

the South Sydney Herald

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Gloria Liang, 'Sorrow on the frontline', 2020, acrylic on canvas, 50 x 70cm. Art is expressive, therapeutic, political and historical as shown here in Gloria's painting of medical personnel during last year's Covid lockdown (see pages 2 and 4 for Covid-safety updates). Local art groups continue to offer support and inspiration to participants. South Sydney Uniting Church's Saturday Art Workshops are held twice monthly, on the 2nd and 4th Saturdays from 12-4pm. Contact Carolyne for Zoom details – artclass@ssh.com.au. Poets Corner Art Group looks forward to meeting again soon. If you would like details on the Poets Corner Art Group or would like to join Counterpoint Community Services' online hangout via Zoom (three days per week) please call Elle on 9698 9569. Photo: Supplied

Fifteen ways to help wildlife

ENVIRONMENT

SSH

WIRES (Wildlife Information, Rescue and Education Service Inc) NSW has been rescuing and caring for wildlife for over 35 years and is the largest wildlife rescue organisation in Australia.

Sign up to WIRE's enews and you'll get a link to 15 Ways to Help

Wildlife ebook, which offers some great ideas about how you can help protect wildlife, including leaving water out, creating wildlife-friendly yards, and becoming a virtual carer.

WIRES receives around 170,000 calls annually and provides rescue advice and assistance for over 100,000 native animals per annum.

In response to the tragic toll of the catastrophic 2020 bushfires, extreme weather and drought on

Australia's wildlife WIRES has partnered on several projects to improve long-term outcomes for native animals.

WIRES enews delivers wildlife rescue stories, information about the care and release of wildlife, and other updates directly to your inbox.

SSH

To sign up for the enews (and to get your ebook) visit www.wires.org.au/contact/e-news



WIRES provides rescue advice and assistance for over 100,000 native animals per annum. Photo: Supplied



Write to the PM on climate action



Science Festival goes digital



Whale of a tale!

South Sydney Herald



To read these online-only stories and much more, go to: southsydneyherald.com.au

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Jenny Leong MP
STATE MEMBER
FOR NEWTOWN

Latest Covid restrictions and supports

With the extension of the Greater Sydney lockdown, it came as a great relief that there would be additional financial support for people and businesses who have lost income. We were also very pleased that **the Premier responded to our calls to implement a singles bubble**, to enable people who live alone to have contact with one other person.

In other positive news, **the NSW Government acted on our suggestion for real-time translations** of the morning press conferences – a recognition of our diverse communities.

In the interests of our whole community and your personal health, **I urge everyone to make an appointment to get vaccinated**. Both available vaccines

are safe and very effective at preventing serious illness and death. You can make an appointment at one of the mass vaccinations centres, pharmacies or at your doctor. If you are feeling unsure or have questions about the vaccines, I encourage you to make an appointment with your GP to discuss your specific health situation.

With so many changes, there is quite a lot to keep track of, so we have pulled together some useful links for you below.

Financial Supports

The NSW Government recently announced a broad expansion to JobSaver to assist businesses in staying afloat and retaining staff, as well as an expansion of supports available to individuals who have lost work due to the lockdown.

To see the details and apply for the Disaster Payments for individuals go to Services Australia Website using this QR CODE



To see the details and apply for business assistance go to Service NSW using this QR CODE.



Latest Restrictions and Public Health Information

To find out the most recent exposure sites, restrictions and rules under the Public Health Orders, visit the NSW Health website using this QR code.



Special Assistance

National Coronavirus 24hr Helpline: **1800 020 080**

Service NSW 24hr Helpline: **13 77 88**

Mental Health 24hr Helpline: **1800 011 511**

Disability Services Helpline: **1800 643 787**

Domestic violence helpline: **1800 656 463**

Link2Home Homelessness hotline: **1800 152 152**

Tenants' Advice line: **1800 251 101**

Due to the current restrictions our office is closed to the public, but we are easily contactable on email via newtown@parliament.nsw.gov.au or by calling 9517 2800. Please don't hesitate to get in touch if there is anything we can do to assist you.

Let's all stay safe, stay home, check in on our friends and family, and support our local businesses where possible with takeaway and delivery.

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

Remember – wear a mask, if you have symptoms get tested, and be sure to follow the NSW Health advice to keep yourself and our community safe. And if you are eligible for a vaccine – then register and get vaccinated!

Together, we can get through these difficult times.

Yours sincerely,
Jenny

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

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HESTA award nominee Natalie Cordukes led a large and successful collaborative project to renovate a property and facilitate a playgroup in Redfern for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families. Photo: Supplied

Local learning leader nominated for HESTA award

EDUCATION

MARJORIE LEWIS-JONES

PADDINGTON: Natalie Cordukes, director of Paddington Children's Centre (Uniting), has been nominated for a HESTA award for her robust leadership on reconciliation, which has resulted in strong partnerships with the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community and the creation of a new culturally safe learning space for Aboriginal children and families.

The HESTA Early Childhood Education & Care Awards recognise the frontline educators and carers at the heart of Australia's early childhood education system.

Ms Cordukes said to have been selected as a finalist for the HESTA Leadership Award was both an honour and a celebration of generosity, community and a commitment to respectful partnerships.

"This journey has been an adventure of connecting, listening and learning. As a leader in my community, I highly value social justice, equity and inclusion."

Ms Cordukes said steps taken to nurture the cultural competence of her team through ongoing relationships with local Elders, artists and community grew out of Paddington Children's Centre (Uniting) Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP).

"Strong relationships formed with Aboriginal community members have transformed our thinking, approaches and values."

One RAP goal was to facilitate a playgroup in Redfern for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families through community partnerships. Consultation with Redfern organisations and community to ascertain needs was critical to achieving this. As was meeting the "amazing" Aunty Ann Weldon (ACS Committee member a Head Coordinator of the ACS Food Drive) who was supportive and excited at the idea of the Aboriginal Children's Service (ACS) premises being used for children's programs again.

Ms Cordukes said, "I began supporting the ACS food drive to gain greater insight into the values of the committee and also connect to the space. It was not long before the ACS had completely captured my heart, driving me to be courageous and take on a project much larger than ever imagined!"

The ACS was in a four-storey terrace in need of substantial repair and restoration before programs could be offered to the community.

The full restoration and refurbishment project took 16 months, the support of 55 businesses, and financial contributions exceeding \$400,000.

Launch events were sponsored by Paddington Uniting Church Social Action Committee and enjoyed in conjunction with the National Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Children's Day (August 4, 2019).

"Community and supporting businesses came together to celebrate the transformation of the ACS. The support, generosity and interest displayed by businesses, individuals and community members was extraordinary."

Ms Cordukes said, "In 2019, with restoration complete, we launched an Aboriginal playgroup in the space – Biddy's Joy Playgroup – and we are committed to ensuring a culturally safe program and environment."

The playgroup is facilitated by community members and qualified early childhood educators. Community members inform and guide the program, which is creative and flexible to be responsive to the needs of the Redfern and inner-city community.

Ms Cordukes said joining a playgroup has many benefits, including connecting with other mums from the local area while supporting children's learning and development.

"Our playgroup space is filled with beautiful cultural resources. We have enjoyed establishing a bush tucker garden, weaving sessions and enjoy working with the community on activity ideas for the group."

"Aunty Beryl Van-Oploos has been conducting cooking classes with the Mums & Bubs last term. We look forward to creating delicious meals with Aunty Beryl to take home and enjoy together at the end of the session."

The playgroup is free and runs weekly on a Wednesday morning from 9.30am – 11.30am during school terms. Closed during the Covid lockdown period, the Facebook page @ACSRestorationProject is a great way to stay informed about the program. To find out more email contact@acsredfern.org or call 0407 066 288.

HESTA award winners will be announced on September 7 in Brisbane as part of the Early Childhood Australia National Conference.

Mural in Waterloo honours Eileen O'Connor's work with the poor

LOCALS

MICHAEL KENNY

THE primary school and church in Waterloo which played an influential role in the childhood of the woman expected to become Australia's next saint now has a permanent memorial to honour her memory.

The parish priest of the Catholic community of Sydney City South, Fr Paul Smithers commissioned local artist, Danny Mulyono to paint a striking mural on the grounds of Our Lady of Mount Carmel primary school to honour Eileen O'Connor who attended the school in the early 1900s.

Alongside missionary priest, Fr Edward McGrath, Eileen co-founded Our Lady's Nurses for the Poor in 1913, a religious order committed to nursing the sick and poor in their homes.

The order continues today with ongoing ministries in Coogee, Newcastle and Minto, with Eileen's legacy also honoured in the work of the Brown Nurses, an independent organisation which provides in-home care and support to the most disadvantaged and marginalised in inner-Sydney.

Archbishop Anthony Fisher OP officially launched Eileen O'Connor's cause for canonisation in February 2020.



Fr Paul Smithers commissioned local artist Danny Mulyono to paint a mural of Eileen O'Connor to honour her work with poor and disadvantaged people in Waterloo. Photo: Giovanni Portelli, Catholic Archdiocese of Sydney

The new Waterloo mural has been unveiled to coincide with the 100th anniversary of Eileen's death at the young age of 28. It features images of Eileen at different stages of her life as well as her personal signature, taken from her writings on the needs of the poor in Sydney.

Fr Smithers said many of his parishioners have a strong devotion to Eileen and he hoped the new mural helped to embody her story more within the life of the broader community.

"Waterloo was a ghetto for the poor and disadvantaged in Sydney at that time and I have

no doubt that her experiences would have inspired her outreach to the needy which still continues today.

"Eileen lived with a crippling condition called transverse myelitis which left her confined to a wheelchair for most of her life. We know that this impacted

upon her school attendance here in Waterloo and yet her family would often carry her up a steep hill to Mass and for prayer in the church here."

.....
Michael Kenny is Acting Director, Communications, News and Media, Catholic Archdiocese of Sydney

Celebrating together through and beyond Covid

EDUCATION

CATHIE HARRISON

AT this time of lockdown the notion of celebration seems far off. Recent celebrations for NAIDOC Week and Ash Barty's celebration of her historic win at Wimbledon has reminded us, too, that celebrations do not have to be about individuals and ego. They can be about kindness and community, and continue to connect and enrich us, through Covid and beyond.

During 2019 I was invited to lead a project with Uniting Early Learning (EL) and Out of School Hours Care (OSHC) services to explore the nature of celebrations and the role that celebrations could serve within Uniting services for children. Through regional gatherings across NSW, educators, leaders and church representatives explored questions of what, why and how do we celebrate? They also shared their stories of day-to-day practice and specific projects of celebration within their local communities.

The Director at Frederick St Uniting EL shared her commitment to getting to know the families deeply. "Our service is characterised by its multi-cultural and multi-faith diversity. We have 28 different languages, 98 per cent of children from diverse cultural backgrounds and families who practise Hindu, Muslim, Christian and the Buddhist faith. We learn so much from our families – about different traditions, festivals, celebrations and cultural practices.



The authentic celebration of diversity and difference is building trust and community in Uniting services for children. Photo: Supplied

Eighty-five per cent of children come to us via a word-of-mouth recommendation so the sense of community trust is important. Our multi-lingual staff help with our ability to be welcoming to families from many different cultures."

Educators shared moments of kindness, compassion and friendship that can be celebrated along with personal achievements, milestones, birthdays and festivals. At Uniting North Bondi EL children were supported to pick children they may not usually play with, and think of ways they could compliment them. At Adamstown Heights Uniting Preschool the children's compassion, care and kindness in offering support to homeless people is being celebrated.

The implementation of Celebrating Together continues. A recent example was the celebration of family week at Caringbah Uniting Preschool. After consultation, the decision to celebrate Family Week instead of Mother's and Father's Day was made in response to the diverse nature of families and the commitment to ensuring a safe and respectful place of welcome for all. May acts of care and kindness and commitment to the common good like this continue through Covid lockdown and beyond.



Young children are curious, capable and creative human beings, and it is important to value the unique spirit and capacities of each child. Photo: Supplied

Don't just smile and call me cute

EDUCATION

CATHIE HARRISON

TAKE another look. There's so much more to me than meets the eye.

I am two and a bit and a busy human being. I'm an athlete in training. I move constantly, bending, stretching, climbing, jumping. Will you find me interesting places to navigate and give me room to move?

I'm an intrepid traveller. I touch, smell and taste whatever comes my way. Can you dare as much as me? Will you trust me to find my way?

For I'm a scientist collecting data. I gather, investigate, examine and experiment. I wonder what will happen if ...? Do you notice the seriousness of my pursuits?

Like an archaeologist on a dig, I delight in unexpected finds. Even the tiniest object is a treasure to behold, a trace of a world I am just coming to know. Can you see it? Will you treasure this moment too?

I'm a nurse and a carer and I see and know when someone is hurt or sad. I worry for broken things and am sad at disappointments. Will you come close and share these big feelings with me?

I'm a gardener and nurturer. I am tender with the worm and careful with the snail. Will you come outside with me? Will you take better care of the earth for me?

I'm judge and jury, witness and advocate. I ponder what is right and I'm learning what is wrong. I'm wondering who decides and why things aren't always fair. Do you wonder about these things too? Can we think about this together?

I'm curious and learning from everything around me and from all that happens. I see what you do and I hear what you say. Are you curious and learning from everything too?

I'm a human being in this world, a citizen of now. Please slow down and get to know me better for we can be fully human together. I can teach you how.

TANYA PLIBERSEK MP

Federal Member for Sydney

COVID-19 INFORMATION

COVID-19 DISASTER SUPPORT PAYMENT

Scan here to access support payments for workers adversely affected by a state public health order.



COVID-19 BUSINESS SUPPORT

Scan here to access financial support to businesses or not-for-profits impacted by the recent COVID-19 restrictions.



NSW RESTRICTIONS

Scan here for the latest health orders from the NSW Government.



TESTING CLINIC LOCATIONS

Scan here for a list of COVID testing locations.



LIFELINE

Scan here for access to 24 hour crisis support and mental health assistance.



ELECTORATE OFFICE

While Sydney is under stay at home orders, my electorate office will not be open for drops ins or Justice or the Peace services, **please contact us via phone or email anytime for assistance.**

Tax Help services have been delayed and we will let know when it starts up again.

If you are having trouble providing food for your family please contact my office and we can provide you with a food assistance directory.

TANYA PLIBERSEK MP

Federal Member for Sydney

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Slow progress - physical inactivity remains a global pandemic

SPONSORED

STEPHEN GARTON

A new three-paper series in the *Lancet*, co-led by a University of Sydney academic and featuring University of Sydney authors, reveals that since the 2016 Olympics worldwide progress to improve physical activity has stalled with deaths associated with inactivity still at more than five million per year.

The slow progress on inactivity has been exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic, with lockdowns likely associated with overall less physical activity worldwide.

The researchers examined the missed opportunity of the Olympic legacy in physical activity promotion, levels of physical activity in adolescents and for people with disability.

The findings highlight that adolescents and people living with disabilities were among the least likely populations to have the support needed to meet the World Health Organization (WHO)'s physical activity guidelines. In addition, researchers found no measurable change in participation in sports either immediately before or after previous Olympic Games.

"The irony of the Olympics is that for most people they're really about sitting on the couch watching sport on TV," says Associate Professor Melody Ding, from the University of Sydney's Charles Perkins Centre, who co-led the *Lancet* series with two international colleagues.

"We should consider the Olympics an opportunity to remind the public and our decision makers of the importance of physical activity. This isn't something we should be thinking about once every four years. It should be a conversation we're having all the time."

Lack of support for people with disability, adolescents

The *Lancet* series' global analysis of 1.6 million school children from 146 countries has found no progress has been made to improve adolescent physical activity.

It is the most up-to-date analysis of its kind, finding 80 per cent of school-going adolescents failed to meet the WHO recommended guidelines of 60 minutes of physical activity per day, similar to figures reported in a 2012 *Lancet* article.

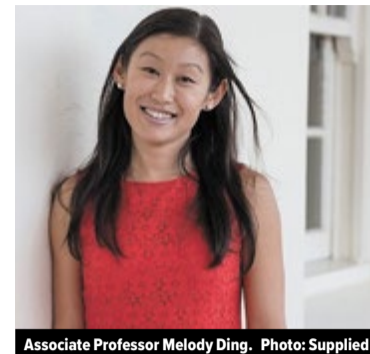
Key findings

- 80 per cent of school-going adolescents do not meet WHO guidelines for physical activity.
- 40 per cent of adolescents never walk to school.
- 25 per cent sit for more than three hours per day in addition to sitting at school and for homework.
- 60 per cent of boys and 56 per cent of girls spent two hours or more a day watching television.
- 51 per cent of boys and 33 per cent of girls spent two hours a day or more playing video games.

Olympics must provide a legacy for health that lasts

The third paper in the series found the Olympic Games had a minimal impact on physical activity in host cities and are a missed opportunity to promote and improve health at the population level.

Researchers found no measurable change in participation in sports either immediately before or after the Olympic Games. This was true even after the Games initiated the global impact project in 2001, which suggested that cities



Associate Professor Melody Ding. Photo: Supplied

collect indicator data before and after the Games that specifically include legacy information on grassroots sports participation.

These findings suggest that more planning and greater public health efforts are needed to generate a legacy of more physical activity following the Olympics or other mass sporting events.

"The Olympics provide a global stage to get people interested in and excited about physical activity. The challenge is how to translate that enthusiasm into sustained public health programs that are achievable and enjoyable for the general public," says study lead author Professor Adrian Bauman from the University of Sydney.

The *Lancet* series also features a commentary comparing the response of cities, including Sydney, to adjust infrastructure to accommodate physical activity in urban places during the Covid-19 lockdown, showing the global crisis has opened a window of opportunity for promoting physical activity in cities.



Authorised by Vice-Chancellor and Principal Prof. Stephen Garton.
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info.centre@sydney.edu.au

New mental health support group comes to South Sydney

HEALTH

SSH

MENTAL health organisation Grow has opened a Tuesday morning group in Redfern-Waterloo to provide friendly peer support in South Sydney.

Mental health experts agree that peer support in the community reduces isolation and builds resilience. Grow is a mental health organisation with over six decades of success helping people regain and maintain mental health and wellbeing. Small groups meet weekly to support members with issues such as depression, anxiety or loneliness. Meetings are run by peers – people with personal experience of improving their mental health.

Local Grow member Michelle says, "Grow has changed my life. I've gone from feeling frustrated and exhausted trying to cope, to having weekly dedicated time and a lovely group of peers who help me manage my mental health, solve problems and feel supported."



Grow groups help people overcome anxiety, depression and loneliness and improve mental health. The new Redfern-Waterloo group welcomes people who need support. Photo: Supplied

Grow is recognised and part-funded by NSW Health. Everyone is welcome regardless of life experience, no diagnosis or referral is required and there is no cost to attend. Meetings involve a series of group discussions, interactions and readings that follow a structure and timetable to ensure everyone has an opportunity to participate.

Grow's Redfern group meets every Tuesday 10.45am-12.45pm. Under Covid-safe stay-at-home

conditions, meetings are online and when in-person gatherings recommence the group meets at South Sydney Uniting Church (in the hall behind the church) at 56a Raglan St, Waterloo.

To confirm whether in-person meetings are on, or to get the Zoom link, contact Kylie on 1800 558 268. An optional online introduction is also available at www.grow.org.au/welcome-to-grow

For more details about Grow please visit www.grow.org.au



cartoon: norrie mAy-welby

Covid solidarity and Tisha B'Av

FAITH

ZALMAN KASTEL

“WHERE is the Aussie spirit? Aren't we all Aussies?!” Rami Ykmour, an Australian of Lebanese heritage and co-founder of popular restaurant chain Rashays, asked a group of police officers. On the afternoon of July 8, 2021, police had entered his Chester Hill office over allegations that some of his staff were breaching face mask orders.

After disagreement about how to proceed, the situation escalated. Rami made his appeal to the police, whose patience with him was quickly wearing thin. In the days since the incident, Rami has expressed regret for how things unfolded and support for the police for doing their jobs. He rightly observed that many people are very stressed and stretched at this time.

However, anguished assertions of unequal and harsh treatment of western Sydney residents from non-English speaking backgrounds recall long-standing experiences of prejudice experienced by many people from migrant backgrounds. Rami's question about us all being Aussies reminds me of the plea of the Jewish character Shylock in *The Merchant of Venice*: “Doesn't a Jew ... warm up in summer and cool off in winter just like a Christian? If you prick us, don't we bleed?”

We discussed this among the Together for Humanity team. One of our teachers, Kate Xavier, a Western Sydney resident of Croatian Catholic heritage, shared the following sentiment: “The danger for us living out west is real. Not only a sense that we don't belong or are inferior, but a sense of feeling that any minute we fall into that trap of believing the media narrative and forgetting the humanity of our neighbours and ourselves.”

I write these lines on the saddest day of the Jewish calendar, Tisha B'Av. This year, I joined other members of my community to recite Lamentations in the traditional way via Zoom under lockdown. On this day we mourn destruction, division and loss of dignity. One legend of this day involves a man, Bar Kamtza, who – like Rami – pleaded for dignity. Solidarity means that every Australian, regardless of background, never needs to question if they are as Aussie as anyone else.

Rabbi Zalman Kastel AM is National Director of Together for Humanity, which fosters interfaith and intercultural understanding. www.togetherforhumanity.org.au

Help Sydney Food Share assist people doing it tough

EDITORIAL

SSH

THE extension of this latest Covid-related lockdown has meant many vulnerable people in Greater Sydney are doing it tough.

Sydney Food Share's (SFS) committed volunteers see the crisis first hand – and you only need to scroll through SFS's Facebook posts for a moment to feel how deeply it's biting.

In July, SFS volunteers made contactless deliveries of food hampers to:

A single mum with five kids three with special needs from Airds who is finding it hard to cope with no money, not

much food and the kids home and in total lock down.

A single dad and three kids over 10 who are going through an incredibly tough time.

A mum from Appin with two kids who didn't need much, just a few things to tide them over.

A 73-year-old Koori elder living alone in Wentworthville, with no family or transport.

And the list goes on ...

SFS exists to make a difference at a local level by collecting basic food items and distributing freely to whoever is in need, no fees, no questions asked.

During Covid-19 SFS needs additional donations and support as it is a very stressful time for families.

Due to the unknowns, lockdowns and changing regulations, drop-off details sometimes need to change. Please message the SFS page on Facebook Sydney Food Share when you are ready to donate.

Your donation, no matter how humble, can help families doing it tough all around Sydney.

Collected items are given freely, no questions asked, to help anyone in genuine need. Hampers are Covid-safely picked up from Stanmore or Douglas Park after you message the page and a specific arrangement made.

SFS is not a storefront, supermarket or food-warehouse; every single hamper is put together in consultation with

whoever is reaching out and according to their need. The entire process is carefully executed but can all happen within a couple of hours, if pick-up arrangements are followed through.

Coordinator Freny Ardeshir says, “Kindness is everything and change for the better happens one kind gesture at a time.”

“There are so many ways to help, including online orders, your own food collection that can build every time you shop for yourself, your own fundraising event, a modest monthly donation of goods that your small business sells, an online contribution to the SFS bank account – please message the Facebook page for details!”

www.facebook.com/SydneyFoodShare

Kinchela boys reclaim their education

FIRST PEOPLES

SSH

A landmark literacy program run by TAFE NSW is helping Uncles from Kinchela Boys Home Aboriginal Corporation in Redfern reclaim their education.

Kinchela Boys Home Aboriginal Corporation was established by survivors of Kinchela Aboriginal Boys Training Home, a “home” run by the NSW government for over 50 years to house Aboriginal boys forcibly removed from their families.

Uncle Bobby attended the Kinchela Boys Home from 1954 to 1965. He says that his time in the home was traumatic, and that he never really

received a formal education.

“I'm one of the ex-KBH boys, the Stolen Generation. When we first lived in the boys' home our identity and culture were taken away from us and we were called by numbers. I was number 24 and my cousin was number 23,” Uncle Bobby said.

“We were punished regularly at the home, caned and forced to write a word 100 times from the blackboard even though our hands and bodies were aching from the cane. When I left, I still had very little education, so I went to work in the railways and then later as a driver for a freight company.”

In developing the literacy program, TAFE NSW and the Uncles from Kinchela worked together to build trust and identify

personalised and collective goals. A strong component of the program has been integrating literacy activities with cultural and family history research to support the Uncles' truth telling. Literacy teachers, Jill Finch and Sue Sim, work closely with Drew Roberts, a proud Bundjalung man and Cultural Education teacher, to customise learning opportunities to suit each student's literacy levels, needs and interests.

“This is much more than just a literacy program – it is a two-way learning experience,” Sue said. “Each week we learn from the Uncles and their brave and honest life stories. They are teaching us to be better teachers.”

Uncle Bobby says the program has completely changed his experience of education and

increased his confidence in reading, writing and spelling.

“In the past to get by I've mainly focussed on what people were saying at work and around me. I used to get frustrated because my wife and eldest boy would have to help me fill out forms and I'd like to be able to do that sort of thing by myself.”

“I'm really proud of what we have achieved here. I have learnt a lot and increased my ability in reading and writing and spelling, which has helped with my confidence. I really look forward to it each week and I'm so happy already with how far I've come.”

The literacy program was awarded the Community Partnership Award in the 2021 TAFE NSW Gili Awards.

The Review

Arts & Culture in Your Neighbourhood

‘I hope the book will reach kids like me’

FIRST PEOPLES

CATHERINE DEMAYO

A recent Australian study has revealed many Indigenous LGBTIQ+ people feel a strong sense of pride in their identity but frequently experience heterosexism and racism. Gary Lonesborough hopes his debut YA novel will help young people as they navigate this complexity and find the courage to explore who they are.

Gary Lonesborough, author of *The Boy from the Mish*, says that while writing the book, he “was thinking of 17-year-old me, writing for my teenage self ... I hope the book will reach kids like me. If the book can help one person, that’s good.”

Lonesborough, who finished high school in 2013, says he loved reading in primary school, but “at 14, 15, it started to dawn on me that I didn’t have much access to books with Aboriginal protagonists. I also started getting interested in underage drinking, partying.”

Thankfully, he had teachers who encouraged him academically, and the book’s acknowledgements include teachers at his primary and high schools in Bega. “I definitely credit my Year 12 English teacher – I fed off that passion that he had.”

Small town race relations as depicted in the book are complex. Jackson (the narrator a 17-year-old Aboriginal facing a huge issue of sexuality and identity), his cousins and their friends are insulted



Gary Lonesborough spoke about his new YA novel at Hurstville Library on June 11. He is pictured here with Thanh Nguyen, Marisa Bottaro and Danielle Finlay. Photo: Advance Diversity Services

and threatened by Ethan and his mates, watched carefully by shop keepers and hassled by the cops. They also party with white kids on holiday at the local camp ground, and (spoiler alert), the (white) teacher and principal at Jackson’s school pledge their support for him, and sound like they mean it.

Lonesborough agrees that race relations in a small community such as the one shown in his book are complex. “I don’t think I could have written a book about growing up Aboriginal without talking about racism – there’s

direct racism, there’s casual racism. I wanted to underline that, there’s that unsaid, hidden racism that goes on behind closed doors. I wanted to play around with that.”

While the book’s ending doesn’t tie up every loose end, it does finish on an optimistic note. “I wanted the ending to be hopeful,” says Lonesborough. “It’s about acceptance, and realising how love can change you. By the time we get to the end, we feel it’ll be OK.”

See Catherine DeMayo’s review of *The Boy from the Mish* at right.

The Reviews

Book Review
by Catherine DeMayo



The Boy from the Mish
Gary Lonesborough
Allen&Unwin, \$19.99

It was with a feeling of trepidation that I set out to review this book. It’s categorised as YA (Young Adult) fiction, which theoretically targets 12 to 18 year olds. Now, even at the upper end, I haven’t been a young adult for 45 years.

The YA genre is widely seen as evolving in the 1970s, with S.E. Hinton’s *The Outsiders* one of the first books to target a teenage audience and explore alienation from the teens’ point of view. Typically, the protagonists struggle with families and peers, navigate the minefields of adolescent sexuality, drugs and alcohol, and emerge changed, having absorbed some (often painful) life lessons. Many, like the groundbreaking *Outsiders*, are narrated by young people struggling with difference, be it poverty, race, nerdiness, appearance or sexuality.

In this sense, *The Boy from the Mish* is both a classic coming of age novel and an unusual book. Classic because

the narrator, a 17-year-old Aboriginal boy called Jackson, who lives on the Mish (Mission), is facing a huge issue of sexuality and identity. Unusual because its main characters are Aboriginal boys and young men living in a country town, a demographic we don’t often hear from in YA novels. Author Gary Lonesborough (interview on page 6) stresses that while this is a work of fiction, it is informed by his own life experience.

Opening just before Christmas, when Auntie Pat always visits with Jackson’s younger cousins, *The Boy from the Mish* also features a common literary plot element – the mysterious stranger whose arrival heralds change. Here, the stranger is Tomas, who Auntie Pat brings along on the Christmas visit. Tomas has been in juvie, his past is murky, and initially Jackson is annoyed to have to share his room with him.

While Jackson is unable to maintain an erection with his girlfriend Tesha, he begins to find himself attracted to Tomas. His confusion over his sexuality – and his fear of ostracism, should he turn out to be gay – form the centre of the novel’s plot. Other issues are touched on – racism, underage drinking and pot smoking, Jackson’s lack of direction among them.

While Lonesborough’s narrative flows, and his language is direct and clear, the book is more appropriate for the upper end of the YA audience. There is frank discussion of Jackson’s impotence with Tesha, the boys on the Mish swear a bit and same sex attraction is openly mentioned. With its combination of universal themes of identity and acceptance and a distinctly Australian setting, *The Boy from the Mish* is a book full of heart.

Five things wild and wonderful

SELECTED BY MARJORIE LEWIS-JONES



Myth and mystery

I’m a reluctant seafarer but love the Hebrides and Philip Marsden writes mesmerically of skipping a wooden sailboat up the west coast of Ireland and the Inner Hebrides to the Summer Isles in northern Scotland. He mostly journeys alone. The trip he describes in *The Summer Isles: A Voyage to the Imagination*, was inspired by walks in north-west Scotland with his aunt Bridget. He faces wild storms, treacherous channels and tricky landing spots and writes lyrically of the region’s mythical islands, marvellous poetry and ancient lore.



I am an island

“In nature there are no hard edges. Perhaps this is why I seek out the wilds before I seek people. The natural world offers a peace like none other I know.” Tamsin Calidas finds herself in ever-increasing isolation on an island in the Scottish Hebrides. Her marriage implodes, her dreams of having a child collapse, she loses her closest friend, and more. Finally, wild swimming in icy water fosters a new resilience. *I am an Island* is a book for battlers and nature lovers both.



Nature’s medicine

Dara McAnulty says immersing himself in nature is medicine for his mental health; soothing his despair over the destruction of wildlife and ecosystems. McAnulty is a teenager but his marvellous memoir *Diary of a Young Naturalist* is the work of a wise soul and seasoned environmentalist. Diagnosed with autism and Asperger’s as a child, his writing pulses with joy, sadness, and intricate descriptions of the birds, beasts, habitats and landscapes he connects with and fights for. Our next Robert Macfarlane or David Attenborough?



Re-wild my child ...

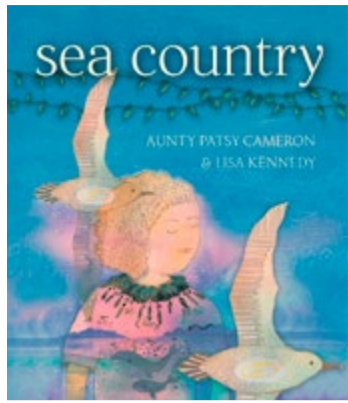
“How will climate chaos, extinction and environmental degradation affect the human spirit?” Badly, Lucy Jones concludes, from her analysis of peer-reviewed science in *Losing Eden: Why our minds need the wild*. The saddest sentence for me was, “Inuit are people of the sea ice. If there is no more sea ice, how can we be people of the sea ice?” Like nature, Jones’s writing has teeth and turned my gaze to the phrase “unconscious planetary suicide”. Surprisingly, this is not a depressing book – rather a necessary one.



Flourish when freezing

Wintering: How I Learned to Flourish When Life Became Frozen is packed with choice descriptions of our coldest season – many of which reinforce how nature’s fallow period gives us an opportunity to nurture ourselves when times are tough. Katherine May writes, “Doing those deeply unfashionable things – slowing down, letting your spare time expand, getting enough sleep, resting – are radical acts these days, but they are essential.” Inviting quiet pleasures back in, working with our hands, dreaminess and kindness. Ah, bliss.

Book Review
by Marjorie Lewis-Jones



Sea Country
Auntie Patsy Cameron (author)
Lisa Kennedy (illustrator)
Magabala Books, \$24.99

This children's book has a gloriously languid feel – awash with sensual detail. From bush tucker, to seasonal awareness, to the naming of nature in the local Aboriginal language, to showing which fish and shellfish were most abundant in the area, we learn of island life as lived by the author growing up on Flinders Island.

“My people are proud, strong people. We are the descendants of Mannelargenna of the Pairrebeenne / Trawlwoolway clan,” Auntie Patsy Cameron writes to introduce her generous tale of the environment and traditions that have shaped her life and kin.

Whether fishing in wooden dinghies with long oars, collecting shells to string into necklaces, or imagining mutton birds diving deep and talking to whales, Cameron

and her people clearly connected to Country in meaningful and sustainable ways. “We were free to hear Country speaking to us,” she writes “to watch for signs from Country”.

Lisa Kennedy, who is a descendant of the coastal Pairebeenne/ Trawlwoolway clan in North East Tasmania, has illustrated the story in a way that shows her deep appreciation for Cameron's story and the Bass Strait island on which it unfolds. Her love of the sea and marine life is also apparent.

All of the illustrations are detailed, warm and welcoming. My favourite shows vivid purple clouds, lino cut trees and mustard and black feathers. It is accompanied by the text, “When the black cockatoos came down from the mountains, we knew it would rain, and the winds would blow from the north-west.”

Little touches, such as the way the words “rice shells, toothies, black crows, penguins, mairreeners, oat shells, gull shells” are formatted in a wavy line to mirror how the objects will be threaded onto string for necklaces, show extra attention to detail that matters.

Sea Country is a valuable addition to a growing suite of place-based children's picture books that celebrate and illuminate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures, and environmental sustainability.

When Cameron writes that the paper nautilus shells “smelled like the deepest ocean”, I'm there on the sand beside her eager to see more, feel more, learn and listen.

» books@ssh.com.au

Theatre Review
by Catherine Skipper



Outlines
Digital Performance Season
www.stream.sydneyoperahouse.com/outlines-digital-performance-season-2021

Outlines is the inaugural season of video works displaying boundary-pushing artists and technologists who are reimagining the future of performance. The works are designed to connect both physical and digital worlds and feature artists who both utilise and disrupt digital platforms to bring new forms and challenging questions.

The program includes works from “Beyond Black” from the Korea National Dance Company (2020) and “Dream” (2021) from the Royal Shakespeare Company as well as two original Sydney Opera House

commissions, “Apotheosis” (2021) and “R+J RMX” (2021). Each of these performances is prefaced by an explanation of the process explored through the video work and an often very thought-provoking reflection on what the process means for not only the future of dance but also of humanity.

“Apotheosis” is a real-time capture performance in which Lydia Kivela explores a hyper-real 3D environment created by Serwah Attafuah accompanied by an original score (ptwigg). A young girl takes the universal journey from innocence to experience embracing darker thoughts as she explores a desolate neon-lit Western Sydney. While a common enough theme the score, the images chosen and the hallucogenic treatment gives the sense that her rite of passage is pre-visionsed, a prior knowledge carried in the psyche.

The introduction to the “Dream” (Pippa Hill, Robin McNicholas) claims it as “an amazing hybrid of gaming technology, orchestral music and theatre”. While the stage relies upon conventionally accepted signs, this “Dream” can take its audience *into* a forest, wander with Puck among trembling leaves, be with her to cross a rushing brook and pluck a rose. And the moonshine, which always has to be assumed on stage, is a soft glow illuminating the pale flowers, trunks and stones. It is evident that the video's makers fell in love with the magical and curious world they created from Shakespeare's original inspiration.

“Beyond Black” disrupts the traditional basic concepts of creation through a comparison between dancers' bodies expressive

of emotion and dance generated by Madi, a program created to choreograph using AI. While the clean outlines, speed and energy of the performance are mesmerising, the conclusion offered by choreographer, Shin Changho, is one that might make some of the audience nervous. While he doesn't consider AI choreography can simulate the intensity of human performance at present he believes that “if AI continues to evolve and develop, it will be able to create [true] art, which is considered as our own human realm”.

For personal reasons, “R+J RMX” (Joe Couch, Kate Armstrong-Smith) was the most appealing. A tool based on Omelia, a revolutionary new AI technology built for gaming and Hollywood, capable of generating a vast number of variations on a script and audience preferences, became the means by which the remarkably talented performers generate new story possibilities. It has always seemed so unfair that two young people should be annihilated whose only fault is impulsiveness (compared to the greed, pride, jealousy and ambition of other tragic personae), and who are dependent upon two totally incompetent life coaches and the bad luck of a messenger who could have prevented their deaths but was quarantined(!). Storytelling technology to the rescue, but how will it influence art and the performance of the future?

Watch *Outlines* ... engaging, thoughtful and hypnotic, and each a possible response to Covid-19.

» theatre@ssh.com.au



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Olympics on home soil

SPORT

STEVE TURNER

BRISBANE'S selection as the host city of the 2032 Olympic Games will inspire a host of younger athletes dreaming of competing on home soil, says former Olympian John Bertrand. "What it means is a new generation of young people can start to aspire and dream about being involved in the Olympics here as a competitor," he stated.

"I think the biggest thing is the inspiration that the Olympics will generate for young people to say, 'Let's give this thing a go'. These little kids, in 10 to 12 years' time, will be ready to compete at the highest level if they wish, if that's part of their dream."

Jamie rides the wave of success

Outstanding jockey Jamie Kah is officially the toast of Australian racing after recently setting a Melbourne riding record. Ms Kah, 25, recently became the first jockey to ride 100 city winners in a Melbourne season of racing at Caulfield. Kah landed the milestone when Deep Speed held on over an 1100m race.

Kah told of her relief in breaking Brett Prebble's 21-year-old record. "I was hearing the crowd and getting goosebumps over the line," Kah said. "I'm not the one for crowds and people cheering my name, it's very foreign to me still."

Kah took Adelaide racing by storm before moving to Melbourne in early 2019 and



It's official, the Olympics are coming to Brisbane. Photo: Supplied

landed her first Group One win a few months later when Harlem took out the Australian Cup. She has notched a further five Group One victories. At the close of the 2020-21 Australian racing calendar, Kah had an unassailable lead in the Melbourne jockeys' premiership and is already an odds-on favourite to take the title again next year.

Souths on their way

Rugby league reporter John Lanzky writes: "Souths can win this. The pathway to the finals is smooth. The main thing is we must stay injury free, then there's no reason we can't go all the way."

"My prediction is Souths to finish the regular season in second place. Penrith will drop down to third. The Panthers have too many injuries and suspensions for Covid breaches. Alex Johnston will be back for the finals. Souths will face Melbourne in the grand final – and the Storm will underestimate the Rabbitohs! Adam Reynolds will go out a winner!

"The win against St George-Illawarra (50-14) on August 1 showed Souths' strengths – in bursts. I'm sure Wayne Bennett will have them fired up to perform for the full 80 minutes in coming weeks. We're playing Parramatta next and that game will tell us where we are – glory, glory to South Sydney!"

SSH

Volunteers' News

PAT CLARKE

New date for Council elections

The NSW government has announced a new date for the local government elections – Saturday December 4. iVote (electronic voting) will be available for the first time and the NSW government has implemented changes to pre-poll to ensure that voters have 13 days to cast their ballot, reducing congestion on polling day.

Lockdown extended to August 28

It is no news really that NSW is now in an extended lockdown for another four weeks until 12.01am on Saturday August 28. Here is a short précis of the changes:

There is now a restriction for shopping within your LGA or 10km from home.

Single people living alone can nominate a visitor from their LGA or within 10km and not from any of the LGAs listed as of concern.

Year 12 students will return to face-to-face learning on August 16 under strict Covid-19 protocols.

The premier also announced more financial support for businesses and individuals, but at the time of writing had made no announcement about new assistance for individuals.

As so many recent cases of Covid-19 have been infectious in the community, it is more important than ever that we are all vaccinated. And don't forget your masks.

Archibald Prize – Virtual Visit

While the Art Gallery of NSW remains closed, if you are an Archibald junkie, you can explore this 100th year of the Archies in a virtual 360-degree tour at

www.artgallery.nsw.gov.au/art/channel/virtual-visit/archibald-prize-2021.

When you've finished your virtual tour, you can cast your vote in the ANZ People's Choice Award for a chance to win a \$2,000 cash prize.

Sydney Film Festival August 18-29

Sydney Film Festival has delayed the sale of single tickets for this year's Festival due to Covid restrictions. Go to sff.org.au or sign up for news and programs at SFFeNews.

Watch out for an increase in phone and email scams

There has been an increase in scamming during Covid-19, including impersonation of government departments like the National Crime Authority, MyGov and Australia Post, as well as online shopping, dating sites, fake charities, etc. We need to be vigilant as these scammers are expert in their deceptions, so it is important never to give out personal information. If you think you have been scammed contact www.scamwatch.gov.au/. You can also sign up for email alerts at this website.

Father's Day September 5

This is a day to love and remember our fathers on their day, especially if you have been separated for some time. September 5 would mark 108 years since the birth of my own father in Scotland. Wishing all our readers and friends a safe August, with the hope for a normal September and start of spring.

Until next time,
Pat Clarke

volunteers@ssh.com.au

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Fable fun on Planet Zoom!

THEATRE

SSH

COMMUNITY-BASED theatre company Natalie Mitz Productions continues to create uplifting works for young people on a virtual stage.

Natalie says: "Our dynamic educational theatre show is called Fable Journey. It incorporates a bright combination of technology-based culture and a traditional fable format which allows children to be active story-makers. We incorporate folktales and traditional stories from a wide variety of cultures, giving each an original twist."

"Created in 2020, Fable Journey is proudly supported by Creative NSW as an advanced educational theatre program for children successfully delivered online."

"Alongside the storytelling itself, our young audience has fun participating

in theatrical games, singing along to a variety of songs, and dancing.

"Our upcoming Fable Journey, 'Aladdin', will broadcast on Monday August 16 from 6-7pm, and will be perfectly suited for children 5-10 years.

"In this journey, kids meet with kind-hearted Aladdin, who unexpectedly finds a magic lamp with a genie who can grant him any wish. One of Aladdin's wishes is to become a prince and marry a beautiful princess. The evil Vizier Jafar plots to steal the magic lamp ...

"Fable Journey 'Aladdin' will be happening via Zoom, so that everyone can join from the comfort of their own homes."

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The Zoom link will be sent to your email after you book your ticket: www.trybooking.com/BTCPU

Learn more about Natalie Mitz, Author/Musician: www.nmitz.com

Blak & Blu

Annual pen on paper art prize

Due to Covid restrictions the deadline for the Blak & Blu drawing prize is extended until August 31. Please send entries – drawings on paper (at least 300gsm) using black and/or blue pens, observations in the landscape – to PO Box 3288 Redfern NSW 2016. See September SSH for exhibition details. Blak & Blu, inspired by 19th-century Aboriginal artist Tommy McRae, is sponsored by Redfern-based Dhungatti artist Blak Douglas: www.blakdouglas.com.au

SSH Cartoon Show



Artworks by norrie mAy-welby
Curated by Catherine Skipper

Due to Covid lockdown the **SSH Cartoon Show** opening is postponed (date TBA), and the exhibition has been extended indefinitely. Artworks by norrie mAy-welby are available for viewing on Instagram @orchardgalleryau, and items (including original drawings, prints, t-shirts, aprons and ceramic mugs) can be purchased via an online order form: www.bit.ly/3jzvKwl

All proceeds in support of the Orchard Gallery and SSH. The Orchard Gallery – 56a Raglan St Waterloo @orchardgalleryau