

Boronia & The Basin COMMUNITY NEWS

Issue 296
Feb. 2021



Temple Upgrade

See page 8



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From the Editor...

TREES of LIFE

We take trees for granted, after all, they're always there, populating our forests, lining our highways, shading our gardens... and these are just the ones we see.. Like individuals in a Friday nout rush hour, their individual existence and meaning is swallowed by the throng., the forest.

for myself, trees have always been part of my life from a small boy climbing big trees to a more or less grown up man collecting seeds and propagating natives

Then I have to find them a home!

But caring about trees is about much more than admiring their beauty and shading our yard - trees really are the trees of life.

For thousands of years, the tree of life has been a powerful symbol of life, of individual uniqueness bound to a common community. And now, as the spectre of global warming looms large in our nightly news, scientists have determined that if we planted trees in all the readily available spaces in the world it would be enough to stop the growth of carbon emissions, a great starting point for working to contain the menace.

Of course, that's not going to happen.

But it's a start, like any dream.

We saw that trees can do harm as well as good in the August storm that demolished and damaged many homes, even killing several unfortunate people. For a month after that the 'ravine' area of The Basin resonated to the howl of chainsaws in all directions. Not all carried stamp of Council approval. Yet who could blame them? That people died and houses were demolished is a hard argument to counter.

The reality is that trees are responsible clearing pollutants from the air we breathe, countering the 'heat island' affect of summer heatwaves and providing us with much of the food we eat. Cutting some trees down increases the risk of more exposed neighbouring trees falling in strong winds. At their worst, trees are much less dangerous than more cars and few of us would hang up our car keys if we heard of a fatal collision.

We need to find some balance in the trees we plant and the respect we owe them.

As a starting point, look towards planting more indigenous trees to support our biodiversity. Learn to love your life giving trees if you don't already.

John Mortimore

NEW phone: 0438 560 260

E: contact@bbcnc.org.au

Share your neighbourhood.

This is a community newspaper run by unpaid volunteers.

If you would like to help in any way; writing, illustration, photography, advertising etc etc - please contact the editor or president. It can be fun!

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We welcome all contributions from our community but can not guarantee publication. Email is preferred but not essential. Articles or letters that have no contact details, are abusive in nature, or contain racial or other vilification will not be published. Insulting the editor is okay only if you do it intelligently and use facts.

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the voice of the community

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Enthusiastic, responsible people passionate about communication and their neighbourhood are needed to assist on the committee.

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Common Birds

This month I'll be banging on about... taking things for granted. Flushing toilets, light switches, gas stovetops, fresh high-quality food at supermarkets, comfortable mattresses to sleep on (millions of people worldwide sleep on the ground or perhaps a thin mat) and the greatest of all, drinking water of the highest quality at the turn of a tap. Poor people living in countries like Africa must wonder at that, it being their greatest problem, having no access to clean water.

And the list doesn't stop there. It includes the people around us who love and look after us, our families, our friends. Beach holidays, rainfall to sustain us, sunshine to enjoy, I don't know where to stop really. And I'm as big an offender as the next person, grumbling and complaining at small inconveniences. But I'm supposed to be talking about birds, so thought I would pay homage to the birds we take for granted, the ones we see everyday and don't even bat an eyelid at.

Our next-door neighbours are Linda and Ian. Linda is an English lady and Ian, I only recently found out, is of Scottish heritage but grew up in the Falkland Islands. Pack your winter woollies for that one. But in their back-yard is a massive English Oak tree, and in that Oak tree an English Blackbird sang for the last half of October and all of November last year. From first light until dark it sang its heart out, when it fed or had a drink is beyond me. I honestly never heard it stop to draw breath. Now, I'm a purist, introduced species of anything didn't really do it for me until one day my wife Adrienne commented on what an incredible sound it was. I stopped and listened to it and finally had to admit, yep, wow, what a beautiful song he has, the common much maligned English Blackbird.

In August this year a pair of Peewee's moved into our neighbourhood. Peewee, Peewit, Magpie-Lark, Mud-Lark, call him what you want, you know the bird I'm talking about. Looks like a smaller version of a Magpie, got him? Yep, common as clay. And yet if you look at them, they are quite comical. When they walk they have a sort of swagger, head rocking backwards and forwards with each step and the call is hilarious, well at least I find it funny. Great sound!

Common Starlings are an invasive, destructive pest species which quite frankly, shouldn't be here in Australia, get rid of the bludgers. But next winter, try and take notice of one. The winter plumage of this bird is quite spectacular, with a glossy bronze-green and purplish hue over black plumage and striking white streaks. So there,



White faced heron - local wetland

even European Starlings have their up-side.

Birdwatchers who visit wetlands tire of seeing White-faced Herons. Come on, give me a Spoonbill or Egret to look at, a Wood Sandpiper or a Red-kneed Dotterel, anything but a White-faced Heron. Next time you see one, stop to admire its graceful elegant movements as it patiently stalks its prey. It will lean forward and freeze, its whole body defying gravity, like a tortuous pilates move which you could only hold for a few moments. And the striking contrast of the yellow legs against the grey plumage. That's a great bird.

I remember a few years ago meeting a man down on the Rankin road bike track. He noticed I had binoculars (A Collared Sparrowhawk was nesting in the big Pine trees) and started to talk about birds. Of all things, I helped him identify a little bird who had been visiting his garden and I worked out it was an Eastern Spinebill. He told me he was from Liverpool, I seem to remember, and said he came to Australia in the late 60s. He confided in me that he was contemplating returning to England to live out his dotage in the motherland. He finished the conversation by saying the thing he would miss most about Australia was the chortling carolling call of the Magpie. Yep, I know where he's coming from.

My electrician mate Mal, who tags all my gear, told me recently that his son and his son's girlfriend were visiting from Canada, she being a Canadian lass who had not been to Australia before. He told me that the thing she most wanted to hear was a Kookaburra in full voice. Her joy on

Our Page 3 Birds



European sparrow, Gallipoli,

hearing one was unbridled happiness. Can you imagine being an overseas visitor hearing that for the first time? I reckon you'd have to join in the laughter with them. I read Mathew Flinders' journal of his first voyage to Australia, and the first night they were anchored off Botany Bay heard peals of laughter coming from the shore. The men on board the ship were convinced they were Aboriginal people laughing at them and could not believe it when they discovered the sound came from a bird. Well, you wouldn't would you?

Well, there's my take on things for the first BBCN edition for 2021. I've made a vow to myself to try to not take things for granted, to appreciate what I've got and even admire things around me that at first blush don't seem all that exciting. Our field trips are up and running again if you want to join us, email me for more info at arc_welding@live.com.au and I'll fill you in on the latest activity.

I would like to fully endorse the Save Lake Knox protest. Scientific studies prove the benefits that would be lost would not be offset by the new proposal. The Blue-billed Duck needs all the help he can get, so in my humble opinion, get on board and sign the petition everyone.

Des Palmer

Special Olympics Australia Melbourne Eastern Ranges, MER Welcome to our official RAID! Our Return And Invitation Day 21st February 2021 10.30 am start to 1.30pm

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In Memory of Norma

There will be a countless number of locals who over the last 30 years attended the Boronia ANZ to carry out banking transactions of one form or another. Whilst in there, there is every chance you would have been looked after by Norma. She spent time as a teller and then for a many number of years was on the service desk taking care of all other banking matters not normally performed with tellers. It was with immense sadness that I learned that Norma had passed away on October 15th. She had been away from the bank for some time whilst on long service leave but at the same time was battling ill health. She will be missed deeply by all of us who enjoyed the personalised care and attention she gave, not normally found in this industry. Nothing was too much trouble for Norma, and she enjoyed being able to help people with all of their banking needs. She was taken too soon, too soon to enjoy a long retirement with her family. Sincere condolences to Bill, Tony and Chris and family. We all loved Norma.

NEW early learning centre opens.

Children's House of Early Learning is a brand-new Centre in Boronia and is a privately-owned family business that operates for 52 weeks of the year. We are a 100-place licensed Care and Education service that offers Long Day Care, Three-year-old kindergarten and a funded four-year-old Kindergarten Program. We offer full-time or part-time care for children aged six weeks to six years.

As we enter 2021 with COVID restrictions lifted, we are excited to run our Bush Kinder program! We believe in the importance of building connections with our wider community, and for children to be active participants within their community. Each week our educators and children participate in a venture outside the Centre to enjoy the local parks, go for a bush walk, or visit local businesses in the community such as the library, supermarket, op shop, post office and Kmart.

Our Centre also offers three weekly amazing programs! We have music classes with Adam from Hey Dee Ho Music, HYPE – Helping Young People Energise dance and fitness with educator and personal trainer Jade, and yummy MasterChef classes in our fully equipped children's dining room.

If you would like to hear more about our Centre, please call our Director Jaqui on 9762 5974

Ride for Medical Research

Every year the Rotary Clubs of Boronia and Healesville jointly organise a bike ride around the Victorian countryside, raising funds for the important medical research supported by Australian Rotary Health*.

This year, due to continuing restrictions on our ability to gather and travel as a group, we are replacing the usual event with a do-it-yourself event:

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* Australian Rotary Health, Rotary Australia's not-for-profit health research fund provider, is one of the largest independent funders of mental health research within Australia. Apart from mental health, it also supports a broad range of other general health areas, including scholarships for rural medical and nursing and Indigenous health students.

Australian Rotary Health provides support for areas of health that do not readily

attract other funding and publishes and promotes research findings to the community.

For more information on Australian Rotary Health or Rotary go to:

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Great News for Boronia

I'm very pleased to advise that the new Minister for Suburban Development, Shaun Leane announced late yesterday that Knox Council and the Boronia Activity Centre has been successful in being earmarked for the new *Neighbourhood Activity Centre Renewal Fund*, as one of 6 Activity Centres across Melbourne selected. Boronia, along with the five other centres will share in \$3M of funding to be directed towards revitalisation projects/works. They are being treated as the showcase activity centres for revitalisation, to follow in the footsteps of previous work undertaken by local and state governments for Frankston and Broadmeadows activity centres. This is being managed through the Office of Suburban Development.

The grant will go towards leveraging co-investment to improve the local areas through upgrades to parks and other public spaces, increased lighting, public art installations and new footpaths and bike paths. This

funding will provide a real kick-start for Council in implementing the Boronia Renewal Strategy, supporting the activity centre's short and long term revitalisation journey.

Council officers are pulling together information from the Draft Boronia Renewal Strategy 2019 to assist with identification of suitable works. The funding is designed to be leveraged and compliment financial and in-kind contributions from Council and other stakeholders. The Office of Suburban Development (OSD) will be working with Council in a list of shovel ready projects that will ultimately be considered by the Minister. More importantly, as the program has a partnership focus, the OSD will also provide its support to Council in working with and coordinating other government departments in advancing projects and programs for Boronia.

This is an exciting opportunity to kick start some of the actions in the Draft Boronia Renewal Strategy 2019, and to progress from planning to implementation. We will continue our conversations with DJPR to better understand the detail of the funding program, and to provide them with any information that they require on Boronia.

It's been a long journey so far, and I wanted to acknowledge the efforts of the Ward Councillors, Peter Lockwood and John Mortimore in supporting the overall strategy and project for Boronia and the work to come. I'd also like to acknowledge the work of the team who have been engaging directly with the OSD to advocate for Boronia to be selected as a prime activity centre for funding, now coming to fruition. Anthony, Madeline, Patrick and Jo in Knox Council's City Futures department have all been doing what they can to support the OSD in arriving at this decision with the Minister.



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Keith Cree

Keith joined the Boronia West Primary School council committee in the 1960s when his eldest daughter entered school, and remained on the committee as each of his remaining three children passed through that school.

Six years later his eldest daughter started at Knox Technical School and then Keith joined that school council serving as Treasurer, Co-operative Director and President.

His total service to both schools amounts to twenty plus years and a large part of that was overlapping service working for both schools at the same time.

Whilst serving on both school committees and in pursuit of a safer neighborhood he saw fit to squeeze in fifteen years service as a zone leader in the neighbourhood watch program and a further five years as a member of Rotary.

Late in 1999 Keith's wife Rosalie used to walk past her friends house in Boronia and, as friends do, would stop and pass the time of day. Talk turned to how difficult the Treasurer's position had become and Rosalie suggested that it may be a good idea if she asked Keith if he could '...offer some advice, and if he wanted to help she would give it her full support.

Really no Field Marshall could have devised a better plan, he never stood a chance, joining as Treasurer, then soon to be President and Advertising Manager many times, once again in overlapping roles for the next 20 years.

Whilst all this was going on he managed to snare a position at Puffing Billy Railway where he could indulge his passion for steam trains.

Seven very happy train years and such a great way to finish his well over 60 years of combined voluntary community service.

I first met Keith when I answered an advert in the local

paper advising of a position open on the Committee. We had 3/4 meetings handing over the advertising job and I got to witness the relentless attention to detail, all the i's dotted and the t's crossed, and his uncompromising attitude to right and wrong.

Not everything went smoothly all the time, I was told on one occasion that Quick Books was so named because it was meant to be quick, probably is if at that time I'd understood how to work the damn thing.

Out of these get-togethers we became friends and, like so many other people, I will from time to time get a bit of a smile as I remember some little moment we shared; these are the things that are to be cherished.

Now it's time for you to continue your journey Keith, and you can do so knowing that you have contributed greatly to the many organisations which you have represented, and that you have brought much positive benefit to so many people along the way. You really have done so very, very well."

John Edgley



Eulogy by John Edgley for the passing of friend and colleague, Keith Cree.

"Good morning my name is John Edgley. I'm a committee member of the Boronia and the Basin Community News Paper, and am here today to speak about Keith's quite remarkable service to the local community over the last sixty years.

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Coming out of a CoVid Christmas

Danny Nolan

It was so satisfying having CoVid restrictions lifted in Melbourne so close to Christmas, giving everyone some semblance of normalcy. The ability to have the family together and move freely about, unlike Sydney who seemed to swap places with Melbourne just in time, almost as if we got winter and spring if they could have summer.

After spending the last five to six months in CoVid lockdown with plenty of time to fix things around the house and garden, write and explore hobbies, it was a bit of a shock having more freedom to get about. All of a sudden the pace quickened and time stress became a thing again. especially with Christmas coming up and all the plans that needed to be made then achieved.

It made the lead up to Christmas feel weird, especially at the shopping centre. All those masked people waiting to go into what seemed like a half empty store. Santa Claus sitting by himself with a mask over his beard while little kids sat to one side confused by having their picture taken, supposedly with him.

There were some humorous moments, like the Police walking around with tinsel in their hats and people being

refused entry to shops who didn't wear masks. Because, you know, everyone is sick of Karens, even the male ones. One thing I did find amusing was the line at the Post Office, because of the 1.5 metres distancing the usually long lines at this time of year looked ten times longer, probably not funny to the people in line though.

By our own choosing Christmas was bigger and grander this year. Time spent with family was more relaxed. It was a bit sad that we couldn't have our aged parents over for the day but the care centres were still being cautiously vigilant and it was a stark reminder that things hadn't quite turned the corner yet.

The lockdown made us appreciate the slower pace you don't usually associate with a large city like Melbourne and I have continued to go for walks and maintain the garden and make times for things like my hobbies and collections. Who knows when this will be all over and eventually forgotten and things go back to whatever is considered normal, but I pretty sure the old normal wasn't really that great?

CoVid taught us that.



BUILDING AT THE NEW KNOX SES FACILITY KICKS OFF

As part of the Victorian Government's \$54 million investment in Victoria State Emergency Service (VICSES) facility infrastructure, construction of the new VICSES Knox Unit will soon be underway.

Member for Bayswater Jackson Taylor welcomed the start of the project which will see the unit relocate from Lewis Road, Wantirna South to 609 Burwood Highway, Knoxfield.

The new facility includes a Divisional Control Point, which coordinates major emergency response activities with other emergency services agencies.

Additional features include six drive through motor bays, two training rooms, four additional vehicle storage bays and a design incorporating environmentally sustainable design principles, such as solar panels, water tanks and rain gardens.

The new facility will ensure the unit can strengthen its response to growing communities across the outer eastern metropolitan area and continue to assist Victoria Police, Ambulance Victoria and fire services.

The new unit will sit within the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning's local headquarters and will better equip its 47 volunteers, while helping to support the retention and recruitment of new volunteers.

The VICSES Knox Unit is consistently one of the busiest road rescue units in metropolitan Melbourne, alongside VICSES Frankston, and overall has responded to 2,870 requests for assistance between July 2015 to June 2020.

May Constructions has been awarded the building contract, and the project is due for completion by September 2021.

The Victorian Government's \$54 million investment in VICSES capital works over the past three State Budgets is ensuring the state's emergency services volunteers are equipped with the resources needed to support Victorian communities.

These projects are delivered on behalf of the Victorian Government by the Community Safety Building Authority.

Member for Bayswater Jackson Taylor said, "The whole team at the Knox SES unit go above and beyond, stepping forward when we need them most. It's only right that we back them in with the 21st century facilities, equipment and training they deserve."

"I'm stoked to have been able to go into bat for them, to secure this new facility, and it's fantastic to see that works are already underway. I'm looking forward to joining them on the journey to see this delivered in full."

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Largest Granite Hindu Temple in the Southern Hemisphere opens in The Basin

Victoria's oldest Hindu temple, Sri Vakrahunda Vinayagar Temple is undergoing a historic transformation, making it the largest granite Hindu temple in the Southern Hemisphere.

Sri Vakrahunda Vinayagar Temple, home to Hinduism's most-loved deity Lord Ganesha, has been designed by Australian temple architect (Stapathy) Purushothaman Jayaraman (Puru). Puru drew inspiration from the UNESCO-listed Chola temples and sourced the granite from a single quarry in Tamil Nadu, India. South Indian Hindu temples are reconsecrated once every 13 years and this granite transformation has been completed successfully despite the global pandemic.

The main shrine for Lord Ganesha alone is built from 17 layers of granite, all carved by hand. The roof of the Moolasthanam (the shrine where the main deity resides) is constructed in a conical shape which amplifies the sound of the chanting so that it can be heard around the temple. The roof is capped off by a 6 tonne dome made from a single stone, similar to the UNESCO-listed Brihadeeswarar Temple in Tanjore, Tamil Nadu. Hand carved Ganeshas, elephants, peacocks, lions and lotuses adorn the walls, corners and panels of each shrine.

Granite is a stone that has all the five elements of nature - air, earth, water, fire and space - in optimal proportions. Hindus have always constructed temples using this stone. This age defying stone, which is strong and scratch proof, is believed to



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absorb the divine vibrations and the daily chanting in a temple. The temple is designed to precise mathematical calculations on paper to ensure that when each stone is laid, it is done in such a way that the weight transfer takes place to the sides of the structure. The drawings and designs were sent to the Indian Institute of Technology in Chennai and the calculations were verified and validated by UNESCO-approved civil engineers. They were then rechecked by qualified Australian civil engineers and appropriately certified.

A combination of traditional and modern sculpting tools was used to carve every stone. The figurine is initially drawn on paper, then transferred onto the stone by way of markings. The stone is hollowed out using sculpting tools such as a chisel and hammer as well as modern stone cutting and grinding machines. Depending on the sculptors' imagination, intricacy and complexity of each design as well as the desired outcome, this process can take from a few days to months. At the end, exceptionally fine cement and water are used to hold all the pieces together which make the final form look continuous and flawless.

In India, where the carving and sculpting was done, the project spanned three locations and involved more than 1,200 granite stones weighing from 200kg to 6 tonnes. Close to 100 artisans were involved in the work in India. The carved stones were then packed in expensive silver oak wood to avoid pests and shipped to Melbourne. Once in Melbourne, specifically skilled stone masons were brought from India to assemble each stone to produce this magnificent temple.

Pulling off this project took almost two years, from selecting the temple architect to the final completion. This was done by the 15-member Management Committee of the Melbourne Vinayagar Hindu Sangam (MVHS) which runs the Sri Vakrathunda Vinayagar Temple. Specifically, highly-skilled project consultants, architects and engineers such as Babu Akula (Project Director), Sritharan Sathasivam (Chairman, Building Committee), Markandu Sivakumar (Project Engineer) and Sivagnanam Pillai (Operations Manager) generously volunteered their time to bring this historic project together. The

Management Committee wishes to thank Jeeva Balasingam (Site Manager) and Vibhav Nawathe (Project Co-ordinator) for their tireless efforts. The entire project, from fund raising to managing the various aspects of the running of the temple, is done by the Management Committee headed by the executive committee - Balaa Kandiah (President), Shan Pillai (Secretary) and Sivanathan Thamboo (Treasurer).

A Brief Look into the Temple History

The Sri Vakrathunda Vinayagar Temple in The Basin was first conceived in 1989, when a breakaway group moved away from the Hindu Society of Victoria, frustrated at the slow progress in the development of a Ganesha temple. The Melbourne Vinayagar Hindu Sangam was founded, and a pro-tem committee was formed with trustees, members, and volunteers, and with donated funds, the process of building the temple began in 1990. When pro-tem committee member Shan Pillai and his wife went to India to source a deity blessed by the Kanchi Shankaracharya Swamigal, they could not find one. They paid a visit to the Shankaracharya Swamigal regardless and were pleasantly surprised when he offered them a deity. It was the first of many miracles they encountered. The deity was named Vakrathunda Vinayagar and brought back to Melbourne, and lived in the home of trustee S. Somasundaram until the temple was built. The deity was taken to a community hall every month for worship. On 20th April 1990, the Management Committee successfully purchased a plot of



land at The Basin. The site had formerly housed the disused St. Mary's Anglican Church. The foundation stone for the Sri Vakrathunda Vinayagar Temple was laid in 1991. The first brick was blessed by Sri Jayendra Saraswathi Swamigal and flown from Kancheepuram to Melbourne, and laid in November 1991. The temple building was completed in 1992 with its Consecration held on 11th October 1992, making it the first Traditional Hindu temple in Victoria. The second Consecration was done on 17th June 2007 when a Raja gopuram was built partly in granite and extensive renovations including shrines for Durga and Murugan were completed. Sri Vakrathunda Vinayagar Temple is also the first temple, and continues to be the only temple, that takes the Thaar (Chariot) out in the streets of Melbourne. The Temple also participates in community events in the City of Knox such as the Knox Global Cooking Show. The third Consecration will see the Temple become the largest granite Hindu temple in the Southern Hemisphere with all its 11 shrines in granite, intricately carved by hand, inspired by the great Chola temples of India and permanently transforming the multicultural landscape of Melbourne.



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Families on Taveuni Island, Fiji, are in dire need after Cyclone Yasa.

They have no money for children to go to school. How can we help?

Support the Rotary Club of Taveuni Island Secondary School Student Assistance Project through the Rotary Club of Boronia.

Tax-deductible donations may be made to all Rotary Club of Boronia Fiji projects (including the Student Assistance project) via RAWCS.org.au, project 129/2010-11 or by direct deposit to the Rotary Club of Boronia account: BSB: 633-108

Account No:
131-338-782

In the Message area write "Fiji".

Tropical Cyclone Yasa struck the islands of Fiji on December 17th 2020 their food and income crops were basically wiped out.

Families have no cash left to pay for children to go to school.

The Rotary Club of Boronia has a sister-club relationship with the Rotary Club of Taveuni. Contact for further information: Peter Malden, Rotary Club of Boronia.

0417-998-082 or petermalden@bigpond.com

2021: a big year for Knox

As a community we are bouncing back from the pandemic and life is finally starting to get back to normal.

Importantly, there are several local road and community infrastructure projects that will be getting underway across Knox - projects I committed to at the last election to address congestion and safety and improve our life as a community.

While I have had the full funding secured for some time, we have had to wait for the State Government or Knox Council to begin construction of these projects.

One of the first that will be starting early this year is the installation of traffic lights at the Lewis Rd and Boronia Rd intersection.

As many of you would know, this is a very dangerous intersection and has needed attention for a long time.

Other local road improvements that will begin construction early this year are the traffic lights at the Kelletts/Henderson Rd intersection and slip lanes at Ferntree Gully/Henderson Rd intersection.

One of the big developments of 2019 was opening the Henderson Rd Bridge in Rowville and although it provides better access between Ferntree Gully Rd and Kelletts Rd, it has increased traffic using these intersections every day. These upgrades will really help manage this extra traffic and increase safety for

drivers.

As for community infrastructure, in March this year I expect to see construction begin on one of our largest community projects - the new Knox Regional Netball Centre.

During peak times the centre hosts over 6,000 people every week and is a huge part of our community's life. When complete, the centre will have twice as many indoor courts, seating for 300 spectators, 180 extra car parks and a considerable facelift.

The upgrades will especially help the netball association to expand its programs and transform the complex into a true regional centre for netball, right here in Knox.

\$4 million of federal funding has been secured for these much-needed upgrades and Knox Council and the state government has agreed to provide the rest, with the council managing the construction.

At the same time as all this construction, important planning and preparation work will continue on the Dorset Rd extension and the Napoleon Rd duplication. \$130 million of federal funding is locked in for these and I expect construction to begin early next year.

Planning is also underway on extra parking at Ferntree Gully Station and Boronia Station but we still haven't settled on a design for these so there is a bit to go.

As for the Rowville Rail, \$475 million of federal funding remains on the table and I will continue to work to convince the state government, who own the rail network, about this important project. We will find a solution.

Overall, it's exciting to see infrastructure that our community has needed for so many years now being built.

As usual I will keep you updated on all our local projects through Facebook, email and letterbox.

Thanks for your patience and support as we get these local projects done. **2021 is going to be a big year.**







Alan TUDGE MP

Federal Member for Aston

tudgeMP
 alan.tudge.mp@aph.gov.au
 9887 3890
 www.alantudge.com.au

Real Action For Knox

Nick Wakeling MP Endeavour Awards

After a difficult year, I was particularly delighted to award the 2020 Ferntree Gully Endeavour Awards to 23 deserving students from across the Knox community.

Every year these awards recognise students

who by their exemplary character and conduct act as ambassadors for our community and role models to their peers.

After a year of many challenges for young people, the achievements of this year's recipients are particularly impressive and deserving of community recognition.

My sincere congratulations go to each of the following recipients of the Endeavour Award for 2020: -

Benjamin Currie, The Knox School (Junior)

Aariz Khan, Eastern Ranges School

Isabelle Heinley,
Regency Park Primary School

Naomi Sunderman, Wantirna College

Ritkriti Melam, Templeton Primary School

Soomin Lee, Wantirna Primary School

Livinia Hogan, Kent Park Primary School

Angus Potter,
St John the Baptist Primary School

Dhruv Valji, St Luke's Primary School

Joel Lindsay,
Wantirna South Primary School

Samuel Bray, Knox Park Primary School

Jack Silcot, Fairhills Primary School

Isabel Hooi & Taylor Marinis, Knox
Gardens Primary School

Tyler Miles & Chloe Gottliebsen,
Wattleview Primary School

Imogen Rhodes, Fairhills High School

Charlotte Harrup,
Holy Trinity Primary School

Joshua Deng, St Andrew's Junior School



Lachlan Ahearn, St Andrew's Senior School

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A Gentle Giant - Peter Chen

This month's profile is of Peter Chen, a humble man who in 2004 in his mid-20s left his homeland of China, his much loved and respected parents and the picturesque town of Shanghai to study overseas. He tells me the most important date in his life was 29 November 2004, the day he arrived in Australia. This was the first time he had left his family and parent. Peter had never flown overseas before and had lived in Shanghai since the day he was born. It was a "turning point" for him as he had done it all by himself. In China, he tells me, his parents did everything for him; washing his clothes, cooking dinner, and he was very dependent on them. He says it was a "big challenge; totally different doing it all by myself."

Peter lived in a suburb-of Shanghai that was similar to The Basin, a small town called Fengxian. He remembers when he was little, around five years old lining up with the other 30 kids in the morning and the teacher would walk them all to school. He lived on the 3rd floor of an apartment but he had creeks nearby, trees to climb or he would catch yabbies in the creek with friends. They had no television or even an x box. He bought his first Nintendo in Year 6 and shared it with his friends. In the school

PROFILE

by Lynette Hayhurst



Peter with his wife & son

holidays in summer time he and his friends would swim in a big river in which many drowned even the soldiers. He tells me the cultural revolution was "long ago" in China and it was "all good" when he was growing

up. He lived close to the Fengxian Shanghai Bay National Forest Park which is lush and green, a lot like the Dandenongs.

Peter talks to me about the differences between China and Australia. He says in Australia it is more comfortable, less people, less cars and traffic. Shanghai has a population of 24.28 million and it is in China's central coast and the country's biggest city. He says, "China's pace of a day is pretty fast like any of the big cities, it is pressured. Australia is a big country with less population and people enjoy life and you can drink more coffee than in China. Customers are closer to each other since he says in the big cities of 10 million there is not time to know each other. We are quite blessed." The best thing he says about Shanghai is, "the family, friends and all of your childhood you grew up with. It is pretty there, downtown is very modern. In Shanghai shops are open until

midnight with many on the streets. At night it is safe on the streets because so many are out walking."

Peter tells me that his parents, who still live in China, visit once every year or two and he



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calls them every fortnight to see how they are going. His father's name is Shilong and his mother is Lanhua. Peter's dad is a P.E. teacher at primary school level. His mother "who teaches English," is a strict and tough teacher who still teaches at the age of 63 She is the decision maker in the family as she has a sharp mind and is a strong woman." Peter tells me warmly and with respect about his father in law whose name is Quikang. He used to be a governor in China and he was very honest. Peter admires him because, "even during all his years of employment he never took anything from anyone even though he could have."



Peter with his happy workers.

One of the most important dates in his life was on 10th April 2010 when he first bought The Basin Fruit Shop which he later sold in 2014 and then bought a fruit shop closer to his home in Ormond but finally came back and bought it again in 2019. Peter says he hasn't any great goals to be rich, famous or an astronaut, just simple but powerful goals. He wants to be a good husband, a good dad and a good son. He wants to make sure he looks after his family needs financially so the job as a fruiterer enables him to do that. He says, "I have a good job, good enough for the family." He hopes people don't judge him because he is a fruiterer. "It's just like any other job; there is pressure to provide good fruit for the

customers." Peter says, "If you can wake up at 4 a.m. in the morning to head off for fresh fruit and vegetables each day, the customer appreciates that and knows if you are a reliable fruiterer."

Peter tells me the most important thing in his life is, "his family, yeah-my parents, my son, and my wife. I would do anything for them." His wife's name is Ophelia (Qian) and he met her at Monash University in 2005 and married in 2009. He says if he had not married he would have returned to China. She completed a master of accounting and he a Bachelor of Industrial Design and later a Master in Risk


Management. I ask him to tell me a funny story and he tells me his life is pretty boring as he spends three hours on the road each day heading to the markets and delivering to his shop in The Basin. But he tells me with great joy and affection about his little boy. He says he plays with him daily and "he surprises me with his changes- I think that's pretty funny." He says Chinese laugh at word humor like many of us. Peter's son is called Aiden and he has Noonan's Syndrome, it is not a mental condition but a developmental delay, he is of short stature, Peter is over six feet tall. Peter daily walks with Aiden for up to an hour a day with "father and son time." His goals at the moment are to, "support my family, look after my kid and his medical issues and see he is living happily and that one day me and my missus would see him have his own family." He tells me the lessons he has learnt so far in life are how to be a good husband and father and how to be independent and he has learnt that money does not come easy and he should know with his long hours of work every day. It seems to me he has succeeded well in all of these goals.

Chen in Chinese means strong and Peter in Greek means rock which aptly fits Peter both in regard to his family and in his local community. It was a real delight to spend time with this fine young man, a good husband, father and son who made a momentous decision to leave his much loved family, friends and home in Shanghai and live and work amongst us. We are all the richer for having Peter come and call Australia home. Reminds me of the Peter Allen song, "I still call Australia home."



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If you plan to travel through Victoria during fire season, it's important to check the Fire Danger Rating every day. If the rating is Extreme or above, avoid travelling to high risk bush or grassfire areas. It's safer to travel to cities or towns for the day.

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Naturopathic Case Study

Acidity and Inflammation

P. a young man, came to the store suffering from unusual reflux, headaches and generalized body aches. After a brief explanation of his New Year's celebrations, it was obvious that P. was suffering from excess acid forming food and a struggling liver! Excess acid is coming from consuming too much meat, seafood and alcohol. The toxic effect of alcohol on the liver is very serious. The repeated

consumption of alcohol inhibits the liver's production of digestive enzymes, impairing the body's ability to absorb proteins, fats and fat soluble vitamins such as vitamin A/D/E/K/Folic acid/ B1 and Bs in general. It reduces the body's storage of zinc. The liver is the only organ that has the ability to regenerate itself except after being severely damaged by alcohol. I started P. on the following protocol, to take intensively 4 times a day for one week, then to reduce to twice a day until finished.

Herbal formula made of:

- Celery seeds extract. Traditionally it improves digestion, and helps the flushing of uric acid crystals from the body
- Curcumin, the active turmeric extract: it's anti-inflammatory and protects the liver.
- Willow bark: the herbal equivalent to aspirin but without the side effects, to eliminate the body aches.
- St Mary thistle: It protects the liver from toxins, pollutants and stimulates the production of new liver cells.

Nutritional formula:

- Magnesium: Research has found low levels of magnesium in headaches and migraines sufferers. In one study magnesium was found to reduce the frequency of migraines by 41.6% versus 15.8% in those given placebo. It's effective for the relief of body aches as well.

- Potassium: It exerts alkalizing effects which serve to neutralize excess acidity in the body. Low-grade metabolic acidosis, when not properly controlled, may exacerbate various catabolic processes.

- Vitamin B complex: They are water soluble therefore not stored in the body. They convert food into energy, are helping with good brain function and repairing DNA.

P. came back to the store, feeling already better after a few days.

Christine Gozlan, Naturopath at Essential Health Foods - 246 Dorset Road, Boronia
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Walking the NEWS



NEWS

Distribution report

February

Welcome back & A Very Happy New Year to all walkers and drivers. We hope you all had an enjoyable Xmas and a safe and healthy 2021. We hope you were able to catch up with family and friends over the festive season.

Our most grateful thanks go to Robert James, who has had to cease driving for us, after delivering papers for the last 17 years. We thank you for all your help and wish you well for the future.

Welcome Christine Chalmers and thank you for taking on a new round.

The following driving & walking rounds are available, if you can assist or would like more information, please contact me on details below:

Permanent Driving round currently available is:

Collect approx. 1300 papers from The Basin and distribute to approx. 12 locations around The Basin.

Details of locations given each month. Must have suitable vehicle and be able to lift bundles of 100 papers.

Distribution is usually the last Thursday or Friday each month.



Volunteer Drivers Needed

Throughout the pandemic our Community Transport continued with a committed group of volunteer drivers. As we now restart other programs we are in urgent need of volunteer drivers.

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Temporary / Casual walkers or drivers: For further information on the above rounds, or if you can assist with any deliveries on a casual or temporary basis, we would love to hear from you. There are always people away on holidays or temporary sick, so if you have any time to assist just once a month for 11 months of the year, please phone Veronica on 0403 522 308. Please note these are voluntary positions.

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Construction Shortlist State Basketball Centre

Construction of the \$130 million State Basketball Centre expansion is set to begin mid-year with four companies today invited to submit detailed submissions to build the game-changing project. Member for Bayswater Jackson Taylor stated, "This state-of-the-art facility will provide 10 new community courts for our local basketball competitions."

The addition of 10 new indoor courts will serve grassroots and elite basketball players and make the Wantirna South centre will be the largest basketball facility in the country.

Hansen Yuncken, Kane Constructions, Adco Constructions and BESIX Watpac have been shortlisted from 12 companies that lodged initial expressions of interest. The successful contractor is expected to be announced in the second quarter of 2021 with construction to start shortly afterwards.

The Andrews Labor Government provided a \$22 million boost to the State Basketball Centre project in the Victorian Budget 2020/21, taking the Government's investment to \$105 million. The Knox City Council is contributing \$25 million.

Deputy Premier James Merlino said the centre would cement Melbourne's south-east as the heartland of Australian basketball and attract more than 2 million people each year.

The transformed State Basketball Centre will create a grassroots and high-performance hub featuring 16 indoor community courts, professional training



facilities for the local WNBL and NBL teams and new administration spaces.

The centre will be a mega base for Basketball Victoria, Deakin Melbourne Boomers (WNBL), South East Melbourne Phoenix (NBL), Basketball Australia and one of Australia's largest basketball associations, Knox Basketball Inc. Basketball Victoria's high-performance and pathway program will have cutting-edge training facilities to develop up and coming athletes while the expanded centre will also house a regional gymnastics facility.

Knox City Council mayor Cr Lisa Cooper said, "we are proud to see Knox maintain its reputation as the heartland of basketball and provide more people with the opportunity to participate in their favourite sports."