

the South Sydney Herald

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Folk-infused indie rock made in England

MUSIC

PAUL SOMERVILLE

SINGER-SONGWRITER

Toby Martin's latest offering embodies his ongoing fascination with the way that environment affects music and lyrics. A recent four-year stint in the UK inspired the songs on *I Felt the Valley Lifting*, his third solo release.

"I've long been interested in the way that place affects my music," Martin explains. "I love travelling, being stirred by different landscapes, meeting the people and hearing their stories.

"A few years back I moved to Northern Yorkshire for an academic position, lecturing in music. For someone born in Australia and used to living in the centres of Melbourne and Sydney, it was an interesting mix of familiar and foreign.

"We were living in a typically English village, surrounded by rolling hills and moors. But it was also very post-industrial, so there were also lots of crumbling buildings, overgrown with trees.

"There's something stimulating for a songwriter to be an outsider in a new environment," he says. "There are very literal ways that I respond to that – right down to putting place names in the songs.

"But there are also less direct ways of responding. Much of this album was written outside and that definitely fed its style and atmosphere. Many of the melodies are long and meandering, and they are based on modes often used in folk music."

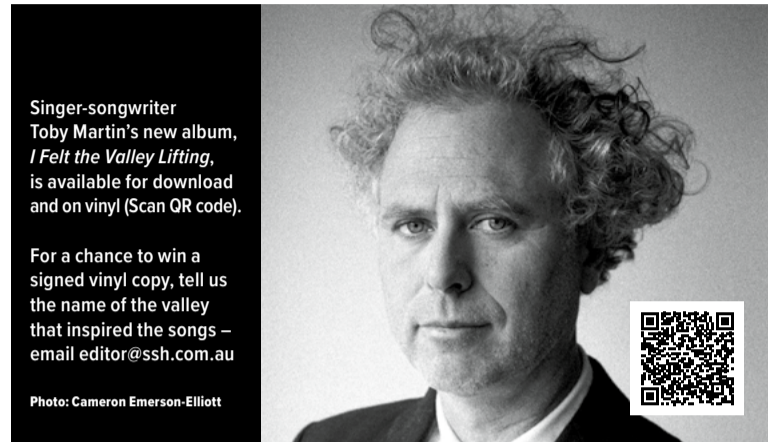
The new record doesn't merely sound like authentic Celtic folk, however. It integrates traditional instruments and plaintive tunes with the clang and clatter of indie rock – not just on different tracks, but within the one track.

"I really soaked up all the folk music around me, both traditional and contemporary. But you need to know what you're doing!" he laughs. "I've been in indie rock for 20 years – that's what I know how to do. So I tended to put all the new folk influences over the top of that."

The Aria-award-winning artist, who scored a worldwide hit with band Youth Group for their cover of "Forever Young" in 2006, says that songwriting is getting harder as he gets older.

"As time passes, you think about things more – maybe overthink them – and that has affected my creative output. When I was younger I didn't really analyse the process. The songs just came out on a fairly intuitive level and I didn't want to question that too much.

"When my second child was born, I didn't write for ages. I started to worry about why I wasn't producing new music."



Singer-songwriter Toby Martin's new album, *I Felt the Valley Lifting*, is available for download and on vinyl (Scan QR code).

For a chance to win a signed vinyl copy, tell us the name of the valley that inspired the songs – email editor@ssh.com.au

Photo: Cameron Emerson-Elliott



The breakthrough came with his second solo album, *Songs from Northam Avenue*, written and recorded in Sydney's south-west using local musicians, and once again using locality to trigger ideas.

"I was literally writing in someone's front yard in Bankstown within a tight time-frame. It forced me to write songs, without waiting for inspiration

to strike," Martin says. "It was a bit painful – but it was good for me. Sometimes with songwriting, you just have to show up and do it!"

Toby Martin will join Redfern-based folk-country duo The Joesixpack Experience for the SSH online concert/fundraiser, Local Stories Live! From 6pm on December 11. Join Zoom: www.bit.ly/2ZPrUHT/.

Nina Gotsis EP - 'You can live inside these songs'

MUSIC

SSH

SYDNEY musician Nina Gotsis has released a new EP, *Music Colours*, featuring members of Youth Group and Xylouris/White.

Gotsis is influenced by country, pop and the beauty of the natural world, and honed her guitar playing by spending hours rehearsing in the upstairs bedroom of her old home at Bardwell Park.

She works at the Club Weld studio for neurodiverse musicians, and recently recorded at Information & Cultural Exchange (I.C.E.) in Parramatta with Aria-nominated producer Chris Hamer-Smith.

Gotsis was a member of the Junction House Band with Lindy Morrison (The Go-Betweens), and after the band ceased she continued to write prolifically.

"I've been writing music for 15 years, and I'm very happy that people can listen to these songs on CD and in performances," she said.

The songs are distinctive and focus on beauty, ecology and family origins.

"Endless Country" is about

living in Greece and Australia, that's why I wrote it," she said.

Gotsis features on guitar and percussion throughout *Music Colours*, playing with her core band which includes Toby Martin from Youth Group and Sam Worrad from The Holy Soul.

Martin praised the joyousness of the material.

"Waterfalls at night, light shining through gardens, native birds," Martin said.

"I love singing Nina's songs, I feel I can really get inside them and live in them."

Other guest musicians are George Xylouris, Apollonia Xylouris (Bandidas), Sonia Zadro (Hotel) and Kate Wilson (The Holy Soul/Sachet).

Worrad said George and Apollonia Xylouris came to be involved after he and Gotsis attended a Xylouris/White performance in Sydney just prior to the pandemic hitting.

"George and Apollonia wound up playing outi, violin and masia on the song 'Australian Bird', recording their parts over in Crete," he said.

In June, Gotsis, Martin and Worrad debuted the *Music Colours* material at Koutouki,



The songs on Nina Gotsis' new EP are distinctive and focus on beauty, ecology and family origins. Photo: Lyndal Irons.

a Greek restaurant and music venue in Leichhardt.

"It's great to see the result of Nina's work," Worrad said.

"We met a couple of years ago and Nina showed me binders full of chord progressions and lyrics, and we started going over them every Monday afternoon – beautiful songs about water,

birds, mountains and pop stars."

Currently, Gotsis is working with conductor Sarah Penicka-Smith to create a choral version of her song "Frozen River" with the River City Voices symphonic choir.

She has also collaborated with award-winning animator Helena Papageorgiou on a video for this song.

Music Colours is available on bandcamp (icemusic.bandcamp.com/album/music-colours) and is streaming via ABC Music.



SSH

Yananurala - walk it!

The Kindness Revolution
How we can restore hope, rebuild trust and inspire leadership.
Kindness is key
HUGH MACKAY

The Positivity Project

South Sydney Herald



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

The Freedom Hub tackles modern slavery at its roots

HUMAN AFFAIRS

ALYSSA ROBINSON

WATERLOO: For someone who works with survivors of modern slavery, Sally Irwin is remarkably optimistic.

“We’re on the cusp of seeing massive change,” she says, since Australia’s Modern Slavery Act came into force in 2019.

Ms Irwin campaigned long and hard for the introduction of the Australian Act. It was a journey that began when she was posted to Germany alongside her diplomat husband.

Without the ability to speak German or permission to work, Ms Irwin turned to volunteering at a small organisation in Berlin, helping young women tricked into coming from abroad and coerced into sex work. It was an eye-opening experience that affected her deeply.

“My life had changed from that point on. I knew I couldn’t just go back to the corporate world and pretend nothing had happened,” she said.

Ms Irwin was driven to continue supporting survivors once she returned home. Mobilising her skills from many years of retail management, she established the Freedom Hub: a social enterprise and survivor support service. Based in Waterloo, the commercial side of the organisation – a café, shop and events venue – raises money for the charity side, a “survivor school” that equips slavery survivors with trauma support, practical training



Inside the Freedom Hub café and events venue in Waterloo. Inset: Founder, Sally Irwin, says the Freedom Hub started out supporting three survivors in 2014 and now has 76 people in its care. Photo: Supplied

such as computer and English classes, and life skills to adapt to independent living in Australia.

The Freedom Hub started out supporting three survivors in 2014 and now has 76 people in its care. Unlike most other services for slavery survivors, the organisation’s care is ongoing. It still helps out clients from years ago if they struggle with unexpected bills or other challenges.

In addition to working directly with survivors, the Freedom Hub works with government and businesses to tackle modern slavery at its roots. After lobbying government to create the Modern Slavery Act, the organisation now supports businesses to understand their reporting obligations. The Act requires large businesses to report on their supply chains, aiming to stamp out forced labour.

According to the International Labour Organisation, more than 40 million people globally are experiencing modern slavery, and 75 per cent are living in the Asia-Pacific region – “Australia’s shopping ground,” Ms Irwin said.

“If Australian consumers get their act together with the supply chain, we can dramatically impact global slavery,” she said.

“No matter where you are, you can actually make a difference.” ^{SSH}

The Freedom Hub café is at 283 Young Street, Waterloo. Shoppers can buy slavery-free chocolate, coffee and more at the café or online at www.freedomhub.org. Donations to the Survivor School can also be made through the website.



Priest and poet, baker, neighbour

LOCALS

ANDREW COLLIS

BORN in Gippsland, Anglican friar Noel Jeffs studied theology at St Barnabas College in Adelaide. The Sisters of the Anglican Community of the Holy Name ran a retreat house there, and Noel was inspired by their missionary works. The Sisters helped Noel discern a call to Franciscan life and ministry.

Ordained a priest in the Ballarat Diocese in 1976, Noel served in Ararat and Horsham for three years before moving to Brisbane. There, he joined the Society of St Francis, a religious community marked by faith, compassion and simplicity. “It was in the days of potted ferns, and ladies in hats and gloves,” Noel recalls.

In the late 1980s, Noel travelled to England via the United States. He served in Cambridge, Sheffield and Lincolnshire, then Alnmouth in Northumberland. Neighbourhood ministry centred on hospitality.

Noel enrolled in further study at Regents College, London. He was awarded a Master of Arts in the Psychology of Therapy and Counselling by Antioch College, an affiliate of the University of Ohio.

He remembers living near Whitechapel, joining the Group Analytical Society and working as an honorary psychotherapist in London. “My therapist and teacher was Sr Eva Hamann RSJ,” Noel says. “She encouraged my work on spirituality and sexuality.”

While in London he studied under psychotherapist Jeff Roberts at the Royal London Hospital. Dr Roberts would prove an encouraging mentor. Noel explains: “Later, I lived in a hermitage in Stroud, NSW. Beautiful mud-brick buildings. It was there I completed my thesis on maturing in the religious life. I’m indebted to Jeff. We had a lovely correspondence over many years.”

Further opportunities in counselling led to ministry with the St Vincent de Paul house in Redfern, then the Matthew Talbot Hostel in Woolloomooloo. Noel lived for a time in Marrickville, then Enmore where he joined

St Luke’s Anglican parish (he remains a member).

For the past 20 years Noel has lived in a Bridge Housing flat in Eveleigh. “I will stay here until I fall over,” Noel laughs. “I’m comfortably established here. I volunteer a little and I enjoy writing poetry.”

Poetry is a passion. In 2011, Noel completed a Master of Creative Writing at the University of Sydney under Associate Professor Kate Lilley. St Francis of Assisi was a poet too, Noel observes. “He wrote in the vernacular.”

Noel describes his own poetry as postmodern. He belongs to the Judith Beveridge Poetry Group, which meets online.

Chronic back pain and impaired hearing make some days very challenging, and Noel appreciates the support of an ACON counsellor, his fellow Franciscans at Stroud, in Brisbane, Sri Lanka and Korea, as well as kind neighbours in South Sydney.

A regular patron of Lobby Boy Café in South Eveleigh, Noel enjoys friendship with staff at Delhi O Delhi in Erskineville



Noel Jeffs with Lemy the dog at the hotel formerly known as the Camelia Grove, Alexandria. Photo: Courtesy of Jamien and Tracey (former publicans, Camelia Grove)

and the Alexandria Service Station. “I like to bake,” Noel says. “I take – or send by post – something to share with the staff – brandied cormquats, cakes, something gluten- and lactose-free. I sometimes receive a coffee in return.”

Noel sees religious vocation as care for neighbours. “I offer poetry, connection, silence. My neighbourhood is around me.” ^{SSH}
Noel Jeffs *SSH, Maturing in the Religious Life: The Image of the Heart and the Heart’s Desire* is published by MoshPit, Penrith, NSW, 2021.

The bionic eye that could help blind people navigate the world

SPONSORED

MARK SCOTT

FOR people with impaired eyesight or no sight at all, the world is an enormous obstacle course. Professor Gregg Suaning is pushing vision capture and nerve stimulation technologies beyond their limits to help clear a path.

As research goals go, it is bold with perhaps a touch of the miraculous. For more than 20 years, Professor Gregg Suaning has been working to bring sight to the blind. Though in the early days, the idea was almost all he had.

"We were dismantling radios and car electricals to make the equipment we needed," Suaning says, obviously enjoying the memory. "One time we were making bespoke electrodes and we ended up using a capacitor out of a big, old-style television."

A camera on a pair of glasses collects the visual information which is then sent to a mobile phone and processed. The result is sent wirelessly to a microchip implanted in the retina which decodes the wireless signal and sends electrical impulses to the part of the brain that produces vision: the visual cortex.

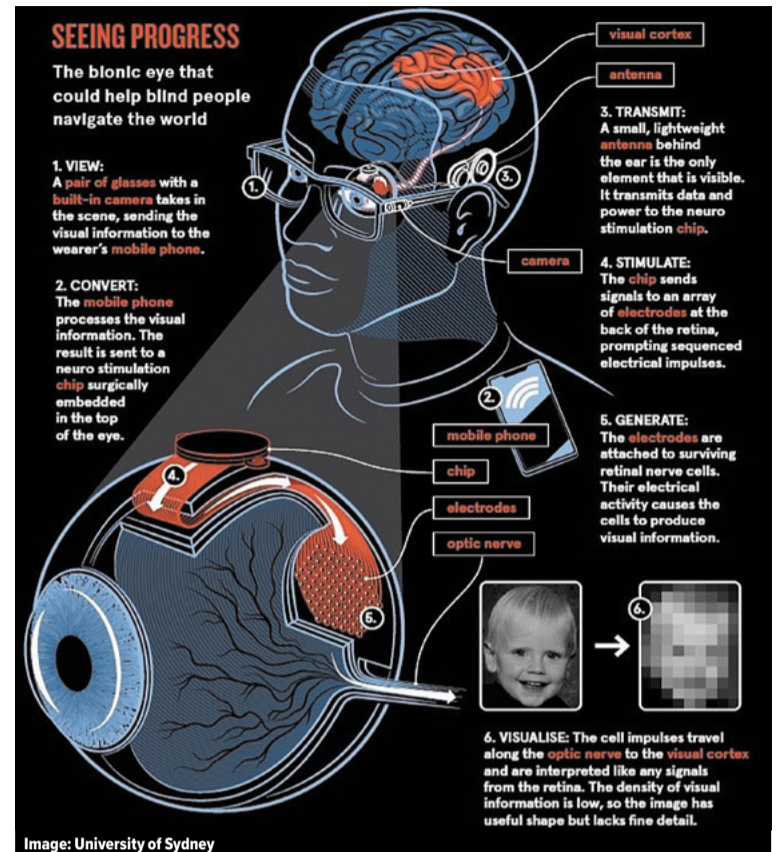
While the technology might be cochlear-like, the degree of difficulty is many times greater because vision is so much more information dense than sound.

Where hearing technologies can deliver a more than acceptable result using 14 channels of information, Suaning's work currently uses 100 channels with more limits in the process of being pushed.

"It hasn't been easy," says Suaning. "Full vision is like a million channels of information, it really helps that the brain can also make a lot out of very little."

This was demonstrated in 2014 when the sight technology was still cumbersome, and lab bound. As part of a national project where researchers were developing an Australian bionic eye, three blind volunteers came to a Melbourne University lab, and were implanted with a rudimentary electrode array and connected to laboratory-based electronics.

"Two didn't get much of a reaction, but one of them did



really well," remembers Suaning. "Going through an obstacle course she avoided and even identified obstacles, including a chair. Though it wouldn't have been a fully realised chair, just a few dots. But her brain filled in enough of the gaps."

"We're working towards something so blind people can navigate the world," Suaning says.

Recent support from the Neil and Norma Hill Foundation has sent Suaning and the technology down a new path.

Where the research focus for Suaning has always been on a rare, blindness inducing condition called retina pigmentosa, which can strike people in their 30s and 40s, causing initial tunnel vision that later narrows to full vision loss, the Foundation gift brought macular degeneration into the frame.

As the Trustee for the Foundation says, "When we heard about Professor Suaning's work we felt compelled to help. We are so pleased that our philanthropy could help to ease the burden in some way for people with macular degeneration and their families."

Suaning is now preparing for the first human trials where the volunteers will use wearable equipment that they can take home.

To even contemplate using human volunteers in this way, Suaning has had to demonstrate the safety of what he's doing to the highest possible standards.

This he has done, and in the process seen for himself that the newest expression of the technology would present a minimal threat to any volunteer participating, including someone with macular degeneration.

Suaning's work has also been helped by his move to the University of Sydney. "There's so much multidisciplinary stuff that happens here," he says. "As part of one ecosystem there's the technical side, medical, business, even the psychological aspects."

"That makes every advancement even more immediate. You can see the effect it could have, maybe not tomorrow, but you can see it; something is emerging that will help people."



Authorised by Vice-Chancellor and Principal Prof. Mark Scott.
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Jenny Leong MP

STATE MEMBER FOR NEWTOWN

After decades of Greens calling for climate action – the task has never been more urgent

While it was a relief to see that the Australian Government has finally committed to a target to achieve net zero emissions – there is still no short-term target and no plan to get us there.

While the rest of the world has well and truly moved on, and most countries are developing ambitious targets to cut emissions by around 50% by the end of the decade, the Liberal-National Government have moved on from their tactics of climate denial – and are now seeking to delay action as long as possible.

The climate has already warmed by around 1.4 degrees, and the impacts are already being felt: the catastrophic 2019 bushfires, 50-degree days in Sydney, and coastal erosion are already impacting us – and particularly those who are already struggling due to insecure housing and financial stress. We simply don't have the luxury of time to wait until 2050 before we act.

There were big marches on the streets for climate action back in 2005 – the first climate action I participated in was in 2004 – but instead of listening then, the Liberals instead made it a political game to oppose action on the most serious challenge facing the global community.

Fast forward 16 years, and the Liberals and Nationals have finally moved on from their tactic of denying the consensus of the world's scientists, banks, global insurance companies, and world leaders, and have accepted that climate change is real. But they are still attempting to delay action for as long as they can by setting a target that is decades away, and will endanger lives and livelihoods, especially for younger generations who will pay the heaviest price.

If only we had acted back in the early 2000s, the challenge today would be far simpler.

With every passing year of inaction, the task becomes bigger and more urgent.

There are, however, glimmers of hope: with other major economies like the USA, China and the EU rapidly scaling up their commitments for climate action, there will be global pressure on Australia to act more quickly.

The Greens at a local, state and federal level have a long and proud history of campaigning for climate action – whether it be in the town halls, the parliaments or on the streets.

I'll be on the streets with climate activists, student strikers and other Greens on November 6 calling for faster, stronger action, and I hope you will join me there.

Global Day of Action for Climate Justice – Sydney
12 Noon, Saturday 6 November
Hyde Park Fountain

Take care and stay safe,

Jenny

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**, funded using parliamentary entitlements.

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Nine life-defying days

FILM REVIEW BY LINDSAY COHEN

IT took only four months to see *Nine Days*. The week we went into lockdown was the week I was scheduled to see a critics' screening of the film. So, to say I was eagerly looking forward to finally seeing it is an understatement.

It was worth the wait. If you consider the best films to be those that make you think, ponder your existence, and then debate it with your friends, then *Nine Days* is the film for you. Indeed, the premise and concept of the film is probably better than the execution of the film itself.

The basic premise is of souls competing to be placed into newly born human bodies, and the selector of the souls facing his own existential crisis when one soul he places meets a tragic end. It begs more questions than it asks, like who selects the selectors and how are the souls generated in the first place? Also, what's the point of the exercise when so many humans, indeed all of them really, are imperfect? Did the chooser of your soul make the right decision?

So, it doesn't really matter that the film has plot holes in abundance, falls flat in the middle, and embraces 1980s

technology for no apparent reason except to trigger further debate with your friends. What does matter is that the film's legacy lingers in your consciousness, makes you question pretty much everything, and is a great way to end months of naval gazing on the couch.

Rating: Four days later and still thinking about it.



Nine Days
Director: Edson Oda
Starring: Winston Duke, Zazie Beetz, Benedict Wong
Genre: Life Defying



cartoon: norrie mAy-welby

Keep picnics a staple in Sydney's social season

EDITORIAL

GRACE WHITE

THROUGH a dark and difficult few months, picnics truly earned their place in the sun. Think, "Bridgerton lakeside promenade" meets "wide selection of Aldi cheeses". Think, why weren't we doing this before?

A draft report from the Disability Royal Commission highlighted the present, imminent and inequitable dangers of re-opening before all disabled people have had accessible opportunities for full vaccination.

Clutching a roadmap with little regard for these recommendations, NSW folk awoke nonetheless to find themselves in a dissonant State of startling normality. We can go to the pub, the club, we're back to bottomless brunch.

This roadmap is a joyride for some, but for those of us left vulnerable it's simply reckless driving.

As a disabled woman, I am well-acquainted with the grief of induced stagnation. I'm far too familiar with having my autonomy, choice and independence disabled by the choices of others, and circumstances beyond my control.

One of the most powerful traits of freedom is the freedom to resist. We don't have to do something just because it's legal. We can choose lower-risk activities to protect the wider community. We can still have picnics.

Keeping picnics around isn't just protective for those of us with compromised immune systems. Psychologists and those with lived expertise of mental ill health have recently been highlighting the struggles of "re-entry anxiety".

The general advice? To come out of lockdown at our own pace. Preserving picnics as a key part of our social calendar allows for a graded-debut.

With fewer crowds, open air, and a lower risk of transmission, keeping picnics as a social staple may be the secret to a smoother transition for many.

Here we have an opportunity to learn about accessibility, and the importance of planning in a way that enables all to safely attend.

Hosting a picnic over a house party, for example, can accommodate immuno-diversity within a friendship group. Keeping access needs at the heart of any gathering will be a welcome change to Sydney's social life, pandemic or not.

It's time to Slip, Slop, Slap, Slide, Seek, Socially-Distance and Snack.

What an incredible thing we will have done to have stayed a

Let us see each other's faces

FAITH

DOROTHY MCRAE-MCMAHON

ONE of the clearest ways to see new ideas about living with faith is when we look at each other's faces. Even if we are not happy about being denied sharing our religious life within our church buildings due to the Covid-19 pandemic, when we share worship via Zoom we do often receive gifts from being able to see more clearly all of our faces, and especially when we offer our prayers. It is like being above and looking down on the whole congregation.

There we may see rejection, fear, hope, love, celebration and many other expressions of what lies in the hearts of the people concerned. This expresses, with authenticity, what lies in the lives of the people who are gathered there together. It often suggests to us who we might talk with if we need wisdom or help.

It can also give us a stronger affirmation of the community we are creating together as we form the life of our church.

The life of Jesus Christ, the Human One, who represents God among us, is a great gift. In Christ, as Steven Shakespeare says in a prayer we shared in one Sunday Zoom service, we are given "the beauty of God's face". Seeing in images of Jesus Christ the beauty of God's face brings us towards faith in a God who is fundamentally a God of love – one who forgives us when we fail and who embraces us with care when we are afraid or hurt.

Of course, there are parts of the Christian church, and

sometimes within other faiths, which have a strong emphasis on a God who is primarily about judgement. Often mention is made of a God who will send us to hell if we are involved in wrong actions or beliefs, especially just before we die.

Jesus teaches us about the call of God for us to "love our neighbours as ourselves". This God adds love to the world in multitudes of ways – in the Creation and in all sorts of relationships. One thing we don't always notice in this calling is that we are also meant to love ourselves, confident that we will receive forgiveness and understanding.

All of this invites in us a commitment to look carefully at the faces of people with whom we relate, or who are part of the community around us. This could mean that that we are open to genuine relationships with others and that we recognise when they are concerned or grieving.

If people look peaceful or full of life, we may be encouraged to add our own positive energies to theirs in developing a more hopeful and gracious community.

If you choose to be a person of faith, it may give a view of life and of a God who strengthens hope, justice and creativity within you. You may be prepared to take risks to offer new ideas and activity into your daily life and encourage others to do the same.

Note: From November 28, the doors of South Sydney Uniting Church (SSUC) will re-open to everyone. Until then, subscribe to the SSUC eNewsletter at www.southsydneyuniting.org.au/ for the prayer vigil Zoom link and other details.

little longer stuck in the mud.

Grace White is a Sydney-based writer,

music tutor and advocate for social justice who holds a Bachelor of Arts in Indigenous Studies from the University of Sydney.

RECONNECT WITH YOUR WELLNESS

Welcoming you back to Bodyfit X and Bodyfit Platinum, Xtend Barre and Egg of the Universe Yoga Studio (8 Nov) at South Eveleigh. 2-hour free parking at 2 Central Ave with retailer validation.

Sports Courts have now re-opened for bookings at southeveleigh.com

**SOUTH
EVELEIGH**
southeveleigh.com



Local Government Elections 2021

The NSW local government elections will be held on **Saturday, December 4**. Candidates from six parties responded to three key prompts on **progress, community input, and advocacy**.



GREENS

PROGRESS – [Sylvie Elssmore says] The Greens have a vision for a more equal, sustainable and grassroots city, where every resident has a voice. Sydney should be a city for everybody, not just people with huge salaries.

The pandemic revealed deep inequalities, but also possibilities. Last year, government housed rough sleepers and reduced poverty. Now housing insecurity and inequality are growing again. Sydney is more expensive than it has ever been.

As a Marrickville Councillor, we invested directly in affordable housing. The City of Sydney can do this too, and should go much further. The Greens have a costed plan to create genuinely affordable housing with rents of \$100 a week – more housing in one term than the City has achieved in the last 17 years.

Climate action must match the scale of the crisis. Council can help transition the grid – through planning and community investment in batteries. We need specific strategies to help renters access cheap, clean energy. There's so much more we can do to reduce waste, and match the more ambitious tree canopy targets of other major councils.

COMMUNITY INPUT – First, we'll shift money from consultants to community-building and partnerships. Communities are strongest when they have genuine opportunities to drive Council's agenda. We support participatory budgeting, prioritising First Nations communities, and giving communities real control over how money is spent.

The Greens will make it easier to connect, create and organise; by improving access to Council spaces, re-staffing community halls, and ensuring information and services are available in community languages.

We need more community control in our planning, and how we protect and celebrate our heritage and stories. Efforts to recognise our city's rich social and First Nations history are too slow.

ADVOCACY – We stand with social housing tenants against the state government plans to sell off public housing and break up local public housing communities. Council can do much more to support public housing residents to have a real seat at the table in decisions that affect them. That includes no more meetings about massive new developments behind closed doors, which residents hear about first through the media, or after key decisions or Council concessions have been negotiated.

The Greens' costed plan will create thousands of new affordable homes. We support First Nations housing targets and at least 25 per cent affordable housing in new developments, and much stronger renters' rights.

www.greensoncouncil.org.au/city-of-sydney



LABOR

PROGRESS – [Linda Scott says] Growing up with a sister with Down Syndrome, inspired me to reduce inequality, support others in my community and work for social justice.

The Labor team is committed to making Sydney fun, fair and sustainable for the future, with more local social services for our residents, accelerated action on climate change, more green space across the City.

In my nine years on Council I've seen City services and spaces outsourced. I was the only Councillor to vote against the outsourcing of our City's waste.

Labor is committed to examining the feasibility of reducing outsourcing of council venues and services to improve the quality of service delivery to residents and businesses and create good quality jobs.

Labor will keep rates for pensioners free and expand grants for local social services.

As we recover from Covid lockdowns, Labor has a jobs plan for a locally led recovery across the City, with opportunities for great work and support for creatives.

COMMUNITY INPUT – At my monthly street stalls, I have too often heard residents say their voices don't count. Throughout my time on Council, I've tried to ensure that residents' concerns and ideas are heard.

I'll keep doing monthly street stalls, ensure the City holds regular meetings with public housing tenants. Labor will ensure the City reaches out to all our community to seek your feedback and input at every step of the way.

ADVOCACY – With two local Redfern legends on our Labor team, Damien Minton and Norma Ingram, we're committed to ensuring Redfern and Waterloo communities, and First Nations Australians, have an elected voice on the Council.

I have moved more motions to seek City action on affordable housing than any other councillor, with many voted down by the Lord Mayor who claimed it's the state government's job. I am strongly committed to utilising the City of Sydney's significant resources to lead in this area.

As a Labor Councillor, I proudly moved to ensure there will be minimum social housing targets for the Waterloo redevelopments. Labor will double the City's Diverse and Affordable Housing Program to \$20 million and support more housing for those transitioning from homelessness in the City of Sydney, working with Tanya Plibersek MP and the state government.

If honoured to be elected Lord Mayor, I have committed to donate my entire salary to local charities in my first term.

www.lindascott.org.au/meet-the-team



LIBERAL

PROGRESS – [Shauna Jarrett says] Sydney Liberals have developed a Covid recovery plan to support Council to ensure Sydney becomes a welcoming place once again to live, operate a small business, invest in creative industries and cultural pursuits. We will fight to keep rates low and encourage innovation in and activation of our public spaces.

By supporting small and medium business we will work to reinvigorate key business precincts, such as Oxford Street in Darlinghurst, Kings Cross/Potts Point, Crown and Bourke streets, southern Sydney in Redfern, Zetland and Green Square, with plans to beautify and improve the amenity of these precincts.

Fighting for improved speed and transparency in Council processes, enabling access to Council to support innovation and working alongside the NSW government to ensure the City of Sydney leads Australia in the pursuit of emissions mitigation measures for a sustainable future.

COMMUNITY INPUT – Prioritising working more closely with state government, Sydney Liberals will champion the needs of the whole community.

We will work to improve the access of residents and ratepayers to Council services and response times via an expanded website/hotline tailored to the various services that residents and ratepayers require or suggest.

ADVOCACY – Our team has diverse and long experience of actively supporting those most in need in our communities. We will fight to better utilise almost \$1 billion in City assets for community benefit, including investing funds to redevelop Council assets to support at-risk and vulnerable communities.

Sydney Liberals will fight to end the waste on follies like "Cloud Arch", re-directing millions of dollars spent on fanciful agendas to support our communities with infrastructure, waste and cultural services they need to thrive.

Despite talking up Council's achievements, affordable housing targets of 7.5 per cent per annum have not been reached under the current leadership. When the Lord Mayor was elected, Sydney had 447 affordable dwellings, and after 17 years there were only 1,028 – not even one-tenth of the 2020 Review 11,000 target. At the current rate Council will struggle to meet the 2030 target by 2044, yet Council-owned apartments are sitting empty.

The \$300 million spent on the Town Hall Square could have been more effectively spent meeting real needs of Sydney residents. If elected, Sydney Liberals will immediately push for a proper audit of Council properties and take action to get low-income Sydney workers into homes.

www.sydneyliberals.com





Visit our website for profiles of Lord Mayoral Candidates:
www.southsydneyherald.com.au/lord-mayoral-candidate-profiles-city-of-sydney



City of Sydney Lord Mayoral Candidates have been invited to speak, followed by a Q&A session, at an online forum on Wednesday November 10, 7-8.30pm. Organised by Alexandria RAG, Friends of Erskineville and REDWatch. Zoom link: www.tinyurl.com/2021cosforum

The City of Sydney covers the central suburbs of Sydney, including Pyrmont, Ultimo, Glebe, Forest Lodge, Erskineville, Surry Hills, Chippendale, Darlinghurst, the Rocks, Woolloomooloo, Potts Point, Elizabeth Bay, Redfern, Alexandria, Waterloo, Zetland and Rosebery, as well as parts of Paddington, Newtown, Camperdown.



SMALL BUSINESS

PROGRESS – [Angela Vithoulkas says] Over the past nine years as an elected representative for our beautiful City of Sydney, I have been blessed to work alongside many of the wonderful and talented staff at City of Sydney Council delivering valuable and much needed services.

At every available opportunity I advocate collaboratively and constructively with my fellow Councillors in service to residents and ratepayers who bring issues to my office.

Equally, as an Independent Councillor, I have, and will continue to agitate loudly for under-served communities. I have spent the past nine years as a Councillor fighting for the “little guy”, diligently working to ensure “the individual”, the human being at the core of our democracy, is not swallowed up or washed away by the administration of government.

It is for this reason that I must nominate for Lord Mayor. It is past time to reassess the leadership and direction of the City of Sydney.

COMMUNITY INPUT – The greatest lesson I have learned is that the system of government is what lets people down. The lack of transparency and accessibility around information and decisions of Council have been without a doubt some of the biggest concerns our residents and small business owners have brought to me over the years, which is why our team has created a seven-point plan, focused on reimagining how local government should work for the people.

Our plan ensures broad community input including:

- “Questions Without Notice” Meetings where the people have a true opportunity to ask direct questions or bring up issues of concern without waiting for pre-determined agendas.
- Community Liaison Unit for our residents who might struggle to get assistance.
- Cap on Lord Mayoral Terms to safeguard the future of our city, regardless of who is Lord Mayor.
- Proactive solutions to Covid impacts should be a priority, by establishing a Mental Health & Wellbeing Unit with financial support, free financial counselling and free health and wellbeing programs to assist our residents, local business owners and staff.

ADVOCACY – Advocacy should always be one of the most essential roles of council, in particular being the champion of our vulnerable and those who the state government forgets or ignores like our essential workers and our First Nations people. It’s our responsibility to serve all our constituents equally and vigorously.

www.themallbusinessparty.com/city-of-sydney



TEAM CLOVER

PROGRESS – Our independent team has provided progressive, stable and corruption-free governance for our City since 2004. We will continue to work toward a Covid-safe economic recovery, supporting especially business, creatives and the community sector.

Action on climate change is a key priority. We committed in 2008 to reduce our emissions by 70 per cent by 2030 and achieved that goal nine years early in 2021 and our operations are powered by 100 per cent renewable electricity. Our plan is to reach net zero emissions by 2035 and complete water-recycling initiatives to drought-proof our city.

We’ve created new parkland, open space and extended harbour foreshore walks, increasing city open space by 24 hectares. We’ve renewed parks and playgrounds, provided childcare, world class pools and community facilities, and created cycleways.

We were quick to help our businesses and residents when the pandemic struck – funding food security programs so that no one went hungry and working with the NSW government to ensure our community facilities were used for testing and vaccination hubs and that masks and accommodation were available for those at risk.

We are now helping reactivate our city and supporting businesses, including through our popular al fresco dining program.

A \$377 million program will increase our tree canopy and street planting, and build and upgrade 60 parks.

COMMUNITY INPUT – We’ve been working closely with business, community and residents’ groups for the past 17 years, since we developed the ground-breaking Sustainable Sydney 2030 program. Our process of consultation for the update to that strategic plan has been internationally recognised for leading engagement during Covid.

In the past year, the City has consulted on 75 projects ranging from park upgrades to major planning changes such as Botany Road. Some consultation is long-term, such as the work we’ve undertaken to protect our residents at Waterloo.

At the heart of all this is our sound financial management of the City, which will see us finance and deliver \$1.7 billion in projects over the next 10 years.

ADVOCACY – We continue to call for more social and affordable housing and better outcomes for key neighbourhoods such as Waterloo. The state government’s plan to redevelop public housing on public land with an insufficient allocation of social, affordable and First Nations’ housing is unacceptable.

At Blackwattle Bay, we’re fighting Infrastructure NSW’s proposal allowing developers to build 1,500 apartments in 12 towers of up to 45 storeys – again with minimum social, affordable and Indigenous housing.

www.teamclover.com.au/us



NSW ELECTORAL COMMISSION

For information phone 1300 135 736 or

visit www.bit.ly/3jLxEJt



UNITE FOR SYDNEY

PROGRESS – [Yvonne Weldon says] There’s no question that Sydney’s cultural sector is crying out for help: areas like Kings Cross and Oxford Street have been left for dead by the current Lord Mayor. Under my leadership, the Council will rebuild Sydney’s nightlife, and resurrect its creative spirit. We will do this by supporting freelancers, entrepreneurs, and grassroots venues with micro-grants for up-and-coming creatives and cultural groups.

Our team aims to make Sydney an urban playground, by renovating alleys and retail streets, supporting community-led street activation, and creating city-wide programs that make art and culture accessible for all.

I believe Council should be an enabler, not just a regulator. That’s why I want to make it faster and easier for good actors to obtain the grants and permits they need to help Sydney come alive after Covid. We’ll also review rates and levies on unoccupied shop fronts, to help businesses bounce back.

COMMUNITY INPUT – For too many residents, trying to communicate with City of Sydney Council is like shouting into the abyss. It’s time for genuine community consultation, with greater transparency and accountability around Council decisions.

My team and I will work to enable direct representation in Council meetings, so that councillors hear straight from the people of Sydney. We will set up diverse advisory committees representing cultural, business, and community interests, and provide annual grants for arts and innovation through an independent and auditable process, to ensure public funds are awarded based on merit, not on who you know.

ADVOCACY – As a community leader and proud Wiradjuri woman, I’ve spent the last 30 years advocating for First Nations people and residents facing disadvantage. I’m Chair of the Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council, and currently sit on the boards of Domestic Violence NSW and Redfern Jarjum College.

My vision is for a Sydney where everyone can thrive – not just the wealthy. If elected as Australia’s first ever Aboriginal Lord Mayor, I’ll put the City of Sydney’s most vulnerable residents first, instead of leaving them behind.

Affordable housing is a top priority for Unite for Sydney. We’ll take concrete action to increase the supply of affordable housing, by ensuring a significant proportion of new developments are made up of truly affordable homes, and working with more community housing providers to secure homes for those who need them most. We’ll also consider effective new models and policies for affordable housing, drawing on evidence from cities around the world.

www.uniteforsydney.com.au





Verry Elelegant Photo: Supplied

Elegant choice for horse of the year

STEVE TURNER

MIGHTY mare Verry Elelegant was crowned Australian Horse of the Year in mid-October. The event, usually held in August (not long after the racehorses' birthdays), was postponed.

Trained by Chris Waller, Verry Elelegant won five group one races last season, including the 2020 Caulfield Cup (2400m) and the 2021 George Main Stakes (1600m) at Randwick. Since she started racing, she has chalked up 14 wins, mostly at elite level, and has been usually ridden by top Sydney jockey James McDonald.

Waller's October got even better when his star sprinter Nature Strip won the world's richest race, the \$15 million Everest, run over 1200m at Randwick. "I'm getting a little emotional for a change", Waller told Channel Seven after the race, with tongue in cheek. He is well known for becoming teary when interviewed after big race wins, particularly with his champion racemare Winx. "It's just a great race. It's just captured the imagination of so many people, inside racing and out. What better way to get out of Covid than a race day!

He [Nature Strip] just didn't panic, really." "The horse is a star", stated jockey James McDonald after the race. Seven-year-old gelding Nature Strip's \$6,200,000 earnings for the win lifted his stake earnings to \$14-plus million, promoting him to fourth on the all-time earnings list, behind Winx (\$26-plus million), Redzel (two time Everest winner) and Makybe Diva (three time Melbourne Cup winner). Champion NZ mare Sunline holds fifth place with \$11-plus in earnings. Like Verry Elelegant, Nature Strip has succeeded at the elite level for several seasons. It's a great testimony to these horses' supreme athletic ability.

2022 Gay Games delayed for a year

Next year's Gay Games in Hong Kong have been rescheduled to 2023. The Games originated in 1982 and have been held in capital cities around the world every four years since. Athletes compete in age divisions in a wide range of sports, including athletics, tennis, cycling and swimming. Approximately 10,000 Hong Kong men and women will volunteer their services for the two-week event. The opening and closing ceremonies promise to be major spectacles.

SSH

Volunteers' News

PAT CLARKE

HELLO everyone, it's November already, as the year seems to have passed in a dream-state of lockdown, misleading news, and daily accounts of government follies. Enjoy the spring and the run-up to the December frenzy.

Two important health issues are highlighted this month:

November Nov 1-30 draws attention to prostate cancer and depression in men. Contact www.au.movember.com

Lung Health Awareness Month Nov 1-30 Dedicated to increasing public awareness of the many types of lung disease, more information on lung health is available at www.lungfoundation.com.au

Also on this site is **National Safe Work Month** which aims to help workers learn to protect themselves and their lungs at work.

Local Government Elections, Saturday Dec 4

Voting is compulsory and there is no absentee voting. Last date for enrolment was Oct 25. Sydney Town Hall will not be available for multi-area voting at this election due to Covid-related risks. Early voting in person in your Local Government Area is being encouraged and postal voting is available. Get more information from the NSW Electoral Commission on www.elections.nsw.gov.au or phone 1300 135 736.

Garage Sale Trail 2021 – CHOOSE TO RE-USE

If you love a bargain, or want to sell your unwanted stuff, this year's Garage Sale Trail will be held over two weekends Nov 13 & 14, and 20 & 21. www.garagesaletrail.com.au/sydney.

Canana Farm Christmas Cakes

This is my annual reminder that Canana Farm Christmas cakes and other goodies are available in time for Christmas. The Canana Farm Shop is just back after opening up, and will feature all their products shortly. Place your orders on Facebook or ring 0478 595 725.

Dates for your Diary (just another reminder)

SSH Cartoon Show Dec 1

Our star cartoonist norrie mAy-Welby's cartoon show is finally able to happen at the Orchard Gallery on Dec 1. Wishing you every success for your exhibition, norrie.

Sculpture by the Sea finishes Nov 7.

And now the news you've all been waiting for:

The 2nd Annual SSH Virtual Fundraiser Friday Dec 11 from 6-7.30pm

We're calling it '**Local Stories Live!**' – help the SSH keep local stories alive, with live music by Redfern folk-country duo **The Joesixpack Experience** and singer-songwriter (storyteller and music historian) **Toby Martin**. Toby will perform songs from his highly acclaimed new record, *I Felt the Valley Lifting*. Join via Zoom: www.bit.ly/2ZPrUHT/. You can catch Toby at the usual YouTube, Facebook, Spotify, etc. Full details in our December issue.

Until next time,
Pat Clarke

SSH

» volunteers@ssh.com.au

**THIS CHRISTMAS,
CHOOSE GIFTS THAT
FIGHT
POVERTY AND
BUILD HOPE**

SEND LOVE TO FRIENDS, FAMILY AND THE WHOLE WORLD BY GIVING GIFTS THAT PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES FOR PEOPLE TO LIVE WITH GREATER DIGNITY AND HOPE.

WWW.EVERYTHINGINCOMMON.COM.AU