



THE RAILWAY EXPRESS #11

A SPECIAL WEEKLY NEWSLETTER TO HELP US STAY CONNECTED

AROUND THE HOUSE

Welcome to edition #11 of the Railway Express! We hope that you are all doing ok and that you are finding new ways to stay occupied and positive under the new tighter restrictions. It is certainly encouraging to see that the infection rate is decreasing as we approach the halfway point of Stage 4 lockdown. Fingers crossed that things continue in the right direction.

It was great to get together this week for a cuppa on Zoom with some of the members of our **Cooking Class**. Max, Rhonda, Pam, Donald, John, Georgia, Lisa G and Alison enjoyed catching up and having a chat (mostly about food!) and will continue to meet fortnightly this way. Please contact **Lisa G** if you would like to join them. Plans are underway to resume the Cooking Class (in a new and exciting format) in Term 4. Watch this space!



Also this week, we made up treat packs for the local children who, in normal times, attend our **Learning Club**. Many thanks to our Learning Club volunteers **Mary Egan** and **Pat Rustad** who wrote notes to the children, which were included in the packs. Also included were collectable *Little Treehouse Books* which are handed out at Coles when you spend over \$30. If you have any of these, please consider dropping them off at the House whilst on your daily walk and we will distribute them.

As mentioned in our last newsletter, several of our programs are now online and it is not too late to join any of them so if you are in need of something new to do, please click visit our website for details of our Term 3 online programs. We are really pleased to be adding **Origami for Beginners** to our online offerings, via Zoom, at 10.00am on Saturdays. This class, run by the **Melbourne Origami Group**, will commence on **Saturday 29th August** and run fortnightly. It is free and suitable for all ages, from children to seniors! Please see attached **flyer** and contact the office if you'd like to reserve a spot and receive the Zoom invitation.

We are also pleased to let you know that, thanks to The Footpath Library, Railway House now has free access to an **eLibrary**, which offers a wide range of popular eBooks



and audiobooks for children, teens and adults. It is very easy to browse and borrow. Our first subscriber, **Richard Lasek**, had this to say about it: "*I've just had a look at the eLibrary and it is fantastic! I like how it's possible to filter the search to exactly what I'm looking for and there are so many books available*". Please contact the office if you are interested in accessing the eLibrary and we will give you instructions and a login.

Further to this we are looking for people to form a new **eBook Club!** This month we will be reading *Siddhartha*, the 1922 novel by Hermann Hesse, and will meet on Zoom on **Wednesday 16th September** at 11:30am to discuss the book. There are unlimited copies of this book in the eLibrary. Please contact Alison if you are interested in joining.

Finally, a couple of reminders. If you have not already done so, we would love you to complete our **survey**, which we emailed around last week. This survey will help us capture how our community has fared since March and will help us plan for the coming months. The information gathered also helps us with funding and grant applications, which often come with specific demographic or socioeconomic criteria to be met. Here is the link again, in case you missed it:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScIvLvyuLMC45JHxDZQLj59qFqGi5zFvQUuvHLbJpjUfv3q0Q/viewform?usp=sf_link

Also, if you are not already a Railway House **member**, please consider joining us. Membership is a great way to invest in the future of Railway House. Members can nominate to be on our Committee of Management and can vote (and propose motions) at our Annual General Meeting. For more information and to apply, please visit

<http://railwayneighbourhoodhouse.org.au/membership-form/>

Hang in there everyone!

Alison, Lisa C, Lisa G and Jeff

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YOUR NEWS: WHAT HAVE YOU BEEN UP TO?



Janice Petch, from the knitting group, has finished this gorgeous romper for her granddaughter. She knitted this in Patons Dreamtime Merino 4-ply.

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Sue Tyrrie, VCAL Coordinator at Princes Hill Secondary College, had this letter published in The Age on Thursday. VCAL students are not receiving the same special consideration as VCE students. They will not receive a certificate at the end of Year 12 due to the fact that they won't have completed the VET component of their VCAL course (due to COVID-19).

Well said, Sue! >>>

Bleak VCAL outlook

We've had an announcement about special consideration for VCE students but the silence around equal consideration for VCAL students has been deafening. VCAL students signed up for "hands-on learning" but are about to enter their 10th week of remote learning. These students are set to suffer even more than their VCE counterparts if no special consideration is granted. They don't get a score, they simply pass or fail their certificate based on the number of units they have achieved. Less than 10 units means no school leaving certificate. Surely the future of work is bleak enough. Allow them the dignity of leaving school with a certificate.

**Sue Tyrrie, VCAL co-ordinator,
Princes Hill Secondary College**



David Mayfield, from our Bike Riding Group, has been making this guitar for the past two years. With lockdown providing him with plenty of time for his project, he is determined to finish it this year. Very impressive!

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TOP PICKS



Nicholas Jans, from our bike riding group, writes in to say:

“Salutations to **Carolyn** for her endorsement in the last newsletter of Peter Temple’s 2009 Miles Franklin award winning novel, *Truth*. It’s a brilliant account of Victoria and its police force and its society, sequel to *The Broken Shore*, itself the winner of a raft of awards including the UK Crime Writers Association’s Golden Dagger Award of 2007.

Carolyn’s piece took me back to an evening of Thursday, 12 July, 2018, just ten days after Temple’s untimely death, when I joined a large crowd that packed into The Wheeler Centre to celebrate the life of this punter, poodle-lover, St Kilda tragic and master storyteller. We were entertained and enlightened by a panel comprising *The Age* literary editor Jason Steger, writer and critic Kerryn Goldsworthy, fellow crime writers Shane Maloney and Michael Robotham, TV producer Ian Collie, Text publishers Louise Thurtell and Michael Heyward, and female lead in the *Jack Irish* TV series Marta Dusseldorp. All spoke of their dealings with and affection for Temple, with many informative and amusing insights.

A podcast of that evening is on The Wheeler Centre site: just search ‘Wheeler Centre Peter Temple’, or simply copy and click the link below. Enjoy. (And if you haven’t read any of Temple’s books, particularly the two mentioned earlier, do yourself a favour and remedy that deficiency ASAP!)”

<https://www.wheelercentre.com/broadcasts/podcasts/the-wheeler-centre/celebrating-peter-temple>



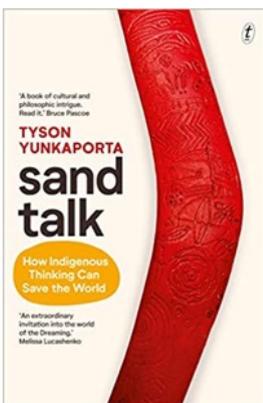
REFLECTIONS

Paul Mayfield contributed the following insightful piece after a recent choir session.

"As the choir sang 'We Rise Again' (The Rankin Family) online on Wednesday morning, I was struck by the vibrancy of lyrics:

*We look to our sons and daughters to explain our lives
(as if a child could tell us why)?
We rise again in the faces of our children
We rise again in the voices of our song
We rise again in the waves out on the ocean
And then we rise again.*

They elicited parallels from a book I am reading - 'Sand Talk - how indigenous thinking can save the world' by Tyson Yunkaporta.



Tyson belongs to the Apalech clan from Western Cape York. He uses wood work to reflect upon stories that have been entrusted to him by Elders. In one carved pattern of concentric circles, Tyson illustrates how the indigenous social system is mapped into the creation pattern, with three generations of strong women around every child – sisters/cousins, mothers/aunties and nannas. Tyson speaks about how the granny's mother goes back to the centre and becomes the child, and all of them cycle through these roles forever, the spirit of the child being born back through the land. Each one also occupies all of the roles simultaneously – so the sister is also somebody's aunty, and grandmother to her niece's daughter.

The final verse of 'We rise again' reads:

*When the light goes dark with the forces of creation
Across a stormy sky
We look to reincarnation to explain our lives
As if a child could tell us why*

Hearing **Flip** sing the melody of "We rise again" was like an entrée; it left me longing to hear a swell of voices singing harmonies. Tyson's book is like that also. It stimulates me to ponder more deeply on the wisdom and reservoir for sustainable living inherent in Indigenous culture.

Bruce Pascoe says of 'Sand Talk' – 'a book of cultural and philosophic intrigue. Read it!'"



LET'S TALK FOOD

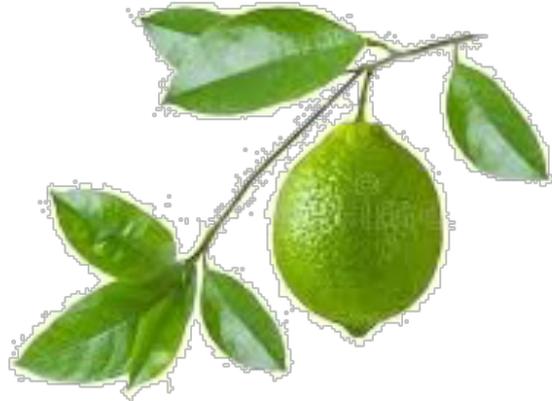
Time for something sweet! Here is another yummy and easy recipe from our Cooking Class facilitator, **Georgia Karavis**. You could substitute lemons if you don't have limes – though you might want to omit the nutmeg. You could also add desiccated coconut to either variation.

Why not whip up a batch this weekend?

LIME BISCUITS

Ingredients:

- 1 2/3 cups plain flour
- 1 tsp baking powder
- ¼ tsp salt
- ¼ tsp ground cinnamon
- ¼ tsp nutmeg
- 185g butter, softened
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 Tbsp lime zest, finely grated
- 2 Tbsp lime juice



Spice Mix:

- 1/3 cup caster sugar
- ¼ tsp ground cinnamon
- 1/4 tsp nutmeg

Method:

- Preheat oven to 180 and line biscuit trays.
- Sift together dry ingredients, leaving out sugar.
- Beat butter, sugar and lime rind together until light and fluffy.
- Gradually add in lime juice, continuing to beat.
- Fold in flour ½ a cup at a time to make dough.
- Mix spice mix together.
- Form walnut sized balls and roll in spice mix.
- Arrange 3cm apart and roll in spice mix.
- Bake for 15-20 minutes.



GETTING TO KNOW YOU

This week we hear from **Julie Johnston**, who is the Neighbourhood House networker for the North East region. Julie has had this position for nine years and supports 35 Neighbourhood Houses across the region, including Railway House. Her wealth of experience in the sector is highly valued and her support much appreciated.

Here is Julie's inspiring story of change and empowerment through sport and physical activity. Keep up the good work, Julie!



"Do you remember at school when the teacher picked two students to be the captains and they took it in turns to select people to be on their teams. Towards the end of the process there would be a few kids left that neither captain wanted on their team. I was one of those kids. I'd stand there awkwardly and one of them would say – you can have her.

It wasn't just team sports that I hated. I still recall the humiliation of a swimming carnival race. I hadn't even reached the end of the pool when the gun went off to start the next race. Needless to say I didn't feel great about my sporting abilities.

Twenties – inspired

In my first job as a new graduate, I worked with another Julie. She was about to celebrate her 50th birthday. I remember thinking she's the kind of 50-year-old I want to be. She shared the secret to her wellbeing was swimming three times a week. I really wasn't keen on the idea of being out of bed at 6am or smelling like chlorine but somehow she convinced me to give it a go. Having someone to meet at the pool who would know if I had slept in motivated me to get started and from there I developed a love of lap swimming. I enjoy the exercise benefits and find it calming and meditative.

Thirties – going places

When I was approaching my 30th birthday I had a conversation with a man called Rex who was about to turn 70. He was celebrating his birthday by going on a 70km bike ride. He always liked to ride a kilometre for every year of his life on his birthday. I was super impressed as I didn't think I could make it 30km on a bike. Rex invited me on a ride with the Wangaratta BUGs (Bicycle User Group). I made it 30km and got bitten by the cycling bug. I found some cycling friends and went on lots of cycling adventures including Around the Bay, various rail trails and high country cycling trips. My favourite place to ride now is the Main Yarra Trail. I call it my sanity saver.



Forties – finding my power

I was with a group of parents watching our 8-year-old kids slogging it out in a cross-country event for school. I thought to myself - 3km... *I couldn't even run that far! I'm a non-runner.* It was a family joke that the only time I ran was when there was a train approaching the platform. Just before my 47th birthday I decided I wanted to change that. I downloaded the "Couch to 5K" app onto my phone and began a running program. It was nothing magic, just run for 30 seconds then walk 2 minutes, slowly building up over a number of weeks to running 5km. I surprised myself that I actually enjoyed running. My teenage self would never have imagined that I would be hooked on running and gladly getting on my running gear 3 times a week. Running has made me feel strong. It makes me feel tougher physically and mentally.

Last year when someone asked me what I was going to do to celebrate my upcoming 50th birthday I impulsively said "a Triathlon!" I began looking into triathlons and decided to give it a go rather than wait until I turned 50. I started with a "fun triathlon" then progressed to "Sprint Triathlons". Sandringham in December 2019 was my favourite race. I had such a high crossing the finishing line after swimming 600m in the bay, riding 20km then running 5km. I love the thrill of achieving something I never thought I could do.

My neighbour warned me, be careful, triathlons are addictive – he was right. I'm looking forward to my next triathlon fix but just can't imagine when we will be able to have an event that brings together 5000 people.

Fifty – what's next?

I did a Rex ride on my 50th this year which happened to fall between lockdowns. Groups of less than ten people met us at designated points along the track for refreshments. I don't think I've ever had happy birthday sung to me so many times in one day or eaten so much cake!

I'm really missing swimming but I'm thankful that I can still ride and run. I love it that I can go out running and not have to wear a mask. In fact the idea of having to put a mask on if I take a walk break is a great motivator to keep me running. The 5km radius limit put a dampener on my bike riding but now I do laps of the ring road at La Trobe Uni. I like to think of it as my personal velodrome.

I'm probably the fittest I've ever been in my life. I'm trying to train as if I have an event coming up. I want to be ready for spring and life after lockdown."



LOCKDOWN LAUGHS



Submitted by **John Potts**, from our bike riding group. 😊

AND FINALLY...



With spring nearly upon us and plenty of lovely weather for walking, you might want to check out the Princes Hill Heritage Walk. The walk takes in several iconic buildings and sites, and the downloadable map & key will guide and inform you along the way! The walk takes 2 ½ to 3 hours to complete, so if doing it in Stage 4, we suggest that you do it in 1-hour segments. For information and printable map, visit <https://www.yarracity.vic.gov.au/the-area/visiting-yarra/heritage-walks/princes-hill-heritage-walk>

Thank you to **Megan Scannell**, local resident and Chair of Railway House's Committee of Management, for sending this through.