 2.00pm–3.00pm
 T2 Tue 13 Apr–18 May
 6 sessions 2.00pm–3.00pm
 An interactive play-time for three and four year olds and their parents. A different activity each week will inspire play ideas at home. Our consultant, 3 year old Raph, named the group and the first week activity (according to Raph) will be decorating cupcakes! The focus will be on encouraging interactive play time between child and parent or grandparent. *Places will be limited and booking with full payment will secure your place. Breastfeeding babies welcome.*

eBay Tricks from a woman who knows

Nada Borevec

Where: The Centre
 Cost: \$97 or \$88 concession

T1 Mon 22 Feb–22 Mar
 4 sessions 7.00pm–8.30pm
 No class on Labour Day 8 Mar
 T2 Mon 3 May–24 May
 4 sessions 7.00pm–8.30pm
 This proven course has previous students revelling in eBay success! This is a tried and true way to make money and save money! All you have ever wanted to know about eBay.

Learn how to set up your account, avoid pitfalls, find bargains and identify products that will sell at a profit! Start having a fun and successful eBay hobby or business. As an experienced eBay 'power seller and buyer', this woman knows the easy way that eBay can work for you!

Basic internet and digital photography knowledge required.

Errol's Angels Community Choir

Where: North Melbourne Primary School 210 Errol Street, North Melbourne

Cost: earlybird \$120
 Full \$130 concession \$80.

Fee to be paid in first two weeks of term.

T1 Thu 28 Jan–25 Mar
 9 sessions 7.00pm–9.00pm
 T2 Thu 15 Apr–24 Jun
 11 sessions 7.00pm–9.00pm

Errol's Angels is a small, independent a-cappella choir based in North Melbourne, led by Musical Director Emily Hayes. Consisting of up to 30 voices, Errol's Angels sing a magical mix of multi-part songs, from Bach to the Beach Boys. We perform regularly at hospitals, events and the biennial Spring Fling Street Festival. Details can be found at <http://au.groups.yahoo.com/group/errolsangels/>
No audition is necessary, just a desire to sing and a willingness to learn.
 Contact Mark on 0438 557 664 or email mnmkcp@yahoo.com.au

Experiencing English

Where: The Centre
 Cost: \$8 per session concession

T2 Fri 16 Apr–25 Jun
 11 sessions 10.00am–12.00 noon

If English is not your first language and you want to improve your listening and speaking, then this is the class for you. Gain an understanding of many cultures in a friendly setting. Improve your spoken English. These fun and informal sessions will include practical experience in the local community. It may be ordering your coffee or catching a tram. Learn more about your community while building your English communication skills.
This is an ACFE funded course providing foundation skills to concession card holders, migrants and refugees from non-English speaking backgrounds.

Fancy Becoming a Freelancer?—Advanced

Amy McDonald

Where: The Centre
 Cost: \$100 or \$90 concession

T2 Wed 5 May–26 May
 4 sessions 7.00pm–9.00pm

So you think you've got good ideas, can string a sentence together and know the difference between a profile and a review? Great! Come along to the second instalment of the Fancy Being a Freelancer? course to hone your skills and increase your profits! Share more magazine article tips and tricks with other emerging freelance writers.

Freelance Writing New!

Amy McDonald

Where: The Centre
 Cost: \$55 concession

T1 Wed 3 Mar–24 Mar
 4 sessions 7.00pm–9.00pm

Do you enjoy reading magazines? Or writing? What about combining the two and making some money? Writing freelance magazine articles and selling them to editors is much easier than you might think. In this course, participants will learn how to conduct interviews, write reviews and profiles and pitch their articles to magazine editors.

This is an ACFE funded course providing foundation skills to concession card holders, migrants and refugees from non-English speaking backgrounds.

Global Homework Program

Celeste O'Keefe

The Centre, in conjunction with the North Melbourne Football Club Learning & Life Centre and the North Melbourne Library, runs a free homework tutoring program for students in years 4-12. There is a strong focus on numeracy and literacy in line with school curriculum, VELS, VCE, VCAL, VET, ESL and IB. The program also provides interpreters for students from backgrounds where English is not their first language, and encourages students from refugee and CALD backgrounds to attend.

Great fun for tutors and local children!
 Please contact The Centre on 93281126 to register your child/student if you are interested or for further information.

Holyoake Drumbeat Program

Andrew McSweeney

Where: Living Music, 53 Little Baillie Street, North Melbourne

Cost: \$55 concession

T1 Thu 4 Feb–25 Mar
 8 sessions 4.00pm–5.00pm
 T2 Thu 15 Apr–24 Jun
 11 sessions 4.00pm–5.00pm

Learn group drumming while developing interpersonal skills. This innovative course is for young people over 15. Group drumming enables people to connect with others while learning social skills including better communication, problem solving and empathy. The course is held in a warehouse recording studio in North Melbourne with trained facilitators who are musicians. This course is structured so attendance is required for the full 10 weeks.

This is an ACFE funded course providing foundation skills to concession card holders, migrants and refugees from non-English speaking backgrounds.

Sponsored by the Rotary Club of North Melbourne



Homework Club: Grades 4–6

Where: North Melbourne Library Room 1, 66 Errol Street, North Melbourne

Cost: Free

T1 Wed 17 Feb–24 Mar
 6 sessions 4.00pm–6.00pm
 T2 Wed 14 Apr–23 Jun
 11 sessions 4.00pm–6.00pm

This program is a free homework tutoring program for children in grades 4 to 6 who live or attend school in the North and West Melbourne area. A team of supervised and trained volunteers will offer individual support and tutoring. Children must be signed in and out by a parent or guardian. Just turn up with your homework.

New volunteer tutors are encouraged to apply—see The Centre's Volunteer Program.

Homework Club: Transitional Years 6–9

Where: North Melbourne Library Room 1, 66 Errol Street, North Melbourne

Cost: Free

T1 Tue 16 Feb–23 Mar
 6 sessions 4.00pm–6.00pm
 T2 Tue 13 Apr–22 Jun
 11 sessions 4.00pm–6.00pm

A transitional program for children moving from primary school into secondary school. A team of supervised and trained volunteers will offer support and tutoring.
New volunteer tutors are encouraged to apply—see The Centre's Volunteer Program.

be studied—poses, counter poses, breathing, meditation, relaxation and philosophy. This will enable students to develop a practice tailored to their own specific needs based on current state of health, age, occupation and lifestyle. Classes will be conducted in a light-hearted manner to allow students to have fun, explore and develop a complete practice for themselves based on the traditional principles of yoga.

**Please do not eat a large meal within 2–3 hours of your Yoga practice. Light snacks are ideal to maintain your energy. This yoga class is not suitable for pregnant women.*



Centre Program Terms One and Two

2010

Centre Adventures

Ainslee Smith

European Food Safari Shopping Tour

Starting from The Centre

Cost: \$25

T2 Mon 12 Apr 1 session

9.30am – 3.00pm

All-day bus trip to European food factory outlets around Melbourne! Purchase gourmet delights at discounted prices. Includes visits to Mediterranean wholesalers such as La Triestina pasta factory and Aurora's Ice-cream! Travel and lunch are all inclusive. Bookings with payment required one week before scheduled date.

Ticket required for entry.

Globe Trotting Lunches

Where: The Centre

Cost: \$15 per lunch

T1 Wed 24 Mar,

1 session 12.30pm – 2.30pm

T2 Wed 21 Apr, 26 May, 23 Jun

3 sessions 12.30pm – 2.30pm

A gastronomic taste sensation awaits you when you come on in for our delicious Globe Trotting Lunches. All the food is prepared and cooked at The Centre by Ainslee Smith. On our gastronomic journey we will experience a range of tastes, sounds, sights and smells, whilst enjoying a fabulous three-course meal. We would love to share our journey with you. Let's go! Bookings with payment required one week before scheduled date.

Ticket required for entry.

Healesville Sanctuary Adventure

Where: Meet at The Centre

Cost: \$25

T1 Mon 1 Mar

1 session 9.30am – 3.30pm

This Adventure involves a bus ride through the beautiful Yarra Valley to the Healesville Sanctuary. We will have a guided tour through

the sanctuary including the «birds of flight» show. A BBQ lunch will be provided. Come and be a part of this wonderful day! Please wear suitable footwear and clothing for the day's weather! Photos will be taken and displayed in our Adventure window. Bookings with payment required one week before scheduled date.

Ticket required for entry.

Laverton Market Adventure

Where: Meet at The Centre

Cost: \$15

T1 Sat 20 Feb

1 session 8.30am – 1.30pm

T2 Sat 15 May

1 session 8.30am – 1.30pm

Our next Adventure for the year starts with a half-day bus trip to Melbourne's most popular bargain destination, trash and treasure at the Laverton Market. Receive a free shopping bag with morning tea provided. There will be something for everyone. Come along and let's get shopping. Please wear suitable footwear and clothing for the day's weather! Bookings with payment required one week before scheduled date.

Ticket required for entry.

Werribee Mansion & Rose Garden Adventure

Where: Meet at The Centre

Cost: \$20

T1 Mon 8 Feb

1 session 9.30am – 3.30pm

This Adventure involves a bus ride to the spectacular Werribee Mansion & Rose Garden. We will have a guided tour through the Mansion and rose garden. A BBQ lunch will be provided.

Come and be a part of this wonderful day! Photos will be taken and displayed in our Adventure window. Bookings with payment required one week before scheduled date.

Ticket required for entry.

Wonders of Science: Scienceworks including Planetarium Adventure

Where: Meet at The Centre

Cost: \$25

T2 Mon 3 May

1 session 9.30am – 3.30pm

Discover the wonders of science and astronomy! There is absolutely something for everyone on this tour. Lunch included in trendy Yarraville. Bookings with payment required one week before scheduled date. Ticket required for entry.

Download an enrolment form today!

Visit <http://www.centre.org.au> and click on enrolment forms.

EVENTS

Breakfast Event Series

Breakfast #3 — *Fashion Never Sleeps*

24 February 2009

7.00am-10.00am

The Centre proudly works in partnership with the North and West Melbourne Precinct Association to support local business with a series of Breakfast Events. The next Breakfast Event will be held on 24 February 2010. This event will showcase local fashion and design. It will be held in local designer Jason Grech's Style Warehouse. Experience the design and construction work room while it is functioning. This is a great opportunity to meet people who live, work or play locally whilst sampling the diversity of local fare. The Breakfast Event is the perfect opportunity to network and promote your own business or organisation before your busy workday begins. Tickets always sell out so book soon.

Spring Fling Festival 2010

Sunday 24 October 2010

More details to come.

Unwrapping

During seven days in Spring, I tried something new. I was welcomed into unfamiliar spaces, and I was left feeling warm and fuzzy about our local places and the people we share them with. Spring Fling Fundraising Week 2009 was designed to UNWRAP the best of North and West Melbourne and help promote funds for the 2010 Street Festival.

The most creative festival event concept award goes to (drum roll) Libertine Dining and Rose Bar for their five course degustation menu with cocktails matched to each course! They were closely followed by Fort Knox Self Storage, whose Spencer Street establishment was the place to be for wine, beer and cheese tasting to promote their self storage options. Very nice work.

Tasting of a different kind was on offer at The Centre's Open Mic Night. Carnival decorations set the scene for the true 'ave a go spirit of local artists who entertained the packed Lithuanian Club with comedy, music and spoken word. Guests indulged in home-style lasagne, salad, garlic bread, fairy floss and toffee apples. An outstanding evening and big effort by The Centre team who moved onto a mixed cocktail at Red Monkey to celebrate and a late night burger from Embassy Café!

St Mary Star of the Sea opened its doors for a tour of the church and an organ recital. One festival adventurer remarked she had wanted to see inside the magnificent building for a long time, and the tour gave everyone, no matter what their beliefs, a chance to admire it. Thanks to the Restoration Coordinator.

North Melbourne Sustainability Street helped us spring into gardening. Plants were sold, and money was raised thanks to the very skilled green thumb volunteers. Thanks also to the IGA and the City of Melbourne for hosting the weekend Errol Street stall.

Exceptionally talented and modest artist Ted May opened his Little Dryburgh Street studio and generously guided us through. His delight in and enthusiasm for his art is infec-

tious, which, if you missed it, can be caught at his Gallerysmith exhibition in January 2010. Coincidentally, the gallery was my next stop.

While director Marita Smith was being interviewed about her Abbotsford Street gallery, I explored the upstairs artist studio spaces. It was difficult for me to resist the ping pong table that greeted me on my entry to the well-lit open space. Artists were busy rearranging their spaces or perhaps cleaning up in preparation for the festival onlookers! It really was a rare glimpse into shared studio environment, and if you are looking for one, I recommend you check it out.

Naturally, the urge to play ping pong led

me to the City of Melbourne Bowls Club. After many family gatherings hearing my Grandfather's lawn bowls adventures, it was time to don the traditional white hat (provided by the Club) and take to the lawn.

Thankfully, the good folk from the Club gave me a lesson after I enjoyed a perfectly cooked barbecue sausage, a drink from the bar and a tour around the outstanding new facilities. It is no surprise that the Club is fully booked for functions over the Christmas period. See if you can squeeze in sometime, become a member or join the social teams.

If lawn bowls doesn't take your fancy, make time to check out the newly reno-

vated North Melbourne Recreation Centre on Macauley Road; it is worth a visit. Also, check out the youth and lunchtime fitness sessions at the ever popular North Melbourne Boxing and Fitness in Sutton Street. Steve and his team are great supporters of North and West Melbourne. And after your workout, contact Angela at Eros Hair Lounge on Errol Street for a well-deserved pampering!

As usual, there are too many people to thank for making it all possible. Thanks for your warmth and the fuzz.

See you on Errol Street in October next year. Subscribe to www.springfling.org.au to keep up-to-date.

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street festival

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**volunteer. perform. participate
or show off your wares**

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Errol Street North Melbourne

Sunday 24 October 2010

12noon – 5pm

Register your interest to volunteer, perform, show off your wares or participate in festival activities at:
www.springfling.org.au

Spring Fling is produced by The Centre to celebrate with people who live, work and play in and around North and West Melbourne.



abbeyfield

Housing for Older People

**Supported Accommodation
North Melbourne**

The Abbeyfield Society is a non-profit organisation which provides supported accommodation for older men and women with limited income in a number of locations in Victoria.

The North Melbourne House is conveniently located close to public transport, hospitals and other facilities. It provides a small number of bed-sitting rooms all with en-suite facilities. All meals are provided.

Abbeyfield is the perfect answer for older people who want to remain independent but who wish for increased wellbeing through support, companionship and security. Abbeyfield gives older people an alternative to living alone and to facing an uncertain housing market.

For enquiries and applications please call The Abbeyfield Society (North West Melbourne) Inc on **9329 9220**

farmers market



North Melbourne Primary School Council hosted its first monthly Farmers' Market on 1 November 2009.

The inaugural Farmers' Market attracted Victorian producers from as close as Geelong and as far away as Robinvale. The local Farmers' Market proved to be popular, with over 1,000 people visiting.

Fresh and locally produced goods were offered for sampling and sale. Happy shoppers were able to choose from a range of freshly grown and locally manufactured foods.

The gate fee for entry to the market was a gold coin donation, which will be allocated to the school's Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Program.

The Farmers' Market is a wonderful community building exercise, with more opportunities for the local community to show its support of the school. North Melbourne Primary School will welcome shoppers on the first Sunday of each month (except for January when it will be the second Sunday) until December 2010.

Helen Stearman

book reviews

Pink—Lili Wilkinson
(Melbourne author)

Surviving adolescence is hard enough: trying to discover who you are while not losing yourself to peer pressure and friends' expectations. Ava Simpson is trying to juggle these pressures and also trying to figure out whether she likes girls or boys. She leaves the public school she attends with super-cool feminist girlfriend Chloe, to explore a new identity at private school Billy Hughes, trading her black wardrobe for a pink argyle sweater. Far from the perfect and popular ideal she had expected, Ava finds herself torn between the cool, over-achieving actors in the 'Pastel' crowd, and the fun but geeky misfits in the stage crew. While trying hard to fit in with the expectations of her unconventional parents and girlfriend Chloe, as well as the Pastels and the stage crew, Ava loses track of what she really wants for herself, until the juggling act comes crashing down on opening night. This is a really great book for girls, for geeks, and for anyone who

doesn't want to be pigeonholed by the expectations of others. Highly recommended.

Paper Towns—John Green

There really are not sufficient words to describe how amazing and awesome this book is. I read it in under 24 hours, just like the crazy gas-pedal road trip that Q takes with his friends. To say that it perfectly captures the alienation and hilarity of adolescence sounds cliched and is a woefully inadequate description, yet this is what I felt. The novel is essentially about endings and beginnings—the ending of high school and leaving behind your past. The object of Q's affections, Margo Roth Spiegelman, is at once cool, mysterious and aloof, and also immature, selfish and afraid. She is a real person. This is the beauty of John Green's writing—through the skilful use of Walt Whitman's poetry, he makes us see people not through the superimposed mask we make for them but as they really are. Definitely recommended.

Kate McDonell

film award

Italian Students at North Melbourne Primary School Win Language Film Festival In Italian lessons at North Melbourne Primary School, Grades 4 to 6 have been studying a unit about Pompeii to coincide with the exhibition A Day In Pompeii, which visited the Melbourne Museum in Carlton Gardens earlier this year. Students studied the lives of a typical family from Pompeii—how they lived, what they ate and the effects of the eruption of Mount Vesuvius. Students

in Grade 6 visited the exhibition and participated in a hands-on tutorial with the Museum's language and educational consultant. As part of an extension program, a small group of students created a short film about Pompeii using Claymation and iMOVIE. The film, Pompeii Tra Gli Occhi di un Cane, follows the eruption of Mount Vesuvius from a dog's point of view. This film was entered into a short film competition open to all LOTE students in the Western Metropolitan Region and to our great delight—we WON!

src visit

On Monday 14 September, students in the Student Representative Council (SRC) at North Melbourne Primary School travelled to Middle Kinglake Primary School (a school that lost everything in the bushfires) to deliver the books and games that had been collected for them.

We had morning tea in their special garden. After that, we met with the Grade 3/4

class. We paired up with students from the class and opened up all of the boxes of books and games. They were very excited and thankful for our gifts. Then, we were introduced to their pet chickens and guinea pigs!

It was interesting to see where the fires had been, and it was good to see that the plants and trees have begun to recover.



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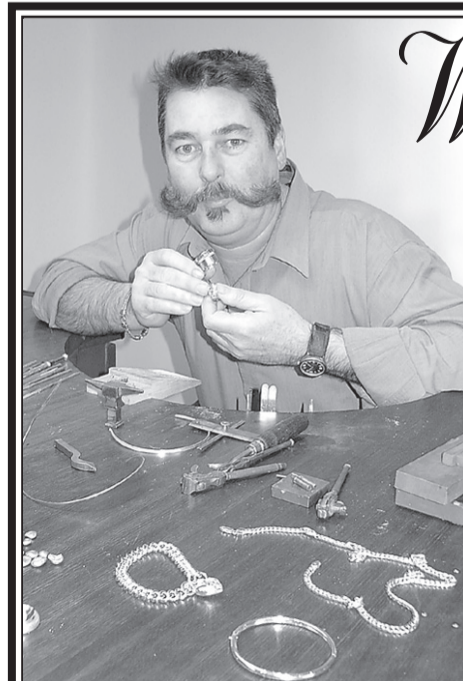
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The Hotham History Project Inc is a group of residents and friends of North and West Melbourne who are interested in exploring the history of this fascinating old part of Melbourne.

Committee meetings and activities are held on the fourth Tuesday of the month at the North Melbourne Library. Occasional historical walks and other events are also conducted on Saturday afternoons. See www.hothamhistory.org.au for our events and publications.

Talk of the dead

John Laurens deserves to be remembered by people who live in North and West Melbourne. He was the first treasurer of the Hotham Mechanics Institute, which later became the North Melbourne Library. When you stand opposite the library on Errol Street, you will still see the words 'Mechanics Institute' on the wall of the building. In his role as treasurer, John Laurens was most persistent in negotiating for a Victorian government grant to help establish a municipal library. His success helped to ensure that we have had a library in Errol Street ever since.

John Laurens did not live in Laurens Street. Very few of Hotham's former mayors and councillors did live in the streets that later came to have their names. Mr Laurens lived in Claremount Villa in Dryburgh Street with his wife Elizabeth and her daughter by a previous marriage. The actual house is no longer there, but our best guess is that it was on the site of the present Ukrainian cathedral. Mr Laurens was for many years active in public life. As well as being a local councillor for 21 years (1870–1891) and mayor of Hotham from 1872–1873, he was also a member of the Legislative Council from 1877–1892. In these various roles, as the press noted at the time, his speeches earned him the nickname 'Windbag'. You can find more colourful details about John Laurens and his career in Heather McKay's *Men of Hotham* and Bill Hannan's *Pride of Hotham*, both publications of the Hotham History Project.

Documents retrieved from the Public Records Office site show that when John Laurens died of liver cancer in 1894, his estate owed a small sum to the Collins Street doctor who had been treating him. Apart from household furniture and linen, the only personal item which is identified in the will is 'an old silver watch' valued at fifteen shillings. His wife, Elizabeth, who was already a widow when they married, was one of the 800 or so local women to sign the Monster Petition of 1891 which sought voting rights for women in the colony of Victoria. She was to die about seven years after John, having lived to see Federation come to pass but not yet having the opportunity to cast a vote.

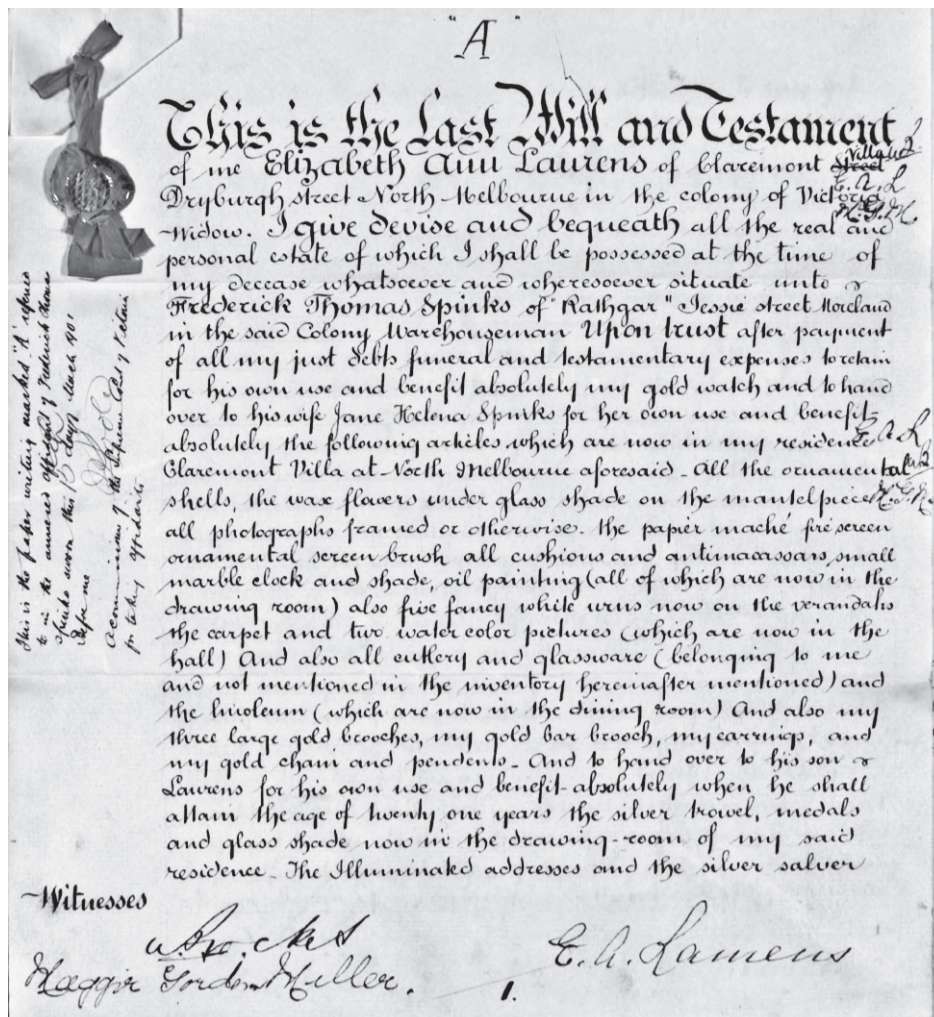
Elizabeth's will, which was made about two years before she died, seems to the present day reader a much more engaging document than John's will. She refers to many belongings about which she is most particular and her instructions about who should get what are quite specific. Her main benefactor was to receive articles from the drawing room: her collection of ornamental shells, the wax flowers under the glass shack on the mantelpiece, framed and unframed photos, the papier-mâché firescreen, all the cushions and antimacassars in the room, and a small marble clock. These details are interesting because they provide glimpses of what her house might have been like and how she lived in it. In addition, the same beneficiary also inherited five white urns from the verandah of the house and particular items of jewellery: three large gold brooches, a gold bar brooch, ear rings, a gold chain and pendants. Elizabeth's personal belongings

outnumber those of her husband and are certainly more valuable.

All Elizabeth's wearing apparel (not items that one would expect to find in a modern will), including her gold brooch with the monogram engraved on it and five pounds in cash, are to be given 'for her sole use and benefit' to Lucy Dudderidge as 'a mark of appreciation of her long and faithful service'. Lucy must have been a servant or a lady's companion. The papers submitted for probate show that Lucy was also paid seven shillings which may have been owing to her in wages. Allison's, the Errol Street undertakers of the time, charged twelve pounds for Elizabeth Laurens' funeral, and she was buried with John in an unmarked grave in the Methodist section of Melbourne General Cemetery.

The Buncles, another prominent Hotham family at the time, appear to have had much more property to dispose of than the Laurens. John Bunclie had arrived in Melbourne in 1852 with his wife. He was then a 28-year-old and father of three. He settled in Hotham, had two short terms as a municipal councillor (one as mayor) and went on to establish himself as a highly successful engineer and manufacturer of agricultural instruments. His businesses were not in Bunclie Street but in the vicinity of Vale and High streets and up towards Flemington Road.

When he was preparing his will, John had quite a lot of valuable property to dispose of, including factories, 14 rented houses and a hotel. John directs his property and income to his wife Mary Ann 'for the term of her natural life so long as she remains my widow'. He goes into further detail explaining, 'In the event of my wife remarrying, I direct my trustees to allow her the



Last will and testament of Elizabeth Laurens courtesy Lorna Hannan

sum of one hundred and fifty pounds per annum from the rents and profits of said houses.' Thus Mary Ann will still be provided for, but these provisions would alter should she re-marry, which she did not.

When Mary Ann died a widow in 1895, the papers that list her property value her furniture at one hundred and thirty pounds and plate, which is probably silver, at fifty pounds. The depression of the early 1890s had wiped out much of the wealth the Buncles had accumulated. Her will states that her personal belongings would go to her daughter, except for a family Bible which had belonged to her mother and father and was now to be handed on to her sister. All else was to be divided equally between her children with no differentiation between her sons and daughters. Her parental care, parceled out in equal bundles, carried on beyond her lifetime.

These wills and probate papers are all available online from the Public Records Office of Victoria. With the help of a few names and dates, you may be able to find information about your family or previous residents in your house or street. The Public Records site is easy to use. Click on *Accessing Wills and Probate Records* and follow the prompts provided for 1841–1925, 1926–1992 or 2001 onwards. There is also information in *PROVGuide 68* which is about accessing original wills and probate records.

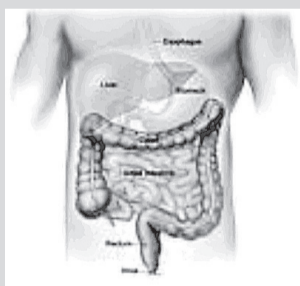
Lorna Hannan,
for the Hotham History Project

Lorna is chair and a founding member of the Hotham History Project. If you are interested in the work of the Project, you will find lots to interest you on our website which is at www.hothamhistory.org.au.

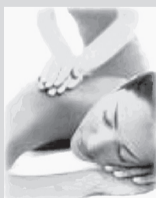
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BOOK REVIEW

Climate of Australia

If you are looking for a beautifully presented book that provides detailed and authoritative information on Australia's climate, then *Climate of Australia* is just that book. If, however, you are more specifically interested in climate change and how global warming is affecting the climate of Australia, then you may be disappointed.

Climate of Australia is not short on facts and data. At over 200 pages this pretty, large format hardcover makes a lovely coffee table book at the same time as it is a respectable reference book. Drawing on the Bureau of Meteorology's extensive records and statistics, the book takes the reader through all aspects of the Australian climate. It traces Australia's palaeo-climates back millions of years, examines weather patterns that influence our climate, explains the various weather elements (such as rainfall and temperature) that make up our climate, and describes extreme weather such as cyclones, droughts and bushfires.

It is a wonderful book for confirming or correcting those 'facts' you hear floating around—for example, Sydney really does receive twice as much rainfall as Melbourne or London. I also found particularly interesting the explanations on how the meteorological data is collected. I had never thought to wonder how the sunniness of a day is

measured; it seems they use a crystal ball that focuses sunlight once it reaches a certain intensity and burns a mark into a piece of paper. I also appreciated the different view provided in the case study of an Indigenous understanding of climate. The Brambuk calendar, from the region of Halls Gap, has six seasons. These are defined by the behaviour of animals, the flowering of plants and the timing of traditional activities as much as by the weather.

At some points, however, *Climate of Australia* takes on a textbook look and the amount of information crowding the pages in the form of graphs and tables is overwhelming. It was in these sections that I felt the book had a focus on data rather than information; I was reading statistics but finding it difficult to conceptualise what those numbers meant in the real world. Yet at other times, information was presented very well—often through the use of comparisons. When I could see the weather statistics for the capital cities I have visited side-by-side with those I haven't, it was much easier to imagine the climates of the latter. It was also enlightening to see which areas around the world have similar climates to the various regions of Australia, to learn that tropical northern Australia is similar to south-eastern Brazil, whilst south-western Australia is similar to the Mediterranean and south-eastern Australia is more like Western Europe or even parts of Central Chile.

But perhaps one of the major drawbacks of *Climate of Australia* is the chapter on extreme weather; we tend to be more

interested in extremes than averages. This chapter deals with cyclones, storms, floods, drought, fires, snow, gales, heat waves and dust storms, so a lot of the more dramatic photographs in the book are here. The cause and nature of these extreme weather events are explained, and some of the most memorable examples are described. The fact that the past year has been so eventful in terms of extreme weather has caused the book to be slightly outdated in some ways. There is no mention of the Black Saturday fires, the concurrent flooding in Queensland or the more recent dust storm in Sydney.

Yet the Bureau of Meteorology cannot control the weather (as much as we seem to think they can when we curse them for inaccurate forecasts), and the book doesn't really suffer from these omissions. What is more disappointing is that there is no real discussion as to whether extreme weather events are increasing due to climate change. This is, in fact, where the book fell down for me. The issue of human-induced climate change did not even rate a whole section to itself, but rather was mentioned briefly in two subsections within a chapter on 'Climate Influences'. The two sections (one on 'Temperature Trends' and one on 'Enhanced Global Warming') came to a total of four pages out of 214, or about 540 words. Considering that the promotion and marketing of this book will surely be taking advantage of the public interest in climate change, I was disappointed that it was covered so cursorily in the book.

However, whilst this is a significant omis-

sion, it does not detract from the quality of the content that is there. This book provides reliable and well-structured information that can act as an excellent foundation for those who would like to further pursue the issue of climate change as it relates to the Australian climate (and there are a few entries in the further reading section that point in that direction). *Climate of Australia* is also a good reference work in its own right, particularly in regard to the extensive statistics it contains, which lend themselves to further analysis by the technically minded reader. In fact an included CD contains yet more data, including tables that can be downloaded into a spreadsheet for the purposes of graphing and analysis. And if, like me, you are not technically minded, the quality of the photography alone will bring great reading pleasure.

To purchase a copy of *Climate of Australia*, visit <www.scholarly.info> or call 9329 6963.



For a chance to win a copy of *Climate of Australia*, visit Australian Scholarly Publishing's website (www.scholarly.info) and send the most creative answer you can to the question,

Which new title would you most like to read on a summer's day?

Email your entry, name, and contact details to thenews58@gmail.com with 'CLIMATE Giveaway' in the topic line by 18 December 2009.

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Keen learner-gardeners at the recent workshop, Make Your Own Mini-Garden, presented by North Melbourne Sustainability Street at their North Melbourne Community Garden. For more information on Sustainability Street, community gardening and future workshops, go to <www.northmelbourness.com> or email info@northmelbourness.com.

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Becoming a grandparent



was for them. Unfortunately, the program I attended in mid-August was the last as the course has fallen under the axe of hospital administrative cost-cutting and is unlikely to run again.

I was unavailable for the June course, so I was booked in to participate in July, the month my grandson was born. As this class was cancelled, my grandson was about 6 weeks old when I finally attended the class in August. By that time, I was an old hand at grandparenthood and was able to discuss my own experiences for the benefit of the still-to-be enlightened class members.

The experience of becoming a grandmother was for me a kind of enlightenment—being able to relive the birthing process from a completely new perspective and reflect on my own experiences that occurred a whole generation ago.

The class was fairly unstructured and the teacher was prepared to set the agenda according to the interests of the participants. However, the midwife who led the class had some set views that she was keen to share. Whether class members were prepared to accept these views was up to them.

The first clearly expressed view was the need for prospective grandparents and young parents to negotiate their expectations and clarify their respective roles prior to the birth. It was suggested that a neutral venue (such as a cafe for brunch) for this important discussion was ideal since this removed the power differential. Grandparents were reminded that it was important that the adoption of a new role/life stage was not the signal that everything should be dropped in the interests of supporting the new parents

and that sacrifice is not a requirement of this new state. It was evident from the group discussion, however, that several of the participants were preparing to take a very dominant role in caring for their grandchildren to enable their sons and daughters and their partners to establish themselves economically.

We were given some of the latest information on pregnancy and birth: how long they will allow pregnant mothers to go overdue before induction, how mothers are monitored (with a different stream for mothers of twins) and the significant changes to suggested diets during pregnancy to help prevent health conditions such as listeria. The amazing development in 3-D scanning was also discussed, and the hospital tries to assist young mothers to rest and get to know their new babies by strictly regulating visiting hours.

Some changes in child care practices were covered, including the suggestion that solid foods should not be given to babies until they are six months old to prevent food allergies. Sleeping babies on their backs was also discussed because of the risk of SIDS (Sudden Infant Death Syndrome). Other information about this condition was discussed as well, as was the importance of lots of rest and of practical help during the early months of motherhood. Although it was pointed out that today's new fathers often take on a major role in child rearing, there is still room for grandparents to get involved in cooking and housework to enable the mother to feed and care for the baby. Helping young mothers is highly essential because young mothers who appear to be depressed are most

likely stressed and if this is not monitored, one in five mothers are at risk of developing post-natal depression.

It was also suggested that every grandparent teach each of their grandchildren one special skill whether it be knitting, football or whatever is right for the two of you.

There is a lot of new thinking about practical and philosophical aspects of child rearing with lots of theories and suggestions, but today's parents are very knowledgeable and are used to researching issues and problems as they arise. Perhaps the most important role for grandparents is to be available to participate in dialogue rather than set themselves up as a source of alternative knowledge.

So is this a program that the hospital should continue to run? I found the views expressed were thoughtfully presented, although I did not always agree with them. The interaction with others who were about to take on a grandparent role was fruitful. It was a forum that was ideal for asking questions and concerns about pregnancy, childbirth and the care of young babies. An alternative to this program could be the formation of local groups for grandparents who are heavily involved in caring for their grandchildren, run by health professionals at places like community health centres. This could provide a real benefit, but knowing how stretched these services are already, it is probably not a feasible suggestion.

Felicity Jack

Organised through the Royal Women's Hospital was a grandparent course for those who were or about to be grandparents of babies born at the hospital. I was curious to know what it would teach me so I enrolled enthusiastically and offered to write a piece for the *North and West Melbourne News* so that other grandparents could decide whether the course

Cherry trail

Cherries are without a doubt the ultimate seasonal fruit. Being at their best between November and January, these heart-shaped stone fruits vary in colour from red, to deep red to black depending on their variety.

They are highly perishable so it's best to store them in a plastic bag in the fridge. Having said that, their plump, glossy skins make them hard to resist, so they probably would be consumed as quickly as they are put on the table.



As with all fruits and vegetables, not only are cherries delicious to munch on, but they are also packed full of health benefits as well. Eating cherries can help lower uric acid levels in the blood, reducing the risk of gout. Having anti-

inflammatory compounds, cherries are also said to be great for those who have rheumatoid arthritis and other inflammatory conditions. They are also said to be beneficial for people who suffer from cardiovascular conditions, asthma, hay fever, eczema and hives, just to name a few.

Cherries are jam-packed full of vitamins A, C and E. Vitamin A is particularly useful for vision, eye health and skin as well as enhancing one's immunity. Vitamin C is necessary for tissue growth and repair as well as acting as an antioxidant, and vitamin E improves circulation and protects against heart disease. Cherries are also high in antioxi-

dants, making them an excellent boost to the immune system—a vital element in the prevention of infection.

So as you can see, when it comes to cherries, more is definitely better as they are clearly a great fruit full of health benefits. Even if you aren't a cherry fan, you can always just use them to dangle over your ears as a pair of earrings.

Patricia Lew

For more information, visit the Victorian Cherry Association's website at www.cherries.org.au where you can download a free brochure with recipes, facts and a map of 'The Great Victorian Cherry Trail' with information on growers who sell direct to the public.

Advertising Feature



Are your feet killing you? Help is at hand.

Did you know that one in five Australians experience foot pain? However, only a small percentage of us consult a podiatrist.

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Young people and foot pain

A recent study found that a disproportionate number of men aged 20–34 leave foot pain untreated.

They could be taking a risk, as foot pain can reflect medical problems that may have serious health consequences.

A perception that podiatry is only for older people may explain why younger people tend not to seek help.

Podiatrists are tertiary qualified, front-line health professionals trained to deal with the prevention, diagnosis, treatment and rehabilitation of medical and surgical conditions of the feet and lower limbs.

The complex way feet work and the wide range of foot problems demand professional expertise to assess and manage the causes of foot pain.

The older person and foot pain

As you get on in years you are more likely to have bunions, toe deformities, numbness and reduced toe strength. Foot pain and poor foot function can result in frequent falls among the elderly.

Older people sometimes dismiss these symptoms as an inevitable part of ageing. These problems are treatable, however, and a visit to a podiatrist will almost certainly lead to a reduction in pain and less likelihood of falling.

Heal and arch pain

Early treatment for heel and arch pain might involve exercise, shoe recommendations, taping or strapping and anti-inflammatory medication. Ice-packs or ultrasounds may also be used. These methods will effectively treat most heel and arch pain without the need for surgery.

Care for your feet

Our feet are often the most neglected and forgotten part of our bodies. Yet research has shown that our feet carry us on a journey of 128,000 kilometres over a lifetime — the equivalent of three times round the world!

If your feet are killing you, whatever your age, see your local podiatrist.

North Melbourne Podiatry
59 Errol Street, North Melbourne 3051
Phone 9328 3733 • Fax 9328 3732
Contact Loan Nguyen



The benefits of chiropractic care

Some might ask what a chiropractor really does and how seeing one can rid you of your aches and pains. The answer is simple. A chiropractor's goal is to focus on the spine's relationship with the nervous system and to encourage the body to heal itself without the use of drugs or surgery.

The spine and the nervous system are the main focuses of a chiropractor, and although back and neck pain are what people immediately associate chiropractic treatment with, these aren't the only goals. In fact, chiropractic care can help ease a range of different ail-

ments including back pain, headaches, digestive problems, numbness and poor posture. According to the Chiropractors' Association of Australia, the benefits of chiropractic care include increased mobility and range of motion, decreased stiffness and muscular spasms, arthritic joint pain relief, increased joint health, increased sense of wellbeing and relaxation, enhanced tissue healing, and decreased tissue inflammation.

Usually, an adjustment will be required for a chiropractor to help improve spinal function and alignment. There are reportedly over 100 different techniques for this to be performed. Chiropractors may for instance use their hands, a handheld instrument or use a special table, all of which are specialised techniques designed to increase and help the nervous system work at its best. When people have an adjustment, they often hear a popping noise. This isn't anything to be too alarmed

about though, as it's usually just tiny gas bubbles being released from the spine or other joints.

Along with spinal adjustive techniques, a chiropractor may also use soft tissue techniques (e.g. massage), offering advice on dietary needs, nutritional counselling, physical therapies and lifestyle modification programs depending on a patient's condition.

Chiropractic treatment is yet another natural way to heal your body without the use of medication, and the benefits certainly sound worthwhile. Next time you have a sore back or you are feeling generally out of whack, you might want to consider a chiropractor.

For further information, visit the Chiropractors' Association of Australia website at www.chiropractors.asn.au.

Patricia Lew

TRAVEL & FOOD

It's pretty rosey in North Melbourne



Snacks and drinks or just relaxing, the Rose Bar is definitely the place to be.

Photos: Shannon Newley

Being at Rose Bar is kind of like visiting your really cool friend's house. You know the ones—they live in a share house decked out with basic but somehow really trendy decor with sporadic smatterings of art on the walls, there's always really funky

music playing, and they are never short on snacks and drinks. There are the ever present part-of-the-furniture friends, the workmates reminiscing about their days and of course, some random strangers who have just wandered in. And North Melbourne is lucky enough to have

this gem of a local situated right on the main drag.

Rose's modest front room has a long bench doubling as a bar and whether or not you are just there to order from it, or you wish to pull up a chair, this beautiful centrepiece sets the loungey mood of the place. A couple of couches and a few tables and chairs cater to those not looking to mingle with the crowd.

From the front bar, a doorway takes you to a corridor style room with a long table and pew style seats that make for a great private party away from other revellers. Moving on from there you'll find a quaint courtyard, fitted out with plenty of seating, perfect for sipping on a refreshing drink in the warmer months. And on one such evening, some friends and I visit Rose for dinner and drinks.

First up, we chose the popular Egyptian snack, dukkah (\$10). The nutty, seeded mix comes out in both plain and a chilli style with a very generous serving of Turkish bread and plenty of olive oil. Platters and antipastos also offer a range of tasty gourmet treats. We decided on the vintage cheese platter (\$18), which offered a selection of meats, Dijon mustard, fruit chutney, pickled onions, cornichins and one generous chunk of vintage cheddar. The vegetarian platter was stacked with yummy morsels of goat's cheese, marinated vegetables and tapenade.

With four of us chowing down for dinner, we weren't sure if this would have satiated our

hunger; however, it was more than enough—helped by the generous servings of Turkish bread across all dishes. And if that doesn't do the job, extra servings of Turkish bread are only \$3. Bar snacks like good old crisps and hot wasabi peas are available for a quick nibble, and olives, dips and gourmet toasted sandwiches also feature on the menu.

Of course, while dining on any meal, one must have something to wash it down with and no trip to a cocktail bar would be complete without a few fancy beverages. The extensive list of lavish offerings will not disappoint even the most knowledgeable cocktail aficionado. First up, I tried the Pomegranate Soufflé—and as the name suggests it's sweet and fluffy. But it wouldn't be fair to go in to too much detail as it's now off the menu due to the fact that the fruit on which it is based is now out of season.

The Red Room was a sweet tooth's dream. Mixed berries, vanilla vodka and chocolate liqueur with shavings of chocolate all help create this rich and indulgent dessert-like drink. Silk Sheets was a refreshing and sexy cocktail containing lime, pineapple, vodka and cranberry juice (among other things) that went down just a little too easily. But the *piece de la resistance* was the Aloha Sunset, a citrusy concoction containing blood orange and passionfruit with lemon infused vodka, which came complete with a flaming, floating 'shot

glass' made from the skin of a passionfruit and filled with absinthe. A sight to behold!

The beer drinkers in our party were also taken care of with beers on tap and stubbies available. And while no one is drinking wine tonight, an extensive and informed wine list will cater for lovers of a good vino.

The Rose Bar is just as the name suggests, so if you are looking for a proper sit down meal, it's probably not the place to go. It is, however, the perfect place to start or end an evening. The tapas-style menu offers a good range of filling gourmet options that could happily feed a party of four for under \$50, meaning that if you never quite get to moving on, you'll be well looked after.

The specialty is of course cocktails, and the extensive list will accommodate anyone's taste. With pricing around the \$17 mark for the more involved offerings, they are well worth it, not only for the taste but the entertainment and artistry involved in created these liquid masterpieces.

So whether or not you are looking for a quick bite and relaxing drink or a night mingling with North Melbourne locals, Rose Bar is definitely the place to be.

Shannon Newley

Rose Bar is open from 2pm daily and is located at 7 Errol Street North Melbourne.

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STREETSMART
HELPING THE HOMELESS

A smart way to dine

The charity dining initiative StreetSmart is happening again in 2010. Starting on November 9, the program allows diners to contribute to the community venture simply by dining out any time from now until December 24, at participating businesses. North Melbourne restaurants Libertine, Oskar and The Town Hall Hotel have all gotten behind the cause, meaning that no matter what your budget or preferred dining experience is—you too can be a part of it.

The program works simply by adding a \$2 'tip' to the total of your bill. One hundred per cent of the donations are then passed on by the restaurant to StreetSmart, which will delegate the funds raised in the form of grants to smaller, community based organisations with limited resources and a focus on helping out the homeless. Diners can choose to donate more if they wish and while most businesses will automatically add the donation to the bill for the period of the program, customers are totally free to opt out.

So if there was ever an excuse to take a break from cooking for a night, this is it. Get along and help out some great organisations supporting the homeless—simply by going out to dinner!

For more information and a full list of participating restaurants in all suburbs, head to www.streetsmartaustralia.com.org.

Participating venues

The Town Hall Hotel
33 Errol St
North Melbourne
03 9328 1983

Oskar
1-5 Errol Street
North Melbourne
03 9329 1585

Libertine
500 Victoria St
North Melbourne
03 9329 5228

Cupcake-led recovery



Take a wander around the centre of Melbourne and you could be forgiven for thinking that the economic downturn has been good to the cupcake trade. One recent inspection noted five different stores belonging to three separate businesses. The suburbs have even more, and that's just physical locations. The online trade is also booming, with up to eight stores in the Melbourne area alone and more on the way.

Perhaps the outlet with the most to boast is Cupcakes by Paolo, whose online business is complemented by nascent retail outlets in Melbourne's east and west. This is a reversal of many of his competitors' beginnings, says the company's eponymous creator, Paolo Esmaguel. "A lot of people start their business and a website pops up later as a marketing tool," West Melbourne-based Paolo explains. "I knew I wanted to start it online at first because of other commitments, but the idea for a store came later when things took off more quickly than I thought. It was meant more as a hobby but has turned into almost a full-time job."

And for good reason. Cupcakes by Paolo's 20 flavours (with more to come) cater to all tastes and inclinations, from the obligatory Chocolate Lover and Strawberry Lush to the less intuitive but no less impres-

sive Oh So Velvet, Ambrosian Carrot, and Exotic Buko Pandan. Each cupcake is made by hand and from scratch, and Paolo promises the finest ingredients. "We believe a cupcake should have flavour from first to last. A moist or fluffy flavoursome base paired with rich, butter cream icing and baked to perfection is about as good as it gets, we think."

And while the main ingredient is love, Paolo professes, those with allergies and intolerances needn't fear the fallout from the taste explosion. Alternative ingredients are available and won't impede the experience. "Everyone needs an occasional treat," Esmaguel says, "even our dairy, egg, or otherwise intolerant friends."

Cupcakes by Paolo is available for private catering as well as events and special occasions such as engagements and weddings, baptisms, birthdays, anniversaries, and hens' nights and (perhaps oddly) bucks' parties. It can customise its cupcakes with different cupcake cup colours (red and green for Christmas, for instance), custom edible toppers (such as company logos for client, employee, or guest events), individual boxes, and many more to suit the need.

With cupcakes as good as these on offer, the economic recovery may yet transition into a cupcake-sustained boom.

Tom Kramer

For more information, visit www.cupcakesbypaolo.com.au. For a chance to win a dozen single-flavour cupcakes,



visit the website and send the most creative answer you can to the question, Which Cupcakes by Paolo flavour would indulge your senses the most and why? Email your entry to competitions@cupcakesbypaolo.com.au by December 20

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The News

Advertising

9328 1126

Talent unearthed at the drunken poet



Host of the open mic night, poet Lish Skec.

vision sets in sight—all entertainment is live.

The poetry night has been attracting poets of all ages and styles for the three years the pub's been operating. The evening's usual format is a mixture of open mic performers and invited poets, who come from all over the country and sometimes overseas. There is usually a live music performance as well, since The Poet also supports musicians from around Melbourne.

A recent visit to the open mic night revealed poetic imagery ranging from drug-smuggling teddy bears to romance, relationships to pornography.

The evening began with Lish Skec, the vivacious and gregarious host, performing two poems by different authors. A fabulously extroverted performer, she was particularly good at reciting *Plastic Bags*, a delightful and clever indictment of the proliferation of plastic shopping bags. Lish is a poet, as is her husband Paul Skec, and their 11-year-old twins are already following in their parents' footsteps.

There were three invited poets on the night, Kerry Loughy, Jo DiAcovo and Paul Skec. Kerry Loughy is an engaging poet whose readings have a beautiful rhythm. Jo DiAcovo and Paul Skec both offered noisy, energetic performances, their strong stage presence drawing in the crowd. All were thoroughly enjoyed and applauded—a credit to the supportive audience and the informal atmosphere of the night.

One of the two open mic poets, Billy, has been writing poetry and fiction for nine years. An American, he has performed at other venues, but although he has been to

The Drunken Poet's open mic night a few times before, this was his first performance. He was a little nervous about performing. "What I write is an extension of self, where I take the filter off. So of course I do get nervous," he said.

The second performer, Pixie, has been writing poetry for more than two decades and has participated in dozens of poetry readings at venues all around Melbourne, including The Drunken Poet. Brought up in a conservative Irish-Greek family, Pixie said poetry was a liberating experience "with no rules" that allowed her to get her ideas on paper quickly and to be "crass, classy, intense or dirty".

As the evening progressed, the readings and the audience got louder and more rambunctious. To cries of 'encore' from the audi-

ence, Lish finished the evening the same way it began, with another, equally energetic, rendition of *Plastic Bags*.

When it was all over, the night had revealed a group of poets as diverse as their material. "It's different every time," said The Poet's owner Siobhan, who tirelessly worked the bar.

Jeanne Gabrielle

Open mic at The Drunken Poet is held on the first Thursday of every month at 8pm. It is presented by Overload Poetry Inc., whose goal is to bring Melbourne's vibrant poetry scene into public view. For more details, ring 03 9348 9797 or visit www.myspace.com/drunkenpoets.

Precious place of handmade things

Tucked away at the northern edge of Errol Street's well-known dining strip sits Ramona Tienda, a sweet little gift shop filled with pretty pieces from local and international designers.

Like many concept stores popping up around Melbourne's inner suburbs, Ramona Tienda is a sparsely-fitted, bright, open space displaying an eclectic range of products. There are beautifully bound notebooks from South Korea, screen-printed lampshades from Sydney's Cloth Fabric and rustic pottery pieces from South Australia.

The word *tienda*, Spanish for 'small booth' or 'shop', sets the tone perfectly for Ramona Raven's little store. With its welcoming neighbourhood feel, her shop would not be out of place down a narrow cobbled lane somewhere in Europe.

The decision to start a small business is a bold one at the best of times and especially so in the current economic climate. It's also a brave move to open a retail space in a celebrated 'foodie' haunt. But Raven had many reasons to be confident in her vision. Other niche retailers such as Arthur's Circus and Bethroned had already shown that the discerning North Melbourne shopper seeks out what is unique.

The idea of owning her own business had been brewing for a while, and tackling the challenges of going independent was itself a motivation for Raven. Ramona Tienda brings together Raven's previous experience in retail, textiles and handmade

goods. "It's a mix of things, essentially homewares, jewellery and children's clothing and, for the most part, handmade," she said. Many of the products are designed and made locally.

Raven has shown a refreshing restraint in not overcrowding her shop. The open, white space, dotted with potted plants, vintage furniture and bespoke shop fittings, makes a welcome change from the sensual overload of many stores. Found in Beechworth, a long antique display case is filled with silver jewellery, chunky resin and fabric bangles by Madz Has Runaway.

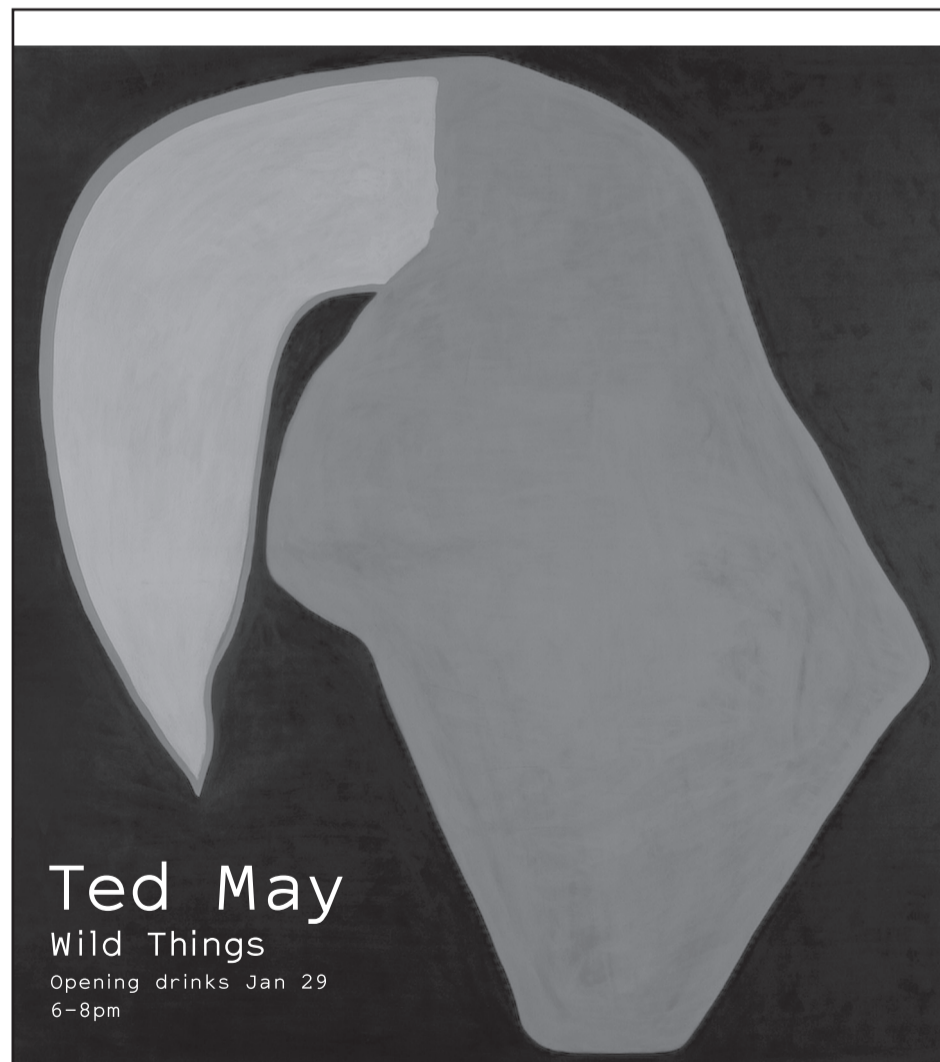
Raven doesn't want to limit her range entirely to Australian designers and has recently introduced cushions and napkins from Cape Town, South Africa and crisp, white, letter-pressed cards printed with lolly-coloured ink from Portland, Oregon in the USA. The business is growing organically, and it now even stocks items made by creative locals who have initially just popped in to have a browse.

A simple summer scarf made from striped organic Japanese cotton is a lovely inclusion and was handmade by Raven. She likes the idea of having something in the store made by the owner, and admits that she "would like to have more free time to make things as well as be in the shop". But at this early stage, she is simply enjoying being able to oversee and manage everything herself—in her very own little shop.

Elizabeth McKenzie



Ramona Tienda is a sparsely-fitted, bright, open space displaying an eclectic range of products



Ted May

Wild Things

Opening drinks Jan 29
6-8pm

Toucan, 2009, oil on canvas, 183x199cm

170-174 Abbotsford St, North Melbourne
(between Queensberry and Victoria sts)

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Director: Marita Smith

Hours: Thursday, Friday 11 – 6
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www.gallerysmith.com.au

GALLERY SMITH

Art haven on Abbotsford

With its semi-industrial spaces and open factory warehouses continuously coming up for new uses, North Melbourne is the perfect setting for the privately run commercial art galleries springing up around the neighbourhood. One of such recent newcomers is Gallerysmith, housed in an old IT warehouse at the top end of Abbotsford Street.

Gallerysmith's director, Marita Smith, has embraced the mix of old and new references in North Melbourne's architecture and its ever-changing social demographics. She uses the expansive gallery, divided into three art spaces, to showcase emerging artists from across Australia alongside established artists, some of them from North Melbourne. She also represents many of these artists commercially.

Opening the gallery in 2008, Marita chose the space for a few key reasons, one of them simply that it's beautiful. "It gives me the capacity to show a number of artists at any one time," she said, "and it has everything I need—lovely floors, great walls, nice solid feeling."

Walking around the gallery, one certainly gets the feeling that this solid, cool, inspiring base is the classic 'blank canvas' for Marita's stable of artists to roam free artistically, without distraction or decorative influences.

White walls, rich polished parquet and concrete floors of the main gallery contrast strikingly with the vivid colours of quirky contemporary artworks on display—portraits of masked 'superheroes' and vibrant red-sequined sneakers by Tony Albert or the colourful nude beauties in lush Victorian landscapes by Arlene TextaQueen.

In one of the two smaller gallery spaces, preserved wedges of earth broken with tiny regrowth of grass lie by Alex Prado on display plinths, bathing the soft, warm light bouncing off cream-coloured walls, perfectly complementing these earth sculptures' gentle strangeness.

Behind the scenes, there is plentiful storage for the commercially avail-

able works and the planned reshuffles of exhibitions. A discrete, secure and amply supplied playroom near the front entrance should keep the kids entertained while the parents explore the gallery, and the front desk set-up allows the staff to offer a friendly greeting and an introduction to anybody venturing within.

The space seems perfect for Marita's vision of an art space that is thematically explorative, aesthetically interesting and socially relevant. And it suits her mission to make art easily accessible and inviting to anybody, regardless of their knowledge of or experience with the art world.

The gallery is a commercial space, and Marita's nine years as a curator at the Arts Centre helps her balance the aesthetics of the exhibitions with the business need to prioritise. "I'm interested in providing tangible support to the artists," Marita said, "and I bring with it, from the curatorial world, ideas about cultural significance and about cultural value rather than monetary value. I'm interested in art that's powerful and interesting and that has something to say. I'm not just interested in pretty paintings to hang on walls."

As a commercial agent, Marita represents 17 artists with a divergent but invariably interesting take on the world around them, including Arlene TextaQueen, Ted May, Monika Brehens and Tony Albert. Each in their own way, these artists marry light-hearted observations of everyday life around them with profound themes such as nationalism, indigenous affairs, Australian history and personal identity.

Gallerysmith has been described as having "a particular aesthetic," Marita said, and personal preference certainly comes into play. "I'm interested in art that is well-executed, that's beautiful—and there needs to be a very broad interpretation of what is beautiful—but I'm interested in art and artists that have really good ideas and that can sustain those ideas over many, many years."

For the art lovers interested in starting their own art collection,

Marita's advice is straightforward—pick an emerging contemporary artist and follow their career. "Look at what they've done, where they've exhibited, which curators or public institutions recognised them and use that as the building block to build on," Marita said.

"Begin with one work, then build upwards and outwards, so that every subsequent acquisition adds strength to the whole and provides context for other works in your collection," she said. "Buy the best example of an artist's work that fits within your budget. Two thousand dollars is better spent on the best work of a young artist than on a minor work of a more senior artist."

"Do your research—visit galleries, talk to gallery owners, arrange studio visits, look at an artist's CV," Marita said. And most importantly? "Buy works that move you, and have fun doing it."

Gallerysmith is a great place to start your explorations in art. Exhibitions change every four to five weeks and everyone is welcome to explore the gallery during the week or come to the Friday night exhibition launches.

"We encourage anyone to come to the openings, whether they're art savvy or not. I have an anti-elitist view of art. I think the space should be here for everyone, and I encourage everyone to come in," Marita said.

"I designed the gallery in a way that when I sit here at my desk I can make eye contact with everyone that comes in, so I try to make it a positive experience for everyone. I don't want people to walk in and think 'Oh, should I be in here?' That's just not nice at all. Art's for everyone."

Erin Kitchingman

Top and middle: Marita Smith has designed her gallery to be an inviting space for art lovers of all ages

Bottom: Arlene TextaQueen (left) poses with one of the models who inspired the paintings in the 'Naked Landscapes of Victoria' exhibition

Photos: Irina Fainberg



The artist who lives next door

A Sydneysider by birth, acclaimed artist Ted May settled in North Melbourne more than 20 years ago in true inner city style. Enconced in a spacious, converted industrial warehouse apartment on Little Dryburgh Street, overlooking the throbbing freeways and bustling factories to the west of the city, Ted creates artworks as expansive and intricate as the ever-changing view from his warehouse windows. In October, Ted threw open the doors of his apartment studio and invited his neighbours to talk about his art, the creative process and the inspirations for his paintings. A welcoming host and an engaging storyteller, Ted loves a good laugh and in every way

Top: Ted May shows off one of the paintings in his *Eureka Mayhem Down Under* series

Ted May in front of *MM with friends, equipment and essentials*, on treated charcoal fixed onto canvas

Photos: Irina Fainberg

defies the stereotype of an artist as aloof and unapproachable. One of his latest projects is *Voyages of Forlorn Hope*, a series of some 80 charcoal drawings on fine linen. The inspiration behind the series is the tale of foolhardy early settlers who attempted to create a city in the marshlands of Kakadu. Large black and white paintings depict fish, boats and men, their abstract and dreamlike representation reminiscent of the desperate but doomed attempt to conquer nature. Other recent projects include a series of paintings and sculptures on the 1854 Eureka Stockade uprising and a huge charcoal drawing of colonial explorer Major Mitchell, who coined the phrase "Australia Felix," in a boat cluttered with equipment, supplies and animals. Ted is currently working on a series of bright, abstract, red, black and yellow birds, fish and other creatures, to be exhibited at Gallerysmith on Abbotsford Street early next year. Ted's approach to creating art can

be summed up as 'paint first and see what happens later'. A painting might start out as a bird, but soon becomes a totem pole, and then a fish, and then a boat. The transformations continue until Ted is happy with the result. He pointed out one of the works in progress: "It's a funny little thing. I quite like it! It's a bird, but then it could have been a hippopotamus!" Ted's come-what-may attitude to art belies the impressive list of awards he's collected over the years. His works hang at the National Gallery of Victoria, Ballarat Art Gallery and Heide Museum of Modern Art. Other pieces have travelled as far as the UK, Germany, Spain, Saudi Arabia and the USA. But while his work may travel the world, Ted is happy to stay in North Melbourne. "I like all this," he said waving his hand across the view of industrial warehouses from his window, "something is always moving."

Erin Kitchingman