



THE RAILWAY EXPRESS #17

A SPECIAL NEWSLETTER TO HELP US STAY CONNECTED

AROUND THE HOUSE

It's been an eventful week in Melbourne, with demonstrations in the city and now an earthquake to add to our locked-down lives! Yesterday was quite unsettling and I hope everyone is doing ok. Onwards we plod, but now, thankfully, with a road map out of lockdown and a feeling that there are better days ahead. Here's hoping that Melbourne hits those vaccination targets.

The slower pace of school holidays is usually very welcomed by me, but the pace doesn't feel a whole lot different to what it has been over the last six weeks. I hope that those of you with school-aged children are at least enjoying the break from juggling work and supporting your children's learning and that you get some time to rest and relax with them.

Term 4 starts on October 4 and will run for 11 weeks until December 17. Please find our timetable [here](#). All things going to plan, we will be able to resume some programs at the end of October. Until then, programs that have been running online will continue online, and Railway House will only be open for essential services such as our food relief program. Tuesday and Wednesday mornings at the House have become quite busy with people attending our mini food market, and we are very much enjoying our interactions with members of our community on these days. As **Lisa G** says "everyone's social cups receive a bit of a refill by the end of market day". Lisa did a walk around at the local public housing estate recently to let people know about our market, and we have been delighted to make some new connections with residents as a result. Thanks to our wonderful gardeners who supply the stall with the harvest of the day as well.



With restrictions now allowing for people from two households to meet for picnics, you might like to consider meeting up with someone from your group at the House. We have picnic tables and of course our beautiful garden, and we would love to see you! It was great



to see **Arthur** on his birthday last week and I enjoyed a coffee and cake with him. If you do come by the House, don't forget that we are still accepting food donations for the Asylum Seeker Welcome Centre.

Several of our groups are staying connected with each other online, including participants in our Tai Chi and Women's Exercise classes as well as Choir, Knitting and Bike Riding groups. The bike riders have a weekly quiz at their online catch up, which is sometimes informative and sometimes not - the answer to all questions in a recent one being 'potatoes' for example! Other topics have been food, geography, Mornington Peninsula celebrities and lockdown rules (I hope they all did well on that one!).

Karate students have also continued their lessons online. I know from my daughter's experience of doing her dance lessons on Zoom that this is not easy for either students or teachers and I would like to congratulate **Sensei Helen** and her students for their perseverance. Amazingly, the students also undertook grading online! Well done **Aleck, Emily, Saskia, Angus, Isaac** and **Sam!**

Finally, we have started work on our Annual Report and have set a date for our AGM, which will be held on **Tuesday 9 November**. It is very important to us that we have a committee that is representative of our community and would therefore like to encourage people who participate in our programs, and anyone with a strong connection to the House, to nominate. Please contact me for a chat if you are interested in finding out what's involved.

Best of luck to those of you whose team is playing in the Grand Final this weekend - I hope it's a good game! Will the Demons break the Norm Smith curse...?

See you soon.

Alison





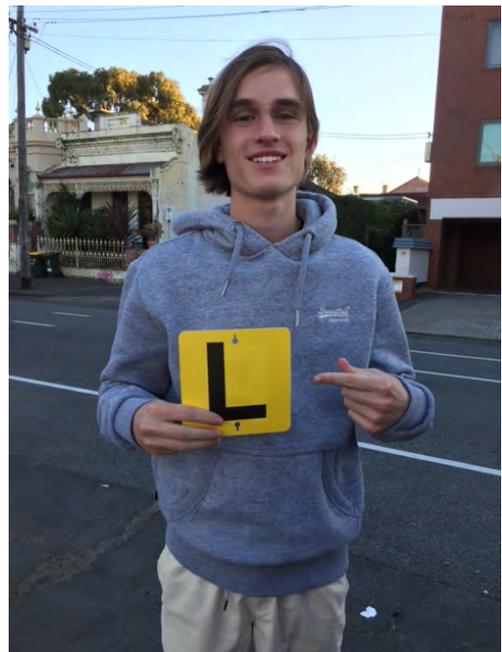
WHAT HAVE YOU BEEN UP TO?

Pam from our choir and lunch groups (and who is also on our Committee of Management) baked a traditional honey cake to celebrate the Jewish New Year. Recipe later in this edition!



Charles from the gardening groups has been creating again, this time experimenting with fermentation. Here he's got a jar of Brussels Sprouts from the Railway House garden on the go. We can't wait to hear how they work out!

Alison has been spending "quality" time in the car with her 16 year old son Archie. She is yet to teach him how to parallel park or do a hook turn, but progress is good. 23 hours logged, 97 to go...





GETTING TO KNOW YOU

This week we meet Simone Litchfield, who runs our popular Inclusive (Chair) Yoga classes!

I grew up in Sydney in Dharawal Country close to bushland and The Royal National Park. I was fortunate to have a supportive family who gave me the opportunity to follow my passion and embark on a dance career.



In my late teens, I travelled to many country towns in NSW, Queensland and Victoria performing to young people in schools, then I took a big trip to England where I completed a Postgraduate Performance Course at London Contemporary Dance School. Highlights included travel and performing in Slovenia and Bulgaria (and living in a squat in Brixton with some great friends).

I had some dance work in London (incl. Russell Maliphant Company) before moving to Ireland and working with CoisCeim Dance Theatre and other companies for nearly 7 years. It was in Ireland that I fell in love and our first son was born. Moving back to Australia in 2002 with my family and before the birth of our second son, it was lovely to return to the beaches and blue skies. Three years later another son was born and he has just turned 16!

I love being involved in the community, where people are diverse in their backgrounds, stories and abilities. I have taught at Neighbourhood Houses in the northern suburbs for nearly 12 years now and in 2020 was very excited to also open my own studio in Coburg (Ergo Yoga Space). It's been challenging with all the lockdowns, but have still managed to connect with people which is most important. While it's been challenging, I have seen a lot of generosity and kindness towards others and I hope people are also being kind to themselves.

I've always been interested in the moving body and the internal energy or movement that exists when we are still, connecting with the energy of stillness while you are moving (could be dancing or just moving through your daily life) can bring a heightened sense of awareness and good feelings. This I hope to share with others through my current yoga teaching.

Sthira Sukham Asanam: Sanskrit verse from Patanjali's Sutras and it means be Firm, But Calm.



"HELLO NEIGHBOUR" MAKERS MARKET

Yes, we WILL all be back together again - meeting outside, catching up and enjoying each other's company. Last Sunday the Government announced that they plan to reach single dose vaccination rates of 80pc early November. Please everyone, join us in reaching those targets.



Here's a reason to get to those targets. If we do, we can launch our exciting new project for the Railway Neighborhood House to celebrate community. As we've announced, we are planning a Makers' Market in partnership with Yarra City Council Libraries. Our first market is on Sunday November 14th, from 9:00 to 12:00. There will be a sausage sizzle with drinks for sale, a performance by one of the Railway House groups to highlight what we have to offer to the community and stalls with crafts, plants, food, etc.

Put these dates in your diary (November 14th, December 12th and February 13th) as we want to have a remarkably busy market for the Christmas rush. Then we will trial one more in February to check that the markets have become a part of the fixture for events at the NCRNH.

If you are interested in having you own stall or want to join in with an activity from NCRNH please tap onto this link: <https://forms.gle/eWsRePvMFLpVwWim8>

Here is an idea that I need some help with. It's a mattress topper for a QS bed. I looked on the internet and they make a great base for a pet bed. Would there be anyone in the community who could work some magic for us that results in pet beds to sell at the market? There may even be other uses that someone with a machine can suggest.



Please let us know if you have any ideas that will assist in making this a joyful, connecting and fun community event.

Trish

on behalf of the Fundraising Subcommittee and Yarra Libraries



ENVIRONMENT: 6 Easy Swaps to Ditch Plastic at the Supermarket

Keen to reduce your plastic waste but finding it all a bit hard? Do your bit for the environment with these top eco tips and workarounds.

Most of us know the score with single-use plastics: they're bad. Really bad. And while the majority of us are pretty diligent about packing our groceries into reusable tote bags (and reusing plastic shopping bags if there's absolutely no other option), there are a few other things we can do at the supermarket to avoid plastic.

1. Utilise bulk bins

Many supermarkets and health food shops allow you to stock up on things like nuts, flours, rice and grains from self-serve bulk bins. This is a really simple way to negate your plastic waste – just remember to bring your own reusable containers from home.



2. Invest in reusable produce bags

We definitely don't need a plastic bag for our apples or bananas, but what about smaller produce like peas, beans or a handful of baby spinach leaves? Stock up on a few reusable mesh produce bags to use instead – or have a crack at sewing your own.



3. Choose products stored in glass or wrapped in paper



Where you can, choose products that are stored in glass, paper or plastic that has already been recycled. Most condiments, drinks, toilet paper, crisps and yoghurt are available to buy in glass or paper packages.

4. Avoid plastic-wrapped fruit and vegies

If buying fresh produce in plastic is unavoidable, and you're in desperate need of a punnet of berries or cherry tomatoes, ask your supermarket to investigate growers who use compostable containers. Otherwise, bypass the supermarket and stock up at your local farmers market or co-op instead.



5. Hit up the butcher, baker, deli and fishmonger



Grabbing your mince and sausages from the fridge is *extremely* convenient, but it also leaves you with a plastic tray to dispose of (or worse – a polystyrene one, which isn't recyclable). Instead, buy things like meat, fish, bread and cheese from the butcher, deli or bakery, where it can be wrapped in paper or stored in a reusable container.

6. Reduce, reuse, refill



Buy refills of things like hand wash, washing detergent and surface sprays, or make the switch to a cleaning product home-delivery service that negates the need for *any* single-use plastics. You could also try your hand at making your own cleaning products – bicarb soda, white vinegar, and a few drops of essential oil is a great all-purpose cleaner.

If plastic is the only option...

Firstly, don't beat yourself up; sometimes it's impossible to get a paper-wrapped option or you can't make it yourself. If you must buy plastic, make sure you can recycle it at the end of its life. Most local councils won't collect soft plastics, so take these to a collection bin at your supermarket (or drop them at Railway House!), where it can be recycled and turned into outdoor furniture, bollards and signage.

Source: www.bankaustr.com.au (thanks, Jeff C.!).





ODE TO COVID

by Janice Petch

An unusual time, how strange is life
People had jobs

People had lives
Fun and laughter and strives.
Planes in the air, cars travelling everywhere.



Then Covid came and made us all scared... caused utter despair.
People lost their jobs
People lost their lives.
No friends or distant family can we see, missing them all terribly.

Shops were closed.
Houses were hosed.
We were told to stay indoors, many people on multiple floors.

But... where are the planes?

Cases became fewer
We looked at a world newer,
and started to mingle again together.

Oh no, Covid has renewed.
Many more cases grew and grew.
So many really,
And a few so silly who spread Covid far and wide.

And where are the planes? Usually so many in the sky.

Six more weeks again in Iso
lots of us growing rather aggro, and can't believe why so.

Then total lockdown and curfew.
Some allowed out, but only a few.

Total silence as I climb into bed.
So many thoughts running through my head...
Where are the planes that normally take off with a drone?
And I live near the airport, that is so close to my home.



JULIA

by Carolyn Ilsley

Her name is Julia.
Some thought her peculiar.
As PM she did sit
(Her jackets "didn't fit"
Germs Greer would declare)
"Her bottom's too big."
Well that's quite a dig.
Fruit basket so empty,
Her manner peremptory.
Abbott copped a blast,
His come-uppance at last!
Sailing away from the treacherous –
(Parliamentary men were so lecherous)
She's gained recognition at last
For her great legislation
Her gains for the nation.

Internationally? A sensation!



TOP PICK



Mara, one of the VCAL students from Princes Hill Secondary College, recommends the movie Monte Carlo. She writes:

“Monte Carlo is one of my all-time favourite movies. It was released in 2011 as a American adventure, romantic comedy film based around three young

women - Grace who is a waitress from Texas, Emma Perkins Grace’s best friend and Meg her uptight step sister. Their trip to Paris doesn’t go as planned as they find themselves being sent off to Monte Carlo after one of the girls Grace was mistaken for Cordelia Winthrop Scott, a British heiress. Both Grace and Cordelia are



identical twins with two very different identities. When they arrive at the hotel in Monte Carlo the girls are greeted by the organiser/host of Cordelia and his son, Theo. Grace soon realises that she likes Theo but knows she has to play a long and continue to act like Cordelia. They are escorted to the ball that night where Grace meets Cordelia’s suspicious Aunt Alicia. Throughout the duration of the film Grace finds it even more difficult to keep up the act and confesses to everyone including Theo which leaves him angry as he believed she was different. Everything turns out okay Grace goes and volunteers at a primary school, where she unexpectedly bumps into Theo who is working at the same school. Emma moves into her new home with her fiancé Owen and Meg is finally happy and travels around the world with Riley who she met in Paris.

I really do recommend this movie for teens and young adults and in saying that you can find yourself watching this movie on either Netflix or other streaming services or websites.”



LET'S TALK FOOD

As promised, here is Pam's recipe for a honey cake, traditionally made to celebrate Jewish New Year.

ROSH HASHANAH HONEY CAKE

Ingredients:

- 2/3 cup clear honey
- 2 large eggs
- 1/2 cup caster sugar
- 1/4 vegetable oil
- 2 cups SR flour
- 1/2 teaspoon each of ground ginger, cinnamon & mixed spice
- 1/2 teaspoon bicarbonate of soda
- 150ml warm water
- Tablespoon of thin honey
- Blanched almonds



Instructions:

1. Grease & line 23cm square cake tin.
2. Warm honey until it thins
3. Beat eggs & sugar until thick & creamy, stir in oil & honey.
4. Sift flour & spices together
5. Dissolve bicarbonate of soda in warm water.
6. Fold flour & water alternatively into egg mixture
7. Pour into cake tin, bake in moderate oven, 150 degrees C for about 1 & 1/4 hours.
8. Leave in tin for 5 minutes then turn onto wire rack to cool.
9. Brush top with thin honey & decorate with blanched almonds.



LOCKDOWN LAUGHS

My doctor said now that I'm older I need to install a bar in the shower!



shared by silversurfers.com



AND FINALLY...

There are a couple of Sustainable House Day events happening in Yarra (online) which we are excited to share, including a virtual home tour by a local resident:



Sustainable House Day virtual tour



Take a [virtual tour](#) through an all-electric, solar-powered Clifton Hill townhouse as part of Sustainable House Day 2021. Built with recycled materials, this energy-efficient home incorporates is completely powered by renewable energy through solar, batteries and all-electric appliances.

If a walking tour is more your thing, you might like to check out these **three routes for you to explore Brunswick!** You can support local businesses, get an alternative outlet for your thoughts, and hopefully bring a different perspective to your day.

<https://brunswickdaily.com.au/community/3-experiences-to-enjoy-brunswick-during-lockdown/>

