

# the South Sydney Herald

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Artists Patricia and Bruce Shillingsworth outside 107 Redfern Street. In view, artwork by Blak Douglas and Will Coles. Photo: Michelle Haywood

## Coming soon – new space for Aboriginal culture and creatives

### FIRST PEOPLES

**SSH**

**REDFERN:** The City of Sydney has approved a new Aboriginal cultural space to be created in Redfern.

For years local Aboriginal community organisations have been campaigning for an Aboriginal-run culture and creative space for the inner city. In the past, Council and the NSW government have rejected opportunities to make it happen.

The centre will be at the Council-owned space at 107 Redfern Street. It's a large space in the heart of the main street of Redfern, and includes a gallery, live music and event space, studios and more. Until the end of last year the space was managed by

"107 Projects", which sadly folded and is no longer in operation. The approval is a huge local win, which comes after significant community pressure, and as a result of motions by the Greens and Independent Councillor Yvonne Weldon who backed the community campaign.

Council will undertake necessary maintenance and upgrades to 107 Redfern Street, provide ongoing asset management support, and conduct an Expression of Interest process to call for local Aboriginal groups to take up tenancy in the building.

SSH

### A ministry concludes

After 18 years with the South Sydney Uniting Church (SSUC), which publishes the *South Sydney Herald*, March 30 marked the closure of ministry for the Rev. Andrew Collis. The service was held at The Factory community centre in Raglan Street, opposite the church building which is soon to undergo major repairs. Pictured (L-R): Rev. Carolyn Thornley (Presbytery of Sydney), Rev. Dr Garry Worete Deverell (SSUC), Aunty Norma Ingram (Welcome to Country), Rev. Andrew Collis and Rev. Phil Newton (Presbytery of Sydney).

Photo: Michelle Haywood





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The people gather for the reopening of the Douglas Street Playground, March 8. Photo: Geoff Turnbull

# Park reopens with resident-led legacy

## URBAN DESIGN

BEN SPIES-BUTCHER

**REDFERN:** Upgrades to the Douglas Street Playground officially opened on March 8. Alongside the new play equipment, shading and seating areas, the park also boasts new signage recognising its history as the product of collective community action.

The park was the result of the surge of resident action taking place in the 1970s. It was then owned by Rachel Forster Hospital and used largely as a rubbish tip. Redfern in

the 1970s was home to many more children, in families with lower incomes. There were far fewer places for kids to hang out and play – a problem that partly inspired various campaigns that have since transformed the inner city.

In 1975 a group of residents from Douglas Street chose direct action and mutual aid. After a series of community meetings, they set to work – pulling down the fences, clearing away the rubbish and building a new adventure playground.

It remained a place for people to hang out and play through until the 1990s, when the Hospital, which still owned the land,

made plans to sell it off. A second campaign emerged, led by local residents and Indigenous activists, including Shireen Malamoo. Eventually they persuaded council – then South Sydney Council – to buy it and permanently preserve it for community use.

This activist history seems to have been lost in the process of amalgamating South Sydney into the City of Sydney. But it was not entirely forgotten. My parents had been part of the community movement. They lived opposite the park and helped organise the takeover. They still had a silent video of the day.

When the park was due to be

upgraded, my partner, Greens Councillor Sylvie Ellsmore, committed to resurrect its history. Redfern resident and community activist Geoff Turnbull went through the invaluable archives of *Inner Sydney Voice*, working with Council staff to recall and record its novel founding.

By coincidence, the reopening came the day before what would have been my dad, John Butcher's 82nd birthday, and about six weeks after he passed. Now, as you enter the park a sign tells its history, complete with photos (my folks' old house in the background) and the words from its first sign as a people's park.

SSH



## The right to safe and affordable housing

Housing activist Mike Mannix of Paddington says: 'I refer to the wide media coverage on the plight of the 28 residents of four boarding houses in Selwyn Street, Paddington, and the community campaign to stop the closure of the boarding houses. The developer, LFD Homes, closed the boarding houses on March 3. This story is one of power imbalance – governments who choose to wring their hands instead of choosing to directly intervene to prevent harm to their people. The solution was simple. The governments buy the boarding houses. Stop the closure. Prevent the evictions. Keep the family together. The community campaign continues to prevent the developer from turning the boarding houses into four luxury apartments. The loss of affordable housing in the city must be stopped. Another 20-room boarding house in Darlinghurst has just been sold to a developer who plans to convert it into a 75-bed backpackers. Another 20 men into the social housing queue. On top of the 20 who joined the queue when their Petersham boarding house burnt down last month. And there are many more happening right now. Enough is enough. What sort of society have we become when we allow this to happen to the most powerless?'

Photo: Michelle Haywood



# TANYA PLIBERSEK MP

## Federal Member for Sydney



*Dear SSH readers*

The Albanese Labor Government has worked hard to help you with the cost of living, making it easier to see a Medicare bulk billing doctor and making medicines cheaper. And we will continue to help you.

### Top-up tax cuts

All taxpayers will receive top-up tax cuts on July 1, 2026 and again on July 1, 2027. An average earner (about \$79,000) will receive total tax relief of \$1922 in 2026-27, and \$2190 per year from 2027-28, compared to 2023-24 tax settings.

We're also **increasing the threshold for the 2% Medicare levy** so that low-income earners will keep more of what they earn before paying the tax.

Our tax cuts help with the cost of living while also easing inflation. Peter Dutton's Coalition rejects them and says it will cut \$315 billion from essential services like Medicare, pensions, housing, veterans' entitlements and public education.

### Cheaper medicines get even cheaper

We are slashing the maximum cost of Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme medicines by more than 20 per cent. You will **pay no more than \$25 for each medication**. For pensioners, the cost of medicines remains frozen at \$7.70 until 2030.

This is in addition to a 25% cut to the number of scripts required before you qualify for the PBS Safety Net and the introduction of 60-day prescriptions.

### More bulk billing GPs

Our record investment in Medicare has revived bulk billing. We're also investing in training more doctors and nurses and will further expand bulk-billing incentives so that 9 out of 10 GP visits will be bulk billed by 2030.

### More Medicare Urgent Care Clinics

A re-elected Albanese Labor Government will add another 50 Medicare Urgent Care Clinics – to the existing 87 – including at Burwood, Chatswood and St Peters/Marrickville. All you need is your Medicare card – there are no additional payments.

### More choice, lower costs and better health care for women

We are delivering big savings for hundreds of thousands of women by: adding new oral contraceptives and new menopausal hormone therapies to the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS); adding more bulk billing for IUDs and birth control implants; and by making contraceptives and treatment for uncomplicated urinary tract infections available directly from pharmacies.

### Building a better and fairer education system

We need to give the next generation the best start in life and the strongest foundation for success so we are:

- Cutting early education costs for around 1 million families
- Building universal early childhood education with a Three Day Guarantee of subsidised care
- Delivering full and fair funding for public schools
- Cutting student debt further by 20% and lowering repayments
- Making fee-free TAFE permanent

**Making it easier to buy and rent a home** by: investing \$33 billion to build more homes for Australians; expanding our Help to Buy scheme; and banning foreign investors from purchasing existing homes.

### Backing and building renewables

Australia's transition to a net-zero economy began with the Albanese Labor Government. In just three years **we've approved enough renewable energy to power over 10 million homes – almost every household in Australia**. Renewables now power 46% of the grid, backed up by gas, large scale storage and 400 community batteries, which we've been rolling out around the country.

We've already added 15GW of renewable energy to the grid – more than Peter Dutton's \$600 billion nuclear plan could hope to produce in 25 years.

**Energy bill relief:** A third year of energy bill rebates of up to \$150 for households and eligible small businesses will be delivered from 1 July, 2025.

### Boosting productivity & wages

We will make it easier for low and middle income earners to move to better paying jobs by **banning non-compete clauses** in their employment contracts.

To learn more about what we've done to help ease the cost of living and build Australia's future – including protecting more of Australia's environment than any previous government – please scan the QR codes.



As always, please contact my electorate office should you need assistance with any federal issues.

*Tanya*

**TANYA PLIBERSEK MP**  
Federal Member for Sydney

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Authorised by T. Plibersek, ALP, 1a Great Buckingham Street, Redfern 2016





**JENNY LEONG MP**  
MEMBER FOR NEWTOWN



## Greens to introduce bill for a NSW Human Rights Act

The NSW Government cannot be trusted when it comes to protecting and promoting human rights for people in our state – which is why it is time for the Parliament to act, and why I gave notice of a Bill to introduce a Human Rights Act for NSW.

In response to a question I asked of the Attorney General about increased human rights protection through a Human Rights Act, I very much welcomed his response in which he said that he was “open to considering the issue and working constructively” with the Greens.

From decimating our right to protest to extending hate speech protections for only a select few and ramming through bail laws that disproportionately impact First Nations kids, the NSW Government is playing fast and loose with our human rights – and playing straight into the hands of the right-wing fringe who wants to promote division and erode our democracy.

Our communities deserve better than ad hoc, reactive reform that offers nothing beyond more criminalisation, more policing and more political spin: we need a NSW Human Rights Act that clearly sets out and protects equality and dignity for everyone – including rights to essentials like housing and education.

The Attorney-General's response in Question Time – as well as the recent news in the *Sydney Morning Herald* that former NSW Premier Bob Carr has also changed his mind and is no longer opposed to legislated human rights protection is a welcome first step. Over the coming months I look forward to working with the broad coalition of civil society organisations who support a Human Rights Act for NSW and parliamentary colleagues across the chamber to deliver on this long-overdue reform.

As the political landscape tilts increasingly to the authoritarian right, a proactive vision for defending and extending human rights is more urgent than ever – that's why the Greens are taking the first step to enshrine protection for civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights in NSW law.

Show your support for a Human Rights Act for NSW by taking action here.



Authorised by Jenny Leong MP. Funded using parliamentary entitlements.



The blue boxes containing the 16 ancestral remains were unloaded from a boat that brought them to the ceremony space at Gorendu. Photo: Norman Ketan, NKW Photography

## Chau Chak Wing Museum returns human remains to Papua New Guinea

### SPONSORED

MARK SCOTT

**THE University of Sydney's Chau Chak Wing Museum has repatriated 16 human crania to Papua New Guinea.**

The skulls, taken from Papua New Guinea's Rai Coast in 1876-1877, were officially returned in a ceremony at Gorendu in Madang Province held on Wednesday February 19.

Following songs of mourning, festivities across the day included speeches, sing-sing dancing and feasting with representatives from six local villages.

These villages were home to the people whose crania were given to Russian scientist Nikolai N. Miklouho-Maclay in the late 19th century, when he undertook a scientific expedition in Papua New Guinea.

In his journal, Miklouho-Maclay said the skulls were acquired only when freely given and were not exhumed remains. In 1888 they became part of the collections of the Macleay Museum, a constituent collection in what is now the Chau Chak Wing Museum.

On his arrival in Sydney in 1878, Miklouho-Maclay began working with William John Macleay (NB different spelling of Macleay, the two were not related), a fellow

natural history enthusiast whose philanthropy enabled the creation of the University of Sydney's Macleay Museum in 1887.

Much of Miklouho-Maclay's enormous history and ethnography collection was given to the Russian Institute of Science, where it remains today. The crania were donated to the Macleay Museum by his widow following his death. That museum became part of the Chau Chak Wing Museum in 2020.

Museum staff have been in contact with descendants on the Rai Coast for more than 40 years, engaging with them on items from its collections, including the skulls. The repatriation follows a formal request, in April 2024, for their return to Papua New Guinea.

Chau Chak Wing Museum Senior Curator Dr Jude Philp accompanied the crania on their return journey.

“Repatriating these ancestors to their homeland was an immense honour,” Dr Philp said.

“My thanks go to all who welcomed them. We look forward to continuing our relationships with the people from the Rai Coast.”

Jack Simbou, a Deputy Secretary at Papua New Guinea's Department for Community Development and Religion, said welcoming ancestors was a moving experience for the community.

“These ancestors were taken by Nikolai almost 150 years ago,

to support his work promoting one shared humanity,” Mr Simbou said.

“They departed the Rai Coast aboard a Russian Corvette and returned on a Boeing Jet. Their journey spans time and distance and we extend gratitude to the Chau Chak Wing Museum for reuniting us.

“Like many other institutions, the Chau Chak Wing Museum is reckoning with its past collection practices,” said Chau Chak Wing Museum Director Michael Dagostino. “We work with communities across the globe to connect them with objects, artefacts and remains that once belonged to them.”

The ceremony was attended by dignitaries including Madang province governor the Honourable Ramsay Pariwa, Astrolabe Bay Local Level Government president Igu Stabie Gasom, Dr Philp, Miklouho-Maclay descendant Nickolay and councillors from villages the skulls came from: Inglam, Sandingby, Bilibili, Bongu, Ibor and Gorendu.

SSH

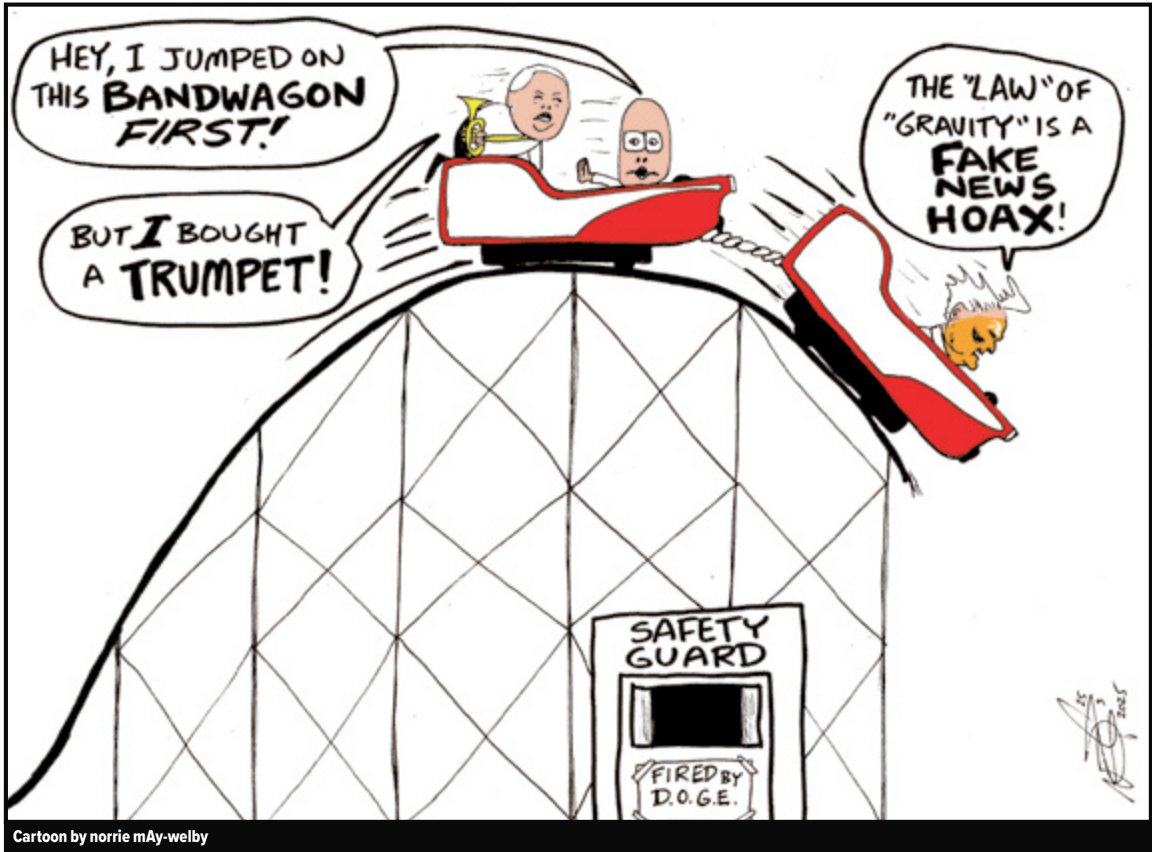


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Rally in support of Ukraine to mark the third anniversary of the Russian invasion, St Mary's Cathedral, February 22. Photo: Michelle Haywood





# The strength of our villages

## EDITORIAL

NORMA INGRAM & ANDREW COLLIS

**LOCAL community is everything. In South Sydney, our villages – Redfern, Waterloo, Erskineville, Alexandria, Surry Hills and beyond – are built on deep relationships, shared struggles and collective hope.**

We acknowledge the fundamental goodness of Gadigal country. Alongside Aboriginal Elders, we are reminded to keep showing up, supporting

inclusive programs and strengthening our connections.

Advocating for Aboriginal self-determination means listening, learning and standing together for justice. Housing is a right, not a privilege. Green spaces must remain places of rest and renewal, not lost to overdevelopment. Access to trustworthy news keeps us informed and strong communities defend this right. Health and wellbeing – physical, mental and spiritual – flourish in supportive environments where everyone belongs.

The forces of greed and division

want us disconnected, but we resist by working together, celebrating culture and lifting each other up. When we enjoy the work, it becomes a joy, not a burden. The power of community is in the small, everyday acts – joining a resident action group, volunteering with others on an art project, checking in on a neighbour, showing up for a protest, sharing a meal or planting a tree.

Stay strong, stay engaged and keep building the world we want to live in. Together, our villages will thrive.

SSH

# ‘Johnny Mac’ – connection and understanding

## HUMAN AFFAIRS

LUCY GLEESON

**ELEVEN years after his passing, Bishop John McIntyre’s legacy continues to inspire community action and faithful presence.**

As rector of St Saviour’s (South Sydney Anglican) parish in the Diocese of Sydney for 15 years, the Rev. McIntyre, or as locals called him “Johnny Mac” or “Rev”, dedicated himself to a ministry that extended far beyond Sunday services.

John believed that faith was not confined to the walls of a church. His ministry took him to hospital rooms, billiards tables, Angels gigs, food distribution centres, public demonstrations and youth group meetings, anywhere people needed comfort or companionship. “He had a concept of ministry that wasn’t about putting bums on seats. It was about getting out there and making real connections”, said Barbara Kerle, John’s sister.

Growing up in Surry Hills in the 1950s, John witnessed at an early age the struggles faced by those in his community. This exposure to hardship fuelled an unwavering

commitment to supporting marginalised groups, a dedication he maintained until his passing.

“Johnny didn’t just see things, he noticed things,” Barbara said.

“It made a deep impression on our lives, living amongst the people who were really struggling, people who were homeless, all of that. So that was part of the person he became.”

After moving to Sydney in 1990 and assuming ministry as rector of St Saviour’s, a role that few were willing to take on, John immersed himself in Redfern’s diverse and often disadvantaged community.

As a passionate supporter of Indigenous rights, he participated in demonstrations supporting residents of The Block, engaged in land rights debates and was a foundation member of the Sydney Anglican Indigenous People’s Ministry Committee, which was constituted in 1997.

Despite backlash from public figures and diocesan authorities, John was also an outspoken advocate for LGBTQIA+ rights within the church, as well as for the ordination of women.

“His approach was always pretty radical; it continued through his



The late Bishop John McIntyre with his wife Jan. Photo: Courtesy of Barbara Kerle

# Trump’s new policies a threat to democracy

## RELIGION & ETHICS

### PHILOSOPHIA AT HOME

**WATCHING the collapse of the “world’s greatest democracy”?**

If not (and who could blame you?), here’s a quick rundown of what the second Trump administration has done – or plans to do – so far. Every claim here is verifiable with a quick search.

#### Foreign Policy

Trump pulled the US out of the World Health Organisation (again), boycotted the G20, and imposed a 25 per cent tariff on steel and aluminium. He called Ukraine’s president – a former comedian turned war hero – a “dictator” and openly sided with Russia in its invasion of Ukraine, a stunning reversal of US policy.

#### Environment

He withdrew from the Paris climate accords, froze clean energy funding, revoked Biden’s offshore drilling ban and expanded fossil fuel production in Alaska. Programs aimed at reducing pollution or helping affected communities have been dismantled and all references to “climate change” erased from government websites.

#### Domestic Policy

Trump eliminated diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) programs in the federal government and removed LGBTQIA+ people, women, Indigenous groups and disability rights from the State Department’s human rights report. He plans to gut the National Institutes of Health, devastating medical research and impacting global programs, including in Australia, where researchers have already been questioned on DEI and climate views. Cuts may hinder efforts to combat bird flu (driving up egg prices) and Chronic Wasting Disease, which threatens to spark a new pandemic.



Sarah Boardman’s portrait of Donald Trump, Colorado state Capitol, 2019.

Elon Musk’s so-called Department of Government Efficiency is firing tens of thousands of federal employees across the IRS, postal service, Federal Aviation Administration, national parks and nuclear security. Some firings had to be reversed after essential services collapsed.

Trump is pushing to deport all undocumented immigrants – an estimated 11 million people – already straining industries like hospitality, construction, agriculture and childcare due to ice raids.

He signed an order to abolish the Department of Education, leaving schools to the states and proposed \$800 billion in Medicaid cuts – affecting 2 in 5 children, 1 in 6 adults and 41 per cent of births.

One tragic truth is clear: America may have gone too far to reverse course. As high-profile deportations and visa denials mount, Canada, Mexico and Germany have issued travel warnings for the US. The likelihood of internal conflict grows by the day.

SSH

Philosophia is a YouTube channel promoting intersectional, activist philosophy. Its core principles are radical reasoning and radical love. Email [philosophiaathome@gmail.com](mailto:philosophiaathome@gmail.com)

life and got him into trouble at times”, said the Rev. Phil Muston, fellow minister in the Diocese of Gippsland and long-time friend.

“For him, it was more important to be out, instead of running a church and trying to get people in, which is what a lot of Christians are trying to do. It was a matter of us going out into the world and representing Christ in the workplace or in schools, wherever we were,” Mr Muston said.

Despite moving to Victoria in 2006, where he was appointed Bishop of Gippsland, John’s memory lives on in the hearts of the Redfern-Waterloo community.

“He was a very community-oriented person. If he was walking down the street, he’d always stop and talk to people or go for a coffee”, said Dianne

Rodgers, caretaker at The Factory community centre (Counterpoint Community Services) in Waterloo.

“When we heard he’d passed, it was a massive shock to the community,” she said.

“One thing I always remembered about John was that he always had the church doors open. There’d be no one in the church, no one there protecting it, but he always believed that if anyone wanted to walk in, they should be able to.”

In a time where the political landscape is marked by division and polarisation, it is important to remember those who dedicated their lives to fostering connection and understanding. The Rev. John McIntyre’s legacy acts as a reminder that compassion and kindness fortify community and belonging.

SSH



# ‘Story is a way to let world know that I have thought’

BOOKS

ELIZABETH ARRIGO

NOT many young people can say that they’ve published a book before they’ve even finished high school.

But that’s not the case for Marianne Handoko, a Year 10 student at Aspect South East Sydney School, who has published not one, not two, but three books through Story Factory’s Year of Poetry program. She is currently working on a fourth.

Marianne, who has autism and can have trouble communicating, finds a way to express herself through writing and poetry.

Her mother, Meliana, says: “We started with Story Factory at Redfern, working one-on-one with one of the staff. After that, she joined the group workshops here in Parramatta. Coming to Story



Marianne Handoko. Photo: Supplied

Factory, it’s an outlet for her – she doesn’t do this anywhere else.”

Marianne has a particular method for writing her books, using an alphabet board system. She will first indicate if she would

like to use a letter, a punctuation mark or start a new line on one board, before pointing to individual block letters to spell out each word – which her mum, a Story Factory educator or a volunteer

will transcribe. This process takes time but allows Marianne’s distinctive voice to come through.

“It’s a joy to work with Marianne,” says Purnima Mahesh, Story Factory’s Open Programs Officer. “It’s wonderful to view the world through her eyes and to see all the words that she carries with her. She’s very precise and knows exactly what words she wants to write and spells them out, deliberately, one letter at a time.”

Marianne is innately curious and deeply philosophical. Her poetry asks challenging questions, encouraging her readers to think about the world around them.

“[At Story Factory] we are taught to find our voice through writing,” she says. “I am autistic. Story is a way to let world know that I have thought.”

When asked what poetry means to her, Marianne composed the following poem: “Thankfully,

wonderfully, carefully concerts have actually started, yet? / Beautifully, right here on this manger! / Teaches all of uses with seen bonus.”

Marianne’s collections of poetry – *Saw One Personally*, *Tide of Time*, and *Talk to a Reader* – are available to purchase on the Story Factory website.

**“Safe Stormy Night”, an excerpt from *Talk to a Reader* by Marianne Handoko:**

She lays her open inspiration to sometimes. We are spun, we are tooled, spoiled to rot. She who sees today, tomorrow sees her. Today, she wants to slack so since she whines, she sobs she scolds. / see some sitting, / see some starving, / see some stepping? / see star shining? / snore she sleeps. / sent sea shore, / shake she shook! / shame side small? / She says she shall see. Sale season seeker, sale spares show, sale sight special sometimes taken to her as inspiration.



Image: Gloria Liang, Untitled (art for book by Alicia Dong, Living with Dementia), 2024.

## The seen and unseen – art as a means of storytelling, connection and praise

ART

ANDREW COLLIS

SYDNEY-BASED artist Gloria Liang creates with a deep sense of purpose, seeking to capture more than just images – she aims to express the emotions, stories and faith that shape her artistic journey.

For her, painting is an act of reflection and spiritual connection, where success is defined not by completion, but by resonance. In this conversation, she shares her thoughts on creative fulfilment, the role of faith in her work, and the evolving path of her artistic practice.

**How do you know when a work is finished?**

I do not create merely to finish a task. I create to feel whole – emotionally and spiritually. My work is only complete when it becomes the full voice of what stirs within me. It is not the outer image alone that matters, but the silent resonance deep inside. When my heart falls quiet, when nothing more longs to be expressed, then I know the work has come to its true end.

**How would you define success as an artist?**

For me, artistic success is more than simply capturing what I see – it’s about breathing life into each creation and revealing the journey beneath every subject. Every person, every place holds a story worthy of honour. Through my art, I search for meaning and nurture hope. True fulfilment comes when my work aligns with God’s will, moving beyond the surface to reach the hearts and souls of others.

**Is there a time of day you prefer to work on a painting?**

I enjoy quiet moments, tucked away in nature under daylight – it thrills me. Yet, on some nights, I cherish the stillness, where alone, in silence, I find space to reflect and plan my work.

**Does art help you in other areas of life?**

Through art, I’ve found friendship, sharing, respect and learning from others. It connects my daily life and Christian faith. Ancient artworks and Bible verses inspire me. Each painting, long or brief, feels like praise to God.

## Globetrotting minstrel revels in community hub

MUSIC

STEPHEN WEBB

FROM the Sydney Opera House to Budapest to London’s West End, from arts festivals in Adelaide, Edinburgh and Tasmania, Mikelangelo – the “Nightingale of the Adriatic”, the “Balkan Elvis” – appeared with his new band, the Long Lost Friends, at Petersham Bowlo on March 21 and left the crowd singing, swaying and spellbound.

After building a worldwide following with the Black Sea Gentlemen and releasing 15 independent albums, Mikelangelo (aka Michael Simic) has settled with his young family in the relative wilderness of Braidwood in the NSW Southern Highlands.

The Long Lost Friends, musicians Simic met playing gigs in the region, first played together last September. After rehearsing for five months, they worked up songs for the current tour before going into the studio.

At Petersham Bowlo they played Mikelangelo classics from his various bands and projects, new material influenced by living around the Shoalhaven River, and songs Simic wrote decades ago and released for the tour as the Lost Recordings.

After living in cities and frenetic years of touring and performing, Simic found respite and inspiration in the countryside.

“There is something about the river and the landscape is magic.

“Being there with the kids – on bushwalks, visiting the river and the beach, getting out and into it – gets me out of my head and into the moment. The songs have grown out of that.”

When one of his children was born, he



Mikelangelo (aka Michael Simic) at the Petersham Bowlo, March 21. Photo: Stephen Webb

took six months off and the songs just came.

“We had been living in a converted church but Rose, my wife, suggested I get a caravan in the garden and use it as a workspace.

“I wrote there at night and the music flowed out. The beautiful bush landscape brought all those songs.”

Reflecting on his home in Braidwood and performing in Petersham, Simic said community was more important than ever.

“The world now seems fractured. But community is like songs: people have come together forever because we feel like we are part of something.

“Live music brings people together in a room, partaking of a shared experience. If it is a good show it stays with us the rest of our lives.

“Petersham Bowlo is a community hub; it’s a beautiful thing.”

Mikelangelo’s performances are known for their humour and hilarity but many of his songs are marked by melancholy.

“Our lives are full of sadness, humour and joy, and Mikelangelo’s shows reflect that.”

**How do you develop your art skills?**

Art has always lived in me. Self-taught young, later trained in art school and interior design, I learned colour and form. Now, through ministry and people, my art blends creativity, compassion, reflection, and heartfelt connection.

Gloria recently contributed 12 artworks to a book by Alicia Dong, *Living with Dementia: A Carer’s Journey* (edited by Miriam Pepper). Paintings are currently on exhibition upstairs at Le Petit Tarte café (319 Glebe Point Rd) and available for purchase. Contact the publisher: admin@southsydneyuniting.org.au



Live Music Review  
by Martha Jones



Bonny Light Horseman  
City Recital Hall  
March 11, 2025

The City Recital Hall hosted an enchanting evening of contemporary folk music, featuring John Grant and Bonny Light Horseman, who truly impressed.

The trio – comprising Anaïs Mitchell, Eric D. Johnson, and Josh Kaufman – delivered a performance that blended traditional folk roots with modern sensibilities.

Anaïs Mitchell, renowned for her folk opera *Hadestown*, brought her evocative vocals and storytelling prowess. Eric D. Johnson (Fruit Bats, also The Shins), contributed his distinctive voice and instrumental versatility. Josh Kaufman, known for his collaborations with The National and Hiss Golden Messenger, showcased his multi-instrumental talents.

The evening’s setlist was a thoughtfully curated journey through the band’s discography.

They opened with “Keep Me On Your Mind,” a track from their latest double album, *Keep Me On Your Mind/See You Free*, released in June 2024. “Lover Take It Easy” followed, a song that melds gentle harmonies with intricate instrumentation. They continued with “The Roving,” a reimagined traditional tune.

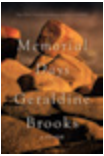
A standout moment was their rendition of “Blackwaterside,” where Mitchell’s haunting vocals intertwined with Johnson’s melodic guitar lines, creating an atmosphere of introspective beauty. The band also performed “I Know You Know,” a track that blends poetic lyrics with a catchy rhythm.

The energy escalated with “Exile,” a song that combines driving rhythms with reflective lyrics. They also performed “Hare and Hound”, adding a playful touch to the evening.

The title track “Bonny Light Horseman,” from their debut album, was a poignant reminder of the band’s origins. They closed the set with “Green Rocky Road”, leaving the crowd in awe.

The harmonies were tight yet effortless. The intimate setting of the Recital Hall amplified the warmth of the music.

Book Review  
by Melinda Kearns



Memorial Days  
Geraldine Brooks  
Hachette, 2025

Geraldine Brooks is known as one of Australia’s most accomplished novelists, journalists and non-fiction writers. Whilst beginning her career as a writer as a newspaper columnist, she moved into international reporting before becoming a novelist with *Year of Wonders*, about the experience of plague in 1666 by the village of

Eyam, then *March*, concerning the father of *Little Women*, absent for much of the story of his daughters, serving as a Civil War chaplain. Her journalistic attention to detail remains a feature of her fiction – she is often drawn to historical subject matter – but in this case the subject matter is deeply personal.

During 2019, Brooks’ husband, the Pulitzer Prize-winning American journalist, Tony Horwitz, was on a tour promoting his most recent publication, *Spying on the South: An Odyssey Across the American Divide*. Brooks and Horwitz met at Columbia University where they were both studying journalism. They married in 1983 and had two sons together, carving out an exciting life together of travel and reporting through Africa, Europe and the Middle East. During his last book tour, Horwitz had a massive heart attack and died before he made it to hospital. In America, they had forged an idyllic life for their family on Martha’s Vineyard and she is there working on her novel *Horse* when she receives the call telling her that her beloved husband has died. She must deal with the practicalities of bereavement – telling their sons, getting them home, organising memorials, paying for health insurance and many of the other things that had never crossed her mind whilst her husband lived. She realises, some months after, that she has never truly grieved for Tony, and so goes back to Australia, to Flinders Island off the coast of Tasmania, to be alone, to reflect and to process her loss.

*Memorial Days* is deeply moving and highly engaging on the subject of death and grief, exploring how to honour the life of someone truly known and loved.

Film Reviews  
by Lindsay Cohen



Anora  
Director: Sean Baker  
Starring: Mikey Madison,  
Paul Weissman, Yura Borisov  
Genre: Academy pashn

You are probably aware that *Anora* won best picture, best actress and best director at this year’s Academy Awards but you probably haven’t seen the film. Indeed, it’s extraordinary how unseen such a great film is. It’s probably because the film is about the complex life of a prostitute and is highly sexual. But this is just the context. It covers so many other deep and meaningful subjects too, including gender, sexuality, physical and mental breakdowns, ageing, politics, criminality, racism and more.

It’s just as extraordinary that as well as deserving best picture and Sean Baker taking out best director (and best film editing and best original screenplay) that Mikey Madison deservedly won best actress given how little acting she’s done. Add to that the relatively small budget (\$6 million) and filming schedule (37 days) and the independent film is even more relevant to the film industry overall.

The film’s greatness and deservedness of best picture comes from its storyline’s high level of complexity. There is a huge number of ongoing unknowns such as the ebbing

and flowing of many characters’ intent and motivation. The nature of the film ebbs and flows too, from intense to amusing, violent to passionate, celebratory to disturbing. Even the final scenes capture these moments and the viewers’ attention.

In my most recent *SSH* reviews I rated *Conclave* as the best Academy Award nominated picture this year I’d seen. Both are worth seeing but because they are so different, so topical and so relevant to modern thinking and issues.

Rating: XXXXX



Mickey 17  
Director: Bong Joon Ho  
Starring: Robert Pattinson,  
Mark Ruffalo, Toni Collette  
Genre: Sci-try

It’s tough reviewing some films without giving away spoilers. *Mickey 17* is a good example, so I’ll stick to pointing out that while the film is science fiction, and so unbelievable to many potential viewers, it has a lot of current political and ethical perspectives even though it’s set in the future and not on Earth.

The other significant attractive element of the film is its director Bong Joon Ho. He is a South Korean filmmaker best known outside Korea for his intense films *Snowpiercer* (2013) and *Parasite* (2019). *Parasite* won thee Academy Awards and was too good for me to review and take the piss out of, but back in 2020 I reviewed series 1 of Bong Joon Ho’s *Snowpiercer* TV series and the movie of the same name. I made a point then which is still highly relevant to *Mickey 17*: “Bong Joon Ho ... has an extraordinary ability to animate the absurd while addressing contemporary grim class realities.”

My *Anora* review is an excellent example of a good and relevant but not very amusing review of a great film! Fortunately, from a reviewing perspective only, *Mickey 17* isn’t as good as *Snowpiercer*, *Parasite* or *Anora*. This is because, as the film progresses, it becomes harder to understand why Mickey 17 and 18 (hint) and their colleagues and enemies do what they do.

So whether this review is a review of my reviews or of *Mickey 17* doesn’t matter. All are worth engaging with!

Rating: Mickey 3

Theatre Review  
by Catherine Skipper



The Player Kings: Part 1  
Adaptor: Damien Ryan  
Director: Damien Ryan  
Seymour Centre  
March 27 – April 5, 2025

Sport for Jove’s *The Player Kings: Part 1* is a compelling, revelatory adaptation of *Richard II*, *Henry IV* (parts 1 & 2), and *Henry V*. Damien Ryan masterfully weaves these cautionary political dramas into a gripping four-hour event, illuminating Shakespeare’s preoccupation

The Art Trail  
Paddington to Waterloo

ART

BRIGID HEALY



Image: Derek Jarman, ‘Self-portrait’, 1959.

Derek Jarman: *Delphinium Days*  
UNSW Galleries, Paddington  
– until May 4  
Open Wed to Fri 10am-5pm,  
Sat and Sun 12-5pm

UNSW Galleries presents an exhibition of Derek Jarman (1942-1994), prolific artist and activist and a significant figure of 20th-century British culture. Jarman’s practice spanned painting, film, assemblage, writing, performance and set design. He is most widely known for his foray into experimental film.

The exhibition, curated by Lisa Beauchamp, Aaron Lister and Michael Lett, is the first exhibition of his work in Australia and marks 30 years since the artist passed away from an AIDS-related illness at the age of 52. It includes rarely seen paintings and films and a collection of photography and archival materials about the artist.

Two large rooms hold a selection of large and smaller paintings and assemblage works constructed of scavenged objects and broken glass suspended or buried in thick, black tar. On a large suspended screen, punk icon Jordan leaps and twirls in a tutu around a blazing pyre, on which the Union Jack flag burns, in the Super 8 film *Jordan’s Dance*.

with power’s fleeting nature and its defining tipping points.

Sean O’Shea delivers a superbly tragic Richard II – vain (loving the photo opportunity) and blind to his downfall. His impulsive seizure of the Lancastrian estates after John of Gaunt’s death (an outstanding John Gaden) seals his fate. Katrina Retallick’s perceptive queen and Leilani Loau’s manipulative Duchess of York amplify the tension. Garth Davies’ Bolingbroke, cold and calculating, deposes Richard, perhaps knowing he will be murdered.

Now king, Henry IV wrestles with conscience and control. His wild son Hal (Oliver Ryan) is “beyond his command”, reveling in Eastcheap’s underworld with the drunken yet deeply human Falstaff (a richly layered Steve Rodgers). Hal’s disrepute fuels an uprising led by the fiery Harry Hotspur (Max Ryan, in a vigorous performance), whose ideals of honour contrast sharply with Hal’s growing pragmatism.

Shakespeare’s cycle captures power’s transformation – how sacred ideals fade into political strategy. Henry IV’s dying words to Hal – distract the people with foreign war

An adjacent room holds archival photographs and paraphernalia including a row of intimate photographs depicting details of domestic spaces, medical paraphernalia, flowers and the much-loved garden of Jarman’s home – Prospect Cottage in Dungeness, Kent. The garden is considered his most enduring legacy, a symbol of resilience and the beauty in creativity and community in the face of severe illness and societal prejudice. *Magic Mirror*, a retrospective of Jarman’s films is running concurrently at the Art Gallery of NSW (AGNSW) until April 6

James Barth: *The Clumped Spirit*  
UNSW Galleries, Paddington  
– until May 4  
Open Wed to Fri 10am-5pm,  
Sat and Sun 12-5pm

James Barth’s work contends with her experience as a trans woman through themes of self-representation and embodiment. Her work plays on traditional genres of portraiture and still life; through 3D modelling software she creates avatars, stages and props which are then transmuted into screen-printed oil paintings and animated videos. 3D-printed sculptures coated in zinc in various poses of movement or repose recall the petrified figures of Pompeii within a chilled gallery space that has been transformed into what feels like a generic office space. *The Clumped Spirit* is presented with the Institute of Modern Art.

Jon Campbell: *Chippin Away*  
Darren Knight Gallery,  
Waterloo – until April 12  
Open Tue to Sat 10am-5pm

Jon Campbell’s work explores and celebrates Australian vernacular through text-based paintings and prints, applying colour, shape and form that highlights the vibrancy in living, everyday language.

– set the stage for the next shift. In a brilliant stroke of stagecraft, young Hal faces his future self: Andrew Cutcliffe’s chillingly decisive Henry V, a king who now embodies both ruthless leadership and the “common touch” shaped by his past.

Rodgers’ Falstaff is less hedonistic than usual, making his final betrayal by Henry V all the more poignant. His famous speech rejecting honour lands as self-pity – echoing Richard II’s lament. As Yeats observed, “all men great and little fail in Shakespeare.” Ryan’s adaptation reinforces this idea: these rulers are merely human, navigating power without a script.

Amid the intensity, two standout comic moments shine: Peter Carroll’s hilarious gardener (with Gaden), a sharp commentary on Richard’s incompetence, and Carroll again as Francis, an overwhelmed beer server in a chaotic tavern scene.

With an evocative set, stunning live music (Jack Mitsch), sharp costuming (Lily Moody) and inventive projections, this production is thrilling, fast-paced and absorbing.

I hope there will be a chance to review *The Player Kings: Part 2*.





Unstoppable motocross champion Charli Cannon. Photo: Paul Bramble/Lost Photography

# ProMX expands with new venues in 2025

SPORT

JOHN LANZKY

MOTOCROSS is a type of off-road motorcycling race. The races take place on gravel, mud or grass-road circuits and the discipline is one of the most skilled, exciting and energetic motor sports around.

The 2025 ProMX Championship takes place over eight rounds from March to August, starting in Wonthaggi, Victoria, and ending at Queensland Moto Park (QMP). The series will visit locations across Australia, including three new venues: Traralgon, Warwick and Nowra. Appin returns after a year off, while Wonthaggi, Gillman, Toowoomba and QMP remain key locations.

Wonthaggi hosted the opening round on March 22-23 for the fifth year, with strong local support. Its challenging track, scenic setting and excellent amenities make it a fan favourite. Excitement was high as riders, including reigning MX1 champion Kyle Webster – who calls nearby Korumburra home – began their battle for the 2025 title.

Charli Cannon, seven times winner of the Australian Women’s Motocross Championship, captained Australia to another team victory in the Oceania Women’s Cup.

## Rabbitohs dig deep

The season started well with two unexpected wins against the Dolphins and the Dragons. With eight regular first-graders out, the team had to dig deep – and the results show the depth in the club.

amie Humphreys is putting so much effort into making the halfback position his. That was a remarkable field goal against the Dragons! I thought wow! Am I dreaming? Humphreys is a third-generation first grade player. His father is Stephen, and his grandfather was former ARL chairman Kevin.

Cody Walker is still going strong. He has a fantastic football brain. And Bennett is the Great Motivator. He makes the simple things count.

The game against Cronulla showed the effort is still there. The Sharks had all their stars and too much talent on the day. Things will be different next time.

On another matter, I just want to say that Souths’ mascot known as Reggie the Rabbit had the decency to apologise for pushing a child who jumped the fence into the players’ tunnel. Enough said.

What can I say about victory over the premiers on March 27? Glory, glory to South Sydney!

SSH



Andres at Coffee Tea & Me on Redfern Street. Photo: Andrew Collis

# Consistently good coffee, food and service

FOOD

ANDREW COLLIS

ANDRES, the manager at Coffee Tea & Me at 93b Redfern Street, thrives in the fast-paced environment of the café, embracing the morning rush. “Busyness can either excite you or stress you,” he says. “It’s a little bit tricky, but that’s the fun of it.”

Born and raised in Barranquilla, a major city in Colombia located on the Caribbean coast, Andres was involved in the café’s transformation before reopening, describing the space as initially being in a state of disrepair. “No floor, bare walls, the roof was destroyed,” he recalls.

Credit goes to new owner Michele for his efficiency, as renovations were completed in just a week. Since then, Andres has focused on consistency

in coffee, food and service. “Consistency – good coffee, good food, good service, constant operation hours. That is the first step.”

Beyond quality, he sees community as the heart of the café, particularly in a neighbourhood like Redfern, where longtime locals and newcomers converge. His approach to hospitality is about creating human connections. “You go out of

the house and into a café, a restaurant, a bar – to exchange. That’s what hospitality is about.”

He fosters engagement with a daily trivia question written on a mirror, adding a playful challenge for customers. While some love it, a few have taken it too seriously. “I think I lost one or two customers because they never got the answer right!” he jokes. But for Andres, that small moment of thought in the morning is worth it.

With a background in fine dining and a passion for interaction, Andres brings energy and personality to the café, helping revive its former reputation while creating a welcoming space for all.

SSH

EXCLUSIVE TRIVIA QUESTION FOR SSH READERS – Let Andres know the answer and enjoy a treat with your next order at Coffee Tea & Me: What is the name of Dostoevsky’s novel which propelled him to fame following his mock execution in a Siberian prison?



Record Store Day 2025 Local Release List: Bluey, Pond, Dannii Minogue, the Saints, the Grogans, Ninajirachi, Maddy Jane, Olana Janfa, and more! Photo: Suffragette Records

# Volunteers’ News

## PAT CLARKE

I’m sure I’m not the only one of us saying HOORAY! It’s nearly autumn after some of the sweltering and changeable weather we’ve had lately.

## Coloured Digger Event and Anzac Day March – April 25, Redfern

The Coloured Digger Anzac Day March and Event has been held at Redfern Community Centre for 18 years, to honour Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander servicemen and women who served at Gallipoli and the Western Front and other conflicts and those who served in a non-military role, often unrecognised, for more than a century. The March can be seen LIVE on Saturday April 25, at 1pm on NITV.

## 43rd Greek Festival of Sydney 2025

The Greek Festival continues throughout April with films, theatre productions, lectures and the Greek Australian Writers festival on Sunday April 27 from 9am-6pm at the Prince Henry Centre, 2 Coast Road, Little Bay (cost \$15 incl. light refreshments). A fascinating lineup of tales including that of pirates from Hydra sent to Australia as convicts, stories of Delphi and the Silk Road. Full program of the remaining sessions at [greekfestival.com.au](http://greekfestival.com.au)

## Sydney Comedy Festival – Monday April 21 to Sunday May 18

This is the 20th anniversary of the Sydney Comedy Festival, in venues including Enmore Theatre, Concourse, Chatswood, Sydney Opera House and more, and a lineup of favourites from Australia and overseas. Full program at [sydneycomedyfest.com.au](http://sydneycomedyfest.com.au)

## Record Store Day 2025 – April 12

Over 200 independent record shops from all across Australia will burst with limited- edition vinyl, special events, live in-store and special activities. We have lots of these stores in our local areas, so lots of opportunities to stock up on the music you love. See more at [recordstoreday.com.au](http://recordstoreday.com.au)

## Why We Love Our Pets photographic exhibition – from March 31

At the Waterloo Neighbourhood Centre on Wed and Thu (April 2 and 3) from 10am-1pm. Photos by Krunal Padhir, Shane Brown and Rebecca Reddin.

## Dates for your Diary

Passover: Sat April 12 – Sun April 20  
Easter: Fri April 18 – Mon April 21  
Orthodox Easter: Sun April 20  
Anzac Day: Fri April 25  
Sydney Writers Festival: May 19-27  
[swf.org.au](http://swf.org.au)

## Farewell to Rev. Andrew Collis

Sadly, this month’s issue of the *South Sydney Herald* will be Andrew’s last as managing editor, as his ministry placement comes to an end. Andrew has been a wonderful editor, friend, confidant and support to all of us, and an asset to the South Sydney community generally. We wish him every success for the future. More about our new managing editor next month!

Wishing all our volunteers, readers and supporters a Happy Easter, and blessings for the various religious festivals this month. Have a safe and happy school holiday break.

## Pat Clarke

volunteers@ssh.com.au