

the South Sydney Herald

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Friends of Erskineville committee member Genevieve Kelly addresses the crowd at the protest and barbecue at Explorer Street public housing, Eveleigh. Photo: Andrew Chuter

Stop the destruction of public housing

URBAN DESIGN

ANDREW CHUTER

FRIENDS of Erskineville believes the plan announced by the Housing Minister to demolish wonderful homes in Explorer Street, South Eveleigh, whack up apartment towers and sell 70 per cent to the private market is wrong. Wrong in principle.

That's because you can't fund public housing by selling the very land it sits on. It's like putting ads on the ABC to pay for the news. It's just a way of avoiding the inevitable fact that a public good requires public investment. That's what we pay our taxes for.

The state government may claim there is some minuscule increase in the number of public

housing dwellings being provided. But it's not the absolute number that matters. It's the proportion of public housing as a fraction of all housing that matters. That is what determines the overall social accessibility of public housing.

The City of Sydney's Housing Audit of 2020 reveals that the percentage of public housing in the area is in fact falling. It's gone from 12 to 9 per cent since 2005. And the federal government's recent Productivity Commission report found that the percentage of public housing in Australia is down from 5 to 4 per cent over the last decade.

How can that be? Aren't these sorts of projects, which are 30 per cent public, bringing the figure up? You can find the answer just 10 minutes walk from South Eveleigh, in Ashmore Estate in Erskineville. Developers there

are in the middle of building 3,000 new apartments and not a single one of them will be public, let alone affordable.

The private sphere is being allowed to massively swamp the public sphere – and the system isn't working.

If we believe that housing is a fundamental human right, we need radical change. At the very least, we must stop the destruction and sell-off of what little public housing we still have left. We need to wrench housing away from the clutches of the developers and the market.

Please sign our online petition and help defend and extend public housing:

www.bit.ly/3snZFsw

See the full speech, given on February 13 at a Friends of Erskineville barbecue and protest in Explorer Street, online: www.bit.ly/2Nxfcr

Waterloo South proposals – stacking Lego blocks

URBAN DESIGN

GEOFF TURNBULL

THE proposals for the future of Waterloo South produced by the City of Sydney Council (CoS) and Land and Housing Corporation (LAHC) are now public. CoS decided it needed to match LAHC's number of units (yield). As a result, Waterloo South will become the densest residential development in the CoS local government area with 3,300 units within 12 hectares, which includes over two hectares of parks and new streets.

The dispute is no longer about how many units go into the development, it's now about how and where to stack the Lego blocks. LAHC prefers to stack them high so it gets better returns from high-rise apartments, so its plan has 12 buildings from 15-32 storeys. The new CoS proposal

is a mid-rise solution with most buildings at eight storeys with up to 13 storeys along George Street and three 27-30 storey towers to give LAHC the yield it wants.

High density creates liveability challenges for any community, and CoS has increased the density of the proposal it initially thought the site could handle. As 30 per cent of the community who will be living at this site will be social housing tenants, many with high and complex needs, the question needs to be asked: Is the density now proposed appropriate? That important question for tenants will no longer be contested between Cos and LAHC, even though the NSW Government Architect expressed reservations about the density at the Central Sydney Planning Committee (CSPC).

On the day Council was to vote on the CoS proposal, including to enter further negotiations with LAHC over

Continued on page 2



Adopt a pet in Zetland



Rainbow path paves way to Mardi Gras



Redfern in the frame



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TANYA PLIBERSEK MP

Federal Member for Sydney

Nationally, child care fees have skyrocketed by over 35 per cent since the Liberals were elected.

The evidence is clear: the Morrison Government's child care system is failing to keep child care costs down. Making child care more affordable is not only important for families; it has a triple dividend - it is good for parents, good for children, and good for the economy.

The design of the current child care system means many second income earners, usually women, actually lose money if they work a fourth or fifth day in a week. Reducing the cost of child care is a smart economic decision. It will allow parents the flexibility to work more hours, and our economy will benefit in return.

Child care should be there to help parents get back to work. Instead, child care fees are a financial burden for many families. This is why Labor has a plan to cut child care fees and put more money into the pockets of working families, straight away.

SCAN THIS QR CODE TO FIND OUT HOW MUCH YOUR FAMILY COULD SAVE UNDER LABOR'S PLAN:



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My electorate office provides support with Centrelink, Veterans' Affairs, Medicare, Immigration, NBN and other federal matters - please contact us anytime for assistance.

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Community action blocks public land grab at South Eveleigh

URBAN DESIGN

ROGER JOWETT

ONE of the great lessons from the Covid-19 pandemic has been the community's appreciation of public land for recreation purposes - particularly critical in Redfern-Waterloo where open space is at an absolute premium.

Property developer Mirvac, in late December 2020, made an application to the NSW Department of Planning, Infrastructure and Environment (DPIE) to construct permanent commercial and retail facilities on land reserved for public use at Innovation Plaza.

Decisive action by community organisation REDWatch strongly supported by the Rail, Tram and Bus Union (RTBU), has seen this proposal abandoned.

Geoff Turnbull from REDWatch was able to remind Mirvac, DPIE and the City of Sydney Council that when the Eveleigh Locomotive Workshops site was sold in late 2015 protections for the community's unreserved access were demanded by REDWatch and added to the land title by the NSW government prior to sale.

Frantic searches by senior officers of the Council confirmed that easements to protect the rights of the public to fully access Innovation Plaza could not be overridden.

Innovation Plaza is the jewel in the crown for the South Eveleigh precinct as it's surrounded by three heritage-listed railway buildings. Now the question is will Mirvac work with the community to create a vibrant public recreation space? **SSH**

Roger Jowett is a retired member of the RTBU.

Waterloo South proposals - stacking Lego blocks

Continued from page 1

providing public infrastructure, LAHC's Minister, Melinda Pavey, accused CoS of holding up social housing.

The next day Planning Minister Stokes issued an ultimatum that if LAHC and CoS could not resolve their differences by March 12, he would end the deadlock by appointing the head of DPIE as the alternate planning proposal authority, with advice from a panel of three independent experts to assess this project within 10 weeks.

Minister Stokes is reported as saying the CoS plan is superior to LAHC's one, but that it is incumbent on CoS to get to an agreement with LAHC. He is also saying that LAHC is mistaken if it thinks he will do its bidding for Waterloo.

A key focus of the CoS proposal is how to make the high density provide the best possible amenity. Some of this is done by minimising high-rise and some by wider and better located streets and buildings, deep soil planting for trees and less people per building. The CoS design guide for Waterloo was mentioned specifically as being of a high standard at the CSPC meeting. It is unclear how the design guide would work with LAHC's high-rise.

CoS has reduced its initial call for 50 per cent social housing and now accepts Communities Plus's 30 per cent. CoS wants 20 per cent affordable housing rather than LAHC's 5 per cent with the remaining 50 per cent private.

CoS has conditioned increased floor-space on LAHC meeting the CoS tenure mix.

Increasing affordable housing increases the cost side of LAHC's development as it would replace high return private units that fund the project. CoS says some of its changes make it possible to reduce LAHC's costs.

The Redfern Waterloo Aboriginal Affordable Housing Campaign's request for developments on government-controlled land in Redfern Waterloo to deliver 10 per cent Aboriginal affordable is also proposed by Council but they note this cannot be assured under planning law.

If the NSW government rather than LAHC could deliver Aboriginal affordable housing this would go some way towards meeting CoS's aims and LAHC's project financial viability. In an ideal world, government would invest in social and affordable housing rather than selling public land to pay for it.

An African proverb says when the elephants fight, the grass is trampled, and when the elephants make love, the grass is trampled. Irrespective of what the elephants get up to it remains to be seen if the public tenant grassroots will get any real say in what happens or have any guarantee that their lives will improve as a result. At some point, after the deal is done, there will be a public exhibition. **SSH**

Links to the proposals can be found on the REDWatch and CoS websites.

This page is sponsored by AC Law Group in memory of Trevor Davies, the *South Sydney Herald's* founding editor and a friend to all in the community.

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Gold's work of love exposes 'elephant hell'

ENVIRONMENT

MARJORIE LEWIS-JONES

THE Breaking by award-winning author and editor, Irma Gold, was released on March 1. In this Q&A she offers insights into her debut novel's central love story and how we can stop the harm done to elephants through tourism.

Which came first: your characters Deven and Hannah or telling a story that might help halt the suffering of elephants in Thailand?

I had recently returned from a trip to Thailand and Deven and Hannah just showed up on the page. They were such a joy to write and at first, I didn't even realise that elephants would be part of the story. In retrospect it seems obvious that I would write about elephants and the situation in Thailand given my experiences, but it wasn't the impetus behind the book. And I actually think that's important. I didn't write an issues-driven book. I wrote about the magnetic bond between two women and the complexity of the world they find themselves in.

How much "elephant hell", as Hannah calls it, have you seen firsthand?

Many details are drawn from my own observations but I also undertook extensive research. I wish I could say that Pang Tong's experience working 10 hours a day with a five-kilogram saddle on her back is unusual, but this is the norm for elephants required to give rides. Humans often see animals as inferior beings, but every animal has their own story. In some ways this novel is a voice for elephants. They are hugely intelligent creatures who we subject to enormous suffering in the name of entertainment.



Which elephant in the novel is your favourite, and why?

If I had to pick one it would have to be Bua Khao (whose name means "white lotus"). She is blind in both eyes from being slingshotted by her mahout on two occasions when she wouldn't comply. This happens more than it should, and several of the elephants at the sanctuary where I worked were blind in one or both eyes. Deven and Hannah rescue Bua Khao and she becomes pivotal in their story. There were many moments writing about Bua Khao that moved me.

Deven's special affection for the elephants mirror your own feelings. What sparked your passion?

When I was 8, my parents took my brother and me to a circus. We had our photograph taken with an elephant, and as I stood beside this enormous creature - feeling a little nervous and a lot awestruck - her trunk brushed briefly against my cheek. It was corrugated but gentle, and I fell in love. Later in life I realised that if I genuinely loved elephants I couldn't in good conscience ride one. That was the



Irma Gold is Ambassador for the Save Elephant Foundation and has worked with rescued elephants in Chiang Mai, Surin and Kanchanaburi. Her novel, *The Breaking*, explores the love that forms between humans and between humans and animals. Photo: Supplied



Photo: Getty Images

point at which my volunteering with elephants in Thailand began.

Hannah says she'd imagined one elephant's owner "as a picture of evil. But he was just a man, with a family." If the choice is safeguarding a livelihood or an elephant's wellbeing, where should the line be drawn?

This is such an excellent question and, in many ways, it is what propelled me forward in writing the book. Unfortunately, there are no easy answers. There is so much grey involved.

For many people in Thailand their elephants may be the only way of them earning a living. The elephant suffers, but without the elephant earning income the people suffer. That's why ecotourism is so important.

I think about the welfare of elephants as being on a spectrum, with the opposite ends being the abuse elephants suffer daily in the tourism industry and the freedom of living wild. In the middle there are all kinds of scenarios which are not ideal, but are better

than the worst. So ecotourism means that the Thai people can earn an income without their elephants experiencing abuse. The Save Elephant Foundation manages many of these projects. They are very special experiences for tourists and they don't physically harm the elephants. However, it's always worth remembering that the only reason that we can get close to these animals is because they have been "broken".

Where should tourists head to once Covid restrictions ease if they want to encounter elephants but not harm them?

Any of the Save Elephant Foundation projects in Thailand, Myanmar and Cambodia are a safe bet. And you'll also have a much richer experience than riding an elephant. But founder Lek Chailert has also worked with many projects to convert them to her ethical model, so it is best to do your research before you go. Be aware that many places now use the word "sanctuary" in their name when they are anything but (so don't visit if they offer rides, performances, petting of separated calves or use bullhooks).

What is the way forward for a place like Thailand?

The crux of it all is that if all tourists demanded eco-friendly interactions with elephants the situation in Thailand - and other countries like India - would change. The current situation only exists because the demand from tourists is there. In other words, the onus is on us to make ethical choices.

The Breaking by Irma Gold (MidnightSun, \$29.99). Irma is an Ambassador for the Save Elephant Foundation.

New soccer program targets time-poor women looking to stay active

SPORT

AMY CHENG

WOMEN wanting to play soccer but who don't have the time and commitment to do a full season will soon have an alternative option.

In December, Marrickville Football Club (MFC) received a two-year grant for \$8,200 from the Inner West Council to run the Kick-on for Women program.

Kick-on for Women is an introductory program for women who have never played soccer before but want to stay active and play with friends.

Managing Director of MFC Georgie Kokokiris said the club had been looking at ways to increase female participation in soccer.

"Speaking to some of the mums and sisters and females in the club, and even myself, there was this issue of we'd love to play," she said.

"We'd love to do something active but we just don't have the time and commitment to do something in a full season and compete in a team," she said.

The program runs for eight weeks, with each session lasting 45 minutes. It comprises a 25-minute skill session, where women will learn basic football skills, and a short 20-minute game with teams of five or seven competing against each other.

MFC will run the program every Thursday night, beginning in April, throughout the second and third terms of the school year.

The grant money will be used to train up female coaches; for equipment, such as balls,

cones and bibs; and to provide female-cut training kits for players to wear, so they feel like they're part of a team.

The female coaches are all part of the club - and coaching and running this program will take their football to another level.

For women in the community hesitant to take part, Ms Kokokiris said there is nothing to worry about. "There will be no divisions, there is no grading, it doesn't matter if you can kick a ball or not."

Initially, the club would like to see 20 to 30 women join up and then increase numbers to run the program all year round.

"It's definitely something that we want to continue; increase the female numbers and see what else our female members want," Ms Kokokiris said.

See www.marrickvillefc.org.au



Kick-on for Women encourages women who have never played soccer before to learn the game and get moving. Photo: Supplied



Jenny Leong MP

STATE MEMBER FOR NEWTOWN

Happy Mardi Gras!

It's time for the Sydney Gay & Lesbian Mardi Gras again and we hope you are ready to join in the annual celebration of diversity, creativity and community.

The usual celebrations will look a little different this year with the official parade operating as a ticketed event at the Sydney Cricket Ground. It's wonderful that the organisers have been able to work with NSW Health to ensure we could still hold this treasured event in a COVID Safe way, but it is vital that we maintain Mardi Gras as a community driven protest for LGBTIQ+ rights and freedoms.

As well as supporting the official parade, we encourage you to get along to the community run march that will take place on Oxford St, beginning at Taylor Square from 2pm on March 6.

The march will provide a free and accessible way to celebrate our LGBTIQ+ community this Mardi Gras, but also continue the proud history of protest by calling for an end to transphobic scapegoating and fear mongering; an end to mandatory detention and forced deportations of refugees; an end to Black deaths in custody and over policing of Black communities; to fully decriminalise sex work in every state and territory and to decriminalise and to legalise drug use and support drug law reform.

We hope you have a safe and wonderful Mardi Gras, and join us in standing up for LGBTIQ+ rights and freedoms.

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

PS!

The need to strengthen consent laws in NSW is long overdue. Tell the Attorney General to act now! Sign on and add your voice to the campaign for stronger consent laws.

Authorised by **Jenny Leong MP**, funded using parliamentary entitlements.

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Ten start-ups chosen for University accelerator program

SPONSORED

STEPHEN GARTON

INCUBATE, Australia's first university-based accelerator program, has announced the 10 start-ups accepted for this year's program. The multi award-winning program at the University of Sydney mentors and funds students, alumni and researchers to launch start-ups through its accelerator program.

In nine years, the INCUBATE program has supported 125 start-ups, attracting more than \$35 million in investment funding and generating around 400 jobs.

The INCUBATE Accelerator Class 16 start-ups for 2021 are:

- **Achange Study** – an online platform that connects international students with Australian education providers and simplifies the complex application process.
- **ACWA** – a passive atmospheric water capture technology that collects water from the atmosphere and processes it to provide a sustainable water source at low cost and can function 24 hours a day.
- **Ballot Box** – is a platform that puts democracy into the palm of everyone's hand. The app allows people to review political party stances and raise core issues with those in power in one centralised location.
- **Codex Research** – unique bioreactor technology allowing

researchers to cure diseases without testing on animals. The technology will revolutionise the discovery and treatment of diseases by growing accurate models of human biology.

- **Kidcampus** – Australia's largest centralised place to help parents find, compare, and book the best after school and holiday programs for their children.
- **KOBI** – produces sustainably made and waterproof designer cork handbags to provide women with an eco-friendly alternative to the traditional leather and plastic-based handbag.
- **Neurgeon** – harnesses closed-loop rehabilitation circuits to help post-stroke patients regain movement and heal quickly, easily and cost-effectively.
- **Newsplay** – aims to deliver personalised, curated news content 24 hours a day in over 16 languages via its unique A.I animatronic news anchor, S.A.M (smart.anchor.machine).
- **Pixii** – Australia's most eco-friendly period products that are made of 100 percent organic cotton and contain no plastic. Pixii is designed to be freely available at work, schools and more.
- **Refundid** – instant refunds for any online purchases. By removing the current 7-14 day refund wait time, Refundid improves customer satisfaction and increases sales for stores.



Students, alumni and researchers of the INCUBATE Accelerator Class 16 start-ups for 2021. Credit: Supplied

Founder of ACWA, Chiara Neto, is a Professor and Australian Research Council Future Fellow in the School of Chemistry, and member of the University of Sydney Nano Institute.

"The INCUBATE program exposes our team – both students and staff – to a set of skills, a frame of mind and a network that we rarely develop in our usual academic work. Incubate is a great asset of the University and we are grateful to have been included in this year's program," Professor Neto said.

INCUBATE's 14-week incubation program provides entrepreneurs with \$5,000 seed funding, working space on campus, mentoring, advice and guidance from some of Australia's most experienced mentors, and access to professional networks of the University and supporting organisations.

You can find out more about INCUBATE at: incubate.org.au



Authorised by Vice-Chancellor and Principal Prof. Stephen Garton.
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Students help transform bread tags into wheelchairs

EDUCATION

SSH

ALEXANDRIA: Children from Camp Australia's before- and after-school care service at Alexandria Park Community School (APCS) have posted 1.2kg of bread tags to an organisation in South Australia and are continuing to collect tags at a fast rate.

"The children have been learning about community connections and being part of a wider global community," said Out of Hours School Care Coordinator, Amy Bash.

"We've been collecting the bread tags as part of the Aussie Bread Tags for Wheelchairs program. The program sells the plastic tags to a recycler and uses the funds to buy wheelchairs for disadvantaged people in South Africa."

Ms Bash said the children have also been learning about the difference they can make by trying to engage others



Children from Camp Australia's before- and after-school care service at Alexandria Park Community School are learning about local and global connections through collecting tags for the Aussie Bread Tags for Wheelchairs program. Photo: Supplied

and some are collecting bread tags in their classrooms and in their apartment blocks.

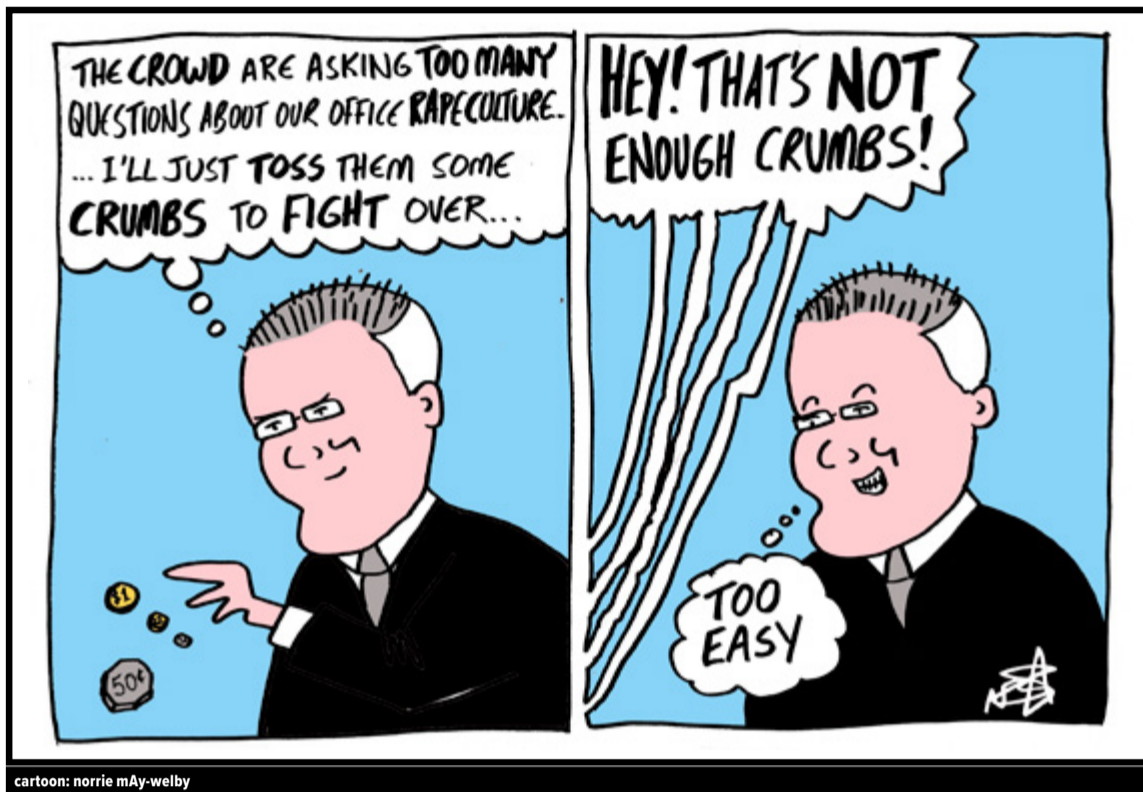
They have also got the canteen on board and are making posters to go around the school and on school social media.

"We are collecting for Aussie Bread Tags for Wheelchairs because it's a fantastic, sustainability focused program that helps our children experience helping others, including those with disabilities, and making changes to people's lives on a global scale. It's really easy

to participate and a great way to help others while also helping the environment."

Two drop off points in the area are SDN Glebe (112a Glebe Street, Glebe) and Helping Hands Bourke Street (590 Bourke Street, Surry Hills). However, APCS post its tags directly to Aussie Bread Tags for Wheelchairs (PO Box 1164 Kensington Gardens, South Australia).

See www.ozbreadtagsforwheelchairs.org.au for the most economical and sustainable ways to post your tags.



cartoon: norrie mAy-welby

In support of harm minimisation

EDITORIAL

SSH

THE Uniting Medically Supervised Injecting Centre (MSIC) in Kings Cross allows for a relatively safe environment for people to inject drugs, access emergency care and obtain sterile injecting equipment.

Since the MSIC opened in 2001, there have been more than 1 million injections supervised and more than 8,500 overdoses managed without a single fatality.

More than 14,500 referrals have been made, connecting clients to health, drug treatment and social welfare services. Among frequently attending

clients, 80 per cent have ultimately accepted a referral for treatment.

According to reports cited by the Alcohol and Drug Foundation, clients report an increase in knowledge of the risk of spread of blood-borne viruses and describe behavioural changes that reflect safer injecting practices to minimise risk.

The number of publicly discarded needles and syringes approximately halved after the centre opened. The number of ambulance call-outs to Kings Cross dropped by approximately 80 per cent, and the average monthly emergency department presentations that were opioid-related fell by 20 per cent post-MSIC.

The SSH is alarmed to hear of renewed opposition to a program deserving of respect and ongoing support.

Sydney's remaining lockout laws will be axed this month and restrictions on Kings Cross lifted to allow venues to open beyond 1.30am. Multiple Kings Cross businesses, including the Potts Point Hotel, have called for the removal of the MSIC.

In light of NSW government plans to attract more people to small bars and restaurants, the Kings Cross Liquor Accord claims the MSIC has a negative impact on the area.

MSIC's medical director, Marianne Jauncey, points out the service has been operating

A person of faith

FAITH

DOROTHY MCRAE-MCMAHON

WHY would anyone choose to be a person of faith? This is a question which many people might want to ask at this point in history, when so many people have chosen not to have faith in anyone beyond human companions.

I must say, those of us who do have faith in someone beyond ourselves have numbers of different ways of describing that Being, depending where we live, or where our families originally lived. There are normally some similarities and some differences in the God we serve and believe exists.

Describing the One who I carry with me in the way I choose to live, in brief terms is as follows: It is a "God", that is a Being who is somewhat mysterious and who is totally beyond me in power, in knowing the truth about holy life with a wisdom beyond humanity and who still loves us and holds us in that love as we struggle to do our best.

Many of the Gods who are present in different faiths have had some experience of human life, such as Jesus Christ.

This is profoundly important because it means that the God who tries to guide us in all of the ways in which we live deeply understands what we face in each moment.

Our God calls us to be faithful in the way we live, the choices we make and in our responses to other people over minutes, days and years. Even when other people are not good or trustworthy, our God asks us to represent faithful love, justice and hope which adds to the possibility of our living together in true community.

People of faith are invited to enter times of quiet meditation which may carry us into openness to true spirituality. This can be a profound connection with life and truth which lies beyond ourselves – a special expansion of human life. It can often heal us of pain and strengthen forgiveness, both for ourselves and for others who have hurt us.

It can carry us more deeply into truth which we are able to add to our future.

Of course, those who journey in life without formal faith are to be respected. None of us really knows what reality really is and we can support and hold onto each other as we travel together.

successfully in Kings Cross for almost 20 years and its clients are part of the "heart and soul" of the area.

A spokesperson for St Vincent's Hospital says the injecting centre has prevented many overdoses and the hospital has heard no convincing argument or evidence for it to be moved.

Urgent: North Eveleigh Vision exhibition

Transport for NSW (TfNSW) has released its Strategic Vision for redeveloping the Redfern North Eveleigh precinct from Redfern Station to Pines Estate Newtown along Wilson Street. Exhibition until March 26 with an information session on March 18. For details, search North Eveleigh on TfNSW website.



Keith Douglass unveils a headstone to honour his father, Gordon. Photo: Lyn Turnbull

An unveiling

FIRST PEOPLES

ANDREW COLLIS

BOTANY: Friday morning, February 12. Following Trig Hill Road to the Anglican historical section at Eastern Suburbs Memorial Park. Keith Gordon Douglass, a proud Gamilaroi man, a member of the Stolen Generation and a Forgotten Australian, has invited the SSH to join him for a memorial – the unveiling of a headstone to honour his father, Gordon Laurence Douglass, buried 70 years in an unmarked grave.

In 1951, aged 3, Keith witnessed the sudden death of his father. The intervening years had been a mix of grief, confusion and determination on Keith's part. He had endured institutional "care", separation from his Aboriginal mother, Jessie, and younger sister, Suzanne.

"Not only did I lose my father, but I lost my whole family,"

Keith said. "I was put into a Church of England home for 'half-caste' boys [Millewa, Mulgoa]. I was there until I was 12. I had no visits from anyone. It was always a question of why because I had come from a large family – I had grandparents, uncles, aunts, cousins. I know that my sister has been affected very deeply too."

As a young man, Keith lived for a time with his sister, mother and step-father – in Bombala, Eden, Sydney and Darwin – as well as on the NSW mid-north coast. "I've always been nomadic," Keith said. "I've done seasonal work and what have you. I tuna-fished for about 25 years. I bought my own fishing vessels and big boats."

The long process of ordering the headstone entailed Keith's purchasing the plot at the cemetery. He, too, he explained, will be buried there.

Beneath his father's name, Keith had the stonemasons inscribe in marble the name of his dear mother, his own name and the names of two sisters –

quite recently having learned of an older sister, Carol Ann, who'd survived just a day in 1947. "She was somebody," Keith said. "So now she has a place too."

The Rev. Ian Fletcher, a minister from Kensington-Eastlakes Anglican Church, led graveside readings and prayers. Keith gave a short speech acknowledging the pain of family members deceased or absent, and the pain of those who'd failed to protect and comfort him: "My father's memory was not to be honoured. And yet I would like to believe that his family held true to their family values."

Keith added: "There are some things I'll never understand. The White Australia Policy was just so terrible. There was trauma for everyone.

"The first time I saw the headstone I was still in my car," he continued. "I could see it so clearly. I thought, it's in place, it's finished. I was overwhelmed. I couldn't believe it. I slumped over the steering wheel thinking, that's just beautiful."

The Review

Arts & Culture in Your Neighbourhood

Bindi encourages care for Country

An interview with Kirli Saunders

FIRST PEOPLES

MARJORIE LEWIS-JONES

KIRLI Saunders wrote *Bindi* as a call to action for young people to understand their role in conservation and caring for Country. *Bindi* might only be 11 years old but she is a captivating Indigenous eco-activist – learning as she goes about what it means to be responsible for Mother Earth in the face of climate change, catastrophic fires, and the decimation of species and their habitats.

You have said that *Bindi* in many ways is autobiographical. What are one or two parallels between your life and hers?

I was raised on Gundungurra lands, and had the joy of bushwalking, riding horses, playing hockey and being connected to a delightful community like Bindi.

The wisdom of Elders, and lessons in planting trees and learning language came later in life for me. I wanted to create a character that interwove those spaces. I wanted her to navigate some of today's environmental and cultural complexities from a child's perspective, with grace.

***Bindi's* story is written in Gundungurra and English? Why is this important?**

Bindi lives on Gundungurra Country and speaks the language of the land she's raised on. This is important because it means *Bindi* is able to connect with Country, by speaking the language of that land. I love teaching and learning language, particularly First Nations languages and I really wanted to incorporate

the language I've learnt so much from, Gundungurra, in my writing.

Can you tell us about Gundungurra Country where the novel is set?

Gundungurra land spans the Blue Mountains through the Burratorang Valley, to Goulburn. It's mountainous, and lushly green. The gum trees tower over rivers and creeks, and lyrebirds scratch around the water ways. There are caves shaped by Dreaming spirits and waterfalls that flow through rain forests and farms for raspberries and grapes. It's magical.

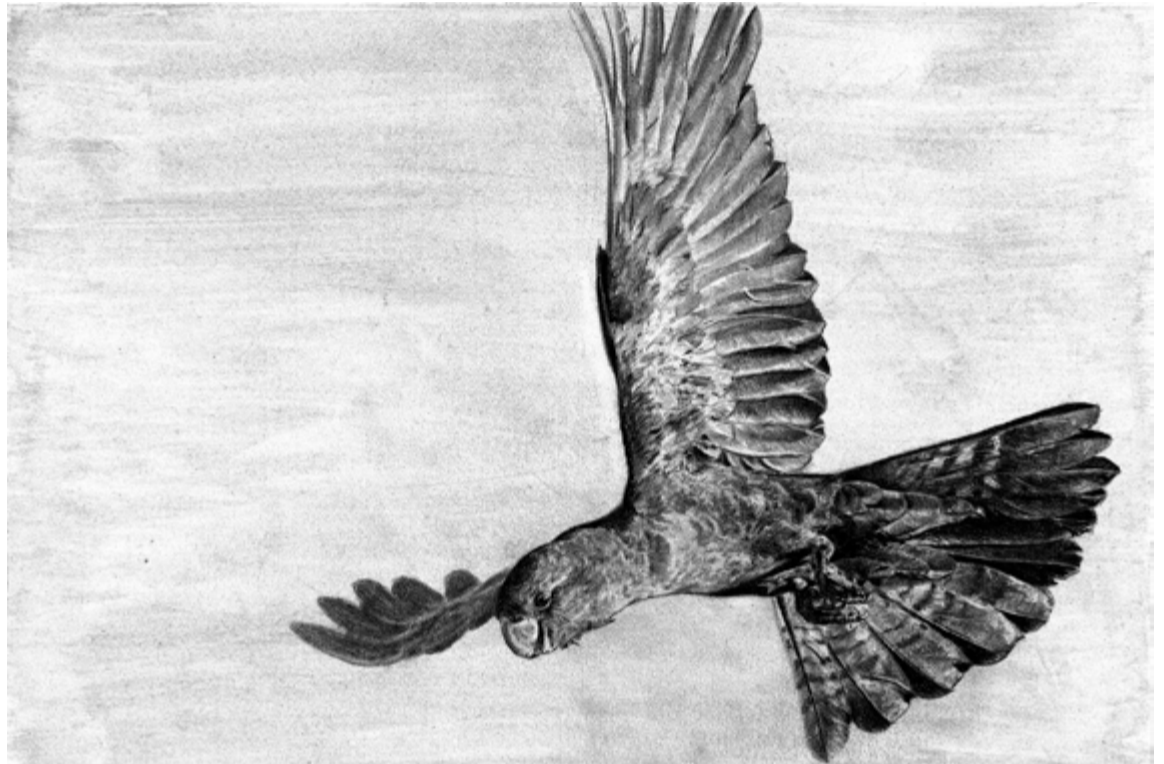
I love most that I got to grow up with Gundungurra bush land and birds and that it made me want to always adventure in natural spaces.

What made you choose to write *Bindi's* story as a "verse" novel?

I wanted to create a narrative that was accessible and experimental. I love poetry and wanted to welcome young readers into alternative ways to tell stories. When I was *Bindi's* age, I wasn't a largely confident reader, so I wanted to include all readers when shaping this story, and welcome all of them in. Junior readers and their teachers have been really supportive of *Bindi*.

***Bindi* grew from your 2019 Daisy Utemorrah Award winning picture book *Mother Speaks*. What made you want to rework the story in the wake of Australia's devastating bushfires in late 2019 and early 2020?**

I was partway through the original manuscript when the bush fires broke out on Gundungurra Country and Dad called. It reminded me of growing up on Gundungurra land, and having fires approach. I wanted to explore the emotions attached to fire, and to honour the



Kirli Saunders wanted her protagonist *Bindi* to navigate some of today's environmental and cultural complexities like caring for the local threatened species the Glossy Black Cockatoo. Illustration: Dub Leffler

communities affected by them. I also wanted to lean into First Nations care for Country, and to welcome young people into discussions about traditional fire keeping.

What makes you confident 11 year olds and other junior readers are ready to handle issues raised in the book and respond to your call to action?

I'm a teacher originally, I've worked in early childhood, primary, secondary and beyond. I'm in awe of the students I've been able to teach. Witnessing them navigate eco-anxiety, outlive bushfires, and continually survive repeated trauma made me feel as though we need stories that acknowledge their experiences with heart.

I hope *Bindi* does a little of that. I hope it offers a safe place to

explore some of those thoughts, feelings or hopes with care and that young people find some joy too wrapped up in her adventures.

Tell us about the Glossies in the Mist project, its work to protect the glossy black-cockatoo and how the team helped you with the book?

I worked with the Glossies in the Mist team to lead Red Room Poetry, Poetry in First Languages workshops on Gundungurra Country. These sessions had students create poetry with Gundungurra language about the Glossy Black Cockatoo. They also learnt about how to care for her, while planting trees to ensure her habitat remained flourishing. We will be leading lessons again in March!

This program largely impacted the shape of *Bindi*, and allowed

me to understand more about local threatened species. I feel so grateful to the dedicated team who support the ongoing conservation of the Glossy Black Cockatoo.

Magabala Books loves *Bindi* so much they have asked you to write a series. Can you give us a glimpse of what's next for our spirited protagonist?

I can't wait to write again with the talented team at Magabala. You can expect more eco-activism, more creation and more adventures on Country with *Bindi* and her friends – I don't want to give too much away!

Bindi
By Kirli Saunders
Illustrated by Dub Leffler
Published by Magabala Books,
\$16.99.

'Paint like no one is watching'

ART

ANNA NORTH

TONI Clarke has been painting for many years and exhibiting her work since 2008 at the Melbourne Art Fair and M2 Gallery in Sydney. She completed studies at the highly regarded Byron Bay School of Arts in 2017.

When Robin Gibson discovered her work Clarke was invited to show at his Darlinghurst gallery. *Trickles Like Honey* is now showing in his beautiful space until March 10.

Initially, Clarke's work charms us with its naïveté, luminosity, and its sense of warmth and play.

Look closer and the surety of her composition, her colour sense and the way paint seems to obey

her every brushstroke reveals a far more sophisticated talent than an ability to paint pretty pictures. This is her vocation!

Outside looking in, I see the joy her work brings, and the constancy of care and love she offers back.

Clarke's art is with her thick and thin, day in day out, in sickness and health, yes, a marriage of sorts. Read the excerpt from her artist statement below and you'll see what I mean.

"The genesis for this body of work was seeing the world change. I watched us all retreat into our homes, making ourselves more remote.

I had often looked out over the landscape in awe, however, this period allowed me to delve deeper into the valleys of my home.

"The repetition of going back to the waterfall each day to draw,

created a fascination in the way nature is transformed. Light plays upon its surface; a metamorphosis of greens, blues, pinks and oranges, in turn creating shape and form.

"The garden has become a playground for me, changing each day with the time and the seasons."

When I ask her about future aims and goals there is no hesitation. "To fall into the rhythm of the day, to discover as I go, to feel the spell of creation, to play alone, paint like no one is watching, feeling the freedom and the excitement of a new work coming ... to paint for ever!"

Trickles Like Honey
Robin Gibson Gallery
278 Liverpool St Darlinghurst
Until March 10

» art@ssh.com.au



Image: Toni Clarke, 'Water is life', 2020.

The Reviews

Book Review by Catherine DeMayo



All Our Shimmering Skies
HarperCollins, \$32.99
Trent Dalton

Two years after his *Boy Swallows Universe* achieved best seller status – some 500,000 copies sold – Trent Dalton has produced another novel. *All Our Shimmering Skies*, like his first novel, is often gritty, violent and harrowing (inspired, said Dalton, by his own childhood), but his luminous prose makes it nonetheless a compelling read.

Like *Boy Swallows Universe*, it is a coming of age story whose main character (a girl this time) lives in a world of addiction, abuse and danger.

Molly Hook is age seven when the book opens and her mother dies by suicide. We meet her again at age 12 when most of the story takes place. Molly digs graves with her father Horace and Uncle Aubrey. Both are alcoholics, her father a pathetic wreck of a man in whom good and evil co-exist, her uncle an abusive bully.

“When Horace Hook is in a light mood, Molly sometimes suggests ... more food to eat. Fewer maggots in the sink. Fewer bloodstains on the kitchen walls ... fewer weevils in the oats in the pantry ... Fewer empty whiskey bottles ...”

Molly learns that, years ago, an Aboriginal man named Longcoat Bob put a curse on her grandfather. Convinced that her family’s misfortune (enormous) will only end if the curse is lifted, she runs away from this dysfunctional home (narrowly escaping being murdered by Uncle Aubrey). Her escape happens to coincide with the Japanese bombing of Darwin, with the ensuing chaos facilitating her flight.

Much of *All Our Shimmering Skies* is a road trip and quest through the Top End, in the company of Uncle Aubrey’s ex-girlfriend

Greta Maze and Yukio, a Japanese fighter pilot who parachutes from his Zero. Think *The Wizard of Oz*, think *The Odyssey*, think of a number of quest narratives. Throw in a dash of magical realism, such as an eagle dropping a baby from the sky. Then transplant them to the vibrant landscape of the Northern Territory, beautifully and lovingly described by Dalton.

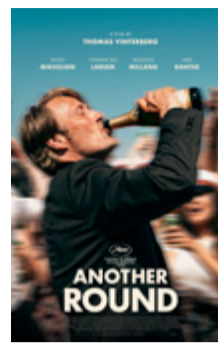
“And then the waterfall comes into full view and it opens up to Molly Hook like a new world. An immense natural hall with a sky roof and mighty walls made of deep red sandstone ... A waterfall ... as deafening and spectacular as would be a thousand white horses charging over that same 250-foot cliff face. A rapid torrent rush so forceful she has to shout to have her voice heard ...”

I did find the use of a mysterious Aboriginal elder, Longcoat Bob, a bit hackneyed; surely the stereotypical wise, traditional Aboriginal person punishing a white man for greed (however deserved) is just a little bit overdone?

All Our Shimmering Skies is, at times, shockingly violent and harrowing. Ultimately, however, it is a story of redemption and love. As Yukio tells himself, “People can change here”.

» books@ssh.com.au

Film Review by Lindsay Cohen



Another Round
Director: Thomas Vinterberg
Starring: Mads Mikkelsen,
Thomas Bo Larsen, Magnus Millang
Genre: Skål

I was going to review the US-Korean critically acclaimed *Minari* this month (four-and-a-half kimchi) but thought it would be more fun to review *Another Round*, the Danish film about four middle-aged mates at the crossroads of their lives experimenting with alcohol. It’s probably also easier for me to relate to!

Anyway, their theory was that they should stay moderately drunk during working hours. And it initially pays off spectacularly, enhancing their personal, physical and social relationships.

Mind you, I’m discovering it doesn’t help with writing film reviews given the multiple attempts it’s taken me just to get this far and my decreasing ability to typw prolperkly/.

My fear about *Another Round* was that it would get all preachy about the dangers of drinking to excess and chart the inevitable descent of all involved. Well there is some of that, they do ramp up the drinking and things do go generally downhill, but there is a lot of fun to be had along the way.

Ultimately, what the drinking did trigger, apart from (spoiler alert) partying, vomiting, fighting, potential marriage bust-ups and death, is voyages of discovery. Each of the mates is impacted, positively and negatively in their own way. But on the whole they learn that you should embrace what you have, enjoy everything in moderation and there’s nothing wrong with an occasional binge in the best of Danish traditions.

And I’ve also learnt to be careful embracing the subject matter of your reviews (my review of *Trainspotting* is spectacular and unintelligible).

Rating: Three-and-a-half double-shots of anything.

» film@ssh.com.au



Jeremy Goldstein has created a new theatrical genre to empower people to speak the truth of their experience. Photo: Supplied

If truth be told

An interview with Jeremy Goldstein

THEATRE

CATHERINE SKIPPER

JEREMY Goldstein is the creative force behind *Truth to Power Café*, a cathartic theatrical experience in which people of all ages, beliefs and backgrounds have been invited to share their responses to the questions, “Who has power over you and what do you want to say to them?”

Jeremy is very proud to have created a space where people are given the opportunity to speak about an experience that is important to them and which they feel is important to everybody. The participants have applied in advance giving 100-word responses to the questions and if selected their answers will evolve through the process of co-creation into a short story of 500 words which they will tell in their own voice. Appearing in Sydney alongside a diverse range

of 24 voices over three nights, are Aboriginal drag artist Nanna Miss Koori and Kate Rowe who was arrested at the first Mardi Gras.

Finding that personal voice is very important to Goldstein whose own struggle to deliver himself from his father’s influence is an integral part of the show. Their relationship was relatively difficult while Goldstein was growing up and he feels he wasn’t really able to resolve consequent tensions until after his father’s death.

“I have only found my own voice in the last four years,” he says.

So passionate is his belief that people need to be empowered to speak the truth of their experience that Goldstein has created a new theatrical genre. Ordinary people are invited to step up onto the stage and, in speaking their truth, bring into the open personal, political or attitudinal obstacles that deprive them and others of self-fulfilment. The participants can, in effect, stage their own drama, be writer and actor, and discover that they can

take charge of their own direction.

Goldstein’s opposition to disempowerment and his call for truth telling are both very relevant at the moment. According to his observation as an intermittent visitor to Sydney the city has changed most in its attitude towards First Nation Peoples. The long due recognition now given to the oldest culture in the world might be seen as a direct consequence of Aboriginal insistence upon the need for truth telling about the past.

While it was once fashionable – and maybe still is – to say truth is relative, Goldstein’s heartfelt belief that speakers know the truth of their stories – of their loss, of their determination, of their resistance and of their hope – and that truth has the power to move, is revolutionary in a time of general deceit.

***Truth to Power Café* will be at the Riverside Theatres, March 11-13.**

» theatre@ssh.com.au

Poetry

Little Voice

*Little voice, a breeze
Triangle silver and green
By the she-oak trees*

*Little voice within
Attend to the little things
Concentrate, begin*

*I see how you fail
And I see that you suffer
Little voice says wait*

*Little voice says wait
For I see that you suffer
I see how you fail*

*When I was fifteen
I thought I would paddle out
Stayed where I had been*

*Little voice that prays
I can renounce my wishes
Rough and rowdy ways*

*You see how I fail
And you see that I suffer
Little voice says write*

*Little voice says write
For you see that I suffer
You see how I fail*

*Little voice, don't cry
Attend to your babies three
Swim freely, pass by*

– Andrew Collis

*today has the kind of morning
I love:
in the high twenties,
the kitchen's white curtains
breathing in and out with
the breeze, bare feet
on green lino or bathroom tiles,
the possibility of revising plans
and not doing anything
but leaning back into the embrace of
feather cushions and reading
a novel
the feeling of freedom ...*

– Catherine Skipper

Wordplay poetry group meets at the Park Café, Chalmers St, Redfern, on the first Saturday of the month. 12pm to 2pm. New members welcome. Contact Marg: 0412 047 259.



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LeBron on track for record

SPORT

STEVE TURNER

LEBRON James continues his ascent towards the top of the American NBA's all-time scoring list. With a free-throw late in the second quarter of the Los Angeles Lakers recent meeting with the Brooklyn Nets, James surpassed the 35,000-career-point mark in the 30th game of his 18th season in the NBA.



LeBron James. Photo: Gary Dineen/NBAE via Getty Images

After surpassing Kobe Bryant and Michael Jordan to become the league's third all-time scoring leader last season, James only trails Karl Malone (36,928 points) and Kareem Abdul-Jabbar (38,387 points) on the all-time scoring list.

James, 36, becomes the youngest player in the history of the league to reach the 35,000-point plateau. Malone was 39 when he scored his 35,000th point while Abdul-Jabbar did so at age 38.

Former athlete to head Japan Olympic organising committee

Japanese athlete-turned-politician Seiko Hashimoto has been chosen as president of the Tokyo 2020 organising committee. She replaces a man who resigned after setting off a furore with sexist remarks.

Hashimoto, who competed in seven Summer and Winter Olympics as a cyclist and a skater,

now faces a series of tough issues at the helm of one of the world's biggest sporting events with less than half a year before its delayed start.

She must ensure that athletes and officials are kept safe from the coronavirus, while also facing strong public opposition to the Games being held amid the pandemic.

Rabbitohs for premiership

Rugby league reporter John Lanzky was very impressed by Souths' performance in Mudgee on February 27: Rabbitohs 48 def. Dragons 16. "It was hard to pick an outright best on field. There were so many brilliant performances. Latrell Mitchell had a hand in six tries. Cody Walker scored a hat-trick. Adam Reynolds' kicking game was spot on. Can't wait for season 2021!". SSH

Volunteers' News

PAT CLARKE

WHAT better way to start our 201st issue but in the Year of the Ox, and all of the other good things happening in March, including Mardi Gras, St Patrick's Day on the 17th, National Close the Gap Day on the 18th, March Equinox and the official start of Autumn on the 20th, Harmony Day on the 21st and Earth Hour on the 27th.

Thank you, Sue!

Sue Dahl has been a volunteer distributor in Erskineville for more than 23 years – since the very first day of Trevor's community newspaper ventures: *The Roadrunner*, *Chippo News*, *Redfern-Chippo Herald*, and *South Sydney Herald*. On the occasion of Sue's retirement from active distribution work, we thank her for helping to build and sustain a network of news sharing, political engagement and community support. We wish Sue every good thing, always.

International Women's Day – March 8

Theme for this year's IWD is "Choose to Challenge" and Sydney's theme is "Recognising Women Working (including unpaid)" and Sydney's IWD event this year will be a gathering behind Parliament



Photo: Getty Images

House in the Domain at 5.30pm. Registration is essential due to Covid restrictions at www.eventbrite.com.au/e/sydney-international-womens-day-2021-tickets

ARTEXPRESS 2021 Art Gallery of NSW until Monday April 5

ARTEXPRESS is a selection of outstanding student artworks from the 2020 HSC, and is in its 21st year. There are 48 artworks of many art forms from 8,617 submitted. Open from 10am-5pm daily and this exhibition is free. Masks are strongly recommended.

Chair Yoga with Claire – Fridays to March 26 from 10-11am

Gentle exercise, great for older adults and is disability inclusive. This is a Zoom event and to register contact: www.bit.ly/3q3LyH7

Rediscovering Sydney – Cartographia, Darling Square Library, Wednesday March 31 from 1-2pm

Calling all map enthusiasts! City of Sydney curator Margaret Betteridge will conduct this talk to

explore ways that Sydney has been mapped, from Indigenous people's use of tracks, language stars and seasons to C19th and C20th cartographers and illustrators. This is a free event, places at the Library are limited, but there can be 200 Zoom participants. To register phone: 02 9265 9333 or go to www.bit.ly/3r0CWCF

SSH Fundraiser

We are happy to announce that the fundraising started at our Celebrate Community online event held on December 11 raised \$5,260, exceeding our target. A big "thank you" to our donors and everyone involved. It was a thoroughly enjoyable evening.

Volunteer Agreement 2021

Dear Volunteers, don't forget to complete your 2021 Agreement and return to distribution@ssh.com.au or mail to South Sydney Herald, PO Box 3288, Redfern NSW 2016.

Until next time

Pat Clarke
volunteers@ssh.com.au

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