

# the South Sydney Herald

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Warrant Officer Class One Colin (Col) Watego OAM with Pastor Ray Minniecon. Photos: Michelle Haywood

## Marching together – honouring service and sovereignty

**FIRST PEOPLES**  
**ANDREW COLLIS**

**ANZAC Day offered a moment not only to honour all who have served but also to reflect on truth-telling and cultural protocols integral to our national story.**

Across the country, Australians gathered at dawn services, marches and community events. Among them was the Coloured Digger March in Redfern – now in its 18th year – in solidarity with Indigenous veterans and Elders, including those whose voices were challenged earlier in the day.

At Melbourne’s dawn service, Bunurong Elder Uncle Mark Brown was interrupted by a small group of neo-Nazis as he delivered a Welcome to Country – an ancient protocol and invitation to deeper understanding. The disrespectful outburst was drowned out by applause from tens of thousands in attendance.

Later that day, Wurundjeri Elder Aunty Joy Murphy Wandin AO was told she could not deliver a Welcome to Country at a Melbourne Storm match – a decision that deeply upset her, particularly as she had planned to honour her father, a World War I veteran. Aunty Joy remained at

the match, wearing her father’s medals in quiet, dignified tribute.

In Redfern, the Coloured Digger March took place in a spirit of remembrance and solidarity. Led by Pastor Ray Minniecon, a Vietnam-era veteran and proud descendant of the Kabi, Gureng, and South Sea Islander nations, the event gathered Elders, current and former service members, families and community supporters. It began with a Welcome to Country from Aunty Barbara Simms and included cultural performances by the Glen Dancers and the Bunja Bunja Butterfly Dancers.

Pastor Minniecon, whose

grandfather served with the 11th Light Horse Brigade in the Great War, co-founded the Coloured Digger Project in 2006 to shine a light on the legacy of Indigenous veterans whose stories had long been neglected or erased. For decades, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who served were denied veterans’ benefits, military funerals and even access to RSL clubs. Thousands served in both World Wars and they continue to serve in the Australian Defence Force today.

The Redfern march culminated in a wreath-laying ceremony at Redfern Park. Speeches by NSW Governor Margaret Beazley,

MP Tanya Plibersek, Lord Mayor Clover Moore and others acknowledged the importance of truth-telling and inclusion in our national commemorations. A performance of “The Coloured Digger” poem by John Paul Young honoured Indigenous soldiers like Private Harold West and George Leonard, who fought – and died – along the Kokoda Trail.

The reverence shown at Redfern echoed the cultural resilience expressed in Melbourne and beyond. From ceremony to silence, from applause to action, the message was clear: true remembrance includes every story, every sacrifice and every voice. **SSH**



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# Waterloo South consortium to deliver homes from 2031

## URBAN DESIGN

GEOFF TURNBULL

THE NSW government has signed contracts to develop the first stage of the Waterloo South renewal project with the Stockland, Link Wentworth Housing, City West Housing and Birribee Housing consortium. At the media conference on April 10, Managing Director and CEO of Stockland, Tarun Gupta, said he expected construction to start in 2027 and to start delivering new homes in 2031.

According to the Waterloo redevelopment website, the project will deliver more than 1,000 new social homes, over 600 affordable homes and around 1,500 private homes in a mixed and integrated community. The announcement shows an increase of 100 social housing units over earlier Homes NSW requirements for 30 per cent of 3,000 to be social housing and 20 per cent affordable housing. This also pushes the number of home units delivered from 3,000 to 3,100. It is not currently known how these extra social housing homes will be delivered within the planning controls.

The government's requirements have also been exceeded in the delivery of an additional 5 per cent of social housing homes dedicated to Aboriginal people. Dedicated Aboriginal housing now is 20 per cent of social and 15 per cent of affordable housing. It has been confirmed that Birribee Housing, the Aboriginal Community Housing Provider (CHP), will manage both Aboriginal social and affordable housing, leaving open the possibility of movement between the two tenure types without changing landlord and hopefully while being able to stay in the same house. It has also been confirmed that Aboriginal tenants will continue to be housed in the non-Aboriginal controlled CHPs if they wish.



Waterloo South players new and old: Paul Coe, CEO of Birribee Housing; Leonie King, CEO of City West Housing; Andrew McNulty, CEO of Link Wentworth; Tarun Gupta, Managing Director and CEO of Stockland; Famey Williams, CE of Aboriginal Housing Office; Michael Wheatley, Head of Housing Portfolio Homes NSW; Rose Jackson, NSW Minister for Housing and Homelessness. Photo: Geoff Turnbull

The SSH understands that the plan is for all affordable housing to be in perpetuity although funding to make this possible has not yet been finalised.

This process began in July 2022 with a call for Expressions of Interest (EOI). In August 2023, the new Labor government changed the requirements to include 50 per cent social and affordable housing. A preferred developer was chosen in August 2024 and final contract talks have been ongoing since then.

Both the community and the developer partners have been frustrated because the partners were not allowed to speak with the public or local groups about the project. Now, they are finally allowed to talk openly with the community about the redevelopment.

No details have been released about what has been agreed between Homes NSW and the

consortium. For example, it's unclear how the People and Place Plan – which focuses on community services and was heavily criticised when it was first shown – has been included in the agreement. This plan hasn't been brought up again.

Consortium members and Homes NSW have been invited to a REDWatch meeting on Thursday June 5 to present the proposal and answer questions.

With contracts now finalised, the project will progress to the next phase, including site investigations, planning approvals and ongoing community engagement, alongside the staged tenant relocations already underway. It is expected planning approvals will take about two years.

With echoes of the rationale for the Metro coming to Waterloo rather than Sydney University, Minister Jackson, at the media

conference, used the Waterloo redevelopment as a good example of Transit Oriented Development (TOD) delivering more density with well-located homes and said they would be taking advantage of any and all instruments to build for the demand.

Prior to the consortium announcement, Minister Jackson met with some of the tenants being relocated from Waterloo South Stage 1 into the new social housing above Waterloo Metro that will be run by Link Wentworth. At the announcement, the Minister emphasised that the redevelopment was about better homes for social housing tenants and not just about more homes.

You can find statements about the announcement from all involved parties on the SSH website version of this story.

Geoff Turnbull is Spokesperson for REDWatch.



## Home at last – journey of the Gweagal Spears

Curators David Johnson, Clare Woolley and Kristy Beller examining the returned spears at the Chau Chak Wing Museum (Sydney University). Two years ago, Trinity College, the Cambridge Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, the Gujaga Foundation, and the La Perouse Local Aboriginal Land Council announced the permanent repatriation of the Gweagal Spears to the La Perouse Aboriginal community. By 2024, the spears had returned to Dharawal Country. Their homecoming is the focus of "Mungari: Fishing, Resistance, Return", an exhibition at the Chau Chak Wing Museum that follows the remarkable journey of the spears. It also tells the story of the generations of resistance that made their return possible and celebrates the ongoing preservation of fishing traditions still practised by the community today.

Photo: Michelle Haywood





Auntie Norma Ingram with Harry (booth captain for Labor). Photo: Michelle Haywood

# ALP’s second term secured amid Coalition collapse

POLITICS

SSH

**THE Australian Labor Party (ALP), led by Prime Minister Anthony Albanese, has secured a decisive victory in the federal election and will form a majority government for a second term. A nationwide swing of 2.8 per cent (as of May 5) has delivered the ALP at least 85 seats (with 15 seats in the balance).**

In stark contrast, the Liberal-National Coalition suffered a significant setback, with just 39 seats at May 5 and a nationwide swing against it of -3.6 per cent. Opposition Leader Peter Dutton has lost his seat (Dickson), casting uncertainty over the Coalition’s future leadership.

The Greens had no certain lower house seats at May 5 (Mehreen Faruqi, however, was re-elected to the Senate). Their national vote has stagnated, and the loss of seats to Labor has raised questions about their future role in pushing for stronger climate action.

Locally, Labor’s Tanya Plibersek has strengthened her hold on the inner-city seat of Sydney, increasing her margin by 5.19 per cent to claim 71.4 per cent of the vote. Her closest rival, the Greens’ Luc Velez, finished with 28.6 per cent.

Plibersek celebrated the win with supporters on Saturday night (May 3), before attending a fundraiser on Sunday for the Women’s and Girls’ Emergency Centre (WAGEC), a Redfern-based not-for-profit.

Meanwhile in Wentworth, Independent Allegra Spender has held her seat with 57.2 per cent of the vote, gaining a +2.04 per cent swing over Liberal challenger Ro Knox.

“The lesson I take from the election is that we need to build from the common ground, with compassion, and cannot be afraid to face the hard challenges we have in this country,” Spender said.

With a stronger mandate, Labor is expected to pursue a bolder agenda in its second term, focusing on public housing, renewable energy, women’s rights, LGBTQ+ protections and Indigenous justice.

As the dust settles, the question remains: will Labor rise to the challenge on climate justice, or will the Greens’ stalled momentum limit pressure for more ambitious reform?

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## New space for Aboriginal culture and creatives – update

FIRST PEOPLES

GERRY SONT

**REDFERN’S much beloved 107 Projects located at 107 Redfern Street is on track for its creative re-imagining.**

Since 2012, 107 Projects has supported a diversity of cultural and community programs and activities. These included courses, art exhibitions, live music performances, theatre and dance within the multi-venue space.

It has hosted some 25,000 artists with over 200,000 visitors.

The venue was handed back to the City of Sydney Council in 2024, and the Council’s Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory

Panel is playing a lead role in providing advice and guidance on the future of the site, including the development of an expressions of interest process to appoint an Aboriginal manager.

Nathan Moran, CEO of the Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council, which is a member of the Advisory Panel, says: “We are in contact with the Boomalli Aboriginal Artists Co-operative and Moogahlin Performing Arts, among others, to get the ball rolling.”

Nathan is extremely excited to finally have a community hub which will be run in a collaborative spirit. Locals and visitors will be able to drop by to experience an immersive and authentic Indigenous experience.



Nathan Moran. Photo: Supplied

The City of Sydney and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Panel officiated the walk-through in April and the City of Sydney will be looking for formal expressions of interest in the coming months.

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Dear SSH readers

Thank you Sydney electors for allowing me to serve you for another term.

Our re-elected Albanese Labor government will get right to work tackling immediate cost of living pressures and building Australia’s future.

Also, I want to thank Andrew Collis for his enormous contribution to the community. He has worked tirelessly and with great integrity to build an inclusive community through his Ministry at the South Sydney Uniting Church and through his work as volunteer editor of the South Sydney Herald.

I wish Andrew all the best and look forward to working with the new South Sydney Herald team led by Anna Jahjah.

Please also remember that you can contact my electorate office if you need help with a federal issue.

Best wishes

Tanya

TANYA PLIBERSEK MP

Federal Member for Sydney

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An eastern quoll post release with a VHF (very high frequency) tail transmitter. Photo: Courtesy Aussie Ark

# Eastern quolls released into NSW bushland

## SPONSORED

MARK SCOTT

CONSERVATION organisation Aussie Ark and the University of Sydney have collaborated on a science-based reintroduction of eastern quolls on mainland Australia into a controlled bushland environment near Nowra.

The two organisations released 15 endangered eastern quolls (*dasyurus viverrinus*) into a 68-hectare feral-proof site, on the Scots College's Bannockburn property near Nowra on the NSW South Coast. Jerrinja traditional owners also partnered the project, with tribal leader Ron Carberry, among others, attending the event and conducting a Welcome to Country.

It is the first time the eastern quoll has been released on this site; a significant step towards rewilding for a species that is otherwise extinct on mainland Australia.

The University of Sydney's Global Ecology Lab in the School of Life and Environmental Sciences manages the project, headed by Associate Professor Thomas Newsome with project lead Dr Patrick Finnerty and on-the-ground research conducted by PhD student Pat Bragato.

Mr Newsome said the priority is to undertake long-term scientific research to better understand how to bolster the success of eastern quoll rewilding. This will involve intensive post-release monitoring, including the deployment of very-high frequency (VHF) radio and global positioning system (GPS) tail transmitters, camera observation with a network of 54 camera traps across the site, and quarterly cage trapping to collect data.

"This long-term research project provides us with a wonderful opportunity not only to establish a meta-population of eastern quolls on mainland Australia but also deep dive into the ecology of the species," Mr Newsome said. "We need to better understand the quolls' role in an ecosystem from which it has been absent for almost 70 years."

The Scots College Bannockburn has been modelled on Aussie Ark's 400-hectare feral-proof Barrington Wildlife Sanctuary, where 10 of the eastern quolls released at Bannockburn were born and bred. Aussie Ark Operations Manager Dean Reid said these quolls were in top health.

"The release is another powerful step toward one day rewilding the eastern quoll to the mainland of Australia," Mr Reid said. "It follows last year's historic release of our eastern quolls into

Booderee Botanical Gardens, when Federal Minister for the Environment Tanya Plibersek personally released one of our quolls."

Alongside Booderee, Bannockburn now joins the SE NSW Eastern Quoll Hub; a network of sanctuaries participating in a genetic metapopulation management plan to ensure the long-term genetic and demographic health of eastern quoll populations in feral-free areas.

The University of Sydney's Dr Finnerty said: "The Bannockburn release is an important step in exploring a multi-faceted approach to improving the success of 'beyond-the-fence' rewilding of the eastern quoll."

It's an ambition that captures the mind and heart of Jerrinja tribal leader Ron Carberry, who reflected on a time not so long ago when his ancestors walked on Country with this "magic little animal". "What is happening today is a magnificent moment," Mr Carberry said. "It's about healing Country."

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Authorised by Vice-Chancellor and President Prof. Mark Scott.  
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## Sunny streets, swift feet

Sydney turned on the charm for a sold-out Runway Half Marathon under perfect Autumn skies. Aussie runners owned the half marathon and men's 10K, while Canada dashed off with the women's 10K crown. Laughter, cheers, and good vibes powered every step through the buzzing city streets.

Photos: Michelle Haywood



# RESISTANCE TILL RETURN NAKBA 2025

Join us in NSW Parliament with special guest Nasser Mashni followed by a screening of 'Palestinians Don't Need Sidewalks'.

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Authorised by Jenny Leong MP, Member for Newtown.  
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# Local news - values and vision for the future

## EDITORIAL

SSH

AS the *South Sydney Herald* turns a new page, its spirit of community journalism continues to shine. Anna Jahjah, the paper's new managing editor, steps into the role with a deep respect for its legacy – and a passion for its future.

Taking over from the Rev. Andrew Collis, who has led the paper since 2007, Anna brings with her a rich background in the arts and a personal connection to the inner city. “I’m a French-Lebanese woman who moved to Sydney 13 years ago,” she says. “I fell in love

with Redfern when I first lived here in my twenties. Later, I joined a local art class and choir – and started reading the *SSH* to understand the community around me. Now, working for the paper feels both unreal and amazing.”

Andrew’s leadership of the *SSH* was part of his broader role as minister at South Sydney Uniting Church, which publishes the paper. With Uniting Church placements typically lasting 10 years, his recent transition marks the end of an 18-year chapter of ministry and editorial guidance. “The experience taught me so much about community and justice – the right to affordable housing, access to reliable information, safe and green

space, advocacy for the most vulnerable,” he says. “I’ve learnt to appreciate the role of First Nations leaders in the community. Amid concerns for the future – resisting greed and careless/callous overdevelopment – lies the deep challenge to better support calls for Indigenous justice.”

News editor Lyn Turnbull, who has worked alongside Andrew for many years, shares his appreciation for the paper’s community focus. “Some of our best stories have come to me while walking around the neighbourhood,” she says. “I’m always moved by the kindness and commitment of our volunteers.” She’s seen the paper evolve from a print-first platform to one that must balance both

# Motherhood of God

## RELIGION & ETHICS

PHILOSOPHILIA AT HOME

THIS Easter, in my meditations, I dwelt awhile on the Motherhood of God.

I like to observe religious festivals in my own way – spending time with the core themes of the season, reflecting on how they apply to me, in my world, at this moment in life. You may not at first see the link between the myth of Christ’s death and resurrection, and the contemplation of the feminine divine – but bear with me.

Easter, the major spring festival in the European calendar, overlays earlier Roman and European fertility rites, replacing them with a desexualised Passion. Its message, according to many, is transcendence – rebirth beyond mortality. But actual, earthly fertility – the generative, embodied, feminine force – has no real place in a patriarchal Christianity.

And yet, if God is everywhere, God must also be expressed in the feminine. Sages have acknowledged this for centuries, going back at least to Isaiah. Further still, the ancient Israelites worshipped a Great Mother Goddess, Asherah.

She was once paired with El; Yahweh, in some traditions, was their son. By King Josiah’s time, Asherah was demoted to Yahweh’s consort; her worship suppressed.

Still, if God exists – or even if He doesn’t – She must. Not in a strict monotheistic sense – no Great Mother ever claimed to be the only one – but in a cosmic, symbolic, energetic sense. There is a feminine to the divine; even the prophets couldn’t deny it.

Julian of Norwich famously compared Christ’s suffering on the cross to a mother’s labour. She – and others from Jesus to Pope Francis – have spoken of God’s love as maternal, especially in her capacity to suffer with us. As Haley Stewart asks in her essay “Julian of Norwich and the Suffering Motherhood of God”: “[H]ow much of wisdom is understanding that [love and suffering] are inseparable?”

So, if you are suffering this Easter, search out the divine love that suffers with you. Find a tree to curl up beneath, or water to bathe in, and rest awhile in the lap of the Great Mother.

SSH

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

print and digital. Yet, the mission remains clear. “Trevor Davies started the *SSH* because the mainstream media overlooked the good in our area,” Lyn recalls. “We’re here to tell human stories and offer a voice to those seldom heard.”

Anna agrees that continuing this work – while expanding online and through social media – is

essential. “Local news creates connection. In a world that can feel fractured, people crave stories that reflect their lives and values.”

As Andrew passes the torch, he says simply, “There’s much good work to do”. And with Anna, Lyn and its team of contributors and distributors, the *SSH* is ready to keep doing it – one story at a time.

SSH

# Empowering women through education

## FIRST PEOPLES

DIXIE LINK-GORDON

I am Dixie Link-Gordon, a Gooreng Gooreng woman from the east coast of Queensland, near Gladstone. My family are the Links, Johnsons and Ah-Sams.

I grew up in Brisbane with my grandparents Peter and Loui Link (paternal) and Mercy Johnson and Thomas Kamore (maternal). However, my grandmother remarried Jack Steel. I am their oldest grand-daughter, and my grandparents were very special in my life, kind and supportive.

I had a tough life as a young girl. I was sent to Melbourne to attend the Harold Blair holiday program which operated from 1963 to 1978. The program was really about assimilating Aboriginal girls into white society.

I moved to Townsville where I had my first child, William, in 1979. I left Brisbane at the age of 18 and it was the beginning

of a new era for me. I did not have a great education and so it’s important that my children have these opportunities. I was able to attend some great classes at Murawina Aboriginal pre-school in Redfern for the mothers of the children who attended the centre. It made me very much aware of the importance of education for me and my children.

My children are able to do far better than I did in education and in life.

When I came to Sydney by the end of 1980, I lived in Eveleigh Street, Redfern, known as The Block, such a beautiful and supportive community for us. By the end of the 1980s I had five children and was keen to further my education, totally supported and encouraged by Aboriginal women in our community. Those women provided an accessible pathway to a good education and a great future ahead of us.

All this work led me to a career in the anti-domestic family violence movement across the country.

I know that it is important to acknowledge the history of our past and how it has impacted our community today. All women are entitled to a safe and healthy life – physically, mentally and spiritually.

I will continue to work and share knowledge in this space. I have been privileged to share this story with international communities since 2012, including speaking at the United Nations Commission Status of Women Forum in New York. This is important for all women because we can all be impacted by the heinous acts of domestic, family and sexual violence in Australian society.

We all deserve to have a voice and live in a safe and healthy community.

SSH

CITY OF SYDNEY  
South Sydney Herald

This article is part of a series by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples living and working on Gadigal land. The series, a joint project of the *SSH* and the City of Sydney, is curated by Aunty Norma Ingram.



Aunty Dixie Link-Gordon. Photo: Teora Gordon-Carr



## A spiritual and connective practice *Artist Profile: Georgie Hare*

ART

ANDREW COLLIS

**GEORGINA (Georgie) Hare transitioned from a career in dance and performance into the visual arts.**

A professional dancer, Hare says: “Dance is a whole language and the connection of mind to body, it has to fire so quickly that if you’re not training it, you sort of crumble a bit. “I’ve always painted alongside dance, but just as personal enjoyment and sort of the cathartic therapy,” she explains. “And then in Covid, I was painting because obviously no one needs a professional dancer in a pandemic.” Hare’s visual art has gained attention, leading to exhibitions and features in publications like *Vogue*. “I think my dancing was so regimented and professional that my art is very much an expression of my inner world and much more directly connected to my emotional being.” Hare’s current artistic practice is

informed by her background in dance and movement, as well as her interest in themes of inclusivity and gender. She has been conducting interviews with female dancers, performers and artists to incorporate their stories and perspectives into her work. This research, combined with her own personal exploration, is shaping the development of her Master’s thesis project and a forthcoming public exhibition. “I’m definitely exploring the connection of my dance and performance work to my visual painting work ... and having access to interesting people, I’m exploring what it is to be a woman now, in a hyper-sexualised world and environment. “We’ve started hosting women-in-art dinners at Jenny Robinson’s print studio in Redfern, an incredible brand-new open-access print atelier. “I’ve been able to speak to all these women about their experiences and what it is to be a woman that might be empowered by her body, but then also shamed or judged or liberated – there are all these layers of complication to the conversation.” In addition to her visual art, Hare continues to be involved in movement direction, teaching dance and collaborating within the LGBTQ+ creative community. Her multidisciplinary approach reflects her holistic view of art as a spiritual and connective practice, grounded in a deep appreciation for the natural world and the cultures of the land on which she works. Exciting possibilities are on the way. “I think there’s some options, maybe do some written work on it, maybe make a short film, maybe make a number of paintings in response to the conversations. Perhaps I may create a live installation work or something along those lines.” Hare is currently developing the arts and wellness community at Paddington Uniting Church. The work includes a yoga program, art studios, exhibitions, live music and more. .... Follow @thechurchpaddo on Instagram.



Georgie Hare in her studio. Photo: Alex Vella



Affie Adago and her pets. Photo Rebecca Reddin



Michael Mihas and his dog. Photo: Shane Brown



Landon and his snake. Photo Krunal Padhiar

## More than pets – portraits of love

ART

ANNA JAHJAH

**I caught the *Why We Love Our Pets* exhibition on its very last day (April 29), just before the photographs were taken down. And I’m so glad I did. It was more than just a display of portraits – it was a window into the deep bonds people share with their animals.**

Hosted at the Waterloo Neighbourhood Centre, the exhibition featured photographs from residents with their pets. Dogs and cats were the stars, of course, but one photo showed a man calmly posing with a snake coiled around his neck! These weren’t just pets – they were companions, healers, even lifelines sometimes. I spoke to Elle Brind, coordinator at The Factory in Waterloo, and Shane Brown, Healthy Living program manager for the Sydney Local Health District, who helped coordinate the exhibition. Shane also contributed photographs together with Krunal Padhiar and Rebecca Reddin. Elle explained that the project began when a peer educator – an avid cat lover – suggested workshops on pet care and the meaning of pet ownership. “She felt people didn’t understand how important pets can be, especially for those who don’t

have much else,” Shane added. With a successful \$10,000 grant from the City of Sydney, the team began taking photos – first at Northcott Pet Day, then in people’s homes and out on the streets around Waterloo. The response was hugely positive. “People were really excited to see themselves and their pets on the wall,” Elle said. “It sparked conversations – people would stop and point and say, ‘That’s my dog!’ or share stories about what their pet meant to them.” Some residents also shared their stories, and several of these will appear in a follow-up booklet later this year. Part 2 of the exhibition will be a continuation of the project, this time in print. “We’ll be doing a call-out for more participants from the Waterloo area,” Elle said. “We want to gather more stories and capture what pets mean to people – in both photos and words.” One of the featured residents, Michael Mihas, told me he was happy to take part. “I’m always involved with what’s going on here,” he said. Though one of his two pets now lives with his sister, he still cherishes the moment captured. When I asked if he’d be part of the upcoming book, he smiled, “Sure. Why not?” This exhibition reminded me that pets are more than animals. They’re anchors – holding us close to comfort, joy, and each other.





# Beyond the buzz – a bar with soul

## FOOD

HELENE SEMERE

I got intrigued when my friend said she found a place I would love because “It’s exactly you!” What did she mean? But she was so convincing, she got me excited.

Bar Julius is a place where you can come pretty much any time of day, for any occasion – from breakfast to dinner, or even a nightcap. Whether you just want to have coffee with a friend or enjoy a fancy birthday dinner, this is your place.

Probably thanks to its very unique, warm yet sophisticated design, once you’re sitting down, you don’t want to leave.

But I started worrying it was all vibe and no taste. Could the menu match this unique atmosphere?

When I read that it was European-

inspired, as a typical French-background gal (from Paris), of course I rolled my eyes ... *What* is European food, anyway? Little did I know it was exactly how I would have described it.

I went straight for the beef tartare and the tomato tarte tatin. Starting with the beautiful presentation, both dishes felt like something I had never had before, while still reminding me of a Parisian bistro or the South of France – somewhere on the Mediterranean.

Not to forget the flavourful oysters or the sparkling wine, which could easily compete with a nice Champagne.

While the kitchen takes us on a trip to France, the bartender is busy crafting perfectly balanced cocktails.

A bar with soul? Definitely!

**Bar Julius**  
**6 Baptist St, Redfern NSW 2016**  
**barjulius.com.au**

# Romani fusion band fosters cultural exchange and a sense of belonging

## MUSIC

STEPHEN WEBB

IN May, Lolo Lovina will be a key part of Vivid, Sydney’s annual celebration of creativity, innovation and technology.

Fronted by vocalist Sarah Bedek, the band presents energetic, interactive and exciting performances, sharing with its audiences a love and respect for one another, their ancestors and Romani culture.

Ahead of Vivid, the band performed at Australia’s inaugural Romani festival in Marrickville, on April 12. Titled *Ushtipe!*, the festival was a powerful celebration of culture, resilience, and unity, bringing together people of all backgrounds to honour Romani contributions to art, music and society.

Attendees experienced a dynamic showcase of Romani heritage through live performances, traditional crafts and collaborative art installations, with five traditional vardo (caravans), fire pits, lounging areas and dance spaces.

The *Ushtipe!* festival was a tribute to International Romani Day (May 8), which celebrates Romani culture and raises awareness of the challenges and discrimination faced by Romani people globally.

Around 1.5 million out of an estimated two million European



Lolo Lovina, Australia’s premier Romani-Gypsy fusion band, on April 12, featured in Australia’s inaugural Romani festival. Photo: Stephen Webb

Roma were killed by Nazi Germany and its collaborators during World War II. Many of those who survived were still subject to persecution. Even today Romani people often face discrimination, prejudice and marginalisation, leading to issues in areas like education, employment and housing.

*Ushtipe!* was supported by Multicultural NSW, Addison Road Community Centre and the newly formed Romani Arts and Culture Collective.

The Collective is an association of artists, Romani people and non-Romani members who are interested in supporting and learning more about Romani culture.

For Vivid, Lolo Lovina will be performing at the Fire Kitchen, a celebration of culture and community, from May 23 to June 14. Along with Lolo Lovina, the program includes the

Strides, Beliza, Moussa Diakite, The Transylvanian Gypsy Kings, George Nikolopoulos & Friends, and more.

Ms Bedek said, “In line with the Fire Kitchen’s ‘Fire & Spice’ theme, Lolo Lovina and the Caravan Stage will bring one hell of a hot line-up of diverse and divine world music artists and DJs to warm up Sydney in the middle of winter.

“We’ll share a dream about a world that is united through the passion and power of music, through the sharing of cultures and of a world that dances joyously hand-in-hand.”

Romani culture is diverse, encompassing various traditions, languages and beliefs, with a strong emphasis on community and family.

**Find out more about Lolo Lovina and the Vivid Sydney Fire Kitchen here: [vividssydney.com/event/food/vivid-fire-kitchen](https://vividssydney.com/event/food/vivid-fire-kitchen)**

## Book Review by Melinda Kearns



**The Usual Desire to Kill**  
**Camilla Barnes**  
**Scribner, 2025**

*The Usual Desire to Kill* is billed as a comedy, but the relationships at its core are all characterised by a great deal of sadness, especially when it comes to lost opportunities, misunderstandings and poor communication.

The protagonist, Miranda, is an actor and writer living in France with her teenage daughter, who is currently performing the role of the Fool in a translated version of *King Lear*. Miranda did the translating and takes pride in both the translation and her daughter’s performance.

However, the Fool’s role of speaking truth to power does not extend to Miranda’s family life. Her relationships with her elderly parents, especially with her difficult mother, must be handled with utmost delicacy. Despite their long marriage, the relationship between her parents is also marked by wilful misunderstandings, occasional treachery and grudging indulgence.

The novel is told from multiple perspectives, offering insight into the personalities and viewpoints of characters who are sometimes hard for Miranda and her sister Charlotte

to understand. Through diary entries written by their much younger mother to an imaginary sister, we learn of her loneliness and sadness following the loss of an infant – a tragedy that haunts the family for the rest of their lives.

Another pivotal moment in the family’s history, known as “The Incident”, centres around a misunderstanding with a visiting American academic. Though this event occurred years ago, it highlights the father’s inability to navigate emotional situations, leaving a lingering resentment in his wife – a resentment he remains powerless to resolve, even decades later.

*The Usual Desire to Kill* is a highly engaging and entertaining novel that explores the complex and often misunderstood dynamics within families, and how we all cope with the profound intimacy of these relationships.

## Theatre Review by Yvonne Hocothee



**Lord Arthur Savile’s Crime**  
**Director: Molly Haddon**  
**Writer: Constance Cox**  
**Genesian Theatre Company**  
**April 26 – June 7, 2025**

The Genesian’s third production for 2025, *Lord Arthur Savile’s Crime*, is a triumph – wacky, hilarious,

pacy, and a sheer delight.

Based on Oscar Wilde’s short story, Constance Cox’s astute adaptation preserves the sharp satire of Wilde’s original vision.

Director Molly Haddon’s handling of this off-the-wall period piece deserves every accolade. Her ability to choreograph the action with such energy, while keeping the comedic rhythm perfectly intact, is impressive. She is ably supported by an exceptional cast.

The story begins with the well-meaning but gullible Lord Arthur (Brock Cramond), who is set to marry the delectable Sybil Merton (Catherine Layard). But her mother, the formidable Lady Merton (Roslyn Hicks), harbours doubts and enlists the services of Podgers (Kees Harmsen), a fashionable palm reader.

Privately, Podgers – a dead ringer for Lurch from *The Addams Family* – warns Arthur that he is destined to commit murder.

Horried, Arthur decides to fulfil this fate before marrying, so he can approach married life with a clean slate. But who to murder? Perhaps one of his tiresome relatives?

Arthur and his loyal butler Baines (Oliver Harcourt-Ham) embark on a hilariously misguided quest to commit the deed. Their plans are further complicated by the arrival of Herr Winkelkopf (Sebastian Lodge), a visiting anarchist who offers his bomb-making skills – though, unfortunately, he proves hopelessly inept. The resulting mayhem is both tense and side-splitting.

The characters are brought to life

by a strong ensemble: Cramond and Layard are a charming couple, Hicks is wonderfully forbidding, and Deirdre Campbell and Julia Burns (as Lady Beauchamp and Lady Windermere) add zest.

Christopher Hamilton is endearing as the vague Dean of Paddington, and Harcourt-Ham excels as the stoic butler. Amy Sylvana Thomas (Nellie) and Harmsen (Podgers) add further colour, as does Lodge’s delightfully daft Winkelkopf.

Costumes (Haddon and Susan Carveth) are outstanding: era-appropriate, elegant and delightfully topped with outlandish hats – one even featuring a seagull mid-flight. The set (Haddon and Tom Fahy) offers a witty touch with its garish decor, explained by Sybil’s girlish tastes.

This is a fast-paced, uplifting comedy – a genuine treat. Don’t wait to see it – you may just want to go twice!

## Film Review by Lindsay Cohen



**Small Things Like These**  
**Director: Tim Mielants**  
**Starring: Cillian Murphy, Eileen Walsh, Emily Watson**  
**Genre: Big deal**

*Small Things Like These* is a curious and clever film and book title.

The film was adapted from the book published in 2021, a small, intense and very well-received small thing (a novella) about issues that aren’t small concerning small, punished Irish girls.

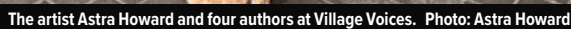
Like the book, the film is tough, tight, difficult and slow which nonetheless is very good and worth seeing. You won’t be entertained, there’s nothing amusing or passionate (not in a positive way), but your attention will be captured, you’ll fear the unknowns and detest the happenings.

What makes *Small Things Like These* very attention-grabbing is it is based on facts. The Roman Catholic convent’s Magdalene Laundries in Ireland harshly kept abandoned and orphaned girls from society from the 18th-20th centuries. In *Small Things Like These*, Cillian Murphy’s character discovers this in the 1970s in a hard way that is made even harder given his difficult childhood.

What also makes the film highly worth watching is the performance of Cillian Murphy. He’s an intensely serious actor who is very specific about the sorts of roles he plays these days. In the *Peaky Blinders* TV series (2013-2022), *Oppenheimer* (2023) and now *Small Things Like These*, he’s the standout performer who highlights extreme happenings during past generations. And is being appropriately rewarded. His next films will almost certainly be worth waiting for.

Don’t wait to see, read and learn about *Small Things Like These*, no matter how small they are! Rating: Four things like this.





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