

the South Sydney Herald

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International success for local filmmakers

LOCALS

CATHERINE SKIPPER

FILMED over five years, *I'm Wanita* is the story of Wanita Bahtiyar, flamboyant country singer from Tamworth, as she heads to the US to realise her lifelong dream of recording an album in Nashville, honkytonk capital of the world.

Announced as finalists for the coveted Documentary Australian Foundation Awards by the 68th Sydney Film Festival *I'm Wanita* is the proud achievement of a Waterloo-Redfern based team, People Productions, comprising creatives, Clare Lewis, Carolina Sorensen and Matthew Walker.

The team is delighted with the success of *I'm Wanita* as the documentary had its premiere at the prestigious Canadian International Documentary Festival, Hot Docs, and was nominated for an Australian Academy of Cinema and Television Arts (AACTA) award for Best Documentary as well as for Best Music Documentary at the UK Raindance Film Festival.

When Clare and Carolina worked with Matthew on the edit of *There Goes Our Neighbourhood* – their moving documentary on the proposed demolition of Waterloo estate – he showed them a short film he had made in 2015 about Wanita. As Clare says, the two producers “were immediately drawn to Wanita’s renegade character, her honesty and her energy ... a tornado with ‘no filter’, who knew exactly who she was”. They both felt that her



Wanita in Tamworth, courtesy People Productions. Photo: Patrick Boland

(Inset: Film key art by Rob Young)

all-consuming passion for '70s style country music, for Loretta Lynn of *Coal Miner's Daughter* fame and her dream of achieving personal stardom by recording in Nashville, would make compelling viewing.

Apart from the problems of raising money to finance the expedition and the difficulties of travelling internationally with an entourage and equipment, Wanita’s hard-drinking, reckless and generous character (despite its appeal) created unwanted complications.

However, Matthew, who directed the film, adopted a philosophical attitude from the outset, “trying to accept that anything that happened was the perfect thing to happen”. Wanita’s character, he explains, “was the story ... she just has complex patterns of behaviour that take a while to understand. Like a weather system maybe.” Yet, even Matthew’s tolerance could be tested and he recalls once sitting in a gutter in New Orleans “pissed off” waiting for her.

In thinking back over the filming, the team recollects several favourite moments. For Matthew, the final days of filming at Honkytonkville before leaving the US “were pretty fun as we and Wanita were all in a heightened state ... as we knew this was actually about to happen” and he fondly remembers an interview with the elusive Archer (who accompanied the entourage as “bagman”) which was filmed in a large fig tree.

Clare is less forthcoming in case recounting her favourite scenes “might spoil the ending for audiences”, but she does admit that “watching Wanita gate crash many a stage on her musical odyssey in America, and nail it every time, was a huge, nail-biting thrill”. There is also a moment, she adds, “steeped in pathos involving a cat ... look out for that one”.

Keep an eye out for the absorbing, offbeat and inspirational *I'm Wanita* at the Sydney Film Festival, November 3-14, 2021. Speaking for the team, Clare says, “this is not a rags-to-riches story. It is a story about never giving up, doing what you love and trying to have your friends still there at the end.” She hopes that people will be inspired by the self-dubbed Queen of Honkytonk to keep seeking their own truth. It is certain that audiences will be drawn in by the drama of Wanita’s one chance at fulfilling her dream and entertained by her unique and immense talent.

The unmissable *I'm Wanita* shows the truth of Carolina’s heartfelt claim that People Productions “is fascinated by and has a strong commitment to the art of documentary story telling” with its seamless mixture of on-the-run interviews and live performance. This dedicated company has several projects in development including *Campesinos* a feature documentary by emerging Chilean-Australian talent Matias Bolla based on his short film of the same name.

Flexpasses and subscriptions to the Sydney Film Festival can be obtained at www.sff.org.au Instagram @wanitathemovie

Young people falling victim to family violence during lockdown

HUMAN AFFAIRS

AMY CHENG

LOCKDOWN has seen young people fall victim to family violence and challenges within families, an expert in developmental psychology has said. Dr Emily Berger, a senior lecturer at Monash University in Melbourne, said the pandemic and lockdown has created a sense of uncertainty.

“Whenever there’s an experience of uncertainty, that can increase our experience of stress and anxiety because we’re not sure what’s going to happen,” she said. “But it’s also taken away protective factors [and] taken away routines that we rely on, particularly for young people.”

The pandemic has also created “an atmosphere and a catalyst for other potentially traumatic experiences”, such as family violence, Dr Berger said. This

family violence can be direct, where young people are victims of the violence, or it can be indirect.

“It can be that they’re stepping in to protect the victim parent or stepping in to protect and comfort younger siblings or siblings,” she said. “Or it could be that they’re hearing the violence that’s occurring between their parents, so they’re hearing that in the house.”

Dr Berger said that family violence is considered an adverse childhood experience.

“Adverse childhood experiences have clear impacts on the psychological health of children at the time,” she said. “But also can have impacts ongoing as well, so things such as anxiety, stress and post-traumatic stress disorder as well.”

Other factors in the home can also affect young people, according to Dr Berger.

“[Lockdown has] also increased disadvantage for families, financial insecurity for families, that’s

increased stress and pressure for parents,” she said. “That can then have an impact on kids, so the mental health of parents can obviously have an impact on the mental health of children as well.”

A joint report by Mission Australia and Black Dog Institute found that the top issues of concern for young people were coping with stress, mental health and body image. Released in September, the report looks at responses from young people

Continued on page 2

Troubled? Try Ethi-call

Lives or livelihoods?

The body politic
Billy-Ray Belcourt

South Sydney Herald



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Jenny Leong MP
STATE MEMBER
FOR NEWTOWN

Get Vaccinated!

With escalating COVID-19 cases and a relatively low vaccination rate in the inner city, there has never been a better time to get vaccinated. We are so pleased that the Sydney Local Health district – and local organisations - have been pulling out all the stops to make sure anyone in the city who needs a vaccination can access one quickly.

These pop-up vaccination hubs are now operating, so get down to your closest one for your jab as soon as possible.

National Centre of Indigenous Excellence (NCIE)

166-180 George Street, Redfern

Pfizer available those eligible

Open 10am-4pm, every Thursday, Friday & Saturday

Sept and Oct

No appointment necessary, just walk in

Ultimo Community Centre

40 William Henry Street, Ultimo

Pfizer available those eligible

Open 10am-4pm every Monday, Tuesday & Wednesday in Sept and Oct

To book go to: bit.ly/mycovaxvc64

There are also a number of pharmacies across the inner west and inner city offering vaccinations with same day appointments available. Scan this code and follow the prompts to find your closest one.



Our office continues to be working remotely - and can be reached by phone or email if you need individual assistance or support.

Let's all stay safe and well and look after each other, and help spread the word by sharing this information with your friends and family today.

Take care and stay safe,

Jenny

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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A treasured jewel under threat again

URBAN DESIGN

ANDREW CHUTER

SYDNEY Park is a treasured jewel of the inner suburbs. Over the last three decades, the former landfill site has been transformed into an urban oasis and wildlife haven, complete with wetlands, community gardens, children's play area, skate park, sports oval and music amphitheatre. A generation of volunteers have taken part in tree plantings and seen their efforts bloom and grow.

Being in a densely populated area with high land values, the park faces ongoing pressures. A hectare of the park's eastern flank was sliced off for the private WestConnex toll road which saw locals arrested in pitched battles to prevent trees being felled.

A new threat emerged in 2017, when property developers bought up land within the Sydney Park block for \$147 million and announced plans to build 390 apartments. The parcel of land had been recommended in a 1982 Department of Planning report to be purchased by the NSW government and incorporated into the park.

The City of Sydney opposed the concept plans but was overruled by the state government controlled Sydney Central Planning Committee. At the same

time, the Friends of Erskineville (FoE) launched a campaign to scrap the development. The latest revelation that the parent company of the developer, Hailiang Property Group, is based in the offshore tax haven of the Cayman Islands, has added strength to the call. Final approval of detailed plans is currently before the Land and Environment Court.

At FoE we have pointed out that City of Sydney residents have a mere 17.7 square metres of public open space each. As the population grows, this figure will shrink unless suitable land can be purchased to compensate, and the developer contributions for this purpose fall very far short of what is needed. The location of the proposed apartments, adjacent to the sensitive wetlands, would place unacceptable pressure on the wildlife, from the much loved baby swans to migratory birds from Japan and Siberia.

An alternative, recommended by the Sydney Design Advisory Panel, is for a land swap, which would allow a more suitable site to be found. FoE is calling upon the Minister for Planning to intervene and return the land to the public so that the original vision for Sydney Park can be fulfilled. SSH

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Andrew Chuter is President of the Friends of Erskineville. The online petition can be found here: www.actionnetwork.org/letters/defend-the-sydney-park-superblock

Young people falling victim to family violence during lockdown

Continued from page 1

aged 15 to 19 years. There were 25,800 responses to the survey, which was conducted last year.

The report looked at sources that young people rely on when dealing with psychological distress compared to when they're not.

"Young people with psychological distress were more likely to use mobile apps or go to social media for support," the report said.

"Young people without psychological distress reported going to close personal connections for help, particularly parent/s or guardian/s, a relative/family friend and their brother/sister. Young people without psychological distress were also slightly more likely to go to a teacher or friend/s for support with important issues."

However, most of these supports have been taken away because of the lockdown, Dr Berger said.

In particular, by not being able to attend school in person, they've lost the ability to escape from stresses at home. "Schools would quite often provide a break for kids from stresses at home," she said. "Young people have lost that break and that buffer away from stresses at home with their parents or otherwise."

To better look after themselves during lockdown, Dr Berger advises that they begin by recognising that the protective factors that they used to have easy access to

are now gone, including attending school, exercising every day and social interactions with peers.

"If they can create that within their daily routine to help to protect them against the negative psychological impacts of Covid then that's really important," Dr Berger said.

Parents and carers should watch for any signs of withdrawal from young people.

"If parents and teachers are noticing that young people are not indulging in the activities that they used to enjoy, and have withdrawn from the interactions that they used to engage with, then that's probably a sign that the young person isn't coping," she said.

To support young people, parents and carers can start by acknowledging that young people are also experiencing stress and uncertainty from the pandemic. "Be curious and ask young people about their thoughts and their feelings about what's happening in relation to the pandemic," Dr Berger said.

"Quite often, young people might exaggerate or have lost hope for the future or they might exaggerate how bad things are for them. So, we need to understand what they're thinking and what they're feeling and be able to just be a sounding board to what their experience is from the pandemic." SSH

Dear Premier,

As you know, the NSW Government imposes housing targets onto local Councils to accommodate Sydney's population growth.

And in turn, our communities rely on our Councils to deliver the essential facilities and infrastructure needed to support this growth, and make people's lives and local environments better.

This infrastructure includes everything from roads and footpaths, to sports fields, parks and netball courts, to playgrounds, pools and libraries.

We can only deliver these facilities because we are able to collect contributions from property developers to help fund them.

However, the changes now being planned by the NSW Government will divert a large proportion of these developer contributions away from Councils and into a Treasury-controlled fund, with no clear accountability or transparency of how it will be spent.

And the Government is proposing Councils raise rates to make up the revenue we are losing.

This breaks the nexus between where contributions are made and where they are spent. This threatens the ability of every Council to deliver much-needed new community facilities, and transfers that burden onto our ratepayers.

Premier, you are forcing us to choose between cancelling projects and raising rates. And this is at a time of pandemic-induced financial hardship for many people in the state.

On behalf of our communities, we urge that you withdraw the changes currently before Parliament.

Yours sincerely



Read more at saveourcommunities.com



TANYA PLIBERSEK MP

Federal Member for Sydney

COVID-19 UPDATE

In recent weeks Redfern and Waterloo have experienced a concerning outbreak of Covid-19. I want to acknowledge and thank the local community for their response. Locals rallied together, got tested and, importantly, got vaccinated. While this is an incredibly tough time, we will get through it together.

ROADMAP OUT OF LOCKDOWN

The NSW Government has released guidelines on a roadmap out of lockdown. The roadmap includes details the easing of restrictions for those who are fully vaccinated once the community reaches 70 per cent and 80 per cent fully vaccinated. This is subject to change so stay up to date here:



OR call 1800 020 080

VACCINATIONS

We are in the final push to reach the vaccination rates needed for Sydney to gradually begin reopening. If you have not yet received your Covid-19 vaccination, I urge you to do so as soon as you can. You can find out where they are available near you here:



OR call 1800 020 080

ELECTORATE OFFICE

While Sydney is under stay at home orders, my electorate office will not be open to the public, but we're still here to help by phone or email. My electorate office provides support with Centrelink, Veterans' Affairs, Medicare, Immigration, NBN and other federal matters. Justice of the Peace services will not be operating while Sydney is under stay at home orders.

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**Mental health modelling recognised globally****SPONSORED**

MARK SCOTT

THE University of Sydney's Brain and Mind Centre (BMC) is warning that without concerted and effective action, the disruption caused by Covid-19 will cast a "long shadow" on mental health.

Unique modelling of linkages between social and economic changes and mental-health outcomes by the BMC soon after the pandemic's outbreak led to several policy changes in 2020-21. Now that modelling is being recognised on a global scale and extended through work with the World Economic Forum Global Future Council on Mental Health.

In September, the systems modelling and computer simulation was recognised in the Scientific American Top 10 Innovations in Mental Health and a comment piece was published in *Nature*, led by the BMC at the University of Sydney.

Lead authors of the *Nature* essay are Associate Professor Jo-An Occhipinti, the BMC's head of Systems Modelling, Simulation and Data Science group and Dr Adam Skinner, senior systems modeller of the group, along with senior author Professor Ian Hickie, the BMC's co-director (health and policy), on behalf of the World Economic Forum's Global Future Council on Mental Health, of which they are recent members.

In the *Nature* essay, the authors warn the mental health crisis is growing because of Covid-19 but the pandemic also offers opportunities to learn from the integrated and systematic approach to infectious diseases modelling and prevention.



The disruption caused by Covid-19 will cast a 'long shadow' on mental health. Image: Getty

They point out that the most potent mental-health interventions can be social and economic, for example through improving employment and childcare.

Associate Professor Occhipinti, with the University of Sydney's Faculty of Medicine and Health, said that just as systems science had been used to model and forecast the spread of Covid-19, and the impact of alternative strategies to mitigate that spread, so too could such simulations be used routinely to tackle mental health.

"A systems modelling approach can and must be taken to address the significant and persistent challenges of mental health and suicide," Associate Professor Occhipinti said.

"History has shown us that spreading resources too thin across a range of programs or taking an ad hoc, reactive approach to decision making is inadequate to tackle today's mental health crisis."

Professor Ian Hickie, co-director of the BMC, said the traditional approach of using retrospective data to identify independent risk factors had only brought partial progress towards population-

level impact, which dynamic modelling sought to rectify.

"During the first wave, we highlighted the need to be proactive about pandemic-induced mental ill-health, at a time when the focus was 'flattening the curve' of the physical health effects of Covid-19.

"Mental health is now considered as an integral part of the pandemic response but in a post-Covid world we need to be smart about where and how we focus our efforts."

The co-authors of the *Nature* essay on behalf of the World Economic Forum Global Future Council on Mental Health conclude: "The scale of these challenges behoves us to take a more progressive research path ... modelling and simulation can help us get a handle on such complexity."

SSH



Authorised by Vice-Chancellor and Principal Prof. Mark Scott.
Enquiries: 9351 2000
info.centre@sydney.edu.au

Col James Student Housing for quarantine trial**URBAN DESIGN**

LYN TURNBULL

EXCAVATION has started on the final precinct of the Pemulwuy Project on Eveleigh Street between Lawson and Caroline streets. Gone now is the old Railway View Hotel that used to occupy the corner, with the only remaining trace of it the recently exposed cellar under the old bar room. During work for the other precincts, the site stored construction materials and equipment.

It will soon be replaced by a three-storey building with four retail tenancies at ground level and offices above, including one for the Aboriginal Housing Company (AHC). Facing Caroline Street, a childcare centre for 60 children will be built with its outdoor play space between it and the rerouted end of Caroline Lane that will now exit to Caroline Street.

The AHC office is currently occupying one of the residential apartments waiting for the new building. Only two other of the 62 units remain unoccupied.



Artist's impression of the final buildings – office and retail (left and foreground) childcare (right). Image: Supplied

Scape built and operates the Col James Student Housing building adjacent to the railway line under a long-term lease from the AHC which paid for construction of the Aboriginal housing. In May, Scape took a proposal to the NSW treasurer to use its new building to quarantine overseas students. On September 23 Scape was awarded the contract to run a trial starting in December 2021.

The building accommodates about 500 students in single rooms with individually contained air-conditioning. Students, who will arrive in groups of 250 for their 14 days in quarantine, must be fully vaccinated with one of the four Australian approved vaccines – AstraZeneca, Pfizer, Moderna or Johnson & Johnson. The buses they

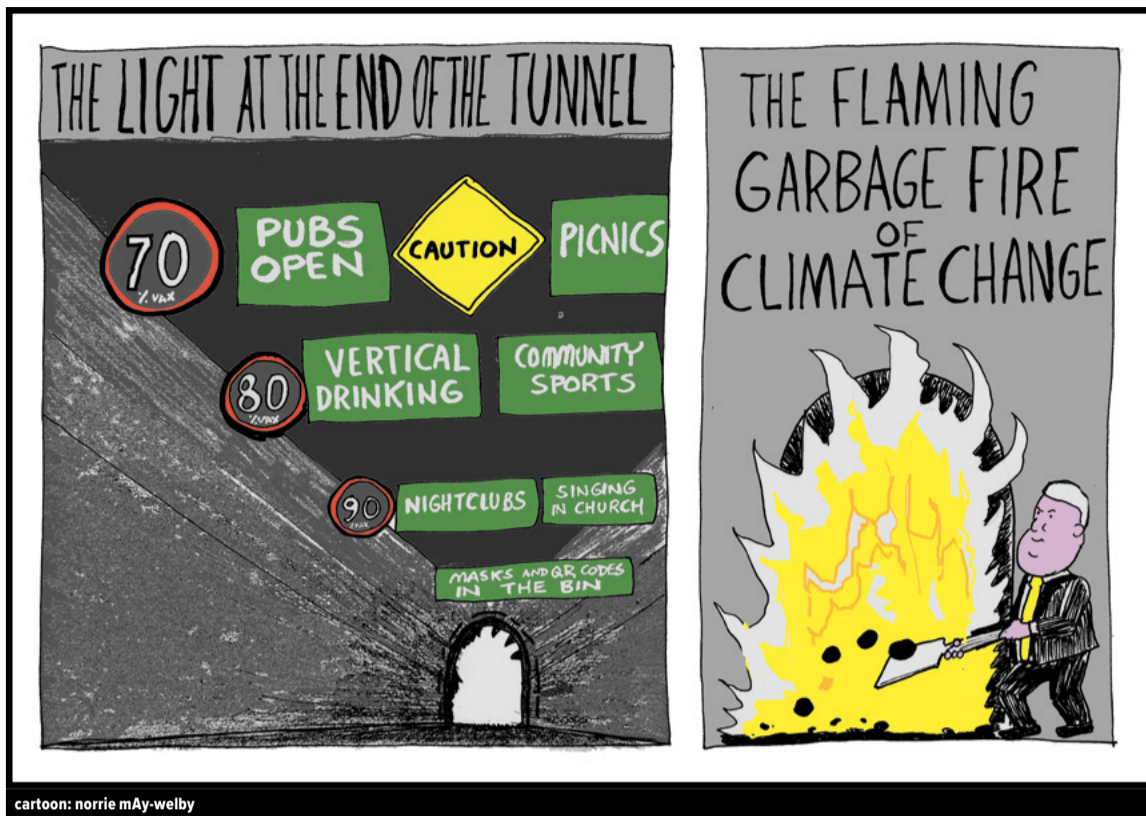
arrive in will pull into the building's delivery area to avoid external contact with local residents.

Scape chief executive Anouk Darling was reported by News Media as saying that police will oversee the quarantine from an onsite ground floor room, monitoring the hallways and CCTV, and that each room has sensors that alert them when a door is opened.

"It can sense whether the door is opened from the inside or outside, so we'll know if it's a scheduled meal delivery or if there's a potential breach on the floor," Ms Darling said.

"It's such a complex problem and it's so important to get it right. But I think this would be the safest place for anyone to quarantine in Australia."

SSH



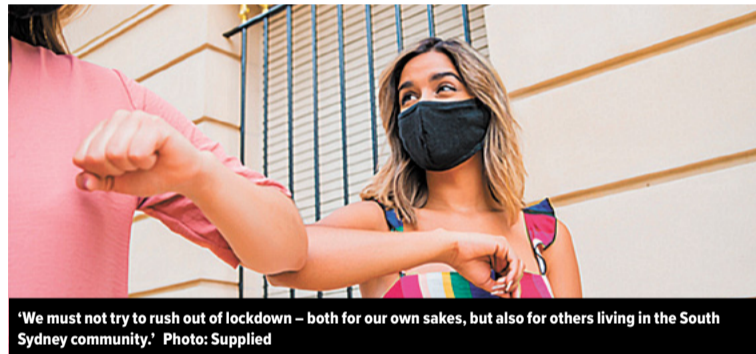
cartoon: norrie mAy-welby

Covid-19 is a hard slog - but hang in there

EDITORIAL / HEALTH

MEGAN WEIER

THIS is a frustrating time – we are all feeling various shades of tired, overwhelmed, and angry about the Covid-19 Delta outbreak in NSW, and in particular the way the virus has swept across Sydney and into the South Sydney suburbs.



'We must not try to rush out of lockdown – both for our own sakes, but also for others living in the South Sydney community.' Photo: Supplied

State and federal governments have started to present their plans for opening up the state and the nation again. We frequently get reports on the proportion of the state (of people aged 16 and over) who are partially or fully vaccinated, and so it is tempting to think “we are nearly there” – and to resume our lives with as much normalcy as possible. However, if we wish to avoid future long lockdowns, we must try to keep in mind not just the impact of Covid-19 on ourselves and our families, but also other people living in our communities.

There are still people who have been unable to get vaccinated –

either because they haven't been able to get an appointment, they have health conditions that mean vaccination presents more of a risk than a benefit, or there has not been adequate translation of health advice to multicultural communities.

The nature of the Delta variant means that children are more likely to be infected and get very sick – but smaller proportions of young people have been able to get vaccinated at time of writing.

There are people who need to work that are working in high-contact or high-risk environments – such as those working in warehouses, delivery, and retail.

For many, it is not always possible or easy to stay home if unwell.

These points reinforce that we still have a long way to go before we can feel confident that this outbreak is under control. There are important policy decisions to be made, and while it will not completely stop hospitalisations and deaths, there needs to be considerations about who will potentially be left behind if we rush to open up.

What can we, as citizens who want the best for each other, do in the meantime?

- Continue checking in with QR codes or other sign in options wherever you go.

What brings freedom for the individual?

FAITH

DHARMACHARI DHARMANANDA

WE look to the ideals of democracy to guarantee personal freedom, but does the democratic ideal guarantee true freedom for the individual?

One of the freedoms that democracy aims to guarantee is freedom of religion. We may argue that the true freedom of each of us lies beyond what democracy alone can afford us; and lies within that very freedom of religion.

We may recognise that faith in religion can be the open road to freedom for the individual, beyond that afforded by democracy; but first a caveat on religious freedom. The recent political fall of Afghanistan to an ideological extremism has shocked the world; and democracy-led ideals failed to avert this. A distorted version of a religion of peace has used power rather than love to assert its voice; and, sadly, denies many freedoms to its subjects. A reminder for us that wisdom and love are the true voices of religion and the basis for freedom-granting faith.

Democracy grants us what we may call external freedoms;

freedoms of the ordinary world. Religion, however, grants us internal freedoms; freedoms from the more existential human predicament. We are very grateful for what democracy affords, but that does not free us from the existential human situation.

From a Buddhist point of view, we are caught up in a cycle of birth, death and rebirth. We regard this as a predicament of suffering. It is a suffering beyond, but also including, everyday kinds of pain and woe. Suffering is being caught up in a confusion driven by propensity for greed, ill-will and delusion; and all that comes of them. The Buddhist teachings, ethical and other practices afford its followers faith in a path beyond suffering, and especially those causes of suffering in which we are enmeshed.

Religiously realised freedoms do come with responsibilities to others and to whomsoever may be the higher powers of our religion. Whereas the higher powers of democratic government are granted in the modes of power, true religion is a relationship based solely in love. In that we may enjoy faith and freedom.

Read the full version on southsydneyherald.com.au

- Avoid large gatherings.
- Seek help in getting vaccinated if you haven't been able to get an appointment yet.
- Try to stay home when you are sick.
- Look after your mental health – if you are feeling more tired, “out of sorts” or unmotivated than usual, it might be worth speaking to a mental health organisation about how you're feeling.

We will get through this time, but we must not try to rush –

both for our own sakes, but also for others living in the South Sydney community.

For information and support, some numbers are:
Counterpoint Community Services
 (02) 9698 9569 or counterpointcs.org.au
 Its Covid Vax Assist number is (02) 9062 5161 or email covid@counterpointcs.org.au
Aboriginal Medical Service Cooperative Limited, Redfern: (02) 93195823 or www.amsredfern.org.au
Lifeline
 13 11 14 or www.lifeline.org.au

Reining in the debt

PAUL WILSON

I have been betting since I was 12. Sometimes I win. I have been doing this for decades. I even work in horse racing. I know stuff. I am good at this.

I had always carried credit card debt. Nothing drastic. Manageable. Shuffle money here, shuffle money there. You get offered a bigger limit. You take it, just in case. Relieves some pressure.

As the amount grew I stopped adding it up.

Endless phone calls from banks. Anxious about the mail. I told no one. I was all alone. It was all me. It was all my fault. It had gotten away from me.

Thousands of plans hatched to

climb out of the hole. Plans lasted a month, or two weeks, or four hours, or one race.

It took a few months for the plane to crash, bits falling off on the way down.

I felt ashamed and humiliated, partly for what I'd done, but more for keeping it from those near to me. The core of my life. Can I be forgiven? Would I deserve it anyway?

But when the wreckage was laid bare, in agonising detail, the debt was in six figures. I had eight credit cards and a personal loan.

My wonderful partner had to absorb the shock. We then sent texts and emails to our immediate family outlining the situation. My partner said that if you put the truth out there you don't know how much love will come back. She was



'As the gambling debt mounted, phone calls and letters of demand kept coming and help seemed far off – but seeking and finding the right support finally helped to rein it in.' Photo: Supplied

right. There was plenty.

The phone calls and letters of demand were still coming. Where I was on my journey meant nothing to them.

We needed help. The National Debt Helpline put us onto Catholic Care. I got a phone call from a gambling counsellor. I have met her most Fridays since.

I was directed to a financial counsellor. Phone consultations only, thanks to Covid.

But thanks to Covid the landscape was new.

We called banks. We paid off some debts, others were put on ice. A number of banks allowed customers some Covid relief.

Appointments were made with the financial counsellor. Our first chat was more than an hour, more counselling, less financial. I needed to get past the psychological barrier of saying out loud the scale of what I'd done. There were six creditors left.

The debt was approximately \$120k. We offered half. After a few weeks of to-ing and fro-ing they accepted our offers.

So many of us get into debt for any number of reasons. Part of my fear of revealing how bad it was getting was that banks were heartless behemoths who routinely crush people who owe them.

They call you, send letters, huff and puff but a lot of it is bluffing. Call the National Debt Helpline! They won't be shocked by anything you say, even if you find it shocking as it comes out of your mouth.

Banks and collection agencies are understaffed and during Covid are attempting to get blood out of stones. Any offer you make them to clear your debt will be snaffled out of your hand in a heartbeat.

It is not easy to believe but there is help out there.

Take a walk for kindness

HUMAN AFFAIRS

CATHIE HARRISON

LOCKDOWN continues and concerns regarding mental health and wellbeing are increasing along with concern for the number of Covid cases. We know about the need to stay safe from the Covid in our world but we also need to stay safe within ourselves.

Right now, getting outside safely and walking may be one of the kindest things we can do for our own physical and mental health and wellbeing. Moving bodies, seeing new things and hearing different sounds can be enlivening. Kerri Smith in *How to be an Explorer of the World*, offers all sorts of fascinating provocations for making a seemingly mundane walk into an interesting and creative experience.

Can you find some tiny objects to create a miniature museum? Can you see a whole palette of colours along the way? What sorts of patterns can you see? Collect objects for their potential magic quality. Attach a story to them or create a fictitious history for the object. Collect objects that appear the same. Study them closely. Are they really the same? Can you use them to create a pattern or a picture?

You don't have to go far to explore a lot. A neighbourhood walk with senses alert and a curious mind, can be an adventure and an act of kindness to ourselves.

As well as being kind to ourselves we can make a daily walk an act of kindness to others. The registered charity, flyhighbillie is inviting us all to "walk for a kinder world", one step at a time.

walk for a kinder world
13th October – 13th November



Flyhighbillie was established by Danny Kinder and her family in memory of their precious Billie who died tragically in 2016 aged 12. The charity promotes kindness, empathy and compassion in children and young people to reduce mental health issues, bullying and suicide.

Danny says, "November 13 is world kindness day and flyhighbillie are so excited to be holding our second 'walk for a kinder world'. It's about walking with purpose; you can complete acts of kindness while walking and raise funds to help others."

You can set up a fundraising page at fundraise.flyhighbillie.org, decide how far you would like to walk during the month from October 13 to November 13, and ask others to sponsor you. For every \$20 raised, flyhighbillie will donate a b kinder workbook and kindness resources to a child in an Australian primary school. SSH

This is Part 3 of a series by Dr Cathie Harrison about celebrating together through and beyond Covid. See Part 1 on our website www.outhsydneyherald.com.au/celebrating-together-through-and-beyond-covid See part 2 on our website www.southsydneyherald.com.au/catching-and-spreading-kindness-the-children-show-us-how

Waking up the snake

FIRST PEOPLES

(WASKAM) EMELDA DAVIS & ROBYN HUTCHINSON

"WAKING up the snake – a coalition for hope", a quote from Dr Anne Peolina, well describes the deadly yarning on September 18 organised by Thomas Mayor, Torres Strait Islander, at the invitation of the Raising Peace Festival team to launch a week of thought-provoking events calling for peace (see www.raisingpeace.org.au).

Five hundred participants listened and interacted via chat and on Zoom with First Nations' grassroots leaders from across Australia, thanks to the Raising Peace team, the many volunteers and networks for their solidarity. This combined energy created a powerful grassroots day with the inclusion of Australian South Sea Islander history, an often forgotten narrative for over 60,000 displaced Pacific peoples trafficked to NSW with the influx to Queensland in the 1800s.

Following a welcome to country by Nathan Moran (Local Metropolitan Aboriginal Land Council), Thomas Mayor, National Indigenous Officer at the MUA, facilitated the first two panels.

Yarning with First Nations panel with (Waskam) Emelda Davis, chair of Australian South Sea Islanders (Port Jackson), Carol Vale managing director of Murawin, Shane Charles community educator and reconciliation advocate, and Adrian Russell-Wills film director, who introduced a screening of the

documentary 88 (www.bit.ly/3uvz678).

Yarning Uluru Statement from the Heart and Truth Telling panel with community advocates Craig Cromelin specialising in community governance, politics, design and development, Dean Parkin, Director of From the Heart campaign, and Nicole Laupepa Youth off the Streets, shared the significant scope of work achieved to date.

Michelle Aleksandrovcics Lovegrove, media and communications professional facilitated Yarning Mother Earth – caring for country with panellists Bruce Shillingsworth, "Water for Rivers" campaign, and Dr Anne Poelina, chair of Martuwarra Fitzroy River Council. Anne spoke of First Law and the need for unity in caring for country.

Yarning Walking Together panel with Nicole Laupepa, Jacqui Parker, educator and mediator, Michael West, culturally respectful engagement specialist, Remo Guiffre, founder and director of TEDxSydney, GeneralThinking and REMO, Miche-Elle Myers, National Women's Officer for the MUA and Paul Wright of ANTA focused on the ongoing work required to meet the objectives of Voice Truth Treaty and Peace. SSH

To support the work of achieving First nations VOICE to Parliament, please contact:

(Waskam) Emelda Davis, www.assipj.com.au
Footprints documentary on ASSI history www.bit.ly/3mkJsTp
and Robyn Hutchinson, Women's Reconciliation Network www.wnredfern.org.au

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You can also call our team on (02) 9062 5161



The vaccine should be taken in consultation with a health professional.



Communities & Justice



Volunteers' news

PAT CLARKE

I hope this month finds you all in good spirits and looking forward to some easing of Covid restrictions from October 11 for fully vaccinated people. Aged care residents will be able to receive two fully vaccinated visitors per day, which will be a great relief to those with close family and friends in aged care. With notifications changing almost daily it's hard to keep up.

Once again, it's **Walktober** but I suspect those of us who are able have turned the last three months into walking months. www.bluearth.org/walktober

Reopening of art galleries, museums, cinemas, theatres
I can hardly wait to get out and about to visit these venues, but check about opening times, dates and restrictions.

Museum of Contemporary Art (MCA) will continue its exhibition by Richard Bell: *You Can Go Now*, since it was closed so quickly in June, until early November.

Richard Bell is a renowned Aboriginal activist, artist and political commentator.

24th Annual Sculpture by the Sea October 21 to November 7
Outdoor exhibits will include artists from 2020 as well as some new exhibits. You can download a map, including access points and any forthcoming Covid restrictions at www.sculpturebythesea/bondi or you can phone 02 8399 0233.

Mental Health Month October 2021

The theme for this year is **Tune-In**, and the beautiful artwork for this year is by Tylah Lomas, a proud Kamilaroi woman, whose tribal totem is the goanna. Find out all about the resources available at www.mentalhealthmonth.wayahead.org.au

Climate Action

In the lead-up to the UN climate change conference in Glasgow, there will be a School Strike 4 Climate on October 15 (www.schoolstrike4climate.com) and "Faiths 4 Climate Justice"

actions on October 17-18 (see www.arrcc.org.au/day_of_action).

REDWatch

The REDWatch AGM on October 7 will welcome Blak Douglas who will share tributes to the late Aboriginal artist Roy Kennedy. All welcome to join via Zoom: www.us02web.zoom.us/j/3699420648

SSH Cartoon Show – December 1!

Save the date! Norrie's show opening has been rescheduled for Wednesday, December 1, 5pm. More details next month.

Vale Jack Carnegie

Jack Carnegie of Redfern passed away on September 16. Jack was among the founders of the Greens in Sydney, a unionist and activist, and fine photographer. Jack contributed numerous photos to the SSH over the years. Sincere condolences to Jack's partner Jane, and to Jack's many friends.

Until next time

Pat Clarke

SSH

» volunteers@ssh.com.au



Kathrin Longhurst. Photo: Supplied

Blak & Blu - it's happening

ART

ANDREW COLLIS

ENTRIES are now closed for the Blak & Blu pen on paper art prize, to be awarded at the Orchard Gallery in Waterloo on December 11 (the exhibition was originally planned to open September 11).

Redfern-based Dhungatti artist Blak Douglas, founding sponsor of the *Blak & Blu*, thanks artists for engaging and creative works, and for patience amid Covid restrictions. He looks forward to gathering for an afternoon of art, social reflection, music and refreshments.

Sydney artist Kathrin Longhurst, who served for some years as vice president of Portrait Artists Australia, will serve as judge for the *Blak & Blu*.

Longhurst was the founder and director of the innovative Project 504, an art space that fosters collaboration between emerging and established Australian artists.

Represented by Nanda/Hobbs Contemporary Sydney, she recently completed work for her 18th solo show, *Indoctrinated*, and has been a finalist in numerous awards including the Archibald Prize, the Darling Prize at the National Portrait Gallery, the Doug Moran Prize, the Sulman Prize, the Percival Portrait Award, the Mosman Art Prize, the Portia Geach Award, the Shirley Hannan National Portrait Prize and the WA Black Swan Prize. She won the 2021 Archibald Packing Room Prize.

Blak & Blu is inspired by 19th-century Aboriginal artist Tommy McRae, whose drawings celebrate Aboriginal culture of the south-east of Australia and present an Indigenous perspective on both European settlers and Chinese prospectors. McRae's sharp observation of squatters attired in "exotic" three-piece suits and top hats, and of newly arrived Chinese settlers, reverses the customary equation of coloniser-artists scrutinising colonised native peoples.

"I hope the exhibition stirs things up a bit," Douglas said.

The *Blak & Blu* prize winner will receive \$1,000, as well as the honour of being the inaugural award recipient. Parkers Fine Art Supplies will sponsor a youth category award.

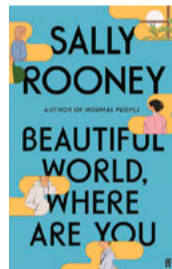
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Blak & Blu
2-4pm, December 11, 2021
The Orchard Gallery
56a Raglan St Waterloo
@theorchardgalleryau

» books@ssh.com.au

Reviews

Book Review
by Catherine DeMayo



Beautiful World, Where Are You
Sally Rooney
Allen&Unwin, \$29.99

Beautiful World, Where Are You is Sally Rooney's third novel. Her first, *Conversations with Friends* (2017) was followed by *Normal People* the following year. The latter was adapted into a Hulu mini-series, the 30-year-old Rooney was feted by the literary establishment, and fans eagerly awaited the next. I fear many will be disappointed. It opens with a quote by Italian author Natalia Ginzberg: "When I write something, I usually think it is very important and that I am a very fine writer ... But there is one corner of my mind in which I know very well what I am, which is a small, a very small writer." Is Rooney warning us that she herself is but a "small writer"? That we shouldn't expect much from this book? Or an insincere dose of false modesty from a bestselling author? Essentially, this is a book about two women and the men they love. Alice and Eileen are best friends. Alice, a successful author like her creator, meets Felix, a warehouse worker who doesn't read books, on a disastrous Tinder date. This odd couple, go from hostile to connected during a trip to Rome. Eileen rekindles a romance with

a childhood family friend, Simon, several years her senior, whose kindness and attention were instrumental in saving her from depression years earlier. Alice and Eileen's email correspondence is interspersed with an alternating narrative of their lives. In their seemingly endless emails, Alice decries the emptiness and tedium of her fame. With no sense of irony whatsoever, she not only complains, but complains about other writers complaining: "I see them all the time ... Complaining about the most boring things in the world – not enough publicity, or bad reviews, or someone else making more money." Climate change, the fate of a now extinct Bronze Age culture, the rise of right-wing politics and global injustice also make their appearance in these detailed electronic epistles. (A reviewer in *New York Magazine* described this correspondence as "an epistolary novel meets Ulysses lite".) Eileen, who has had nothing like Alice's meteoric rise to fame, frets about making ends meet at her poorly paid job with a literary magazine. More than once, we hear that she only makes some 20,000 a year. Yet, when approached by an agent who admires one of her essays (on Natalia Ginzberg!), Eileen doesn't even reply to the email. The last quarter of the book gets more interesting, as the four converge on Alice's house three hours from Dublin. Over the weekend, the two women (who, despite the voluminous emails and assurances of affection, have not seen each other for months) reconnect, and Felix meets Alice's friends for the first time. Will these relationships work out? Will the two couples live happily ever after, despite the

seeming odds? The trouble is that, despite some clear, spare prose and realistic dialogue in the non-email chapters, Rooney doesn't succeed in making me care enough about these self-absorbed characters. It's a small world, after all.

Book Review
by Marjorie Lewis-Jones



Home
Karen Hendriks (author)
Alisa Knatko (illustrator)
Daisy Lane Publishing, \$18.95

"In a snowy mountain village, my family had lived peacefully for hundreds of years ..." – so begins Karen Hendriks' new picture book for children aged 7 and upwards. The narrative continues with guards forcing the peaceable villagers to leave their homes taking no more than they can carry. The little girl at the centre of the story has a locket sewn into her jacket by her mother for safe keeping believing it holds "the voices and songs of our village". The locket gives her hope as she travels with her parents far from their beloved homeland into the unknown. The family sleeps on a cold floor in a crowded building. They're led to a forest camp where the girl collects firewood and mushrooms. They're forced to board a train from where she notices many

buildings and homes have been destroyed and realises her own village while not destroyed is lost forever. This poignant tale is inspired by the author's mother, grandmother and great grandmother who were born in the snowy village of Wunschendorf but forced to leave it in 1946 after WW2 along with the village's entire ethnic German population. They were among three million Sudeten Germans expelled from the Sudeten mountains to Germany, Austria and the Soviet Zone – the largest forced refugee movement of a single population in the 20th Century. "Mum's family was one of those families that bravely chose to travel to Australia by sea, after passing all the required tests and being approved by the Australian government," Hendriks says, "leaving behind the tears of war for new beginnings." In this slim volume, Hendriks tells a powerful story of forced migration. Timely, too, when we know that, in 2020, nearly 82.4 million people were forcibly displaced around the world, and Covid-19 is said to have rendered thousands of refugees and asylum seekers stranded and vulnerable. Alisa Knatko's illustrations convey the darkness and fear these migratory journeys hold but also the resilience shown by the dispossessed people who have no choice but to make them. *Home* captures a moment in time and gives it resonance: It is history offered heart, fiction told with fervour, a little locket of hope I found uplifting.



Proud supporters Val and Chris in Redfern. Photo: Andrew Collis



Reggie the Rabbit meets fans at the Coogee Bay Hotel. Photo: Kelvin Coe

Proud of our team

SPORT

JOHN LANZKY

THE NRL grand final promised to be an intense and tight affair. It was certainly played at a furious pace. Both teams gave it their all. Penrith dominated possession, thanks to precision kicking from Nathan Cleary – some of his high kicks were absolute monsters! Souths tackled and tackled – the defensive effort was heroic – and had their chances in attack too.

The result, Panthers 14-12, was a fair indication of the contest.

Having lost to Melbourne in the decider last year, Penrith were deserving winners in 2021. I am pleased for them. As Souths fan Chris Lodge said to me after the game: “The win will do the Penrith area a lot of good. The people of western Sydney have suffered so much during this pandemic.”

Still, I am very proud to be a South Sydney supporter right now. The grand final showed the skill and character of our team.

How good is Cody Walker! His solo try in the first half was one of the best tries by a five-eighth I've seen. It inspired his teammates to dig deep and never give up.

I was on the edge of my seat the whole time.

Stephen Crichton's try – intercepting Walker's cut-out pass to Alex Johnston – was a heartbreaker. The play could so easily have led to a Souths

try at the other end. A matter of millimetres.

To his credit, Walker recovered to set up a try for Alex Johnston to bring Souths to within two points of their opponents, but Adam Reynolds missed the tough conversion from the sideline.

Congratulations to Alex Johnston for most tries by a Rabbitoh in a season.

In the final minutes, Reynolds' attempt at a 40-metre field goal fell short – it was straight enough, it just didn't have the distance.

Let me say this to Adam Reynolds, thank you for everything. Hold your head up high. You have been a sensational halfback and captain – and we are all proud of you. We wish you and your family health and happiness in Brisbane.

To Benji Marshall, our mighty utility player, what you have done for us this year has inspired the younger players. Whenever you came onto the field, into any position, it was like a breath of fresh air for the team. All the best to you for your retirement.

To coach Wayne Bennett, a big thank you. You've been an inspiration not only to the players but to the fans as well. You've always been approachable and easy to talk to.

Passionate supporter Tony Day put it nicely when he said: “Terribly disappointing result but not a disappointing effort by the Bunnies. The Panthers deserved to win but we didn't deserve to lose. And there's always next year!”

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