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Counterpoint Community Services



South Sydney Rabbitohs



Gleeboks

Spread only kindness

HEALTH

MARJORIE LEWIS-JONES

AS the coronavirus pandemic bites more deeply, people across the globe are hurting and grieving – the people of South Sydney among them.

Over the last month, we have watched and listened with pride and gratitude as people in our area have reached out, acted generously and banded together online and (safely) through other means.

The images here on your community newspaper's front page are tiny windows into some of the ways people and organisations in our area are keeping spirits up and supporting one another even though they're struggling. Free meals for people who've lost their jobs, free book postage, shareable art on Instagram, messages of warmth to bridge the distance ... and the list goes on.

We love these stories because of the kindness and ingenuity they reveal – and because our mission is to publish news that fosters community. In fact, the *South Sydney Herald* exists to help people find hope together and to share possibilities for a fairer and sustainable society.

Physical distancing and self-isolation make gathering these stories a little harder – but our team (mostly volunteers!) will continue to do whatever we can. You can help us by sending your stories (300 words or less, with a photo – 1 megabyte minimum size) to news@ssh.com.au.

If your business or organisation has a specific message you'd like to get to our readers, please consider advertising in print and/or online with us, as every bit of support for the paper in these tough times helps.

As the practical and economic implications of the pandemic become clearer, we may have to print the paper with fewer pages and/or publish some of our stories solely online. So, if you haven't visited our website before, you should head there now!

The coronavirus is a threat to our health but it is also a threat to our community. Stories help keep us connected – fight the battle by spreading kindness and goodwill. **ssh**

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Eatz on Abercrombie



National Centre of Indigenous Excellence



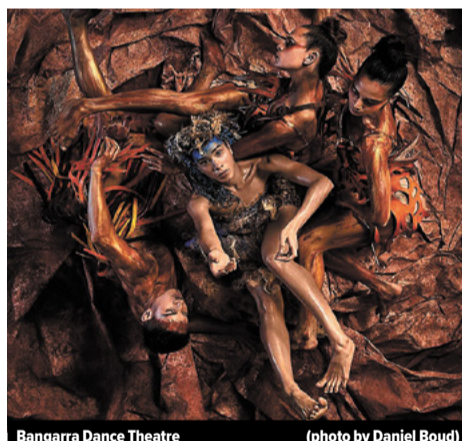
Hearth and Soul



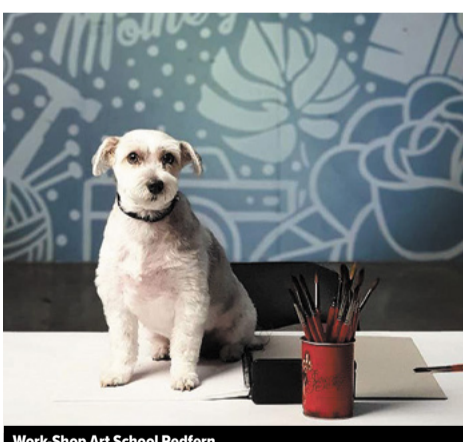
Wayside Chapel



Carriageworks Farmers Market



Bangarra Dance Theatre (photo by Daniel Boud)



Work-Shop Art School Redfern



Orchard Gallery



Belvoir St Theatre

Credit: All these images were taken from social media or other promotional material for these local organisations.



the South Sydney Herald online

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COVID19 Hotline Open 24/7

Call 13 77 88

This hotline is now open 24/7 if you have an enquiry about the latest health advice, restrictions or financial support.

PUBLISHER

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NEWS

news@ssh.com.au
Phone Lyn 0400 008 338

ADVERTISING

adverts@ssh.com.au

MAILING ADDRESS:

PO Box 3288
Redfern NSW 2016

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MANAGING EDITOR

Marjorie Lewis-Jones

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Andrew Collis

NEWS EDITOR

Lyn Turnbull

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ARTS & FESTIVALS

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BOOKS

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Catherine Skipper

FILM

Lindsay Cohen

BOOKS

Shale Preston

MUSIC

Tess Ridgway

SPORT & FITNESS

Steve Turner

SUB EDITORS

Cathie Harrison

Melinda Kearns

DISTRIBUTION

distro@ssh.com.au

DESIGN

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Servicing the community at a distance

HEALTH

ADAM ANTONELLI

THE advice is clear: we must maintain a physical distance in order to slow the spread of Covid-19. If we do not follow this advice, the disease will spread too quickly and consequentially overwhelm our hospitals. Our health system will be under immense stress and people may die unnecessarily.

The elderly and vulnerable are facing months of self-isolation to protect themselves. Hence, the measures we must abide by to contain Covid-19 are changing the way that the community sector can support vulnerable people; those escaping domestic and family violence, with disability, facing homelessness, the elderly and those dealing with chronic illness, mental ill-health and alcohol and drug addiction.

Like many other services with the interest of the community at heart, Counterpoint had been determined to continue servicing the community while complying with physical distancing directions and

comprehensive cleaning routines. However, following the federal government's stage 2 announcement on March 24, Counterpoint Community Services was forced to close its doors to the public.

Going forward, Counterpoint will continue to service the Waterloo and Redfern communities, albeit at a distance, by providing information, support and advice by phone, email, and Facebook Messenger. We have also been calling members of the community who are particularly vulnerable to check-in on their material and mental wellbeing. Counterpoint has also initiated an appeal for the Redfern and Waterloo social housing communities to secure the basic necessities so no one in the community goes without.

The closure of community centres will not only make it harder to provide a service to the community, but it will also exacerbate the sense of isolation and loneliness already felt. Many residents look forward to the social activities that foster a sense of connection and contribute to a feeling of community. Cooking groups, morning teas, English classes, art

group, and community outreach. All these activities have been cancelled and possibly won't return for months with potentially severe consequences for those who are already isolated and battling mental illness. At a moment of immense uncertainty and anxiety, at a time when people need human connection, they are being deprived of exactly that.

It is not only social housing tenants who will need increased support through this pandemic, but also the thousands of people who have already lost their jobs due to circumstances out of their control. This is only set to increase as more and more businesses shutdown due to low demand or are forced to close. In addition are the thousands of international students who depended on casual work to pay their school fees and survive. Now many of these people face a precarious future; to find a way to survive in Australia or to go back home - if they are allowed to return.

Although we can expect the situation to get worse in Australia, how the community has pulled together has been

heartening. Residents are looking out for one another and checking in on neighbours. Community organisations and local government are also increasing communication with one another and forming networks for how to best support the vulnerable communities that we service. Meals on Wheels has started to include scarce supplies such as toilet paper with their deliveries.

The following months will be difficult as we continue to isolate ourselves from each other to protect the most vulnerable in the community and to ultimately save lives. Undoubtedly, there will be immense pain and suffering. Follow physical distancing guidelines but maintain social solidarity. Smile at your neighbour and ask if they are okay. Smile at strangers. While we already feel the devastating short-term impacts of the Covid-19 on employment, health and our lifestyles, in the long-term, the pandemic will force us to reconsider our values and possibly be the catalyst for us to discover the better version of ourselves. To reflect the zeitgeist of this pandemic: we are all in this together. SSH

AMS says, 'Keep our mob safe'

FIRST PEOPLES

PAM JACKSON

HISTORICALLY, Aboriginal people and communities have been exposed to introduced and transmittable viruses.

In April 1789 - 15 months after the First Fleet came to Sydney to establish a penal colony in NSW - a smallpox outbreak decimated the local Aboriginal community. At the time, smallpox was one of the most contagious and deadly diseases to have been inflicted upon humankind, resulting in the deaths of 300 hundred million people worldwide in the 20th century alone.

The Aboriginal communities living around Sydney Cove and the headland had never been exposed to such an infectious virus; they had no resistance to the disease. It is estimated that up to 70 per cent of the Aboriginal community in the area died from smallpox during this period.

Another virus that had a massive impact on the lives of

Aboriginal communities was the 1918 "Spanish" influenza pandemic. In Sydney, 40 per cent of the population caught it, with records showing that the virus completely devastated Aboriginal communities.

Meanwhile, in the Gympie region of Queensland, in a locality called Barambah - now known as Cherbourg - the "Spanish" flu killed 90 people. Within three weeks of the virus reaching the local Aboriginal community, only a handful of people were left uninfected out of a population of 600. Mass graves were dug to accommodate the dead. A Brisbane newspaper expressed indifference by reporting that the Indigenous population had "died like flies". How the virus got into the town is still not known, as there was just one road leading into the community.

Similarly, the Covid-19 virus was initially spread by just one or two people; since then over a million have been infected worldwide.

Pat Turner, CEO of NACCHO (National Aboriginal

Community Controlled Health Organisation), said that should the virus reach remote Aboriginal populations it would be "absolutely catastrophic".

Although Aboriginal Medical Services have much better access to resources than before, we must also take into consideration the high level of chronic conditions that our people already carry, such as respiratory problems, heart disease and diabetes.

Combined with the coronavirus, these pre-existing medical conditions can prove fatal. For this reason, Aboriginal communities along with the elderly are the most vulnerable to the virus.

It must also be taken into consideration that many Aboriginal people live in poor housing conditions which are typically overcrowded. This only exacerbates the vulnerability of the Aboriginal community to Covid-19. Indeed, the disease has the potential to have a similar impact on Aboriginal communities as the "Spanish" flu did in Barambah 100 years ago.

In response, the Redfern Aboriginal Medical Service (AMS) is currently testing for Covid-19 and a triage has been set

up with social-distance seating in place. A nurse is on duty to take people's temperatures and perform other essential duties prior to the patient being referred to a doctor within the clinic.

The AMS CEO has sent Aboriginal patients a strong letter of support and the organisation has developed a Coronavirus Fact Sheet with the culturally appropriate title: "Keeping our mob safe."

With the elderly most of contracting the virus, it is imperative that Aboriginal families prioritise the care of Elders to ensure that they are kept safe and in good health. After all, it was our Elders who were the trailblazers and activists responsible for the establishment of many of the Aboriginal organisations and community services that exist today. Moreover, they are the keepers of our cultural knowledge and traditions.

We all need to work together and do our bit to stop the spread of the coronavirus. It is only by working together, can we keep our mob safe. SSH

For a copy of the Coronavirus Fact Sheet call Mona at the AMS on 9319 5823.



Image: Jess Harwood Art (www.jessharwoodart.com)

CORONAVIRUS HEALTH INFORMATION

SSH Health editor, Megan Weier, says these are the most reliable sources for official information.

Australian Department of Health advice

Covers symptoms, where to get help, and protecting self and others.

Go to: bit.ly/3aKLXaE

Beyond Blue

How to look after your mental health.

Go to: bit.ly/2X4DDI9

NSW Health guidelines for washing your hands

Go to: bit.ly/2JEBxxy

Covid-19 Hotline

Open 24/7 call 13 77 88

NSW Government advice

The most up-to-date advice. Also contains links to seek financial and housing help relevant to NSW.

Go to: bit.ly/2xQ5nw9

Do jeh, Lan!

LOCALS

ISABELLE SPRY

WATERLOO: Meet Lan, the friendly and hard-working owner of Waterloo Laundry on Botany Road, just near the IGA. Business has slowed due to current public health measures and self-isolation, but as we go to print the laundry remains open.

Lan's family is from Vietnam. In 1981, Lan travelled to Hong Kong, where she lived until 1990. She has lived in Waterloo ever since, managing laundries in Newtown and Surry Hills before taking on the Waterloo business nine years ago.

Waterloo Laundry has 16 washing machines and four large driers. The laundry offers washing, drying, ironing and dry-cleaning as well as alterations and repairs. Operating seven days a week with the help of part-time workers is no easy task, but Lan is always welcoming and dedicated to providing top-quality service.

Lan has close family just a



Lan hard at work in the Waterloo Laundry. Photo: Andrew Collis

five-minute walk away (at the dry cleaners on Redfern Street). "We are keeping in touch by phone now," she says. "Like everyone else, I'm feeling a bit scared of the virus. I need to be careful at work,

too, and follow safety rules." When asked to name the best thing about working in Waterloo, Lan replies: "I live in John Street and I love the neighbourhood. I have many good

friends – my Cantonese friend has a flower shop just nearby." Lan speaks Vietnamese and Cantonese and learned to speak English on arrival in Sydney. "I know just a

little English!" she laughs. Regulars appreciate her warm and generous personality. One happy customer says: "I always enjoy dropping by. Lan is never too busy to greet us with a smile, and she can clean and mend just about anything."

Another says: "I drop off my uniforms, trousers and suits for cleaning as the staff are always so very nice. They seem to have a huge commercial business operating in the background but always have time for a talk and smile. They give a very quick quote, never ask for the money first, which is trusting, and they are fast. Jobs are usually ready for pick-up in two days."

Talking with Lan, I learn the Cantonese word for "thank you" – *do jeh*. She says it with a gentle bow. *Do jeh*, Lan. We are grateful to you for many years of care and service.

SSH

Waterloo Laundry

87 Botany Road, Waterloo

Wash and iron: shirts \$3, trousers \$6

Ironing only: shirts \$2.50, trousers \$4

Bag wash: \$15



NHSPA alumni was one of 15 live bands at the festival. Photo: Supplied

Happy 30th birthday, NHSPA!

EDUCATION

SSH

NEWTOWN High School of the Performing Arts (NHSPA) turned 30 this year and celebrated the milestone in style. On March 13, nearly 1,600 people flocked to the party, which boasted 32 stalls, 15 live bands, five dance companies and an abundance of rides. Past, present and even future students turned up in droves to enjoy the celebrations.

The party was opened by the NSW Minister for Education, the Hon. Sarah Mitchell MLC, Virginia Pacey, Director Educational Leadership, Marrickville Network, Metropolitan South, and Jenny Leong, State Member for Newtown.

School faculties ran their own stalls, with highlights including the Science staff making liquid

nitrogen ice cream and the HISIE (Human Society and Its Environment) staff running a "guess-the-teacher-from-the-baby-photo" competition. But it was the librarian, Dominique Sweers, who stole the day with her delectable gourmet pies.

The show began with an alumni band made up of students who'd graduated from the school between 1995 and 2019 – some of whom now work with elite orchestras, studios, bands and theatres around the globe.

The staff band, First Warning, closed the day with a spirited performance, which featured multiple vocals, guitars, percussion, keyboards and strings. The crowd went crazy with the final "Happy Birthday" – singing and smiling.

NHSPA Principal, Sharon Roberts, said it was the best party she'd been to in long while. Look out 40th!

SSH

Women's jazz tribute night helps girls find refuge

HUMAN AFFAIRS

SSH

JOHNSTON Street Jazz, one of Sydney's most respected jazz venues, hosted a magnificent celebration of International Women's Day at its location in the Annandale Arts Centre on March 12.

A fundraiser for the Girls Refuge (Detour House), eight separate acts commanded the stage, performing an array of jazzified hit pop songs and originals composed by women.

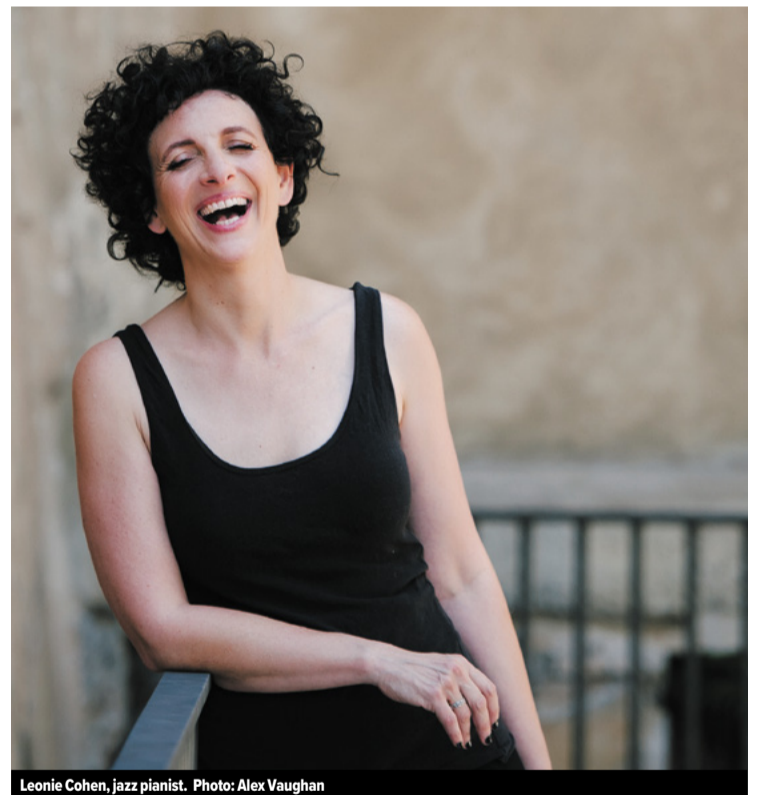
A vibrant art exhibition concurrently graced the room with works by Naomi Downie, Hannah Faye and Kiki Tse.

The incredible line-up included Heather Prowse, Susan Gai Dowling, Christa Hughes, Tania Bowra, Maree Steinway, Leonie Cohen, Nicky Crayson, Jo Fabro and Chloe Kim.

Brooke Prentis (CEO of Common Grace) opened with Acknowledgement of Country. Heather Prowse – leader of 343 Brass band – then launched into a wonderfully playful rendition of Kimbra's "Settle Down".

The supremely bluesy duo Christa Hughes & Leonie Cohen thrilled the crowd with Fiona Apple's "Criminal". Their version of Billie Holiday's "God Bless the Child" hit an extraordinary level of excitement with Ruby Boukabou's tap-dancing cameo.

Maree Steinway, gifted jazz pianist/vocalist, charmed the audience with her trio.



Leonie Cohen, jazz pianist. Photo: Alex Vaughan

Jazz icon Susan Gai Dowling played a gorgeous original from one of her six celebrated albums. Tania Bowra's performance was stunning – herself a composer of top 100 pop chart busters.

Legendary Australian vocalist Nicky Crayson, and pianist Leonie Cohen, played a super soulful version of Dolly Parton's hit, "9 to 5". Jo Fabro, who Johnston Street Jazz has "dreamed of bringing to our space for years", sublimely performed Aretha Franklin's "Do Right Woman".

Talented drummer Chloe Kim's all-female ensemble Rain Patterns debuted with a mesmerising medley of Joni Mitchell and

Judy Bailey. With standing ovation, the powerful evening concluded exquisitely with Carole King's "Natural Woman", featuring all of the singers.

Following the great success of the event, a generous donation was made to the Girl's Refuge (Detour House).

Johnston Street Jazz's remarkable organisers Ashley Asphodel, Naomi Downie, Katrina Drake, Kieran Hogan and Andrew Lorien will continue to stream live performances on their Facebook page, resuming live gigs later in the year.

SSH

[facebook.com/JohnstonStreetJazz](https://www.facebook.com/JohnstonStreetJazz)

Greater social distancing could curb Covid-19 in 13 weeks

SPONSORED

MICHAEL SPENCE

A University of Sydney data study from the Faculty of Engineering has revealed that social distancing must be adopted by at least 80 per cent of the Australian population to reduce the spread of Covid-19.

If social distancing measures were adopted by at least 80 per cent of the Australian population, we could expect to see the Covid-19 pandemic controlled in just over four months.

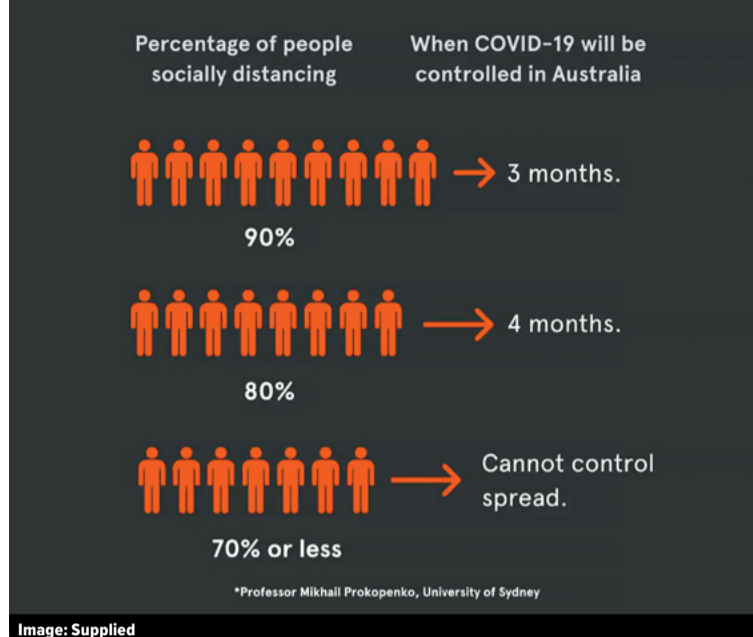
Led by Complex Systems academic and pandemic modelling expert, Professor Mikhail Prokopenko, the study also revealed that social distancing would be an unproductive measure if adopted by less than 70 per cent of the population.

“If we want to control the spread of Covid-19 – rather than letting the disease control us – at least 80 per cent of the Australian population must comply with strict social distancing measures for at least four months,” said Professor Mikhail Prokopenko.

“However, if 90 per cent of the population complies, then the duration could be as short as 13 to 14 weeks – meaning if we began tomorrow we could expect a control of Covid-19 by July,” he said.

“Conversely, if less than 70 per cent of the population is adopting social distancing measures, we cannot suppress the spread of the pandemic and any social distancing could be a fruitless effort,” he said.

“There is a clear trade off – stricter measures imposed earlier would reduce how long our lives are impacted by this disease. On the contrary, laxer protocols could mean a longer, more drawn out and ineffective struggle against Covid-19,” he said.



The research found that for every day the stricter social distancing measures are delayed, society would need to endure several more days under a longer suppression policy.

“There’s good reason for imposing tough measures early on. The longer we delay the peak, the more time our healthcare system has to prepare for it by accessing more resources such as ICU beds, ventilators, antivirals and trained health workers,” said Professor Prokopenko.

The researchers also found that while school closures had the potential to compensate for 10 per cent of a lack of social distancing compliance, they only delayed the peak of the pandemic by two weeks.

The AceMod simulator comprises over 24 million software agents, each with attributes of an anonymous individual, such as age, gender, occupation, susceptibility and immunity to diseases. Contact rates within different social contexts, such as households, household clusters, local neighbourhoods, schools, classrooms and workplaces are also built into the program.

The set of generated agents captures average characteristics of the real population and is calibrated to 2016 Australian Census data with respect to key demographic statistics.

The interactions result in transmission of the disease from infectious to susceptible individuals: given the contact and transmission rates, the simulation computes and updates agents’ states over time, starting from initial infections, seeded in international airports around Australia.

In this scenario, 80 per cent social distancing could either mean – any person in one household could go out once in five days, or, one member per family of five could go out daily, but the other four stay at home all the time.



Authorised by Dr Michael Spence, Vice Chancellor of the University of Sydney.
Contact Details – Security & After Hours:
1800 063 487 (24/7). Enquiries: 9114 0523
local.community@sydney.edu.au

Pemulwuy – protecting our workers



In March, further work on the Level 2 formwork for townhouses that face Eveleigh Street continued. The underground carpark can still be seen on the Louis Street side where the rest of the 62 townhouses will be built. Photo: Supplied – Taken from the vantage point of the upper level of the building housing 26 apartments above the Tony Eloura Gym which has reached its full height.

with all conditions of the consent other than any condition that restricts the hours of work or operation on a Saturday, Sunday or public holiday”. This means that working hours seven days a week, until the order is lifted, will be the same as for Monday to Friday allowing shifts for existing workers to be spread over seven full working days rather than six days meaning fewer workers on site at any one time.

As the Pemulwuy Project planning consent already allowed work on Monday to Friday 7am to 6pm and Saturday 7am to 3.30pm, for local residents it will not be a huge change.

SPONSORED

LANI TUITAVAKE

REDFERN: Extended hours for the construction industry announced on April 2 by Rob Stokes, the Minister for Planning and Public Spaces,

will assist existing precautions for extra handwashing and physical distancing already taking place on The Pemulwuy Project site to protect workers during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Mr Stokes announced that building projects must “comply



Authorised by Michael Mundine, CEO, Aboriginal Housing Company Limited



Jenny Leong MP
STATE MEMBER
FOR NEWTOWN

First and foremost, we hope you are all doing okay in this unprecedented situation.

The reality of living in our city during this pandemic is causing a significant amount of stress and anxiety for so many people. And while we can’t offer all of the answers, we want you to know we are here to help.

New information is being disseminated by the government everyday with new advice and restrictions, as well as new initiatives and support packages for people.

We are very pleased that there is now a 24/7 hotline that is open to be able to provide people with the latest information about health advice and support for people – the number is 13 77 88.

In addition to this, our office will stay ‘open’ from 9am-5pm, Monday to Friday during this pandemic. We are working remotely to continue to support you. **Please know that the Newtown Electorate Office Team is here to help.**

We want to particularly extend this offer to assist people who are finding it difficult to keep track of information, especially for those without easy access to the internet – as well as those who don’t have family or friend support and are finding it difficult to access the things that they need.

We are keeping up to date with the latest information from NSW Health and the Premier’s Office and we are also connected to those who are offering services and setting up community-led initiatives to assist people who need help at this time.

If you don’t have easy access to the internet and would like assistance to be connected to supports, please feel free to give us a call on 9517 2800.

Things are moving quickly, so if you want to know more about our successful campaign for a moratorium on evictions and other measures to protect people from being evicted into homelessness during this crisis, our newly created ‘Hub’ to stay connected and support local businesses, or what we have been doing to support those in our school, childcare, and healthcare systems, we would encourage you to connect with us on Facebook, Instagram and/or Twitter.

Last but certainly not least, on behalf of all of us, thank you to all those who are continuing to work in health, education, care, and essential roles in our community at this time. We can all show our thanks to these people by staying home whenever we can.

Together, let’s help each other get through this.

Jenny Leong, MP for Newtown

If you have a question or are keen to be involved, send a text to 0421 665 208 with your name, suburb and message and we’ll give you a call or you can email newtown@nsw.greens.org.au

Authorised by
Jenny Leong MP
State Member for Newtown

383 King St, Newtown, NSW 2042
T: 02 9517 2800 F: 02 9230 3352
Newtown@parliament.nsw.gov.au



Council process for rezoning Redfern and Waterloo public housing

URBAN DEVELOPMENT

GEOFF TURNBULL

THERE are a number of opportunities for the community to have a say in the City of Sydney (CoS) rezoning process. Before the Land and Housing Corporation's (LAHC) proposal is officially exhibited, it goes through a council process that makes the proposal and its supporting documents publicly available. This allows the community input.

The first time this process will be used is for the Redfern build-to-rent proposal, submitted at the end of February. As the proposal is much less controversial than Waterloo, it could become public in late May or early June.

LAHC is still beaver away on the Waterloo proposal. LAHC was trying to get the proposal in by the end of March, hoping to get it through council before CoS went into caretaker mode. Now that council elections have been postponed a year, LAHC has more time to finalise its proposal and still see the proposal exhibited before the end of 2020.

The requirements that CoS need LAHC to meet are not public under the CoS process. We know that LAHC still needs to meet state requirements including the earlier State Significant Planning study requirements. CoS has also sent LAHC a letter setting out its requirements and a tailored planning proposal checklist.

The promised Memorandum of Understanding between the Minister for Planning and CoS as to the future assessment of the Waterloo estate precinct has not yet been finalised.

The NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DPIE) says it will ensure that government priorities such as the renewal of social housing, creation of public spaces and the planting of trees are addressed by CoS. While CoS manages the process, the proposal has to go through the Central Sydney Planning Committee (CSPC), which includes state government appointees, and the proposal has to be approved by the DPIE before it can be exhibited or a new planning law made.

The process outlined by CoS starts with LAHC putting in a proposal that meets council requirements. Council will then assess it, seeking any additional information it requires from LAHC. This process is likely to take three months. The first public step is when CoS recommendations and the proposal go before council's Transport, Heritage and Planning Committee. At this point, all the materials will be on the CoS meeting website and community members can present concerns about the proposal to the committee and council.

The proposal then goes to the CSPC and to a council meeting before it is sent to DPIE for approval. During these few weeks and during the exhibition there will be a need to help people

understand the proposal and the supporting documents.

Exhibition is usually for a minimum of 28 days. However, given there is a sizable public housing population living in the area, a longer period will be requested of DPIE.

At the March REDWatch meeting, CoS was also asked to ensure independent sessions to help the community understand what is proposed so people can give informed input.

After the exhibition period, CoS officers consider community submissions then make their final recommendations. Again, this goes through council's Planning Committee, CSPC and council before finally being approved by DPIE, which drafts the change to the planning controls.

The CoS presentation slides on the process can be found at www.redwatch.org.au. CoS will soon add information about the planning process for Waterloo and Redfern to its website.

Now that council elections have been delayed, LAHC has time to further consult with the community prior to lodgement. REDWatch has asked LAHC to make its proposal public at the time of lodgement, to at least the same level of detail as it did for its preferred masterplan.

The material produced by LAHC for the Redfern build-to-rent submission did not contain any details of the planning controls requested by LAHC, so we will not know these until the proposal emerges. SSH

U3A – windows on a world of wonders

EDUCATION

ANDREW COLLIS

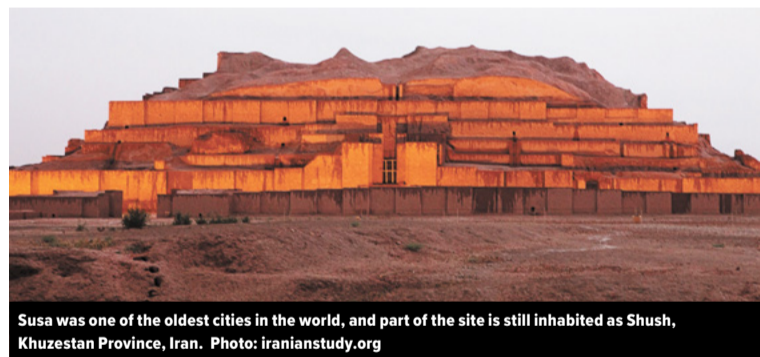
IN early March, at the invitation of SSH volunteer Eleanor Boustead, I attended a U3A lecture at the Epping Leisure and Learning Centre on the history of Iran.

Sydney U3A (University of the Third Age) is a not-for-profit volunteer-based organisation providing continuing education for people who are no longer in full-time employment. Courses and talks are conducted in a relaxed environment and participants are given opportunity to form enduring friendships while learning something new in areas like languages, philosophy, creativity, wellness and more – marvellous windows on a world of wonders!

Sadly, all Sydney U3A courses have been cancelled until at least June 30.

Material for the nine-week course about Iran was prepared by Dr Ian De Mellow. On the occasion of my visit, Ian's grandson James gave the lecture entitled "Iron Age to 21st Century".

There were 30 or so present for the two-hour event, through which we learned a great deal, including:



Susa was one of the oldest cities in the world, and part of the site is still inhabited as Shush, Khuzestan Province, Iran. Photo: iranianstudy.org

- Iran is the 17th largest country in the world, measuring 1,684,000 square kilometres, and the 16th most populous, with about 70 million people. Topographically, its sizable mountains form frontiers and enfold cities.

- Archaeologists have found human settlements that date to the Upper Paleolithic Age, beginning about 40,000 years ago.

- Central Iran is experiencing severe serial drought events. The data indicates an impending environmental disaster.

- Iran's petrochemical industry is controlled by a state monopoly, the National Iranian Petrochemical Company (NIPC, which has

a revenue of \$20 billion and employs 37,000 people).

- The United States has been sanctioning Iran since November 1979, in the aftermath of the Islamic Revolution. The sanctions regime is hurting Iran economically. The IMF is forecasting an unemployment rate of 19 per cent in 2024, based on projected downturns in the economy.

As we go to print, Iran has been severely affected by the Covid-19 pandemic. According to government reports from Tehran, more than 65 million Iranians have been screened online for coronavirus symptoms as part of nationwide efforts to contain the spread of disease. SSH

www.sydneyu3a.org

COVID-19 UPDATE

TANYA PLIBERSEK MP

Federal Member for Sydney

COVID-19

This is an unprecedented, frightening time for a lot of us.

Our priority must always be to keep ourselves and each other safe and healthy. I urge you to closely follow the advice of our health authorities.

I know people are also very worried about the impact of COVID-19 on their livelihoods. Some are facing the very real prospect of losing their jobs, or having their salaries cut. Others have sadly already experienced this.

Labor will do everything we can to protect jobs, help workers, businesses, families, and communities through this difficult time. **In particular, we must ensure vulnerable Australians are supported.**

It is important we take care of one another. Just because we are practicing social distancing or isolation doesn't mean we need to be lonely. Reach out to family and friends over the phone or on social media. If you can, give someone a video call to make sure they are okay. It has been heart warming to see the kindness being extended by neighbours and friends.

And please remember: supermarkets will remain open, there is no need to panic buy!

STAYING UP-TO-DATE

Information on COVID-19 is changing frequently and therefore information is quickly becoming out of date.

For the latest health information, you should visit www.health.gov.au. You can phone your GP if you are worried you have the virus, or call the **1800 020 080 national phone line.**

If you are a small business, you can find out more information about the support being offered at www.treasury.gov.au/coronavirus

You can also find out more about changes to social security and accessing **Centrelink** at www.treasury.gov.au/coronavirus

The Australian Government has announced a number of social security measures to support people during this challenging time, including:

- **The Coronavirus Supplement** – an **additional payment of \$550 per fortnight** to Australians who get income support payments including JobSeekers, Youth Allowance, Parenting Payment, Farm Household Allowance and Special Benefit. This will be available for the next six months.
- **Waiving the liquid assets waiting period** for JobSeekers Payment.
- **A second one-off payment of \$750** (to be paid in July 2020) as part of the second economic stimulus announcement. However, Labor is concerned that this is too long a wait, and we have written to the Government asking them to bring this forward.

As the situation is constantly evolving, please visit the websites listed above for the most up-to-date and accurate information.

MY OFFICE: HERE TO HELP

My electorate office is still operating to provide support with Centrelink, Veterans' Affairs, Medicare, Immigration, NBN and other federal matters.

IF YOU NEED ASSISTANCE please call my office on (02) 9379 0700 or email me: tanya.plibersek.mp@aph.gov.au.

Stay up to date, keep safe.

Tanya

TANYA PLIBERSEK MP

Federal Member for Sydney

1A Great Buckingham St, Redfern NSW 2016

T: 9379 0700 E: Tanya.Plibersek.MP@aph.gov.au



Postcode 2020 – listening to all the voices of Sydney

URBAN DESIGN

STAFFORD SANDERS

IMAGINE a table with food. Around the table sit members from diverse organisations who share the same postcode. They are sharing stories and listening to each other... a warm and facilitated conversation. They share their stories of the lack of affordable housing, homelessness, climate change, heatwaves, energy costs, precarious work and being a city of welcome.

This is how the Sydney Alliance imagines Postcode2020, its ambitious plan to tap into the issues and concerns of communities across Greater Sydney via a series of Table Talk discussions.

The Alliance and its not-for-profit partners – including the Uniting Church and its agency Uniting, who will play a prominent role – are now well into training leaders of the discussions.

The first round of talks will take place in May and June in around 80 of Sydney's 254 postcodes. More are expected to follow later in the year.

As the Alliance points out to its members,

These stories are not told in a vacuum. Later, as people grab a bite and cup of tea, students interview the participants. Some share their story anonymously as written text; others give their permission to have their voice

recorded or retell their story to video. Participants are then invited to a gathering of people from across the city in six weeks' time – to share stories and issues, hear about solutions and prepare to take action. Meanwhile, the student will upload the stories into an online map. The map features stories from across the full diversity of the city.

The idea of such a map, and the concept of the project, came from Dr Kurt Iveson and his team from the Sydney Policy Lab at the University of Sydney – drawing on overseas experience in the UK and elsewhere.

In the early stages of the venture, Dr Iveson's team compiled (appropriate and privacy-cleared) details of leaders, memberships and facilities from the Alliance member organisations, to provide the partnership with unprecedented detail in an interactive map of its organisations' strengths – and gaps – across the city.

It's hoped the discussions and their documentation will provide the Alliance and its partners with guidance on the key challenges affecting Sydney's diverse communities, and how best to act to improve the lives of people across the city.

Uniting will host the talks in several postcodes, and has also played a leading role in the mapping and training phases. SSH

Contact Stafford Sanders from Uniting Advocacy at ssanders@uniting.org for more information about Postcode2020 and our involvement.

Green grocer a food hub for NGOs

HUMAN AFFAIRS

ANDREW COLLIS

MARRICKVILLE: Located at the Addi Road Community Centre (ARCC), 142 Addison Road, the Food Pantry is a low-cost grocer with green credentials. The pantry rescues fresh fruit, vegetables, bread and other quality food and household items from being thrown into landfill. All goods are offered to the community at affordable prices.

In late March, in response to the Covid-19 crisis, the ARCC extended its Food Pantry operations with a new Emergency Food Preparedness and Response Centre.

The Gumbramorra Hall has been repurposed as a production and distribution hub where staff and volunteers prepare emergency hampers to ensure that charities and NGOs, including the Exodus Foundation and Youth Off the Streets, have access to essential food and supplies. "It's a special needs scenario," writes Mark Mordue on the Addi Road website. "Hampers will be given to NGOs and charity groups to deliver to their most vulnerable and isolated community members, and to people who are unable to visit and shop at the Food Pantry."

The service is the only one of its kind currently operating in the inner city.

A related post reports a visit by local MP and federal opposition leader Anthony Albanese and footballer and SBS commentator Craig Foster,



SSH volunteer Matt checks out the Food Pantry with volunteer Jay. Photo: Andrew Collis

who has been "putting together emergency hampers with a team of sporting volunteers roused into action through his #PlayForLife campaign". Mr Albanese expressed concern for the lack of long-term planning in response to the present crisis, and the need for concrete and structured responses that give people a sense of order and confidence.

Launched in 2016, the Food Pantry has expanded from humble beginnings, initially operating out of an old shipping container. It now occupies half of Hut 1, adjacent to the main office at the ARCC.

According to the ABC's *War on Waste*, presented by Craig Reucassel, more than 4 million tonnes of food is wasted in Australia each year – enough to feed 60 million people – at a cost to the economy of \$20 billion.

Food insecurity is a major concern and can impact negatively upon outcomes for children in the short and long term – including children's academic ability and health issues including obesity, diabetes and heart disease.

The Food Pantry joins

similar not-for-profits including Foodbank Australia, Fareshare, SecondBite and Oz Harvest in offering an alternative to waste and food insecurity.

Donations of fruit and vegetables, unopened packaged foods, household items such as laundry detergent, cleaning products, personal products (shampoo, soap, sanitary goods) and other miscellaneous household goods are all accepted, along with products close to "best before" or "use by" dates, excess and slow-moving stock or deleted lines, products incorrectly labelled, products with damaged packaging, and sample and bulk produce.

The Food Pantry accepts donations from primary producers, manufacturers, warehouses and distribution centres, wholesalers, agents and importers, food service retailers, as well as individuals and local community groups. SSH

Opening hours: Tue 2-5pm; Wed 10am-2pm; Thu 2-7pm; Fri 12-3pm. To volunteer, discuss or arrange collection, email foodpantry@addiroad.org.au or phone 9569 7633.

Why doesn't Batman have a domestic to-do list?

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

KATIE GOMPERTZ

DO we all remember the pink Batgirl T-shirt that sent online community groups into a tailspin? I was deep in debates with other mums on those groups. The T-shirt read: "Batgirl To-Do List: Dry-clean Cape; Wash Batmobile; Fight Crime; Save the World." Cute, right?

They made a special pink shirt for the girl who likes Batgirl. A decade ago, I would have agreed. It's a T-shirt, it's harmless, what's the big deal?

I have to admit when it comes to progressive issues like feminism, sexism, racism: once you see the issue, and I mean really see it, and understand it, it cannot be unseen. And then you start to see it everywhere, and you wonder why you had never seen it before, and you can't comprehend how no one else is seeing it.

When I entered into these debates I was angry, before I remembered that I used to be this person who told people to get a sense of humour and not take life so seriously. I recalled Nelson Mandela when he said, "Education is the most powerful weapon you can use to change the world." I think of this every time I dive into the comments section.

The comments at first were seemingly innocent: "Nothing wrong with it in my opinion"; "I think it's great and funny"; "Go Batgirl. Independence!"; "Where's your sense of humour?"

Then some common sense chimed in: "I think the point is that they wouldn't make a Superman or Batman shirt that said cleaning and washing came before fighting crime."

This is exactly the point. This is the adult take on it. But how do children view it? What do they take from a seemingly harmless line of words?

We all know boys and girls are

biologically different but there are environmental and social influences at play. We don't see this wording on boys clothing as it's just an assumption that domestic chores are assigned to the girl. I know this isn't true in adulthood, in fairness, my husband does more than his fair share of the domestic chores, but that's not the point being made here; this is about messaging to the kids, and it's so ingrained in adults we don't even notice it unless someone asks us to question the validity.

One response to that previous comment is a key component here: "Perhaps it's also in your interpretation. I read it as, 'I can look after myself and save the world.'"

Interpretation. This is key. We, as adults, have the ability to apply interpretation to every part of our lives. Children do not have this ability. It is a learned behaviour, and who do they learn it from? Parents, teachers, schools,

the playground, while shopping, advertising, community, family structure, society, pop music/videos, marketing, TV shows, the list is endless.

In reinforcing gender stereotypes, we entrench inequality, which can be connected to domestic violence. As former South Australian Young Australian of the Year, Arman Abrahamzadeh, said, "While not all intimate partner disrespect ends in murder, all domestic violence murders start with disrespect." And disrespect comes from a power imbalance and a power imbalance happens when we don't have equality. SSH

This is an edited excerpt from a presentation given at the Stop Domestic Violence Conference held in Brisbane, 2016, titled, "The role of parents and social media in perpetuating the myths surrounding DV: How parents can help to alter the perception of gender stereotyping and how the gender imbalance carries into our justice system for crimes against women."

DO YOU NEED SUPPORT?

- If you feel you need to find somewhere safe, Jan from the Moving Forward organisation can be contacted on 9599 3217 or email at manager@movingforward.org.au.

- If you or somebody you know is in immediate danger, call 000 now.

- 1800 RESPECT is a 24-hour hotline for any Australian who has experienced, or is at risk of, family and domestic violence. Call 1800 RESPECT (1800 737 732) or visit www.1800respect.org.au

- Lifeline provides all Australians with access to 24-hour crisis support and suicide prevention services. Call 13 11 14 or visit www.lifeline.org.au

- Relationships Australia provides support services for individuals, families and communities. Call 1300 364 277 or visit www.relationshipsnsw.org.au



cartoon: norrie mAy-welby

EDITORIAL

SSH

COVID-19 poses a special risk to the homeless, who are often unable to self-isolate and don't have facilities to regularly wash their hands. There is concern the virus could rapidly spread through this vulnerable population and increase the overall infection rate.

Katherine McKernan, the chief executive of Homelessness NSW, says although the NSW government has unveiled a \$34-million funding package to help and house rough sleepers, the situation in Sydney remains critical.

In a statement dated March 22, the NSW Department of Communities and Justice (DCJ) affirmed the essential role of specialist homelessness services – those working directly with people sleeping rough, as well as crisis refuge accommodation (for young people, people

experiencing domestic and family violence, single adults) and temporary accommodation.

With the need to practise physical distancing, the number of beds available in temporary accommodation centres is likely to become scarcer as the crisis unfolds. Some local shelters have already closed.

The DCJ has since said it is working with hotels and partners to find housing for all who need it, and will cover costs of accommodating those who self-isolate because they are ill or suspect they have contracted the coronavirus (bit.ly/2ULBNkD). A further, more detailed statement has been promised to the SSH (see southsydneyherald.com.au for updates).

“People who are sleeping rough are particularly vulnerable,” says Kate Colvin, a spokesperson for the Everybody’s Home campaign, “partly because often people have chronic health conditions, but also because with a respiratory infection, sleeping somewhere cold and damp is dangerous.”

City of Sydney Councillor Linda Scott says: “I have been working directly with Garth Ward (Minister for Families, Communities and Disability Services) to ensure those experiencing homelessness have places to go for shelter and care.”

Meanwhile, the Wayside Chapel in Kings Cross is doing all it can. Wayside’s community service centre is open Monday to Sunday, 9.30am to 1pm, to provide core services including: practical assistance with showers, emergency clothing packs, phone charging, blankets; care coordination including crisis accommodation referral, medical and Centrelink referrals, assessment for home visits; and takeaway breakfast and lunch to be served from an area outside in order to meet physical distancing requirements. Staff will continue to provide: phone outreach for people in crisis or in self-isolation, including referrals to other services and preparation of care packs; outreach services by foot and van to deliver care

A prayer for health and hope

FAITH

DOROTHY MCRAE-MCMAHON

IN late March, I was asked by the World Council of Churches to write a prayer for the churches around the world in relation to the coronavirus pandemic.

Given that we are facing the same crisis, and that people of faith here may like such a prayer, I am offering it now.

A prayer for the world

O loving God, we pray that you will give us courage and wisdom as we face the hard realities which confront us in life around the world today.

May those with gifts for human health and hope discover ways which will help us to end the threatening infection of coronavirus and to restore our lives to a new day.

Give to us, we pray, a profound sense of creative community as we

care for each other, especially for those who are most vulnerable.

Hold us in your arms, O loving parent God, as we journey into the future.

Call us towards deeper faith, O Jesus Christ, believing that you always walk with us and lift our hearts, O Holy Spirit, as we face each costly moment. Amen.

Whether we are people of formal faith, or not, we may like to ponder how we can connect with a meditation which has a focus on connecting with a sense of community – a commitment to holding each other in care and offering support.

Of course, we hope that there will be people who have the skills to develop ways to directly cure or protect us from the dangerous infection, but we may have to wait for that to be possible. The way in which we relate to each other in the meantime will be very important for our life together now and into the future.

SSH

packs to people on the streets and yard drops to homes; and street outreach targeting key areas and known visitors.

Despite having to close its doors and cancel drop-in and face-to-face activities, Newtown Neighbourhood Centre is determined to find ways to maintain essential services: information and referrals (9564 7333); a boarding house outreach service (9509 1800); domestic and family violence support (1800 737 732).

The Junction Neighbourhood Centre (JNC) offers aged care services for all clients, assistance with shopping, a crisis services directory (jnc.org.au), and a free texting service

for anyone without phone credit (text JNC on 0447 046 046 and someone will phone you).

Staff at Counterpoint Community Services (CCS) in Waterloo and Alexandria have been contacting regular clients by phone and advocating to ensure those in need have access to emergency supplies of staples. CCS has set up a regular online drop-in mechanism for informal gatherings which can be accessed by phone (call WebEx at 9338 2218 and key in meeting number 578 319 877 followed by # and another #). You can still call the office on 9698 9569, Monday to Thursday, 9.15am to 4.15pm, or email info@counterpointcs.org.au.

For Crisis Homelessness Support call Link2Home on 1800 152 152. SSH

Prostate cancer – don't assume it can't happen to you

HEALTH

DAVID REAVELY

THE pain is intense, in an area of my body that's been brutalised by surgery in the last few days. All I can do is stand over the toilet, afraid the stitches are going to burst, or that an even more dramatic event should occur on the bathroom floor. A nurse finally responds to the call and, after watching me for a while, asks me to rate the pain from 1 to 10.

Through a red mist I tell her I'm not a judge on *Dancing with the Stars*, and I'm not in the mood for scoring this particular event, but if I really have to, I'll give it an 8. In return, I want to know what's happening to me, as another wave of pain comes. She offers me some more opiates, but no answer as to why I hurt.

A while later it's settled and,

when the surgeon comes around on his daily visit, I ask him what is going on down there. He explains that my bladder essentially has a limited tolerance for the catheter I've been wearing for the last couple of days, and takes independent action to try and expel it, resulting in “bladder spasms”. These can be relatively minor, or excruciating – particularly when there are other issues in the nether regions, such as diverticular disease.

It's comforting to know this is not an uncommon occurrence but, as it recurs over the next couple of days, the pain remains pretty intense.

A lot of men get prostate cancer, about one in seven of us by the age of 75, and the chances increase the older we get. A lot of the time, it's a pretty benign body-mate, and medical intervention is limited. Some such cancers grow slowly and, on balance, are best left pretty much alone, but others are

aggressive, seeking to colonise the immediate area and spread to green fields elsewhere in the body, and then it can be life threatening.

Screening for prostate cancer is usually via a blood test for the Prostate Specific Antigen (PSA), and I've been having these every six to 12 months for the last seven years. The results were consistently good, even for someone much younger, however the test does not work for everyone. My cancer was detected by a fluke. I did the poo test, which found an abnormality.

This led to a colonoscopy, after which the gastro specialist said he'd detected an anomaly in the prostate and strongly suggested further work, which meant a digital rectal examination (this is an old-school digit we're talking about).

When cancer is strongly suspected, a urologist will generally do a needle biopsy to determine where in the prostate the cancer has spread to, taking

samples via a hollow needle and mapping each location. In my case, this was 23 samples from an organ the size of a walnut, which must have resembled a pincushion by the time they'd finished.

Using these samples, pathologists assign a Gleason Score, again out of 10, based on the aggressiveness of the cancer in the primary site, and a secondary site. Each is a score out of 5, and mine is a 9, but it's a bad 9, with the primary site scoring 5 out of 5 and the secondary a mere 4. As a *DWTS* judge might say, “Still room to improve, cancer boy.”

That meant it needed to come out in a hurry and I was conscious that the cancer was at work while I was waiting for the end of the Christmas break and for surgical schedules to clear.

The surgery itself, known as radical prostatectomy, can be done via the traditional method of open surgery, or laparoscopically using probes, and may be robot

assisted. My surgeon is old school and does it the open way, so I've got a scar about 10 centimetres long under my navel.

Three weeks after surgery it's all healing nicely. The intervention was early enough, and it seems unlikely I'll need radio or chemotherapy, for which I am very grateful.

The message is to recognise the risk, the symptoms, the detection options and the treatment available. Don't assume it can't happen to you, and don't bury your head anywhere it's not wanted for fear of finding something nasty. Surgery isn't pleasant, but it's infinitely preferable to wasting away as metastases take over other vital organs.

If you have a loved one who may be at risk, remind them how important they are to you, and keep annoying them to have regular screening. There's far too much cancer around, but it need not win.

SSH



Kirli Saunders (with microphone) was selected as NSW Aboriginal Woman of the Year for her work in Poetry in First Languages with Red Room Poetry in Zetland. Photo: Salty Dingo

Kirli connects kids to Country through poetry in First Languages

FIRST PEOPLES

MARJORIE LEWIS-JONES

You were recently chosen as the NSW Aboriginal Woman of the Year. How does it feel?

I was surprised and delighted to receive this award, I have so much respect for my fellow finalists, Pauline Clague and Ngiare Brown and for all of the finalists recognised in the different categories of NSW Woman of The Year. This award wouldn't be possible without the other incredible women I have around me, supporting my work in community, writing, and for my project, Poetry in First Languages at Red Room Poetry.

Your award nomination and selection stems from your work through Poetry in First Languages work you do with Red Room Poetry in Zetland. Tell us about it.

Delivered by Red Room Poetry, *Poetry in First Languages* celebrates, shares and preserves knowledge of First Nations languages and culture through poetry, music, dance and art. *Poetry in First Languages* aims to support students to find strength in their cultural identities through language learning and connecting to Country, culture and community with the intention of enhancing overall wellbeing and knowledge.

Why is this work so important?

Our nation's history has strongly impacted the way that cultural knowledge and languages are



Kirli Saunders says, 'We're exploring the digital delivery of our language programs, so that all students can learn First Nations languages from the comfort of their school or home and respond through the creative arts.' Photo: Salty Dingo

shared with First Nations children and Young People. *Poetry in First Languages* supports students to learn from community on Country through a range of tailored learning experiences. Our Bailey and Yang report in 2018 found that for 95 per cent of participants involved, this was their first language-learning opportunity. Anecdotally, I see a lot of students benefit from the program, showing more confidence with self-expression and in regards to cultural identity.

In 2020, Poetry in First Languages was to focus on the south east of NSW and was to be delivered with Gundungurra, Dharawal, Gumea Dharawal, Yuin, and Jerrinja Communities in early childhood, primary and secondary settings. What positives were you aiming for?

In previous years we've delivered *Poetry in First Languages*

in NT, NSW and ACT. This more centralised focus around the south east Coast of NSW is where we've partnered with NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment to support their conservation projects for the glossy black cockatoo, brush-tailed rock wallaby and the coastal ICOLL management of Wallaga Lake. Students will have the opportunity to learn about care for Country with Community, while conserving language through poetic responses to their "On Country" days.

Working with Early Childhood centres allows us to reach our young ones earlier, preparing them with the enhanced educational outcomes that accompany enhanced wellbeing as a result of being connected to Country, language, culture and community through poetry in First Languages.

These are also communities to which I have strong ties, geographically and through my Grandmother's line, and I can't wait to learn more Dhurga with Aunty Vicki Parsley and Aunty Loretta Parsley on Yuin Country.

If Covid-19 is impacting upon the roll out what will this mean?

While we really value caring for our community, and especially our Elders – our face to face programs have been impacted by Covid. As a result, we're exploring the digital delivery of our language programs, so that all students can learn First Nations languages from the comfort of their school or home and respond through the creative arts.

How did you learn Gundungurra language – and what do you love about the language? What is your favourite word and why?

I was born and raised on Gundungurra Country around the Southern Highlands. Aunty Val Mulcahy, Aunty Sharyn Halls and Aunty Trish Levett have all taught me Gundungurra, they've also made me responsible for sharing dance, language and cultural knowledge with our young ones. I love that the language is poetic and melodic. My favourite word is Ngununggula [nah-gun-ah-goo-lah] it means walking and working together. It's also the name of our women's dance group, headed up by Aunty Trish, Aunty Sharyn and Mel Wiya, it welcomes First Nations dancers

from a range of communities, who have ties to Gundungurra lands to walk and work with us in dance.

How can people support Poetry in First Languages and/or Red Room Poetry?

Check out the Red Room Poetry website, Facebook and Instagram. You can also volunteer your time and contribute financially to the ongoing development and delivery of *Poetry in First Languages*. Listen to my interview with Tiddas4Tiddas and Racematters on your favourite podcast app too!

You are a much-acclaimed children's author, poet, author and playwright. What's coming up and what have you achieved?

At the moment I'm working on *Yana in the Bawa*, a preschool aged picture book to be released in 2021 (Magabala Books), and *Our Dreaming* (Scholastic). I'm also working towards a visual poetry exhibition with Verb Syndicate Gallery in Wollongong (November 19 to December 2) with thanks to Australia Council. My recent poetry collection, *Kindred*, was well received, and *The Incredible Freedom Machines* was a notable picture book in the Children's Book Council of Australia awards in 2019. It was also shortlisted that same year for the Prime Minister's Literary Awards. I was also pleased to be awarded the inaugural Daisy Utemorrah Award in July 2019 for my rhythmic junior verse-novel, *Bindi*, which will be published by Magabala Books in August 2020.

The Review

Arts & Culture in Your Neighbourhood

This section is sponsored by **Sako's Café**
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'Act urgently to save the world's wild and wonderful creatures'

ENVIRONMENT

MARJORIE LEWIS-JONES

TWO renowned conservationists have called for urgent cooperative action to prevent further destruction of the world's reefs, including the Great Barrier Reef, and of the Arctic and Antarctic oceans on which many creatures and ecosystems depend.

Dr Emma Camp is a coral scientist at the University of Technology Sydney, a National Geographic Explorer and a 2019 Rolex Associate Laureate.

She says a “deadly trio of stressors” is threatening the survival of coral reefs globally. They are: warmer water, more acidic waters and lower oxygen levels.

“These stressors are going to continue to intensify and corals are going to have to be able to tolerate [them] if they're going to persist into the future.”

Michael Aw is a multi-award-winning wildlife photographer, explorer, author and conservationist. He also founded the *Elysium Epic*, which takes teams of image makers and scientists, who are also activists, to the world's most at-risk marine environments. Since 2010 he has directed expeditions to the Antarctic and Arctic and across the heart of the Coral Triangle, completing the first-ever baseline survey of the biomass of corals and fishes in the region.

Dr Camp and Mr Aw both spoke passionately of their efforts to protect vulnerable organisms and their habitats during *Ocean Talks: Signals from the Ocean* held at the National Maritime Museum in Darling Harbour on March 5.

Attendees also had the opportunity to view the Wildlife Photographer of the Year exhibition, which reinforced the pair's call for people to act urgently in whatever ways they could to protect the world's wild and wonderful places and creatures.

Dr Camp showed a short video made by Rolex in which she spoke of “the real possibility that in our lifetime the Great Barrier Reef, at least as we know it, will be lost”.

“During 2016 and 2017 about two-thirds of the Northern Great Barrier Reef died,” she said, “so, we now think about 50 per cent of the Great Barrier Reef has been lost.

“Imagine that the biggest living structure on the planet – we can see it from space – knowing that we'd be responsible for its demise. It's not really something you really want to think about.”

The video also illustrated Dr Camp's pivotal research into



Stefan Christmann tracked this band of emperor penguins along the edge of the Ekström Ice Shelf for almost two weeks, sleeping for just a few hours a day in fear of missing the moment.
Photo: © Stefan Christmann – Wildlife Photographer of the Year 2019 (Front page banner photo 'The garden of eels' by © David Doubilet – Wildlife Photographer of the Year).

corals that live in mangrove lagoons in very warm and very acidic low-oxygen conditions – similar to the hostile conditions now threatening reef environments due to climate change. Could these more resilient corals, she wondered, provide clues to help reef corals struggling and failing to survive global warming?

Dr Camp's research quest has since led her to set up a nursery on the outer Barrier Reef growing cuttings of more tolerant corals on racks and using them to try to recover some of the reef's degraded areas. Sitting on several panels of the United Nations has also allowed her to convey the value of the world's oceans, the threats they face, and that the time for action to preserve them has not yet run out.

“We are urgently having to act. And, while there's still a lot that we can learn and need to learn, we can make a change if we act soon.

“Having educators, corporates, tourism operators, scientists, and government all together working on these solutions is the only way that we are going to actually be able to combat them [these environmental threats].”

Ecological negligence

Mr Aw's talk offered sobering statistics related to environmental destruction. He detailed the prevalence of microplastics in remote and (seemingly pristine) ocean areas, the decline of South Africa's

once-teeming Sardine Run, and the knock-on effect of sea ice melt on Arctic krill and other creatures. (“No sea ice, no krill. Simple as that. We lose our sea ice, we lose our krill, we lose our big animals as well.”)

He said two deeply disturbing realities were:

- New high-temperature records set this February in the Antarctic region including a February 9 high of 20.75°C; and
- The world's inability to reduce emissions to levels that would offset the amount of CO₂ being released from Arctic permafrost that's melting.

Mr Aw also used a selection of unsettling visuals to show the ecological costs of human negligence. Footage of an operation to remove several feet of plastic lodged inside a sea turtle's body and efforts to dislodge a plastic straw from the turtle's nose elicited gasps from the audience.

His image of a young polar bear teetering on a 250-metre vertical cliff face in Svalbard searching for eggs demonstrated clearly how the loss of sea ice in the high Arctic is distressing the region's iconic creatures.

“Imagine, if you were climbing on this cliff for a bag of chips. You must be desperate, right? If you don't find those bird's eggs, you die. So, every

year, we find two or three skinny polar bears, dead.”

Dr Camp was a researcher in the Seychelles in 2016 during a mass bleaching event. She said the area she'd been researching for five years had been full of diversity and life and then suddenly turned white. In just over a week it was overgrown with algae and died.

She said the scientific community was currently predicting such bleaching events would continue to increase both in intensity and frequency.

“The biggest thing we could do [to alter this trend] is to reduce carbon emissions and ensure we get government and policy on the trajectory that we need. But unfortunately, that's not happening quick enough.

“We're changing the environment too quickly for most corals to be able to keep pace with the changes that are occurring.”

While Dr Camp's team has looked at cross-breeding corals from different environments to try to boost natural rates of evolution; using bio-controls to cool and shade coral in detrimental environments; using probiotics to boost coral's resilience; and creating superior corals through genetic engineering that can tolerate stress, she said she was still concerned the world could easily lose what's valuable.

In the case of the Great Barrier Reef this would include (but was not limited to) apex predators like sharks, fisheries and services like coastal protection, local communities and jobs, and \$6 billion per year in revenue.

“Corals aren't just pretty – there are so many services that they provide. Things like pharmaceuticals, tourism, cultural value. All of those things make it really significant as to why we should want to conserve them.”

The take home message from the talk was that one person's actions can make a difference – and particularly if they join forces with like-minded people.

Dr Camp encourages people to engage with an issue – whether it's climate change, the coral reefs or plastics – and to acknowledge it's not someone else's problem.

“It's very easy to say it's the government's fault, or it's the fossil fuel industry.

“Go vegetarian for a few days a week, vote differently, go with different insurers. Look at our own lives and see what we can do.

“Even if it's one small change, if we all do it collectively, it will have a big impact.”

.....
The Wildlife Photographer of the Year exhibition runs until October 11 (subject to Covid-19 restrictions). See www.sea.museum/whats-on/exhibitions/wildlife

ENVIRONMENT

MARJORIE LEWIS-JONES

Night Glow

Young Wildlife Photographer of the Year for 2019, Cruz Erdmann, is from New Zealand. Now 14, he has been shooting underwater photography since he was 12. Cruz was on a night dive with his dad when he saw a pair of bigfin reef squid in the shallow water. One swam off but Cruz quickly adjusted his camera and strobe settings, knowing that the opportunity was too good to miss. He shot four frames of the remaining squid before it too disappeared into the inky blackness to create his winning photo "Night Glow".

Bigfin reef squid are masters of camouflage and alter their appearance to help them communicate. A 2019 study shows squid will survive and may even flourish under even the worst-case ocean acidification scenarios and projected end-of-century CO2 levels.



Cruz Erdmann was just 12 when he took this prize-winning photo 'Night Glow' which features a bigfin reef squid. Photo: © Cruz Erdmann - Young Wildlife Photographer of the Year

Toward Antarctica

Poet-naturalist Elizabeth Bradfield's fourth collection, *Toward Antarctica*, (Red Hen Press), is an insider's love letter to one of the world's most iconic wild places, and I found it unique, moving and brilliantly informative. I doubt I will ever go to the Antarctic but this book makes me feel I've (almost) encountered it. Bradfield recommends listening to the "unearthly" underwater vocalisations of Weddell seals, and making changes at home to prevent plastic pollution and carbon emissions that can make a difference in Antarctica – a place she has worked in since 2004 as a naturalist on ecotourism

expedition ships and been obsessed with since discovering Alfred Lansing's *Endurance* at a used book store in 1997.

She writes: "Every year, thousands of tourists visit Antarctica. In the 2016–2017 season, IATTO (the International Association of Antarctic Tour Operators) reports that the total number was 44,367, an increase of 15 per cent over the previous season. I understand the desire to travel there, the panic over getting there before it's 'gone'. I also don't know if I'll return."

Of her poem "Here/Elsewhere" she says: Various petrel species arrive in Antarctic waters with stomachs polluted by plastics ingested

elsewhere. They break the plastic down into smaller pieces, which they then excrete. But the toxic substances remain behind in their intestines. A side effect of this digestion rate is that birds contribute to the spreading of plastic waste into waters that otherwise would not have any.

Here/Elsewhere

In news: birds drawn by longline bait, hooked, pulled into deep, unrecoverable plunge. Or, polyethylene wave-shredded to chum then plucked up, flown to nest, voided into chick gape as food. And thus what lasts: plastic-gut carcasses, feather & bone around a bright centre that will never degrade enough.

Intimate sets on Instagram

FESTIVALS

ANDREW COLLIS

IT'S an extraordinarily difficult time for working musicians. With so many festivals and shows cancelled or postponed due to the Covid-19 pandemic, including *Splendour in the Grass* and *Bluesfest*, it's also a difficult time for lovers of live music.

In late March, 146 musical artists took part in an extraordinary live-streaming festival. *Isol-Aid* was staged over two weekends on Instagram, and featured Stella Donnelly, Julia Jacklin, Angie McMahon, Chitra, Clews, Spacey Jane, Hayley Mary, Middle Kids, Alex Lahey, Courtney Barnett, Alexander Gow (Oh Mercy), Sarah Blasko and Gena Rose Bruce.

From noon to midnight on March 21-22 and again on March 28-29 artists played 20-minute sets on their Instagram accounts, from wherever they were practising self-isolation – bedrooms, bathrooms, lounge rooms, studios. Viewers were encouraged to donate to Support Act, which provides relief services for music industry workers facing mental health issues or financial hardship.

The festival was well presented with clever graphics, clearly listed set times and a link to the fundraising page.

More than 3,000 people tuned



Gena Rose Bruce. Photo: Tasha Tylee

in to watch Courtney Barnett, Sarah Blasko, Stella Donnelly and Julia Jacklin. Jacklin's "Head Alone" seemed especially apt at a time of physical distancing: "So I'll say it 'til he understands/ You can love somebody without using your hands."

Melbourne-based soulful rocker Chitra (@chitramusic) and the mesmerising Gena Rose Bruce (@genarosebruce) performed impressive solo sets. Their respective debuts, *Chitra* (2020) and *Can't Make You Love Me* (2019), are highly recommended.

Gena Rose Bruce said: "It was wonderful, a really different experience than being live, but it still felt really intimate with audiences. It was a great distraction from everything that's been going on. I loved watching other artists, it felt so personal and I loved seeing a

different side to them. I'm keen to do more of it – it pushed me out of my comfort zone and encouraged me to perform my songs in a new way. And obviously, it's an amazing way to raise money for Support Act!"

Organised by Rhiannon Atkinson-Howard (aka Merpire), alongside industry figures Emily Ulman and Shannon Egan, *Isol-Aid* raised more than \$44,000 for Support Act. Artists saw a boost in upwards of 400 new followers to their socials.

An *Isol-Aid* statement reads: "If they are in the financial position to do so, viewers are encouraged to buy music and mercy from the artists' Bandcamp and Patreon pages, and their websites."

Isol-Aid keeps happening!
See @isolaid for details.
supportact.org.au

The Reviews

Book Review
by Catherine DeMayo

The Gap – a paramedic's summer on the edge
Benjamin Gilmour
Viking, 2019

For Benjamin Gilmour, a paramedic working the Eastern Suburbs of Sydney, calls to the Gap are common. He has gotten good at talking down potential suicides, and sometimes the story has a happy ending, at least for the moment.

Other times, he arrives too late, or he isn't persuasive enough, or the person is just too determined – and Gilmour and his partner transport a body, not a patient, in their ambulance.

If you have ever wondered how people in emergency services cope with the trauma, gore and abuse that comes with the job, this is the book for you.

Benjamin Gilmour, a paramedic for over 20 years, has written four other books and made a film – in Afghanistan. His alternately thoughtful and entertaining writing, combined with a job that is nothing if not enormously varied, make *The Gap* a page turner. It also raises a range of deeper societal issues as well as describe the sad, bizarre and occasionally funny events in a Sydney paramedic's ordinary day (or night).

The book recounts several chaotic weeks during the summer of 2009. Gilmour works out of Bondi, a beat that covers the wealth of Vaucluse and Double Bay and the sleaze of Kings Cross; it also happens to contain The Gap of the title, where at the time of writing, some 50 people took their own lives in an average year.

A typical shift, if such a thing exists, might see Gilmour racing to an asthma attack or cardiac arrest; injecting Narcan into a heroin overdose victim; pushing his way through a packed nightclub dance floor trying to find his patient; desperately calling for police backup after the perpetrator of domestic violence threatens him with a knife.

The Kings Cross safe injecting room (a Uniting Church initiative, opened in 2001) gets high praise from Gilmour. He told ABC Radio National that its establishment dramatically decreased the number of heroin overdoses he and his colleagues attended.

Sadly, Gilmour and his fellow paramedics cannot escape the mayhem and violence they experience unscathed. His book touches on his own struggles with depression and feelings

of inadequacy, the constant questioning of whether he could have done better, succeeded at saving someone who died. He describes a culture of denial, where many ambulance workers hide their trauma and are slow to seek help; many who do so keep it a secret from workmates.

The best and worst of humanity – and much of its strangeness – is on display in *The Gap*. Gilmour's humanity brings it to life, and gives us an intimate look at what happens after we dial 000.

» books@ssh.com.au

Film Review
by Lindsay Cohen

Queen & Slim
Director: Melina Matsoukas
Starring: Daniel Kaluuya, Jodie Turner-Smith, Bokeem Woodbine
Genre: Black times for everyone

Before the cinemas closed and society shut down, I managed to get out to the Dendy Newtown to catch *Queen & Slim*. It was a timely reminder that for all the pain and stress that the world is going through dealing with Covid-19, it is temporary. There are other issues, also of life and death, that will persist well past the time that Covid-19 becomes as common as the cold and they shouldn't be forgotten or ignored.

Queen & Slim is a dramatic examination of black America. At its heart it is a simple, almost Bonnie and Clyde story of a black couple running away from the shooting of a white cop resulting from a minor traffic infringement. The bigger picture though is the complexity of relationships within the black community and with and within the white community. There are lots of stereotypes in *Queen & Slim* (the racist white cop, the gangsta rapper, the PTSD affected Iraq war veteran and more) but they nearly all have important roles to play in telling the tale of black America's fight for equality.

It was all encapsulated in one quote from Slim, "Why do black people always have to be excellent? Why can't we just be ourselves?" It rings true for all minorities and goes to the heart of why *Queen & Slim* is an important film that everyone should watch from the couch when it no doubt gets released to a streaming service soon.

Rating: Four and a half escapes from fantasy.

» film@ssh.com.au

Wordplays

Memo

If I show you my hand
you will know it,
will you know it
and still let me
deal?

If I let you into my life
will you hold me,
can you hold me
and know I don't
feel?

If I give you my love
will you take it,
can you take it
and make me feel
real?

— Catherine Skipper

All star true
li'l boy's soul
true it is
we all can win
if we love
and care for
the babe his
life is tied
to the land
li'l boy true
tied to the lamb.

— Adrian Spry

So, rise this day,
seek out a view:

from hill-top-town wake
to soft dawn hues;
or, like the sea, calm, hope:
for more vast ones than seen.

All this to show me
of a hard-won word: love.

— Boni Maywald

Love in Four Letters

Rose-pink and lime-green
A bud here, a leaf there
Mud-clay and soil-dirt
Dry and wet-dewy
Calm, kind, and sad
It does not die
Love is.

Bud-leaf beam and fade
Grow-wilt, rot in soil-firm
Ash-dry and snow-hard
Fierce and happy
Sing, weep and wail
A sweet smelling rock
Love is.

— M.A. Vazey

God Is Kind

You bow to know
Not what but whom
With whom
To know not why
You draw to mind
That God is kind

So long
My safe high home
Now we lie low
Like the sea

Oh, do not do
What I ask you
For love
Do what is best
In my best life
Rest of your life

So long
My safe high home
Now we lie low
Like the sea

— Andrew Collis

What Is Love?

Is love real?
So many of us want it
And many are the ways we seek it
We may find it
Or not ...
What is this love?

Is it soft, warm, lame?
Is it a rage?
Is it pain?
Yes, it can be pain
It can also be vast joy ...

And when our days end
We still won't know what love is ...
And then, at the end, will we care?

— Yvonne Hocothee

Love is kept in a box
with the lid on hard,
it lies in a life of its own,
for love did not know how
to care for its nest,
and the bird that flew out fell down,
and even the sky shed a tear that day,
the day they all came
to bury lost love,
love is a word that is all used up,
a word that was too big to fly,
its path was a maze with no way out,
each clip of the wing in its grip,
love can kill,
and it did,
and the lid is on hard,
and the left over bird
can envy the free,
as it sits at the open door of its cage

— Rosalind Flatman

The Wordplay group would usually meet on the first Saturday of the month, 12-2pm,
at the Cauliflower Hotel, Waterloo, but not until further notice. New members welcome.
Email: wordplay@ssh.com.au

VOLUNTEERS' NEWS

PAT CLARKE

WELCOME all to a completely changed world. Since we are in semi-lockdown, and no one can get out and about to theatres, galleries, classes, exercise groups or even the dentist for a check-up, I thought I would give you some Covid-19 information and let you know of interesting events you can join from home.

Health Prescriptions

As of March 31, the NSW government has given extra powers to pharmacists to enable them to dispense medicines without a prescription to assist people who cannot access their GP.

2020 Influenza Vaccines

People over 65 can access the special adjuvanted quadrivalent influenza vaccine through their GP from mid-April. Everyone is advised to get the vaccine as early as possible. This includes everyone over 6 months, people with chronic heart, lung and neurological conditions, all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, and pregnant women.

Coronavirus Help

You can get assistance from Health Direct **1800 022 222** or **healthdirect.gov.au**. National Coronavirus Hotline **1800 020 80**.

Priority Assistance Delivery

If you have trouble getting to the shops you can apply for delivery of groceries: **woolworths.com.au/priorityassistance** or ring **1800 000 610**. Coles Online Priority Service (COPS) will be available shortly. Check **coles.com.au** for updates.

THINGS TO WATCH AT HOME

Many national and international performing arts companies are streaming live performances since they have been shut down. Don't forget international time differences for overseas streaming.

• Sydney Biennale

Nirin will bring the 22nd Biennale to life with walk-throughs, podcasts, interactive Q&As and curated tours.

- **Australian Theatre Live**
facebook.com/austheatrelive
- **National Theatre Home**
nationaltheatre.org.uk/nt-at-home
- **The Royal Opera House (Opera and Ballet)**
roh.uk/tags/live-stream
- **Metropolitan Opera New York**
metopera.org/user-information/nightly-met-opera-streams
- **Kanopy**
Free films from your local library

Free Books

All your local libraries have extensive collections of eBooks and eAudio books, as well as E-Magazines. Log on with your library card.

Audible for children

free streaming of stories while libraries are closed.
stories/audible.com/start-listen

No Internet Access

If you don't have internet access there are still vitally important radio and television broadcasts, as well as ABC Classics, Radio National and Radio Sydney.

SSH Volunteers Meetings Cancelled

Our monthly meetings on the first Saturday of each month are cancelled until further notice. Please keep in contact via **volunteers@ssh.com.au**. We have added a new subscription feature to the SSH website, so please sign up there so we can keep in contact. In the interests of safety, print copies will be distributed according to strict health protocols this month and copies will be available at your local IGA.

Until next time, keep cheerful, we will overcome this. Spare a thought for all those now out of work or completely housebound and remember: Wash Your Hands, Keep your Distance and Care for Each Other.

volunteers@ssh.com.au

the South Sydney Herald

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Uniting Churches



South Sydney Uniting Church

56a Raglan St, Waterloo
Public worship suspended
Follow @sundayssuc for prayers,
music and reflections
Rev. Andrew Collis
0438 719 470
www.southsydneyuniting.org.au

Leichhardt Uniting Church

3 Wetherill St, Leichhardt
(near Norton St,
free parking behind church)
Public worship suspended
Revs Radhika &
Adrian Sukumar-White
www.leichhardtuniting.org.au

Mustard Seed Uniting Church

Cnr Quarry St & Bulwara Rd,
Ultimo
Public worship suspended
Rev. David Gore
0449 875 065
mustardseed.unitingchurch.org.au

Newtown Mission

280 King St Newtown
Public worship suspended
Rev. Graeme Tutt
9519 9000
www.newtownmission.org.au

Paddington Uniting Church

395 Oxford St, Paddington
Public worship suspended
Office 9331 2646
www.paddingtonu.ca.org.au

Pitt Street Uniting Church

264 Pitt St, Sydney
Public worship suspended
Rev. Dr Margaret Mayman
Office 9267 3614
www.pittstreetuniting.org.au

Wayside Chapel

29 Hughes St, Potts Point
Public worship suspended
(Please note that Wayside is
still open for those in need)
Pastor Jon Owen
Office 9581 9100
www.thewaysidechapel.com

St Stephen's Uniting Church

197 Macquarie St, Sydney
Public worship suspended
Rev. Ken Day
Office 9221 1688
www.ssms.org.au

YOUR LOCAL MEMBERS Contact this month by email or phone only



Tanya Plibersek MP
Federal Member for Sydney

672 Crown St,
Surry Hills NSW 2010

T: 02 9379 0700
F: 02 9379 0701

Tanya.Plibersek.MP@aph.gov.au



Jamie Parker MP
State Member for Balmain

112a Glebe Point Rd,
Glebe NSW 2037

T: 02 9660 7586
F: 02 9660 6112

Balmain@parliament.nsw.gov.au



Ron Hoenig MP
State Member for Heffron

Shop 117, 747 Botany Rd,
Rosebery NSW 2018

T: 02 9699 8166
F: 02 9699 8222

Heffron@parliament.nsw.gov.au



Alex Greenwich MP
State Member for Sydney

58 Oxford St, Paddington
NSW 2021

T: 02 9360 3053
F: 02 9331 6963

Sydney@parliament.nsw.gov.au



Jenny Leong MP
State Member for Newtown

383 King St, Newtown
NSW 2042

T: 02 9517 2800
F: 02 9230 3352

Newtown@parliament.nsw.gov.au



Photo: Getty

Keeping fit at home

SPORT

STEVE TURNER

NOT even pandemic isolation can prevent people from keeping fit at home! After a discussion with our rugby league writer John Lanzky, here is a suggested 30-minute daily routine:

▪ SIT UPS

Lay on your back on the floor. Raise knees to 90-degree angle to the floor, bottom of feet flat on the floor. With hands behind head, raise head off the floor 5cm. Repeat as many times as you can.

▪ LEG RAISES

Sit on the couch with back flush against couch. With feet together, raise legs to a 90-degree angle to the floor. Repeat as many times as you can.

▪ SKIPPING

On a flat, firm surface, skip with a rope as many times as you can. Jump only 1cm in the air, just enough to let the rope pass under your feet.

▪ PUSH UPS

Position yourself on the floor on hands and feet. Press body downwards to the floor until chin almost touches. Repeat as many times as you can.

▪ ARM STRENGTHENING

Sit on the couch with back straight. Place a can of baked beans or similar in each hand. Raise each hand alternatively, lifting baked beans to shoulder height. Repeat as many times as you can.

For those who are not in isolation at home, these exercises can be done at some beaches and parks.

Gai wins record 7th Golden Slipper Stakes

Jockey Hugh Bowman secured his maiden Group 1 win recently in the \$3.5 million Golden Slipper Stakes aboard Farnan, who easily took out the feature race at Rosehill Gardens. Farnan is co-trained by Gai Waterhouse and Adrian Bott. Waterhouse celebrated her seventh success in the world's richest race for two year olds, eclipsing the previous record of six winners by her father, the late Tommy Smith.

Aussie girls win the T20 World Cup Final

Congratulations to our women's T20 cricket team on their 85-run win against India in the final. The crowd of 80,000 at the MCG was treated to a top-class match, where Alyssa Healy took the player-of-the-match award with a stunning 75-run knock. Captain Meg Lanning was supremely proud of her team, although she admits for most of the match she thought the Aussies were not in a position to win. Pop superstar Katy Perry entertained the crowd.

SSH

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