



THE RAILWAY EXPRESS #13

A SPECIAL WEEKLY NEWSLETTER TO HELP US STAY CONNECTED

AROUND THE HOUSE

Well it wasn't quite what we were expecting when it was announced two weeks ago that Stage 4 restrictions would remain in place for an extra two weeks, but the small changes that occurred this week were most certainly welcome. We are now able to enjoy catching up in pairs for reasons other than exercise, and playgrounds are open! What terrific timing, too - the blue skies brought people out this week and it was lovely to see the playground next to the House being enjoyed by so many parents and toddlers.

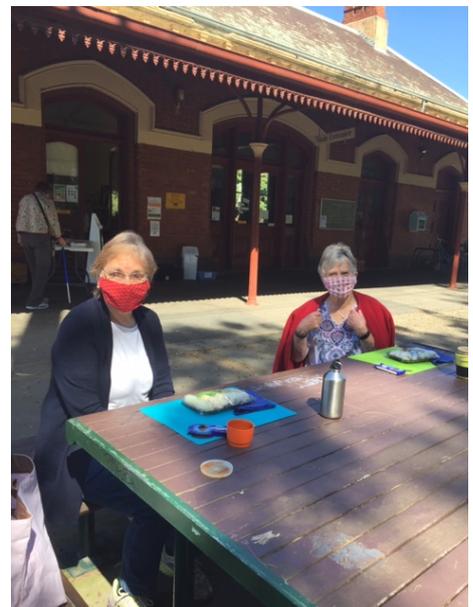
It was also great to see a few familiar faces around the House. Our neighbour **Simon** stopped for a chat and enjoyed a walk around the garden. He was a farmer back when he lived in Ethiopia and is looking forward to growing some vegetables in the garden, but in the meantime he was happy to do a little of bit of pruning of the pea shoots that have sprung up from the pea straw.



We also enjoyed a visit from **Carolyn**, who was out for a walk, as well as **Val** and **Joanna** who met up at Railway House for a picnic. **Alison** was treated to a homemade rice paper roll for lunch (it was delicious, by the way, Joanna!).

Don't forget there is staff member here every day from 10am to 2pm (including over the next two weeks during the school holidays) so if you'd like to say hello whilst out on your walk please do, we are always up for a chat! There are some excellent books on our book trolley and in our Footpath Library, and you can still drop off food donations and items for recycling.

In other news, we have been lucky enough to receive a small grant from the **Inner North Community Foundation** to refurbish the computer room and over the holidays we will be transforming it into a more





comfortable space for people to meet and relax with a cuppa, or use our brand-new laptops. We are really excited about this and cannot wait to welcome you into this new space.

Plans continue for our new cooking program **Food In Common** and we are really looking forward to the start of this program next term, on **Wednesday 7 October**. This program is aimed at people over the age of 60 who will learn to cook delicious healthy recipes with fortnightly recipe packs and instructional videos. There are a couple of places left so please contact **Lisa C** asap if you would like to book in.

Finally we would like to say congratulations to all the children who have participated in **karate** classes on Zoom this term. It is not an easy thing to stay motivated when classes are on Zoom - we all know that it is just not the same - but Sensei Helen reports that they have all done a wonderful job in staying focussed and some of them will be undertaking grading (also on Zoom) in the school holidays. Good luck to **Isaac, Sam, Amelie, Emily, Angus, Ayla, Zac, Izaak, Saskia, Hadya and Galan** - let us know how you go!

We will be in touch at the end of the school holidays to let you know what is happening in Term 4. Hopefully by then we will have had some indication as to what we can expect in terms of opening up the House before the end of the year.

Alison, Lisa C, Lisa G and Jeff

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YOUR NEWS: WHAT HAVE YOU BEEN UP TO?

Lina is a new member of the Railway House community. She and her husband Vedi moved to Brunswick recently for his work at Melbourne Uni, before that they lived in Perth. Lina grew up in Sumatera, western Indonesia.

During lockdown Lina has been keeping busy with patchwork and sewing masks! Many of them are made from traditional Indonesian **batik** fabric and she is still perfecting her designs. Lina kindly donated some to Railway House in support of the community. Welcome, Lina! We hope to see more of you soon.

And for anyone wanting to sew masks for donation, we have several bolts of coloured cotton available – please contact the office.



Elva is a member of our knitting group and like many of them, she has been using the extra time at home to create! Elva dropped by Railway House on one of her walks and showed us a couple of projects she's working on – knitting a warm scarf, and a latch hook pillow cover.



Goh is a local resident and member of our **table tennis** group who wrote in last week to say “The word for crisis in Chinese is **weichi**, which implies both the meaning of danger and opportunity. The pandemic has given me the much-needed kick up the bum to pick up my high school hobby of watercolour painting again. Here is a sample of what I have been doing.”



Williamstown



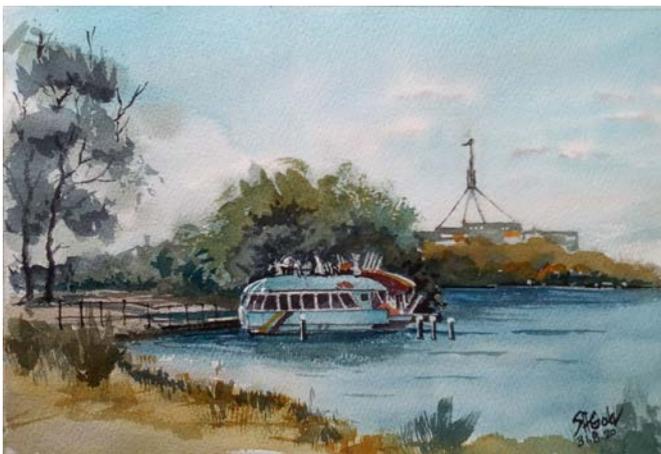
Li River, Yanshuo, Guannxi, China



Moeraki Boulders, New Zealand



Manukan Island, North Borneo



Houseboats on Lake Burley Griffin



Norfolk Island



GARDEN UPDATE

by Jenny Gardner

Many of you have asked about the crop that is now thriving in the garden – it is pea straw, planted as a great source of nitrogen – good for the soil and helps retain moisture. We want the pea straw to keep doing its work, so please don't pick it. When we are ready to plant, the mulch will also protect our seeds and seedlings.

Our new fruit trees are also growing strong. We have two apple trees, two pear trees and one apricot. Thank you, Ken, for planting them!

Over the last month or so we have:

- Placed 4 temporary planter boxes on-site for restoration and replanting while we wait for some wheelchair-accessible boxes to replace them in 2021.
- Worked with a graphic designer/illustrator in collaboration with City of Yarra Open Spaces to develop a unique sign for the garden – two of these beautiful signs will be placed on our borders to welcome people into the space. A communication board is also being made so the gardeners will know what work to do each week and to provide information to the public about the plants.
- We are ready for the water connection but may not be able to connect until 2021. Ours is an old area of Carlton North, and the pipes are rather old and corroded.
- Staff have cleared out storage space in readiness for garden equipment to be housed.
- There is a vacant strip of land between the bocce court and the mesh fence – we will be working with City of Yarra to improve the very poor soil there over a 12-month period, to eventually develop a native meadow which will integrate nicely with the Council's native plantings near the cycle path.



At this stage, it is thought that by November at the earliest we will be able to have up to 10 people onsite. The reality is that we will open only when it is safe to do so. The soil is ready and waiting, and the fruit trees are being hand-watered by subcommittee members that are still in Melbourne. The job for us all now is to be positive, to be patient, and to be grateful that we have got this far at all. City of Yarra are working with us on a process & timeline for opening up the garden in step with the opening up of Melbourne.

Keep your eye on the website for more details over the coming week:

www.railwaygarden.org.au



REFLECTIONS: RONA SCRUBS

During July and August this year, Railway House was able to support the Rona Scrubs scheme, by distributing around 50 scrubs to health care workers in the City of Yarra and surrounding suburbs. Rona Scrubs is a not-for-profit organisation initiated in response to COVID-19, as a way of giving back to our healthcare heroes.

Volunteers and 'sewing angels' have worked tirelessly to sew and distribute over 6000 scrubs to healthcare workers around the country.

Scrubs are durable, protective clothing worn by healthcare workers. The mission of Rona Scrubs was to help ease some of the burdens and worries healthcare workers are facing during COVID-19 so that they can focus on where they add the most value.

While scrubs alone will not provide sufficient protection for our healthcare workers against COVID-19, donning a uniform upon arrival at work does reduce the risk of outside contamination of that workplace. Conversely, removing a uniform (or scrubs) before leaving the workplace minimises the risk of potential contamination into the wider community and the homes of healthcare workers.



Many thanks to all the incredible sewing Angels who contributed their works to this project, and the tireless service of the health care heroes! Also to Railway House staff and volunteers who sorted and distributed and delivered the garments to their recipients.



GETTING TO KNOW YOU

This week we meet **Megan Scannell**, a local resident and current president of the Railway House Committee of Management.



"I have lived in Princes Hill for more than 25 years and yet 2020 has been a year of rediscovering my neighbourhood. I have a passion for local history and have been researching the history of my own home, particularly the stories of the people who have lived here and the way in which they reflect the larger history of Princes Hill. There is so much you can discover just sitting at home and doing online searches. The publications and newsletters produced by the Carlton Community History Group (<http://www.cchg.asn.au>) are also a great resource for those interested in local history.

I enjoy finding the physical traces of that history as I walk around Princes Hill as well as seeing the creative ways in which our community is supporting one another through the COVID lockdown. The Spoonville on McPherson Street and the joyful signs in widows and yards have certainly made my smile. Thank you to all those creative people bringing us joy!

This year I have also spent lots of time zooming (a word and technology I didn't even know until this year). I am grateful that technology has enabled me to stay connected and participate in activities and exercise classes but I do really miss being able to gather with friends and family.



Our cat seems to be the one who most enjoys having us at home so much. Unfortunately for me, she loves to sit between the keyboard and computer screen and at times has even mastered pushing the delete key!

Like a few other people who have shared their stories in the newsletter, I was born in the US (in New York City) but have made Australia my home. My husband is Australian and we met when we were both students in Boston. When I first arrived in Australia, we lived in Sydney and then moved to Melbourne in 1994. Before retiring from paid work a few years ago, I worked in the public sector as a lawyer and policy adviser.



My connection with the Railway House began twenty years ago when my children were young and we would visit the playground often (the play equipment was so different then) as well as occasional events and parties at the house. In more recent years, I have been involved in the committee of management, the book club and the development of the garden.

As I say often 'I am not a gardener' but I am very excited about the possibilities for food growing and community interaction that the garden will enable when we finally get the chance to begin planting. Jane from the garden group has even inspired me to get interested in composting and I am reading a book she

lent me, *Call of the Reed Warbler* by Charles Massy. That is what I love about the Railway House, the chance to meet new people and learn from them!

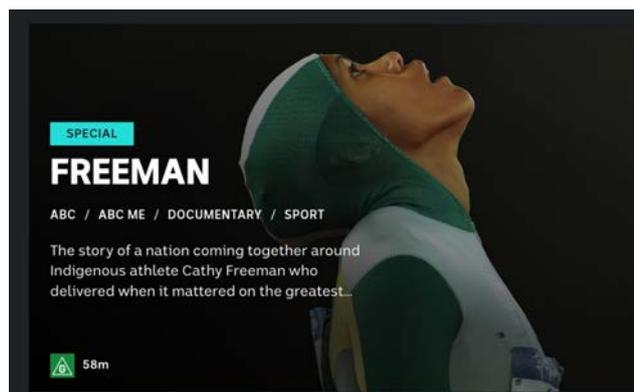


TOP PICKS



If you haven't already seen it, **Lisa C.** from the office highly recommends the short documentary "**Freeman**", currently streaming on ABC iView. This documentary was first broadcast this week as the 20th anniversary of Freeman's electrifying win in the 400 metres at the 2000 Olympics approaches. It is a sensitive and powerful exploration of what it means – and meant – for Cathy Freeman as an Indigenous person, as an athlete and as a young woman – and of the pressures placed on her by an expectant nation. Beautifully captured using archival footage, imagery of Freeman in the current day and captivating dance sequences from the Bangarra Dance Theatre, this documentary is bound to resonate with viewers on many levels. Highly recommended!

Lisa's rating: ★★★★★





LET'S TALK FOOD

Zucchini is **Alison's** favourite vegetable and she was thrilled to recently add this to her repertoire of dishes that feature zucchini. If you're after a light dinner, this is great served with a salad.

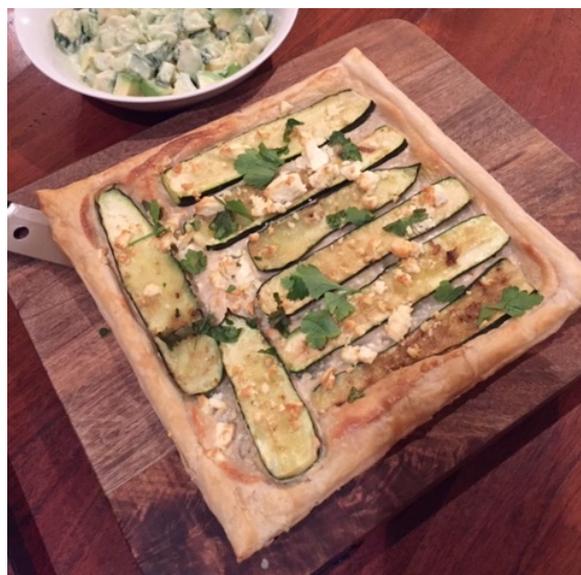
ALISON'S ZUCCHINI TART WITH TAHINI SAUCE

INGREDIENTS (Serves 2)

1 sheet of frozen puff pastry, thawed
1-2 zucchinis
Small amount of crumbly feta
Parsley
Extra virgin olive oil, salt, pepper

For tahini sauce:

½ C tahini (sesame paste)
Extra virgin olive oil
2 cloves of garlic
Juice of half a lemon
1 tablespoon natural yoghurt
Cumin powder, cayenne powder (optional)
Salt



METHOD

(Preheat oven to 175 degrees while you prepare the tart components.)

TAHINI SAUCE

1. Combine the tahini with a good splash of the olive oil, finely minced garlic, lemon juice, and salt. Don't worry if it looks lumpy, this will be fixed when you add some water
2. Add *lukewarm* water a little at a time and whisk – it may go even more lumpy to start with – this is normal – just keep adding more water until it turns into a creamy sauce (for this recipe you want it the same consistency as a spread/dip but you could add more water if you wanted to make a runnier dressing).
3. Stir in the yoghurt
4. Add more salt if required (and a sprinkle of ground cumin and cayenne if desired)



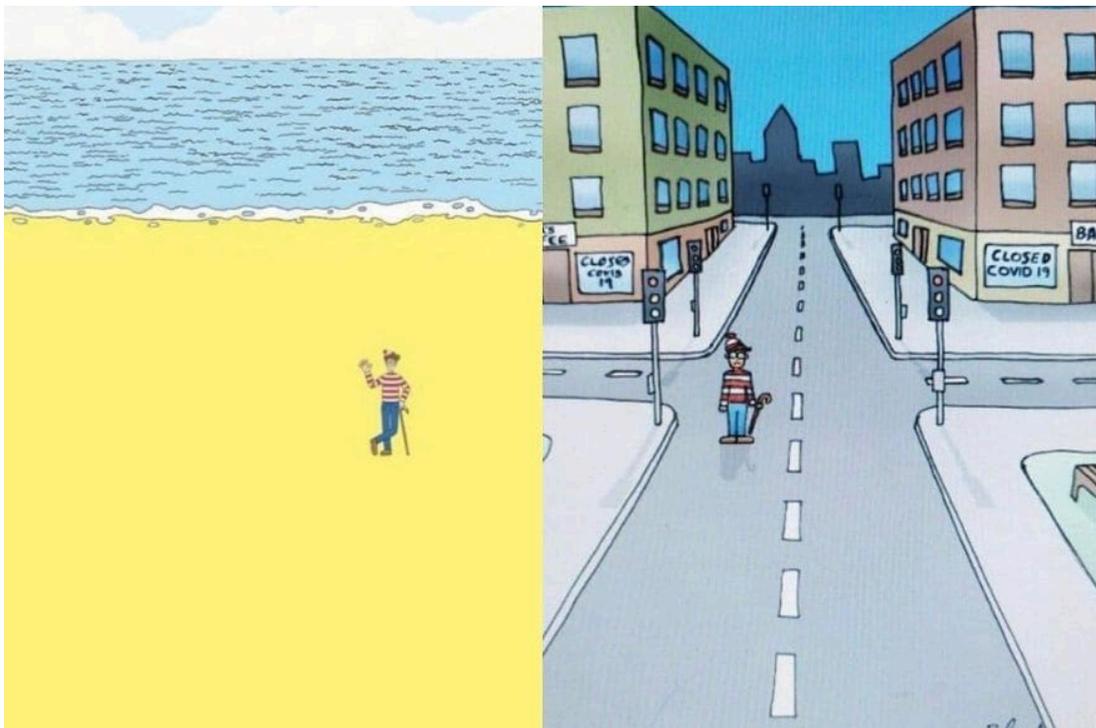
Note: This is delicious and the leftover sauce can be used in lots of ways such as in wraps or as a drizzle for veggies.

TART

1. Slice the zucchinis lengthways, about half a centimetre thick, and toss in a bowl with the olive oil, salt and pepper
2. Heat a griddle or frying pan and add the zucchini. Cook on both sides until browned.
3. Spread the tahini sauce on to the puff pastry and top with zucchini strips in a single layer
4. Sprinkle with crumbled feta
5. Bake until the pastry is golden and the zucchini is starting to brown (about 30 minutes)
6. Sprinkle with fresh parsley to serve



LOCKDOWN LAUGHS



"Where's Wally?" Coronavirus Edition



JUST FOR FUN – PET PHOTOGRAPHY COMPETITION

We know many of you are proud pet owners – and we thought it would be fun to have a pet photography competition. Entries to be judged by a special guest judge, and prizes awarded! The categories are:

- 🐾 DOG WITH THE CUTEST FACE
- 🐾 CAT WITH THE CUTEST FACE
- 🐾 MOST CUDDLY-LOOKING PET
- 🐾 MOST ATHLETIC-LOOKING PET
- 🐾 PET THAT MOST RESEMBLES ITS OWNER (must include photo of owner)
- 🐾 BEST-DRESSED PET (pet to be dressed in clothing or an accessory)
- 🐾 BEST EARS (any pet)
- 🐾 MOST BEAUTIFUL EYES (any pet)

Submissions to be made via email to admin@railwayneighbourhoodhouse.org.au with the subject line: "Pet Competition". You can enter your pets in any number of categories, just send a separate photo for each and state clearly which category you are entering.



Entries close at 5:00 PM on **Wednesday, 30th September**.

AND FINALLY...

The Melbourne Symphony Orchestra Chorus and musicians of the MSO joined forces with the community recently to sing an ode to our city, as part of a special video project dedicated to all Melburnians. Featuring almost 200 people, this virtual choir performance of Paul Kelly's iconic Leaps and Bounds features musicians of the MSO, members of the MSO Chorus, and community vocalists from across Australia.

Dedicated to all Melburnians, this performance serves as a timely reminder that while Melbourne's road to recovery post Covid-19 will be challenging, music will always bring us together.

You can watch the performance here: <https://youtu.be/3beZpPOFkXk>