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On the street and online this library helps the homeless

HUMAN AFFAIRS

ALYSSA ROBINSON

WHILE Martin Place fell into an uncharacteristic quiet during Sydney's lockdown, Tuesday nights have provided a cheerful contrast. Week in and week out, people experiencing homelessness know that's when they can find friendship, a coffee, a bite to eat – and a good read.

The Footpath Library has been providing quality books to people experiencing homelessness since 2003. As well as the outreach service at Martin Place, they deliver books to the Aboriginal Medical Service in Redfern, Northcott Community Centre in Surry Hills, the Johanna O'Dea social housing complex in Camperdown, and more than 100 hostels and shelters.

You may have seen their "little library" boxes popping up on local streets during the pandemic. The Footpath Library also opened a groundbreaking e-library in 2020, giving homelessness services access to 350,000 online titles.

Now the service's founder and managing director, Sarah



The Footpath Library's readers find reading calms them, occupies their minds, and offers an escape during lockdown. (Photo taken before Sydney's Covid-19 mask mandate.) Photo: Supplied

Garnett, has been recognised as a nominee in the Westfield Local Hero Awards. If she is successful in winning the \$10,000 prize, she plans to purchase 1,000 pairs of reading glasses for people

experiencing homelessness. People without secure housing often read under poor lighting conditions; under streetlights or in hostel dormitories while others sleep. The Footpath

Library already gives out roughly 25 pairs of glasses each Tuesday in Martin Place. "A lot of people don't realise they have bad eyesight until they try a pair on," Ms Garnett says.

While the pace of life has slowed for many Sydneysiders under lockdown, The Footpath Library is busier than ever. As an essential service, it has continued to operate, supporting a growing number of readers.

"I've noticed the anxiety levels have definitely gone up for many people experiencing homelessness," Ms Garnett says.

Some of The Footpath Library's newer readers became stuck in Sydney after interstate borders were shut. Out of a job, out of savings and unable to return home to friends and family, they have found themselves without a stable home in an unfamiliar city.

"Reading is something that's getting people through this situation," Ms Garnett says. "It's helping people feel calm, giving them something to do and a bit of an escape."

As for herself, Ms Garnett is currently escaping to Tuscany by reading *Still Life* by Sarah Winman, a fictional tale beginning in World War II.

The Footpath Library gratefully accepts monetary donations – please visit www.footpathlibrary.org

Biggest stumbling block to tackling racism is politics

HUMAN AFFAIRS

AMY CHENG

RACISM is being treated as a political issue in Australia rather than a human rights issue, advocates campaigning against Asian hate have said.

Jenny Leong MP, state member for Newtown, believes Australia is "flawed" in the way it handles issues of racism.

"Racism is not something that is about the left or the right of politics," she said.

"Racism and discrimination is something that impacts on all of us and on our society, and how we work and function in the community."

Ms Leong is concerned this approach could lead to more dominance from the dominant race.

"Our democracy is dominated by white men; now that is



The #StopAsianHate Vigil in Sydney outside Customs House in April 2021 was co-hosted by the Asian Australian Alliance, Kozziecom and Jenny Leong MP. Photo: danishraviphotography

a race issue," she said.

"It's a race issue that is a problem for our society because it doesn't reflect the diversity of our society."

Erin Wen Ai Chew, founder of the Asian Australian Alliance, has seen this play out even amongst the Asian community.

"A lot of Asian groups will kind of look at it and say, 'Well, yes, we know it's an issue but it's better that we let somebody else talk about it because if we talk about it, it's too political for us,'" she said.

"I think one of the biggest stumbling blocks is how that

term racism, and how the issue of racism, is perceived."

A recent report from the Centre for Resilient and Inclusive Societies, an Australian and international think tank, found that four in ten Asian Australians experienced racism during the pandemic.

However, only 3 per cent of them reported the incident to the Australian Human Rights Commission.

Ms Chew believes that many people shrug off racist attacks, claiming they are not serious enough to be reported or that no appropriate action will be taken.

But she would like to encourage people to report these incidents to the police.

"Even if the police decide at the end it's not serious enough in their books to investigate, it actually contributes to their numbers," Ms Chew said.

"These kinds of statistics really add factual and statistical data beyond anecdotal evidence that racism is an issue."

A racist attack occurs whenever one's cultural background is negatively highlighted, she said.

Continued on page 2

Small chats - big impact

Swoop in to read!

Covid response well managed?

South Sydney Herald

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TANYA PLIBERSEK MP

Federal Member for Sydney

TELSTRA DECISION TO MAKE PAYPHONES FREE

Telstra has announced that local and national calls from its payphones to a fixed-line or Australian mobile will now be free of charge. This is great news that will enhance the role of payphones as an important piece of social infrastructure that benefits Australians.

Many vulnerable Australians unfortunately still don't have reliable access to a mobile phone or regular calling credit. This decision will remove barriers to affordability and provide better opportunities to stay connected with family, friends, services and society through Telstra's 15,000 payphones.

Making payphones free will also provide a critical lifeline for vulnerable communities, particularly during these difficult times.

Telstra should be commended for this initiative, and their ongoing commitment to reducing the digital and communications divide in Australia.

COVID-19 VACCINE INFORMATION

Scan here to find out when and where you can receive a Covid-19 vaccine.



OR visit www.health.gov.au/resources/app-and-tools/covid-19-vaccine-eligibility-checker

THANK YOU

Thanks to everyone who is following the Covid-19 restrictions. Together we are saving lives and stopping the spread of Covid-19. We're all in this together, so let's continue to keep each other safe.

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

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City plans commercial growth for Botany Road

URBAN DESIGN

GEOFF TURNBULL

THE City of Sydney Council (CoS), has identified the Botany Road Precinct as a commercial growth area to boost employments and office space. CoS is proposing incentive planning controls, on areas judged capable of growth, to encourage both commercial and affordable housing instead of residential developments.

Two areas close to parks in Wyndham and Cope streets will receive residential increases. On other sites, residential development is still possible, but only within existing planning controls without the additional development capacity. The controls cover privately owned land, so apart from a couple of developers waiting for the new controls to lodge DAs, most redevelopment won't happen soon.

The precinct is bounded by Regent and Cope streets to the east, McEvoy Street to the south and Wyndham Street, Henderson Road, Garden, Cornwallis and Gibbons streets to the west. The site abuts the proposed Waterloo South redevelopment, Waterloo Metro and is diagonal to Council's North Alexandria precinct. Together, CoS estimates the two precincts will provide 15,000 jobs.

At the Redfern end, the tallest buildings (65-70 metres) are to the north of Boundary Street on Cornwallis, Rosehill and

Gibbons streets. On McEvoy Street, heights go to 35 metres with up to 50 metres opposite the Waterloo Metro. The CoS report includes a diagram of potential massing in Botany Road Corridor under the planning proposal.

CoS has reviewed the heritage conservation areas and made some changes, including recognising heritage listing for the initial offices of the Aboriginal Medical Service and the Aboriginal Legal Service. A taller building is also allowed next to Jack Floyd Reserve on Cope Street and Botany Road, as a heritage offset to retain the heritage garage.

CoS studies indicate there has been a lot of thought given to how "Aboriginal Redfern" is preserved and represented in the area. It is also asking for 10 per cent of the affordable housing to be dedicated Aboriginal Affordable Housing to keep a strong Aboriginal community in the area.

CoS has also sketched some of the changes it would like to see in the area, but many of these are dependent on the state government addressing the twin arterial road barrier that runs through the precinct, as well as connectivity around Redfern and Waterloo stations.

If you have an interest in this area, the studies are worth a look. The community can comment on the Botany Road and North Alexandria precinct proposals as soon as the state government approves them for exhibition.

The links to the studies are on the Botany Road tab on www.redwatch.org.au

Biggest stumbling block to tackling racism is politics

Continued from page 1

"As long as you feel that you have been discriminated against, and or picked on, because of your cultural background, then it is racism," Ms Chew said.

"If someone just spits or sneezes at you intentionally, and you look around and you know that you're the only Asian person there, the chances are it is a racist attack even though it's not necessarily verbal."

In March this year, shootings at massage parlours in Atlanta, Georgia, in the United States, left eight people dead, including six Asian women, and led to several anti-racism rallies being held in the US and globally.

However, Ms Chew, who is currently working in the US, believes there are several differences between the US Asian community to Australia.

"There is a lot more advocacy around the issue in the US than in Australia," she said.

"There's a lot more mobilisation, among Asian Americans, and even among Asian American celebrities; they're a lot more vocal on the issue."

She believes there are several lessons Australia can learn from the US approach to the issue.

"There are certain actions that have been done in the United States that can also be duplicated in Australia, such as funding arrangements," Ms Chew said.

The state of California, for example, set aside \$1.4 million earlier this year for research on hate crimes against Asian Americans, allowing the state to track incidents of harassment.

For people interested in advocating for this cause, she suggests they start by talking to their friends.

"Have a conversation about racism issues, whether they are people who do face racism or they don't face racism, have that conversation," Ms Chew said.

"If you see articles of importance, share it over your social media ... share those articles because then you've initiated some awareness and education to your own network."

However, there is still a long way to go for Australia to get to where the US is, she said.

"There is still a long way to go, but we see that there are seeds of change," Ms Chew said.

www.asianaustralianalliance.net
www.facebook.com/kozziemcom

Why aren't Aussies giving fast fashion the flick?

ENVIRONMENT

MARJORIE LEWIS-JONES

AUSTRALIAN consumers believe ethical purchasing is important, but are failing to follow through on their own beliefs.

While 87 per cent want to change their fashion consumption habits to consume more ethically, just 46 per cent indicate they regularly purchase from ethical/sustainable fashion brands.

These findings come from the new Australian Ethical Consumer Report, released by Baptist World Aid Australia in collaboration with social research company McCrindle. The report reveals that most Australians feel a sense of global responsibility and want to change their consumption habits, but cite awareness of ethical brands and expense as the two greatest barriers to doing so.

St Peters-based Citizen Wolf is an ethical clothing supplier whose strategy is to make shopping your values no more difficult than buying anything else.

But co-founder Zoltan Csaki says one difficulty is that the pricing reference point for consumers is unrealistic.



Photo: Getty

“We or any other ethical or sustainable (or both) brand is starting from a huge disadvantage in that people think it’s fine to pay \$5 for a T-shirt at Kmart. It’s simply not ... There’s exploitation throughout the supply chain.

“Between two and maybe four cents of every dollar ends up in the garment workers’ hands.” Citizen Wolf was established with

an eye on the bigger picture – a thirst by Mr Csaki and his business partner Eric Phu to fix fashion’s “dirty secret” of overproduction.

One in three pieces of clothing made every year doesn’t need to be made, he explains. And then, of the clothes that are sold, 40 per cent are sold on discount. This means, of the items that are sold, 40 per cent don’t need to be made.

Fashion is a \$2 trillion industry, globally responsible for 10 per cent of global CO2 emissions. A report released by the World Bank states that, if the way we make clothes at scale doesn’t change, then the carbon emissions of the fashion industry are going to rise by 50 per cent this decade.

“We cannot solve climate change without fixing fashion,” Mr Csaki says.

Peter Keegan, Director of



Roxy Rogan, founder and CEO of conservation enterprise Wild Education, loves her T-shirt from Citizen Wolf because she knows its claims about sustainable production and care for the environment are genuine. Photo: Supplied.

Advocacy at Baptist World Aid, says a large portion of Australian consumers are still struggling to take the next steps towards purchasing ethically but with tools like the Ethical Fashion Guide and My Shopping Type Quiz we can take those next steps towards becoming more ethical consumers.

“Our ambition is to prove that made to order works – that it’s not only viable but desirable from the customer’s point of view and also profitable,” says Mr Csaki. “If we can prove it’s a better business, that’s a large part of what we need to do to make other people join us on this path.”

Download the Australian Ethical Consumer Report at www.bit.ly/3zKckKD. Also see www.citizenwolf.com



Janet Couzens (right), CEO of Act for Peace, at Jamtoli Rohingya refugee camp, in Cox’s Bazaar. Photo: Richard Wainwright/Act for Peace

Assisting families in Afghanistan - emergency appeal

HUMAN AFFAIRS

JANET COUSENS

THE scenes unfolding in Afghanistan are heartbreaking. My team and I have been in constant contact with our local partner on the ground. Like many of us who’ve been watching events unfold, they’re feeling a great sense of disbelief at how quickly the situation has deteriorated.

People are terrified of the Taliban, and the recent bombings add another layer of complexity in a challenging context where people are already struggling through drought and an escalating Covid-19 crisis.

Families hurriedly left their homes without time to bring essential items with them, and now they are sheltering in cramped, unsanitary conditions, and lack even the most basic medical and water facilities. These people are in crisis.

Act for Peace’s local partner is working round the clock to meet the urgent needs

of people affected – despite the dangers involved. For the last 30 years, they have worked to build trust and bring hope to communities in Afghanistan. They remain committed to the Afghan people. And they need our help.

Over the next three months, our partner is preparing to assist 660 displaced Afghan families. They will help with food, shelter and health supplies, and provide much-needed cash assistance through safe, verified transfers to fulfil their essential needs.

Act for Peace has launched an emergency appeal to support this work. Despite all the lockdowns across Australia, together, we’ve already raised \$120,000 to support families uprooted by the conflict with the Taliban.

I can’t stop thinking about our partner staff as they watch their country being torn apart. With the urgent need on the ground, I believe we must act. So please give what you can today.

www.actforpeace.org.au/afghanistan

Afghanistan - Australia, we can do more

COMMENT

MAHSHEED ANSARI

I am an Australian Muslim woman with an Afghan heritage. I have lived most of my life in Australia. It has been very difficult watching the scenes unfold from Afghanistan. The helplessness and hopelessness felt by my family and me is also felt by the many Afghan Australians and other diaspora communities around the world who are currently reliving the horrors of war, displacement and terror that they themselves experienced.

It is absolutely horrifying to witness once again the desperate scenes of displaced Afghans, including women and children (80 per cent of the current total displaced Afghans internally) trying to evade the vicious cycle of war and violence that has already left hundreds killed, including children and civilians. I am especially saddened for the ones who were promised that they could leave but continue to remain behind. Millions of Afghans who have gone through decades of war are now left alone to fend for themselves.

The disparity in our approach towards what constitutes a human life worth saving is also disappointing. I am not going to comment here about the political culpability of the parties involved, but the post evacuation trail of disaster haunts all involved. I am all for self-determination for the Afghan people, but the foreseeability of that is close to nought if this newly erupted cycle of violence does not end. It needs the urgent attention of global leaders, including Australia, to restore peace and ensure the stability of the nation continues in this new “norm”.

The withdrawal of the USA and the coalition, including Australian soldiers from Afghanistan on August 15, 2021, marked Australia’s longest war in history.

Yet, neither the initial purpose nor the end result was of any avail to either of the two countries. Even if we put aside the political blunders of this war, we cannot be blind to the humanitarian crisis unfolding before us. It is disappointing to see the slow response of global leaders in taking action to assist the millions of displaced Afghans and those already abroad, desperately trying to seek asylum in hope of a better future.

Wars create refugees and displacement. Twenty-seven years ago, it was as a result of war and violence and also with that same hope that my family came to Australia – a country that has become our home. Australia’s history of refugee and asylum seeker intake includes the post-war periods, and under both the Fraser and Hawke governments saw record numbers of refugees – 72,000 and 50,000 respectively – matching or surpassing global standards.

Unfortunately, under our current government, there has been no commitment to accepting additional refugees. Australia needs to increase this or at least match the international standards. Though we may have wrapped up our mission in Afghanistan, there is still time to offer greater compassion and hospitality for Afghans seeking our assistance. After 20 years of being in their country, and not always with a good track record, we definitely owe it to the people to do more.

There are 5,000 refugees from Afghanistan right now that live on temporary visas in Australia. There are also countless others. The government can take urgent action to give more aid and assist with providing a safe passage and asylum to save more lives.

Mahsheed Ansari is Senior Lecturer and Researcher at the Centre of Islamic Studies and Civilisation, Charles Sturt University.



Jenny Leong MP

STATE MEMBER
FOR NEWTOWN

Get Vaccinated!

As our community continues to deal with extended lockdowns as a result of the highly transmissible Delta variant of COVID-19, the very best thing we can all do right now to keep us all safe is to get vaccinated – and keep following the health advice.

This week, the Sydney Local Health District was added to the priority program for the Pfizer vaccine so if you are between the ages of 16-39 you can book your appointment right now. Eligible suburbs include Redfern, Erskineville, Waterloo, Camperdown, Chippendale, Newtown and the whole Inner West LGA. You can access the booking page from the QR code below or from this URL: www.vaccination.slhd.nsw.gov.au/.

We know there continue to be problems with booking systems – and that the initial rollout was totally botched – and that all of this can be extremely frustrating, but the feedback we are getting from locals is if you are proactive and keep trying, it is possible to book in your jab fairly quickly. And it's totally worth it!

Recently, we put out a call on our social media for your top tips for booking your vaccination quickly and easily. Here's what we learned (scan the QR code below for all the links):

1. Stay persistent with the Australian Government Vaccine Eligibility Checker to find your closest, or soonest appointment for Pfizer or AZ. www.covid-vaccine.healthdirect.gov.au/eligibility?lang=en
2. Set up a HotDoc account to make the process of booking the next available appointment online easier.
3. Check the list of local pharmacies offering AZ jabs without needing an appointment.
4. Keep an eye on NSW Health Facebook and Twitter accounts for details of pop-up vaccine hubs in your area.
5. Check out one of the user-created online tools to find the next available Pfizer or AZ appointments.

Links to all of these are available by scanning this QR code:



Take care and stay safe – and know our office is always here if you need help or support in these challenging times.

Jenny Leong

Jenny Leong, MP for Newtown

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

Authorised by **Jenny Leong MP**,
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Start-up raises \$784,000 for baby resuscitation system

SPONSORED

MARK SCOTT

A University of Sydney and Westmead Hospital start-up has raised almost \$800,000 in a recent investment round for a paediatric medical device designed to safely resuscitate babies who struggle to begin breathing after birth.

ResusRight was founded by two doctoral biomedical engineering students, Matt Boustred and Matthew Crott, along with Dr Mark Tracy and Dr Murray Hinder, a research team based at Westmead Hospital that specialises in improving care of vulnerable babies.

Together, the team has a mission to lower neonatal mortality rates and prevent babies from developing disabilities due to complications at birth.

The start-up received funding from the Cerebral Palsy Alliance in the organisation's first investment in a company, as well as Startmate Accelerator and angel investors for the development of "Juno", a clinical training system for newborn resuscitation.

The capital raised will allow ResusRight to launch the training system and develop a prototype monitor for use in the clinical setting at birth, with manufacturing set to begin in the 2021-22 financial year.

ResusRight Co-Founder and CEO Matt Boustred said: "Worldwide, every year over 10 million newborn babies require resuscitation at birth, with approximately one million babies dying annually from birth asphyxia. Experts estimate that at least 30 per cent of these deaths – 300,000 babies a year – could be prevented with better resuscitation."

"A lack of access to life-saving training and equipment contributes to a large proportion of these deaths. ResusRight aims to advance the gold standard of newborn resuscitation through equipment that is



ResusRight – a medical device to safely resuscitate babies. Photo: Supplied

accessible in design and at a price point that is affordable to a global market. We want our monitoring systems to be as useful for a consultant in Westmead Hospital as for a midwife out in Bourke or a birth attendant in India."

Co-Founder and Chief Technology Officer, Matt Crott said: "We want to give clinicians the tools to be trained and resuscitate babies more effectively. A key issue in current practices is that the resuscitator has no measure of how much air they are giving to the baby, or whether their mask technique is correct."

"In Australia, approximately 17,000 babies require resuscitation annually – sadly thousands of infants are left with injury or disability through this process which more effective monitoring could help reduce."

"Newborn babies should be given the best chance at life and they deserve high-quality medical techniques that are tailored for their needs."

The ResusRight team hopes to provide better accessibility to neonatal training through affordable pricing and are introducing the Juno into educational programs at Westmead Hospital, Monash Health and Royal Women's Hospital.

ResusRight is a member of the Sydney Knowledge Hub (SKH), a co-working space for startups (non-profits and corporates) seeking to collaborate with staff and students across the University. The SKH helps members connect with the researchers, grant consultants, labs and makerspaces, and other resources at the University of Sydney.

"We've had a fantastic experience at the Sydney Knowledge Hub. There's a great community with other startups in the Hub which we've benefitted from getting to know and share advice with. The Hub team goes above and beyond in actively listening to us and the community to continuously improve the experience and make it a phenomenal co-working space. We're really looking forward to utilising the new manufacturing facilities they're developing to assist with next-gen prototyping," said Matt Boustred.



Authorised by Vice-Chancellor and Principal
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Grant gets Rainbow Families sports days up and running

HEALTH

SSH

ALEXANDRIA-BASED LGBTQ+ support group Rainbow Families has been chosen as a New South Wales winner in the 2021 Active Australia Innovation Challenge run by the Heart Foundation.

The challenge invited tertiary institutions, schools, councils and other organisations to submit innovative ideas for getting people in their communities moving. The winners will each get a grant of \$10,000 to make their project a reality.

The Rainbow Families Sports Carnival Series will offer weekend carnivals in Sydney's Inner West, Penrith and Macarthur, as well as Newcastle and the Illawarra, with a total of about 450 people expected to participate.

The Alexandria group conceived the carnival series

because many members of the LGBTQ+ community have been discriminated against, bullied or harassed while playing sport. As a result, some do not feel comfortable doing mainstream sport or signing up their children for sport.

The carnivals will provide a fun, safe and inclusive space for LGBTQ+ parents and their families to get active together and try out different sports, such as cricket and tennis.

"We are thrilled to receive this grant, which will give us the opportunity to bring our community of LGBTQ+ parents and their kids together in their local areas for a family fun day of sports carnival activities," said Rainbow Families Executive Officer, Ashely Scott.

Funded by the Australian Government Department of Health, this year's challenge awarded grants to 19 projects across Australia

from twice the number of entries received in 2020.

Heart Foundation's NSW & ACT Heart Health Manager, Anna Flynn said the Foundation was pleased with the increased participation, given around two-thirds of people in NSW are not active enough for good heart health.

"This is a real concern, because being inactive is a risk factor for heart disease, our state's single leading cause of death.

"One reason for the spike in entries could be that the pandemic has sparked interest in physical activity at a grass-roots level. Being stuck at home for long periods is making everyone appreciate their communities more and think creatively about ways to stay healthy and active."

Sign up to the newsletter to find out when the sports carnival is coming to your local area: www.rainbowfamilies.com.au/get_involved_signup



Catching and spreading kindness – the children show us how

EDITORIAL

CATHIE HARRISON

IN a recent article in *Australian Educational Leader*, researchers outlined their findings from a project inviting children aged 3-5 years to share their thoughts and feelings about Covid-19. The children were from a diverse range of early childhood services in NSW and Victoria.

The results indicate that children are aware of the loss and restoration of safety and security associated with the coronavirus. They understand how viruses work and the potential impact on themselves and others. It is “deadly and everywhere”, “makes you sick” and “spreads”.

They understand the need for social distancing and can explain how rules control



Children and families at North Bondi Uniting Early Learning gathered more than 97 kilograms of food items in a pop-up pantry to help vulnerable people. Photo: Supplied

where they go, what they do and with whom they interact. “Stay inside” and “look after yourself and wash your hands a lot”

The children were also aware of the shifting dynamics within relationships, particularly with physical

Amazing Grace

FAITH

DOROTHY MCRAE-MCMAHON

“AMAZING Grace” is possibly the most popular hymn around the world. You often find it on non-religious CDs and sung in surprising contexts. It was written in the 18th century by a man who had been a slave owner, which is why he refers to himself as “a wretch” in the first verse of the hymn.

We, who are members of a Christian church, might well reflect on the significance of this hymn for so many people. Could it be that they often regret that they have acted in some bad ways in their lives and fear that they are facing into a God who will judge and punish them?

This could simply be a common human reality, but we may need to ask ourselves whether our churches bear clear witness to a God who is filled with amazing grace and who embraces us in love and forgiveness when we face up to

our failures.

Of course, we may indeed have faith in this God as we live together within the life of our churches. But is this obvious to the community around us – to people who are not members of a church, or who left a judgemental part of the church some years ago?

Are we conveying our true love for the community outside our church in clear ways and also owning the fact that those of us who are members of the church are not perfect – that we often need the forgiveness of a God who has amazing grace? We are truly human and our God, in Jesus Christ, deeply understands what it means to be human because the God of the Holy Trinity is not only the Creator and the Holy Spirit but also the Human One who has walked through life like we do.

Given these realities, we might well celebrate the gift of the hymn “Amazing Grace” for many people who long for that grace and a God who offers it to us when we ask for forgiveness. SSH

contact with grandparents, such as social distancing, and expressed their grief and joy associated with the loss and restoration of relationships.

In 2020 during the onset of the pandemic, at North Bondi Uniting Early Learning, many families were unable to purchase basic consumables and the children demonstrated concern for the “panic-buying” that had begun. Jess Guerin (Director) said, “This concern led us to create a ‘pop-up pantry’ and our families contributed many items.”

“The children’s new understanding of active citizenship then guided us to consider vulnerable families during Christmas. The children knew what it was like to have to go without some things and identified with other families going without. One family proposed a food drive for Food Bank

(charitable food distribution network) and our children, families and members of the community contributed over 97 kilograms of food items.”

Jess helped turn the children’s experience and concern into empathy for others, compassionate action and kindness. Altruism and making a difference for others helps with the wellbeing challenges of Covid for all. Let’s listen to the children. They show us how. SSH

This is Part 2 of a series by Dr Cathie Harrison about celebrating together through and beyond Covid. See Part 1 on our website www.southsydneyherald.com.au/celebrating-together-through-and-beyond-covid/

Loss and Gains of COVID-19: Through the Eyes of the Child was published in *Australian Educational Leader*, Special Edition – Issue 2.

Australian charities unite to launch disaster relief alliance

HUMAN AFFAIRS

MATTHEW MAURY

WHEN a magnitude 7.8 earthquake struck Nepal in 2015, killing nearly 9,000 people, injuring many more and destroying more than 500,000 homes, the generosity of Australians helped humanitarian organisations to respond with life-saving assistance.

When overseas disasters of this scale strike in the future, Australians will be able to help more quickly and easily thanks to the newly-formed Emergency Action Alliance (EAA), a

coalition of international relief and development charities who have agreed to work together when disaster strikes.

The aim of this initiative is to make it even easier for people to respond, removing the barriers that people have said they find when trying to decide where to direct their donations. History shows us that Australians are incredibly generous when a disaster strikes, but also that it can be confusing to know where to donate when there are 16 different agencies all asking for support. Through the EAA we aim to avoid unhelpful competition when collaboration through one public appeal can make it easier for people to respond. We thus

hope the EAA will remove any confusion, and maximise the impact of Australians’ generosity.

How will it work? When there’s a large-scale crisis overseas, the alliance will go out to the Australian public with one appeal inviting them to donate. The EAA will then direct the funds raised to the member agencies best positioned to respond to humanitarian needs. We expect this will help raise more money quickly and enable it to rapidly get to where it is most needed. It also means that the collective expertise of 16 agencies can be harnessed, with a bigger global footprint and diversity of skills and expertise.

A partnership approach underpins the EAA, with this

group of agencies agreeing to work together in ways that have never before been achieved within the Australian charity sector. Foreign Minister Marise Payne helped launch the initiative and noted the value the government sees in this collaborative innovation.

Among the drivers for this new way of working is the sad reality that disasters are increasing around the world. Climate change is predicted to fuel more floods, heatwaves, droughts and fires, and the impacts of COVID-19 have made many already-vulnerable communities more vulnerable. It’s more vital than ever that charities can mobilise resources and respond rapidly to emergencies.

By working together, we believe we can raise more money, and help more people. This alliance is the first of its kind in Australia. It’s a great privilege to be part of it and to be working alongside other Australian aid agencies to help people who are facing grave humanitarian disasters. SSH

Matthew Maury is CEO of Tearfund Australia and chair of the EAA board. The EAA’s member agencies are Action Aid, ADRA, Act for Peace, Australian Lutheran World Service, Anglican Overseas Aid, Baptist World Aid, Caritas Australia, Care, CBM, ChildFund Australia, Oxfam, Plan International, Save the Children, Tearfund Australia, Australia for UNHCR, and World Vision. Visit www.emergencyaction.org.au

The Review

Arts & Culture in Your Neighbourhood

Uplifting Sydney images snapped by young photographers

EXHIBITIONS

SSH

ZOE Morris's photo "Grumpy Cat", shot in South Eveleigh, is a finalist in the 3-7 year old category of the Little Sydney Lives photography competition, the winner to be announced on September 16.

In its 10th year, the annual competition attracted dozens of images of people, animals, toys and nature, captured by children from the ages of 3 to 12.

Zoe is one of 20 of NSW's youngest photographers who have shared their impressions of life in the city as finalists in the competition with entries drawn from across greater Sydney and as far afield as Mudgee.

Zoe said, "I like the colourful rainbow steps. My grumpy cat is a Gacha Gacha toy - which is a Japanese vending machine toy we bought at Regent Place in the city."

"The toy cat really does have a grumpy expression and it's scowling head is too big for its hunching body, which is slumped on top of a yellow wheelie bin at the foot of some rainbow steps.

"The cat, which is grey with brown stripes and a black collar, has glaring eyes, as yellow as the bin lid, and it looks like it's not going to let anybody move it from its perch."

A panel of judges, including National Geographic photographer Michaela Skovranova, Magnum Photo Agency member Trent Parke and TV personality Justine Clarke, selected 20 finalist images in two categories - the 3-7 year olds and 8-12 year olds.



"Grumpy Cat", shot by Zoe Morris in South Eveleigh is a finalist in the Little Sydney Lives photography competition. Photo: Zoe Morris / City of Sydney

"These innocent perspectives on life as we know it right now are creative, funny and incredibly uplifting - and just the tonic we need in today's climate," Lord Mayor Clover Moore said.

"It's wonderful to see our city through their eyes."

The 20 finalist images, and the stories behind each photograph, feature in the Little Sydney Lives online exhibition, curated by photographer Sandy Edwards.

Winners in each of the age categories will be awarded \$500 in photography equipment and accessories by the City of Sydney.

Little Sydney Lives and its sister exhibition Australian Life are part of the City's year-round Art & About program of events and temporary art projects in unusual spaces throughout the city. You can browse Australian Life online and choose your favourite to go in the running for the \$10,000 People's Choice Award.

Little Sydney Lives - www.news.cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/photos/little-sydney-lives-photo-competition-2021

Australian Life - www.artandabout.com.au/projects/australian-life-photography-exhibition-2021/



Blak & Blu drawing prize ... entries have now closed. Further news regarding exhibition and prize winners to come.

How to draw - online tutorials

ART

ANDREW COLLIS

A few years back, local artist Sam McNair started a caricaturing business. During the lockdowns he has started to make YouTube clips - "how to draw ..." for kids and adults. "Cartooning with Sam" aims at enhancing art education by becoming a resource for community artists and teachers.

I really like the approach, beginning with stick figures, then creating form and depth. Is this a process you have always followed?

It wasn't until I tried to draw a proper comic in my 20s that I started using stick-figure construction lines. It seems obvious now. When you have multiple panels with repeated characters that need to be clear for the narrative, the stick-figure method really economises the design period. It saves so much frustration.

I tell my students, "It's like making a sandwich - it's easier to start with bread than mayonnaise".

How did you learn to draw? Was there a "breakthrough" moment?

Like most children; I drew a lot as a kid. I wasn't especially good but I enjoyed it. When I was 8, I was diagnosed with perthes disease. It was bad. Perthes is a rare bone disease. Quite painful. I spent a lot of time unable to move. That was the critical time for my drawing development. I managed to come out of it with this new avenue to express myself through cartoons.*

What are you currently working on? New clips?

I'm working on a new drawing clip about food monsters. It's one of my cartooning challenges which is designed to encourage agency for the learner and offer teachers an open-ended task. Offline, I've just published a book: *After Bruegel*. It's a kind of

political satire, eye-spy, homage to Pieter Bruegel the Elder. It's available from Booktopia and Amazon.

Have you received any feedback from viewers? Requests for exercises?

Yes! I've received some great feedback on the drawing videos and have had some requests: one young Canberran cartoonist has requested dragons and another has asked for cars. I'm excited to cover these topics in the near future.

Post-lockdown, where will you be working as a caricaturist? How can readers contact you?

When the lockdown finally subsides, I will be doing live caricatures again. Definitely. I love my job. With so many bookings being postponed they are now starting to clash. When it rains, it pours. I am open for bookings. If any readers are interested, please use the contact form on my Sam the Caricaturist website, or facebook



Velociraptor illustration - tutorial for students, parents and teachers. Photo: Supplied

message "Sam the Caricaturist" and I can confirm availability.

*This scenario - a sickly stationary childhood that leads to a creative career in later life - is quite common for cartoonists. Jim Davis (of Garfield) suffered from intense asthma attacks and could rarely go outside, Stephan Pastis (of Pearls before swine) had bronchitis. He and Davis both attribute their artistic development to being stuck inside. This doesn't mean you need to have

had an unfortunate childhood to be a cartoonist. With an entire generation locked down right now I'm hoping that they too might carry the flame with drawing as part of their lives.

www.samthecaricaturist.wixsite.com/samthecaricaturist
www.facebook.com/samthecaricaturist
www.booktopia.com.au/after-bruegel-samuel-james-mcnair/



The Reviews

Theatre Review by Catherine Skipper



Australian Theatre Live
www.australiantheatre.live

Australian Theatre Live touts itself as “Australian story telling for the many and not the few” and is a low-cost rental site with a small selection of filmed onstage Australian productions. Just the thing while our theatres remain in lockdown.

Unfortunately, the first item on offer, Michael Gow’s *Away*, an Australian classic and a captivating production from Malthouse directed by Matthew Lutton Theatre, is not available. Relevant to our own times, the play deals with the difficulty of letting go, of loss and of change, the whole leavened with a little wise magic that we could do with right now.

Another Australian classic on offer is the Griffin Theatre production of *Emerald City* by David Williamson directed by Lee Lewis. The play written in 1987 has fun with the traditional Melbourne-Sydney

rivalry, which, alas, we have seen revitalized once again as we watch the two premiers battle it out over who has the best Covid-19 strategy.

The play’s main concern, the conflict between commercial success and artistic achievement, has a poignant relevance for the obvious devaluing of art as work in the Federal’s government distribution of financial support during the present crisis. Sharp-edged direction and a splendid cast make this performance well worth watching.

Written by Geoffrey Atherden, of *Mother and Son* fame, *Liberty Equality Fraternity* produced by Ensemble Theatre and directed by Shannon Murphy could bring some hilarity into your lockdown days. A young woman is detained by an unknown authority and interrogated by an officious young man until she admits to an unidentified wrongdoing.

Disconcertingly, her interrogator has detailed knowledge about her obtained through her use of digital media. Much of the humour is drawn from the woman’s feisty responses to pointless questions and the serious themes of invasion of privacy, the ubiquity of surveillance and the crime of being a female come in a very palatable parcel.

Rachel Mary Brown’s *The Dapto Chaser* produced by the Apocalypse Theatre Company with Independent Griffin takes us into the world of greyhound racing.

Directed by Glynn Nicholas, the play presents a sympathetic but also unflinching perspective on a controversial subculture and

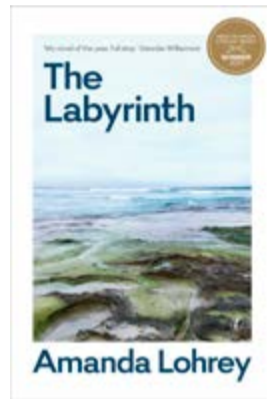
people trapped by addiction, poverty and their own family history.

The fate of a loved greyhound called Boy Named Sue is a metaphor for the socio-economic dilemma that lies at the heart of this gritty play. While we might think that the characters do have other choices than the ones they make, such choices are really only theoretical to men so embedded in a self-perpetuating way of life.

Australian Theatre Live promises that two excellent productions – Katherine Thompson’s *Diving for Pearls* and Louis Nowra’s *This Much Is True* – will be available for rental in the near future. We look forward to both.

» theatre@ssh.com.au

Book Review by Catherine DeMayo



The Labyrinth
Amanda Lohrey
Text Publishing, \$29.99

The Labyrinth is the seventh novel by Tasmanian author Amanda

Lohrey, and was awarded the Miles Franklin Literary Award in July.

The premise of the novel is a familiar one, as Lohrey herself stressed in an interview with Guardian Australia: “People have always tried to escape into some kind of primeval landscape of rural virtue, in order to restore some damaged part of themselves.”

In some ways, *The Labyrinth* fits that familiar pattern to a T: Traumatized narrator flees the city for somewhere he/she is unknown. Meets a cast of local characters, many eccentric and enigmatic. Ultimately forges new relationships and achieves healing/romance/happiness, while learning new liberating rural skills such as home renovation or farming.

What sets *The Labyrinth* apart, though, is both the beauty and simplicity of Lohrey’s writing and the magnitude of the tragedy that has caused her narrator, Erica, to flee Sydney for a tiny coastal town. This is more than a broken heart. Erica has one child, Daniel. He is serving a life sentence for negligent homicide; there is no question of his guilt in the deaths of five innocent people.

Erica has moved to be close to the prison where Daniel serves his sentence, although his contempt for her is withering; he hardly speaks to her when she visits. Settled into a small, unrenovated shed near the ocean, she becomes obsessed with the idea of building a labyrinth – not, she stresses, a maze, in which one can get lost, but a labyrinth, conducive to meditation and peace.

Erica begins her story with her childhood, lived in the bizarre environment of a cottage within the mental hospital where her father, Ken, works as a psychiatrist. Her mother abandons the family when Erica is 10, and she becomes a surrogate mother to her younger brother, Axel.

Daniel’s father is Gabriel Priest, an artist; he, Erica and infant Daniel live in a Redfern squat until Gabriel abandons them. Daniel, until his conviction, was also an artist. Axel has married a woman who disapproves of how Erica raised him, and Erica refuses to even open the letters Axel sends her.

Like many books of the “rural virtue” genre, *The Labyrinth* offers us a few quirky locals. Yet Erica’s transformation doesn’t really begin until she meets Jurko, an enigmatic migrant from the Balkans and a trained stonemason who agrees to help her build the labyrinth. Erica also befriends Lexie, a troubled teenager whose touching devotion to her younger brother helps Erica make sense of her own sibling relationship.

The Labyrinth may travel a familiar path (no pun intended!), but it does so with eloquent prose. Erica describes the view from her shed: “The moon, a deep pink sphere, has risen over the sea and sits low above the horizon. A thin vertical band of charcoal cloud has drifted across its surface to bisect it ...”

Few authors write about grief, sorrow and scenery in such luminous prose as Lohrey.

» books@ssh.com.au



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Locomotive Street, Eveleigh – parking via 2 Central Avenue (two hours free with validation)

ROMEO'S
Food Hall



**SOUTH
EVELEIGH**

Strikers demand rapid reductions in emissions

ENVIRONMENT

MIRIAM PEPPER

YOUTH movement for climate justice School Strike 4 Climate is once again striking on October 15 to call on the Australian government to “fund our future not gas”. The strikers ask the community Australia-wide to take the day off school, work or uni, two weeks before the United Nations climate summit in Glasgow, to demand no new coal, oil and gas projects; 100 per cent renewable energy by 2030; and funding for a just transition and jobs for fossil fuel workers and their communities.

Eighteen months on from the horror bushfires in eastern Australia, the northern hemisphere has just experienced a summer of intense heat, fires and floods. The recently released Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report, labelled by the UN Secretary-General as a “code red for humanity”, has highlighted that stabilising the climate will require rapid reductions in greenhouse gas emissions.

Yet the Australian government continues to fund and support the fossil fuel industry, including the development of new gas basins across the continent, against the wishes of Traditional Owners.



Photo: Andrew Collis

Australia ranked last among 193 UN member countries for action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, according to the Sustainable Development Report 2021. Likewise, the Australia Institute showed last month that Australia trails behind other OECD countries in transitioning to a renewable energy system. It is a shameful performance for a wealthy country with abundant sunshine, wind and coastlines.

An in-person rally is not possible in Sydney on October 15 due to Covid-19. Visit www.schoolstrike4climate.com for updates on how you can participate instead. Organisations can also support by signing on to the #FundOurFutureNotGas pledge.

On October 6 at 7.30pm, the Uniting Church will hold an online community forum on “Why is the Uniting Church supporting the School Strike 4 Climate movement?”.

Hosted by Julie McCrossin AM, the forum will feature diverse guests from the Uniting Church and Uniting Church schools. Visit www.unitingearth.org.au for information on how to tune in.

Counterpointing Covid blues

LOCALS

ANDREW COLLIS

COUNTERPOINT Community Services in Waterloo and Alexandria is currently in the process of setting up a new project to assist social housing residents with vaccine bookings. Elle Brind, office manager and outreach coordinator, asks people to check updates on the Counterpoint Facebook page.

Is the community centre open at all this month?

We are closed for our usual drop-in services and weekly social activities, but our staff are available via phone, email, Facebook, Instagram and the mailbox at our centre (pop a note in our Raglan Street letterbox and we will get back to you).

How are you and the team coping with demands and frustrations?

We are a small team and keeping in regular contact and supporting each other has really helped. I have started early morning walks, the rest of the team have been running, practising yoga, spending quality time with their pets and gardening. Keeping a routine is so important. Counterpoint recently assisted SLHD with the Pop-Up Vaccination clinic in Waterloo. I had been working from home



Elle Brind at Counterpoint Community Services (The Factory) in Raglan Street, Waterloo (photo taken prior to lockdown). Photo: Andrew Collis

for seven weeks; the feeling of happiness and excitement I felt being amongst the community again just reiterated how important this community is to me, as we are to them.

Can you share a little about the “online hangout via Zoom” activity?

The online hangout runs on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays from 11:30am-12:30pm, each day has two staff, anyone is welcome to drop in and have a chat or join in on some trivia or other activities. On Mondays and Wednesdays we have a student counsellor available for phone sessions.

For those without ready access to online resources, this lockdown has been especially difficult.

This pandemic has highlighted that we can no longer view

online access as a luxury but a basic necessity. The two issues that persist are accessibility to a device and affordability of data. Through a great partnership with the Reconnect Project, we have been able to provide refurbished smartphones, tablets and laptops, and provide basic training through our Flexible Response Project. Educating people how to use digital devices is also important as most information and services are now online. We also are pursuing the state government to provide wi-fi hotspots in our local public housing estates.

As cliched as it sounds, we need to be aware that we are not in the same boat, but we are in the same storm.

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Alcott shines at Paralympics

SPORT

STEVE TURNER

AUSTRALIAN wheelchair tennis star Dylan Alcott has won Paralympic gold in the quad tennis singles in Tokyo after a thrilling battle with Sam Schroder. The 30-year-old, who has won 22 grand slams in quad singles and doubles, overcame Dutchman Sam Schroder 7-6 (7/2), 6-1 to successfully defend his title from the 2016 Rio Games.

The singles win was sweet revenge for Alcott after he and Heath Davidson surrendered their Paralympic doubles crown to Schroder and Niels Vink.

Alcott has reached the pinnacle of both sports he has competed in – wheelchair basketball and wheelchair tennis. He started with wheelchair tennis as his main pursuit and was ranked 100th in the world as a 16-year-old before switching to wheelchair basketball for the 2008 Beijing Paralympics.

As a 17-year-old, Alcott won a gold medal in the men’s wheelchair basketball with the Australian team at Beijing 2008 and then followed it up with a silver medal in the same event at London 2012. After switching back to tennis in 2014, Alcott claimed his first grand slam quad singles title at the Australian Open in 2015 – the first of seven consecutive triumphs at Melbourne Park.

This month Alcott is competing in the US Open and vying for a golden slam (all four grand slam titles with an Olympics or Paralympics gold medal in a single calendar year).

New wicketkeeper for T20 World Cup

Uncapped wicketkeeper Josh Inglis is the new face in the Australian team for the upcoming T20 World Cup in the UAE. Inglis has been named in a 15-man squad, which also includes a number of high-profile players. “Josh has been on our radar for some time with his performances in white-ball cricket and more recently in the Vitality Blast, where he topped the run charts”, said chair of selectors, George Bailey. Steve Smith has been named in the squad, despite an ongoing elbow issue. Bailey says he’s “really confident” Smith will be fit, pointing out that the New South Welshman is now facing 100 balls in a net session without any discomfort. The squad is Aaron Finch (capt), David Warner, Steve Smith, Glenn Maxwell, Mitchell Marsh, Matthew Wade, Ashton Agar, Pat Cummins, Mitchell Starc, Kane Richardson, Adam Zampa, Josh Hazlewood, Marcus Stoinis, Mitchell Swepson, Josh Inglis. Travelling reserves: Dan Christian, Nathan Ellis, Daniel Sams.

Rabbitohs a chance to go all the way

Rugby league reporter John Lanzky writes: “Well the season is over and it’s time for the finals. Will Souths go all the way? I don’t know. Latrell won’t be there, but I believe there’s still a chance. We have some great players, and they will give this a good shake. I feel sorry for Latrell – the hatred and racism that he and his family have had to endure from some Roosters fans is disgusting. All I can say is good luck. I know the Rabbitohs will do their best. Glory, glory ...!”

Volunteers’ News

PAT CLARKE

Spring starts when?

Greetings volunteers and readers to the start of Spring, unofficially on September 1, but really with the Spring Solstice on September 23 this year. The Bureau of Meteorology is advising not to pack away jumpers and coats just yet. There have been lots of early blooming flowers and shrubs, even my own Carolina jasmine which has produced an abundance of sweet-smelling yellow flowers and the best showing in over 20 years.

More Covid news

Masks: Fully fitted masks are now mandatory outdoors throughout the state and indoor mask-wearing (except at home) still applies.

Singles Bubble (Nominated Visitor):

This seems to have caused a lot of confusion with mixed messages about who can and who cannot visit you at home. As far as I’ve been able to ascertain, people who live alone can nominate one person, friend or family member to visit; it should be the same person for the whole of the lockdown, and this person should live within 5kms of your home. (New orders have been made in the case of your nominated person now being unable to attend and a replacement person nominated). In Greater Sydney (except in the LGAs of concern) you do not need to register your Nominated Visitor with Service NSW.

Covid-19 Check-in Card: Introduced since August 13, this card can be presented at supermarkets and retail businesses to scan if you don’t have a smartphone or don’t like using the Service NSW QR code app. You can apply by calling Service

NSW on 13 77 88, or register online www.service.nsw.gov.au. The site is notifying delays in processing and sending out plastic cards due to high demand.

Local libraries

If you are regular library user like me, you will be missing your usual exchange of books, magazines, etc., as all libraries are closed. You can access digital collections, e-books, newspapers, films and many other things of interest. If you have a query or need assistance you can contact the City of Sydney’s library team on 9265 9333 or library@cityofsydney.gov.au. Libraries in other Local Government Areas offer similar services.

SSH Instagram Gallery

Do you remember our Instagram Gallery? If you are a keen photographer, even while in lockdown, we’d love to see your photos of things close to you, or in your view, or even of you. Tag your Instagram pics #sshphotos with a chance to be included in the best five photos each month.

Goodbye for this month, take care of your mental health, as well as your physical wellbeing. Our thoughts reach out to those now suffering Covid and its variant Delta, and to those families and friends who have lost loved ones recently. Be vigilant when you are out and about, as extremely high fines now apply for people breaching stay-at-home restrictions.

Until next time,
Pat Clarke

volunteers@ssh.com.au