

MARIBYRNONG

MESSENGER

Spring 2016 | www.maribyrnong.vic.gov.au



MATTHEW
HARDING
TALKS ABOUT
PIPEDREAMS

OPENING UP
NEWELL'S Paddock

WOMEN OF THE WEST

WHAT'S ON IN
MARIBYRNONG

A MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR

Our cover story is about Matthew Harding, the renowned Australian artist who created our newest public art piece called Pipedreams. This impressive stainless steel sculpture reinforces our commitment to endorsement of quality artwork in the public domain and is the perfect addition to our city's existing thriving, cutting-edge arts scene.

The StreetWORKS program has continued again this year, with seven installations created by various commissioned artists. This unique collaboration with artists enables their work to be appreciated by the entire community in locations across the City.

Also in this Spring edition is an insight into Women of the West, Council's film and photography project highlighting 12 local women. We have been a strong supporter of gender equity and we believe that this work showcases the diversity and leadership of women in our vibrant City.

There's lots more to read in this edition – interviews with documentary photographer Warren Kirk, dancer Anna Seymour and some of our volunteers who work so tirelessly in our community.

There is also so much going on in our community centres, our libraries and across the City. We have also added a calendar which provides you with a guide of what's happening across Maribyrnong for the next few months.

In October this year, seven Councillors will be elected to govern our City over the next four years. I encourage you get involved and learn about the candidates and cast your vote.

This is my final Mayoral Message to you before council elections take place. It has been a privilege to serve as Mayor and Councillor of our wonderful City. I have enjoyed meeting so many people, hearing about what matters to you and your families, celebrating with you at festivals and events and representing your needs in the Chamber. Thank you for entrusting me with the honour.

Cr Cameron McDonald
Mayor



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COUNCIL MEETINGS

Council meetings are open to the public and residents are encouraged to attend.

October: Tuesday 11, 6.30pm, Ordinary Council

November: Tuesday 15, 6.30pm, Ordinary Council

December: Tuesday 13, 6.30pm, Ordinary Council

Meetings are held at Maribyrnong Council Offices, cnr Hyde and Napier Streets, Footscray.

Please visit www.maribyrnong.vic.gov.au/meetings or phone 9688 0200 for more information.

Crocheted couch cushions, rusted utes, extravagant animal-shaped hedges, Western Bulldogs memorabilia plastered over walls... Flipping through the pages of *Westography* is truly a trip down memory lane and straight into the homes and lives of the proud and eclectic members of our community.



THE WESTOGRAPHER

Local resident Warren Kirk is known as the 'Westographer' – a moniker he has earned by wandering changing suburban streets with camera in hand, capturing images of people, places and days gone by.

Warren has been a documentary photographer for thirty years, and his online Flickr collection of almost 2,000 photographs has amassed an impressive number of fans. In July this year, *Westography* was released, a hardback publication showcasing a stunning collection of photographs of Melbourne's west.

Westography is a visual diary of an almost-gone Australia. As Melbourne's west began to develop, some houses, spaces, cars, trades and even people began to change or disappear. Small shops closed, buildings were demolished, blocks were subdivided – and so Warren began to document the old west in the hope of preserving a time and place before it vanished completely.

What is it about Melbourne's western suburbs that you find so appealing?

I love the mixture of small scale industry being so close to residential

housing. The contrast of post-war housing next to industry, the way houses and gardens are decorated by European migrants who arrived after the war, the diversity that's on offer. And the fact that it's on my doorstep, all pretty packed – these different worlds – it's just a real melting pot.

How do you manage to find people willing to have such raw, intimate photos taken of themselves and their private homes?

Well for most of those photos, I've met people while I've been wandering and then I've taken the time to get to know them. Often I talk with them for quite a while before I end up in their living room. I think that because I'm not interested in directing people to do a certain thing, or trying to impose my ideas of how they should look, people generally feel pretty comfortable with me. I'm taking photos of people in their own environments where they can just be themselves – it's not anything grandiose.

Why are you focused on photos of vanishing suburbia?

So many places are disappearing even as we speak, more or less, and there are a lot of places in *Westography* that don't exist anymore like a tailor who was on Somerville Road. The whole

area is changing and I want to preserve times, and places, so we don't forget about them

Our city is full of creative people. Do you have any tips for local photographers who might want to hone their skills or move from amateur to professional?

Photograph what you love, rather than what you think people will like. I think if you throw yourself into something with a love and passion, then serendipitous moments come along, doors open up and you never know where they may lead. And rather than think about it, go out and do it. There's a saying I like, 'the harder the work, the luckier I get' – just throw yourself into it and good things will come to you.

Could you sum up our city in three words?

No. No, I couldn't do that. Impossible!

Will we be lucky enough to get a second *Westography*?

People are asking me that already, so there is a bit of a groundswell of interest, and people wondering if there's going to be another one. I've definitely got enough images for another couple of books!

For more information, visit www.echopublishing.com.au/titles/westography-2

MATTHEW HARDING'S 'PIPEDREAMS' SCULPTURE LAUNCHED IN MARIBYRNONG

Council has welcomed its newest commissioned public artwork to the city – a 12 metre wide and 8 metre high stainless steel sculpture, entitled 'Pipedreams', created and installed by renowned Australian artist, Matthew Harding.



The impressive sculpture, located at Thompson Reserve in Maribyrnong, complements and highlights the entrance to the idyllic riverfront eight hectare parkland, Pipemakers Park. Not only does it act as gateway piece to the park to welcome its visitors, it also tells a story of the area's history.

Pipedreams is a very complex and robust piece of public art. It has been fabricated from layers of interwoven 316 marine

grade stainless steel rods and tubes that measure 32 kilometres in total. The sculpture is lit by in-ground Luminaire lights to provide a gentle spectrum of changing light, enhancing the sculptures moiré patterns at dusk.

We caught up with the well recognised artist of Pipedreams, Matthew Harding, who is thrilled that his sculpture has been launched and is well and truly in place.

"It is no longer a 'pipedream'

in the making, this sculpture is now a reality. It has found its home and it has settled in beautifully. It is really owning the space in Thompson Reserve. It perfectly complements the landscape of that lush piece of land," said Matthew. Matthew believes that the surrounding environment of a public art sculpture is an important element. "The concept behind Pipedreams was inspired by the industrial heritage of the site, specifically, the pipemaking techniques such as the 'steel

cages' that were used to reinforce concrete pipes – coincidentally, a similar methodology to what I use in my own sculptural practice. In a place like Pipemakers Park, with such a strong industrial past, and a graceful and complex landscape, it naturally lends itself to hosting a piece of art that tells a story," he said.

"Art always tells a story. There is hidden meaning in every crevice, in every choice the artist makes about its presentation and form," said Matthew.

"Pipedreams is very much a site-specific piece of art. When I was creating the idea behind it, I spent a lot of time at Pipemakers Park, seeing what the place told me about itself. The history, the river's influences, the people who have spent time there, it all went into the concept. The design really references the energy and flow of the Maribyrnong River and symbolises hopes and aspirations of the local community."

Matthew felt drawn to the idea of having a public art work in the City of Maribyrnong as he is a big fan of Melbourne's



inner west. "The City of Maribyrnong is growing tremendously. It has so much going on, so much life in it. Art definitely plays a role in that. Art can make a good place better. Every large scale work of art has the capacity to bolster and enhance the 'felt experience' of a place. As a city evolves, the capacity for public art grows. Evolution, growth and change all evoke a sense of appreciation and demand for art amongst the community. Art in community spaces makes people think, makes people take notice and feel. And it makes them look at their surrounds and put it all in the context along with the art work to really

build that sense of pride of place. The Council is pretty good in supporting the arts and drawing out the strong identities that exist there and applying that to their art," he said.

Matthew was game enough to tell us the secret behind his craft and what he strives for in all his creations. "In all of the art that I do, I really try to push the boundaries of materials and process when I am producing sculptural forms and design pieces. I may use different materials and methods, but I always try to maintain a common theme and investigation into the experiential aspect of form and materiality. I create objects to be interacted with,

touched, sat on, objects that reflect and morph; objects that have a vital and poetic relationship to the environment they are in and the people who interact with them. All of that is captured in *Pipedreams* and I can't wait to see how the community engages with it. I am so happy it is in place, its new home so people can really start getting to know it," said Matthew.

The commissioning and delivery of *Pipedreams* reinforces Council's commitment to its endorsement of quality artwork in the city. Council has a Public Art Strategy that is upheld and guided by its principles – that public

art can act as an agent for change, as a medium for debate, as a space activator and as a symbol of innovation.

Matthew's sculpture beautifully reinforces Council's principles that are so important when delivering a piece of art as significant as this for the community to enjoy for years to come.

For more information on *Pipedreams* and Council's other art projects, visit www.maribyrnong.vic.gov.au/artsandculture or like our Facebook page www.facebook.com/artsandculturemaribyrnong



STREETWORKS ART INSTALLATIONS COLOUR OUR CITY STREETS

There is something very special about colourful and vibrant public art that tells you a story as you casually stroll through our city's familiar streets.

Our StreetWORKS program, up and running annually since 2014, is a collaborative community art project that creates innovative, visual street art to enliven our city's spaces and places, engages artists with community, while discouraging graffiti and tagging. Through a competitive process, selected artists create public art works at designated sites that are inspired by or relevant to our local community. The project is a unique collaboration between Council, local artists, property owners and business proprietors that enables art to be appreciated by the entire community in locations across the city.

The 2016 StreetWORKS projects included seven installations across the city created by various commissioned artists. One of these is artistic duo Mayfield Palace who created a striking mural on the wall of the carpark off Coral Avenue, behind Zoom Fitness on Ballarat Road (near Summerhill Road) in Footscray. (pictured above)

Artists Chuck Mayfield (Australia) and Júlia Palazzo (Brazil) have been collaborating as Mayfield Palace since 2013 to create murals, exhibitions, illustrations and countless other creative projects. Chuck has a background in fine art and graffiti, featuring a combination of urban and natural elements. Julia creates intricate drawings and vibrant paintings inspired by nature and femininity.

Together, they create large scale works that merge graffiti and realism. They are inspired by nature, spirituality and their travels around the world. Mayfield Palace 'love transforming any plain, dirty or forgotten space into an extension of our palace, creating places of wonder.'

The concept behind their StreetWORKS mural was to create a large scale artwork that blends the flora and fauna found in the City of Maribyrnong into a magical and realistic visual story with great appeal to children and the local community.

For more information on Council's StreetWORKS and other arts programs, visit www.maribyrnong.vic.gov.au/artsandculture or like our Facebook page www.facebook.com/artsandculturemaribyrnong



^ Cezary Stulgis
Footscray and District Angling Club,
70 Pentland Parade, Seddon



^ Kelly Manning
Cellarbrations, 176 Somerville Road, Yarraville



^ Creature Creature
Footscray Milking Station, 35 Bunbury Street, Footscray



^ Trashort
Littlefoot Bar, 223 Barkly Street, Footscray



^ Carla Gottgens
Piccolo Bakery Café, 175 Somerville Road, Yarraville



^ Amanda Morgan
Kingsville Post Office, Somerville Road, Yarraville

OPENING UP NEWELL'S PADDOCK

Newell's Paddock has recently undergone some major upgrades including the new picnic shelter, barbecues and a new path and boardwalk connecting through to the Maribyrnong River Trail. The upgrades are part of Council's Footscray River Edge Master Plan and have been done with the help of volunteers from Friends of Newell's Paddock.

We took some time out to speak to Friends of Newell's Paddock member Yvonne Bischofberger.

The greenery and fresh air make this pocket of the city so special. It's surprising the wildlife you find here so close to the city, it's incredible what you see when you stop to look.

Our group stands out as it's a very adaptable and innovative. We encourage our members to pursue their own passions. One member coordinated the habitat box building this past year, while another held a junior bird watching day for his university project and another couple are working on interactive cartography for the park and a new website.

I became involved because it's connecting people back to nature. I'm a real greenie at heart and love to see others get involved and learn from nature. The more

you experience, the more you want to protect our green spaces.

The most rewarding aspect of being involved is definitely how much I've learned from others. It's opened my eyes to the secret world of birds, frogs and ecology which I previously didn't know much about.

I love the view of the city at night when we hold our frog census nights. When we record frogs we need to be quiet for 10 minutes - this is really special in this technological age, to just stand still and wake up your senses. A lot happens in the dark in this ecosystem. There are bats flying overhead, noisy birds settling in for the night, the occasional fox sighting, reflections on the water,

the cool air coming off the ponds and of course frogs, if we're lucky!

We see a lot more people walking through the wetland - which is really great. We hope they notice the changes from season to season and year to year of the ecosystem. While we do love dogs too, the birds are very sensitive to seeing dogs and may not feed or nest if they see or sense dogs off leash. We encourage all dog owners to please respect this and keep dogs on leash.

Some volunteers come regularly, others only when they have time. It's great to have a variety of people at each event, there are always so many great locals to connect with!

If people want to become involved, they can email us at newells.paddock@gmail.com or like our Facebook page or visit our new website: www.newellspaddock.org.au



SUSTAINABILITY EXPO

Compost your way to a more sustainable future



Interactive and innovative ways to save water and energy and minimise waste will be on show at the Sustainability Expo at Pipemakers Park on Sunday 13 November.

We spoke to Ella Boyen from the Compost Community, who will be just one of the many experts on hand at the expo to inspire and encourage participants to take action and help make a difference to our local environment.

What is the Compost Community?

The Compost Community is a free online program filled with great people passionate about food and

gardening. The community was launched in 2013 after local residents expressed interest in receiving ongoing advice and support to help them reduce waste and navigate the sometimes confusing world of compost.

What inspired you to create Compost Community?

For me it was a personal journey based on my own experience with a fair dollop of passion. My journey started with composting to improve my soil, and I learnt quickly that composting is actually the catalyst to a sustainable lifestyle. Soon I was saving money, getting healthy, and having fun – I

feel everyone deserves the opportunity to experience these benefits.

What do you hope to share with community members who come along to the expo?

I really want to share the 'village knowledge'. Different compost systems suit different personalities and different lifestyles, I hope to motivate people to give it a try. Everyone has a different motivation, be it saving money, eating cleaner, ditching the smelly bin, reducing waste or gardening better, there is a compost solution for all.

Our City is filled with plenty of places to get back to nature, what is your favourite place to get outdoors?

I live quite a unique lifestyle just outside of the city, where I'm usually planting trees, monitoring wildlife cameras or herding emus in my spare time, so what I absolutely soak up in Maribyrnong is the culture. I've spent many a day at the Braybrook Community Garden learning everyone's Nonna's recipes and gardening tips, and I absolutely love the vibrancy of all the festivals in the beautiful parklands throughout the city. If I ever have some downtime, you'll

find me at an alfresco street café enjoying a long black and a local pastry.

What is the most surprising or memorable moment you have experienced while exploring our City?

For an earthly soul like me, I'm inspired by the great sense of community here. It is certainly my home away from home – I feel so included and valued when I visit, and I just soak up the amazing knowledge and stories that have been with families for generations. My life and gardening skills are richer for spending so much time here.

Composting is not just for green thumbs, what advice would you give to someone wanting to start composting for the first time?

There is nothing wrong with failure, and the only true failure is to not try. There are systems and tips that can safeguard even the brownest thumb and trust me, everyone has an inner brown thumb. Even if you get it wrong, the sun will still rise, the rain will still fall, the world will still turn, and you can try again tomorrow.

WHAT'S ON IN MARIBYRNONG

FESTIVAL CITY

Fringe Out West 15 September – 2 October Various venues

Melbourne's annual three week explosion of independent art returns to the West with a multi-art form program of adventurous and accessible art.



Lantern Festival 17 September, Leeds Street, Footscray

Celebrating 41 years of Vietnamese settlement in Australia, this family-friendly festival includes traditional music and dancing and a spectacular night parade of glowing lanterns.



MTF Bathukamma Festival of Flowers 8 October, RecWest, Braybrook

The biggest community event for the Telugu Telangana Indian community in Melbourne,

this colourful festival features Indian games, songs celebrating community and traditional dance.

The Money 13 – 16 October, Footscray Town Hall

Melbourne Festival comes to the west to present this internationally acclaimed show in the Council Chamber. Part game, part theatrical performance, choose whether to be a silent witness and watch or actively take part in coming to a unanimous decision about how to spend a pot of real cash.

Westside Discovery Tours 7 – 13 November

Fall in love with the west on a free eclectic tour led by a local gem.

Edgewater Festival 19 November, Harbour Park, Maribyrnong

Now in its second year, this lively community festival includes a fusion of art, history, music, culture, food and crafts for the entire family to enjoy.

Albanian Festival 11 December (TBC), Yarraville Gardens

Held in Footscray for over 20 years, this much loved festival includes traditional food and music, stall holders and children's rides.

Game Changers 21 Sept, 26 October and 9 November

Presented by Council and VU @ MetroWest, Game Changers presents pivotal concepts, personalities and moments in Australia's evolving story for public discussion and debate. Each event is free and open to the whole community.



Festive Season December 2016 – January 2017, various locations

Celebrate the festive season with a jam-packed program of special family-friendly events including outdoor twilight movies in parks, creative workshops for kids and Carols in Yarraville Gardens.

NYE Fireworks in Footscray Park 31 December

Ring in the New Year with a night full of entertainment, including live stage performances, carnival rides for the kids, food trucks and an exhilarating fireworks display. From 6.30 – 10.30pm.

GREEN EVENTS



Pipemakers Park Community Working Bee Every Tuesday, 9.30am – 12noon

Join the Friends of the History Garden every Tuesday morning to weed, clean up and occasionally plant at Pipemakers Park. New helpers are welcome.

Pipemakers Park, Maribyrnong. For more information, email maelor@melbpc.org.au

Lizard Lounges and Butterfly Baths 13 October, 6.30- 7.30pm

Be treated to a colourful report on how a habitat garden using local plants can be fun to create and a stepping stone for wildlife movements.

Maidstone Child & Family Centre. Register at www.mysmartgarden.eventbrite.com

Solar and storage batteries 9 November, 6.30pm

Find out everything you need to know about how a battery system could save you more money with your existing solar PV system.

Maribyrnong City Council Town Hall. Register at www.sustainablemaribyrnong.eventbrite.com

SAVE THE DATE:

We have created a handy tear out calendar in the back of this publication for you to stick on your fridge. It lists festivals from September to January so you don't miss out on any of the festival fun.

For more information visit www.festivalcity.com.au

Sustainability Expo 13 November, 12-4pm

Find out interactive and innovative ways to save water and energy and minimise waste at our Sustainability Expo.

Pipemakers Park, Maribyrnong. For more information www.maribyrnong.vic.gov.au

MARIBYRNONG LIBRARIES



Maribyrnong Young Writers Competition until 7 October

Students in prep to grade 6 are invited by the Maribyrnong Library Service and the Rotary Club of Yarraville to submit an entry into this year's writing competition.



September School Holiday Program until 30 September

Maribyrnong Library Service will have fun craft activities and performers at all branches. Bookings are essential. For more information visit www.maribyrnong.vic.gov.au/library and bookings at www.maribyrnong.eventbrite.com

SENIORS WEEK IN THE CITY OF MARIBYRNONG



Seniors Week in early October honours senior citizens in Victoria by recognising and celebrating their participation in the community. Council is looking forward to providing Seniors Week events and activities across our city at Maribyrnong Aquatic Centre and our Community Centres. For more information, visit www.maribyrnong.vic.gov.au or ring 9688 0200.

CHILDREN'S WEEK IN THE CITY OF MARIBYRNONG

It's all happening 22-30 October with Children's Week, which celebrates the talents, skills and abilities of children. Children's activities across the City of Maribyrnong. Stay tuned for more information at www.maribyrnong.vic.gov.au or ring 9688 0200.

16 Days of Activism: 25 November to 10 December

Events in the City of Maribyrnong supporting activism against gender based violence. More information at www.maribyrnong.vic.gov.au or ring 9688 0200.

COMMUNITY CENTRES PROGRAMS

BRAYBROOK COMMUNITY HUB – 107- 139 CHURCHILL AVE, BRAYBROOK

For program information, visit www.maribyrnong.vic.gov.au/braycomm or ring 9188 5800.

Braybrook Community Hub offers term based classes such as meditation, yoga, cooking classes, sewing, arts and crafts, mosaics, computer and internet and English conversation.

MyTime Tuesdays 10am-12noon

A free peer support program for mums, dads and other people caring for a child with a disability.

Kids Art Class Thursday 24 November to 15 December, 4-5.30pm

Children can enjoy a range of different art activities such as painting, drawing and collage.

MAIDSTONE COMMUNITY CENTRE – 21 YARDLEY STREET, MAIDSTONE

For program information, visit www.maribyrnong.vic.gov.au/maidcomm or ring 9688 0543.

Yoga for Preschoolers Wednesdays 11am-12

Introduce your preschooler to yoga and creative movement in a simple, fun and effective program that promotes healthy and happy young minds and bodies. Age 3-5 yrs.

Yoga for school age kids: Tuesdays 4-5pm

Children's yoga involves learning yoga postures, breathing exercises, play and creative movement that will assist your child in their physical and emotional wellbeing.

MARIBYRNONG COMMUNITY CENTRE – 9 RANDALL STREET, MARIBYRNONG

For program information, visit www.maribyrnong.vic.gov.au/maricomm or ring 9032 4305.



Kids Beat Wednesdays 10am

An introductory class of dance and yoga designed specifically for boys and girls. Age 2-5 yrs.



Yoga = Happy Kid Mondays 9.30am

Classes consist of yoga poses, breath work, relaxation techniques and games, in a fun, safe, interactive and educational environment. Age 3-5 yrs.

BUSINESS IN MARIBYRNONG

Business is booming in Maribyrnong, with more than 3,000 new business registrations in Maribyrnong in the last financial year.

Council has a number of ways that we support local businesses – from improving local shopping strips to offering a range of training and learning opportunities.

Here's some of work we've been doing recently to help our local business community:

REVITALISING SHOPPING STRIPS



CHURCHILL AVENUE BRAYBROOK

Now known as Churchill Avenue, this popular shopping strip, of 14 shops, directly opposite the newly developed Braybrook hub has recently undergone a major revitalisation. With improvements to the shopfronts, strip amenity, new murals and artwork in the laneway, new lighting and installation of a foosball table the strip continues to be a well loved and used strip to community members and local residents.

Council celebrated the revitalised shopping strip and the successes of the Braybrook hub by hosting a long lunch on the strip in August.

LEEDS STREET FOOTSCRAY

Council has been working with local businesses in Leeds Street within the Footscray CBD to improve and enhance the appearance of the shopfronts through new shopfront improvement strategies, visual merchandising and promotional strategies in conjunction with a graffiti clean-up blitz.

BARKLY STREET WEST FOOTSCRAY

Council is currently working with local traders to enhance the retail shopping strip on Barkly Street in West Footscray, with improvements to shopfronts through branding strategies and visual merchandising.

SMALL BUSINESS FESTIVAL

The August Small Business Festival saw Council run a record number of 14 workshops and events for business savvy people throughout the month.

Council's Business Networking Breakfast held as part of the Festival attracted over 100 business owners who were treated to an inspiring and motivating speech by local business owner Monique Milenkovic from The Cupcake Queens. Monique shared how she started a home based business that grew to the biggest cupcake empire in Australia, and had lots of handy and useful tips for businesses wanting to take the next step and expand their business.

BUSINESS TRAINING EVENTS, WORKSHOPS AND SEMINARS

Council also hosts a number of business training sessions every month. For more info and to book, visit www.maribyrnong.vic.gov.au then click on 'Doing Business in Maribyrnong' and then 'Business Training Events, Workshops and Seminars.' Council also provides local businesses with a newsletter which provides handy business tips, taxation news and information on upcoming events. To sign up visit www.maribyrnong.vic.gov.au then click on 'Doing Business in Maribyrnong' and then 'Business Support'.

UPCOMING SEMINARS

PRICING FOR MAXIMUM PROFIT

Wednesday 5 October
6.30-8.30pm

KEEP THE CASH FLOWING

Wednesday 26 October
6.30-8.30pm

FINANCIAL HEALTH CHECK

Wednesday 9 November
6.30-8.30pm

DOING BUSINESS IN MARIBYRNONG

Maribyrnong City Council assists our business community in establishing and growing their businesses with a 'Doing Business in Maribyrnong' kit available. The kit, a starting point for businesses, provides checklists and key council areas based on business needs and requirements.

For more information and to request a copy of our 'Doing Business in Maribyrnong' kit please contact the City Business Unit on 9688 0200 or via email business@maribyrnong.vic.gov.au

GET ACTIVE AND SPRING INTO SUMMER



Get ready to spin, swing or stretch your way to better health while having fun in the sun through Council's best-ever Spring into Summer Series later this year.

The Active Maribyrnong Spring into Summer Series, currently in its third year, will offer five weeks of free health and wellbeing programs across the City of Maribyrnong when it returns on Monday 14 November.

Have you ever taken your kids to a **Family Bootcamp**? Have you tried **Rock up Netball**? Or how about the relaxing and reinvigorating effects of **Guided Meditation, Tai Chi, Pilates or Yoga**? We are offering a range of the popular classics, as well as some new recreational options, including:

- > Pacific Islands Hula Dance
- > Swing Fit (Golf Australia)
- > Social Spin (Cycling Victoria)
- > AFL Active (AFL Victoria)
- > Move My Way (Gymnastics Victoria)
- > Netacise (Netball Victoria)
- > Sunday Night Yoga in the Park
- > Yoga for School Age Kids
- > Yoga for Preschoolers
- > Vietnamese Tai Chi
- > Kangatraining
- > Group Fitness Circuit
- > Get into Cardio Tennis
- > Women's Only Yoga

The majority of programs will be delivered outdoors in local open spaces and are designed to showcase a range of the facilities and activities on offer across our city.

As an added bonus to encourage participants to keep active, all registered participants will receive a free two week membership to either the Maribyrnong Aquatic Centre or RecWest Footscray.

The series is delivered through Council's Active Maribyrnong initiative designed to improve the health and wellbeing of our community through physical activity and community participation.

Since the beginning of the Active Maribyrnong program in 2014, well over 7,000 community members have found their inner athlete by participating in our range of events.

Online registrations open 9am Monday 3 October so start planning your wellbeing journey and join the long list of active participants who have adopted a healthier lifestyle.

Registration is essential and places are limited. For registrations and more information, visit www.activemaribyrnong.com.au or like our Facebook page www.facebook.com/activemaribyrnong. Alternatively, you can contact Council on 9688 0200.

FAMILY FUN IN THE CITY OF MARIBYRNONG

BILINGUAL STORY TIME AT CENTRAL WEST SHOPPING CENTRE

FEATURING THE AMAZING NAFISA

Central West Shopping Centre, in the heart of Braybrook, is a vibrant hub of activity. Supporting our multicultural residents in feeling connected to the broader community is Nafisa, the host and constant presence of Council's Bilingual Storytime program.

Our free Bilingual Storytime offers facilitator-run stories, songs and rhymes in English, Hindi, Bengali, Vietnamese and Mandarin. Through her infectious kindness, Nafisa has a unique way of warmly connecting with and welcoming a range of people from all corners of the globe.

Nafisa has been volunteering and working with the community here in the City of Maribyrnong for over ten years. She is mother to two children and having gone through the system of early years services, she knows how challenging it can be when you come from a different cultural background.

"I come from Eritrea. I moved here in 1994. I know how hard it can be coming from a very different place, not knowing the way the system works. I didn't understand everything because everything is so different back home," she said.

There are a range of Council services to support families in navigating through the early years services. Nafisa always makes a concentrated effort to not only connect families with each other, but to also connect families to other services out in the community.

"Recently I worked with an Ethiopian lady who was completely isolated. She was a single mother of four children, the youngest one only four months old. It was clear she needed so much support. I connected her to a range of community services so she could access transport, food and nappy support. Her children needed help with their



schoolwork so I helped her access Council's FILLs tutoring program. Her world changed. She said the services and being connected to the community around her completely changed her life," said Nafisa.

"It is those moments that make such a difference to others and make such a difference to me and my life. I love children and I love helping families. The City of Maribyrnong is so good for families. It is peaceful, there are services to keep you involved and active. I adore working in Braybrook with the local community. I have some very close friendships here and I love helping people every day," said Nafisa.

For more information on Bicultural Early Years Services, visit www.maribyrnong.vic.gov.au or ring 9688 0200.

BETWEEN THE BOOKS

Want to learn more about how to write Spoken Word and Poetry? Through October, we are offering free after school workshops to young people 12-25 at the Braybrook Library.



MARIBYRNONG AQUATIC CENTRE

Not only a state of the art aquatic centre, did you know that MAC has a new and improved Health Club after undergoing an expansion and upgrade? As we head into spring, check out ways that MAC's Health Club can help you transform into a fitter, healthier you - you could even join our monthly Fitness Challenge! It will get you feeling great, meeting people and getting your hands on some free giveaways and accessory packs.

Plenty for children at MAC. Our September School Holiday Program offers sessions for kid's soccer, metafit, circuit and football. And the very little ones can also have some fun at our Occasional Child Care at MAC.

For more information and bookings with MAC programs, visit www.maribyrnong.vic.gov.au/mac

MATERNAL & CHILD HEALTH

IMMUNISATIONS

Immunisation is a simple way to protect children against certain diseases. Council provides families with an immunisation drop in service and an appointment service for babies and young children.

DEVELOPMENTAL CHECKS

You can track your child's early development with our experienced nurses at Council's Maternal and Child Health Centres across the city. Three and four year old developmental checks are important for accessing extra support services that can help your child.

NEW PARENTING GROUPS

Are you a new parent looking for information? Do you want to meet other new parents in your neighbourhood? There are many types of families in the City of Maribyrnong and all new parents are welcome to attend our sessions located at Council's Maternal and Child Health Centres across the city. For more information on MCH services, visit www.maribyrnong.vic.gov.au or ring 9688 0200.

CENTRAL REGISTRATION SYSTEM (CRS) DROP IN SESSIONS

Council provides a Central Registration System (CRS) to register children in long day care, 3 and 4 year old Kindergarten. Council offers a drop in service for families to meet with the CRS team and ask any questions you may have. No appointment required. Various times and locations. For more information, email earlyyearscentralregister@maribyrnong.vic.gov.au or ring 9688 0116.

PHOENIX YOUTH HUB

SCHOOL HOLIDAY PROGRAM

Want to have some fun this school holidays and meet some new people? There are tons of fun sessions to join. Programs include creating your own tote bag, art XPress (creative arts program including dancing, drawing, drumming), ice skating, Girls on Deck (beginner's female DJ workshops) and Chill out at Phoenix. Activities take place at the Phoenix Youth Hub at 72 Buckley St, Footscray.

CHANGE MAKERS YOUTH CONFERENCE

WEDNESDAY 28 SEPTEMBER, 10am to 4pm

PHOENIX YOUTH HUB, 72 BUCKLEY STREET, FOOTSCRAY.

REGISTER AT www.changemakers2eventbrite.com.au

Youth leadership forum with keynote speaker Omar Al Kassab, a former Syrian refugee. Workshops include 'Activism vs Slacktism', 'The Major Key to Success' and how to network and leave a meaningful impact.

All Phoenix Youth Hub events require bookings. For more information, visit www.phoenixyouth.com.au, like our Facebook page www.facebook.com/PhoenixYouthHub or ring 9091 4700.

CALLING ALL MUSICIANS

We are looking for new and emerging artists (aged 12-25yrs) to perform acoustic style gigs at the Braybrook Library on the second Friday of every month starting October.

MARIBYRNONG LIBRARIES

SO MUCH MORE THAN BOOKS!



HOME LIBRARY SERVICE

If you can't make it to one of our convenient library branches, then let us come to you! We have a free Home Library Service for local residents who are unable to access the library due to frailty, disability or full time care provision. Local resident Patrick Snelling (pictured below) has been volunteering with the Home Library Service program since early 2016, taking library resources out into the community. Patrick said that after many years in education,



he wanted to give something back to his community.

"The library program and the volunteering role created a great opportunity where I could utilise my research skills and teaching experiences to benefit others," said Patrick.

"Being involved in the program has brought a smile to my face many times. A recent request from a 98yr old patron required me to do some research about two merchant vessels that connected his lifelong hobby of model ship building to Australian and Victoria's maritime history.

"To see his face light up with joy at receiving new material about his beautifully crafted hand built ships was a real pleasure. This is an example of how volunteering rewards everyone," said Patrick.

Patrick loves being a local in the City of Maribyrnong, since he moved to the Footscray area 16 years ago.

"I moved here long before it became a contemporary hipster hub! I was attracted by the proximity of Footscray to my work in the CBD via easy transport links and a safe bicycle track. The cultural mix and quirky shopping choices also added value, not to mention having a very successful AFL team in the neighbourhood!" said Patrick.

CONVERSATION CAFÉ

The Conversation Café is a free program run in Footscray Library for people who want to improve their English conversation skills, meet new friends, and participate in intercultural conversations.

Run on the first and third Thursdays of the month, participants and volunteers can enjoy afternoon tea and guided conversation topics. Everyone is welcome, and in particular newly arrived to Australia, asylum seekers who are not eligible for English courses subsidised by the government.

Another long time resident of Footscray, Wendy Charles, loves living in Footscray, and particularly loves that the local community is so diverse and welcoming. Wendy brings her enthusiasm for the community to the Conversation Café program, where she joins the group as a volunteer.

Wendy really enjoys the Conversation Café – and says that “It can be a real hoot!”

“When you are trying to explain the meaning of a word or phrase to a non English speaker, sometimes the experience really makes you laugh about the English language,” she said.

“One of my favourite experiences was talking to a Vietnamese gentleman about words. We were discussing the word ‘discombobulate’, which is a word I love. He was going home to try it on his family and to see them ‘discombobulate’!”

Wendy is also a volunteer for the Home Library Service and has been working with community members since May this year.

“I like doing the Home Library Service because it shows members of our community, who are housebound, that someone cares about them and that they can still access services in the community. The patrons I have really seem to enjoy receiving their books and the time we spend together having a conversation,” said Wendy.

BABY RHYME TIME

Located at branches across the city, Baby Rhyme Time is a series of story times for babies and toddlers zero to two years old. Stories, rhymes and songs help develop babies’ language and literacy skills, as well as a love of books and reading.

MAKERS CLUB

A fun after-school club for kids aged five to twelve years old that explores exciting topics like aliens, animals and buildings. Come along for themed craft activities, talk about the books you are reading and be the first to borrow new books.

BOOK GROUPS

If you love talking about books with likeminded people, then join one of our Book Groups!

Maribyrnong Libraries also runs a few Book Groups in languages other than English.

If you want to host a Book Group, we offer sets of books for use by book groups. Anybody running or starting a book group is welcome to borrow sets of 10 copies of selected new titles for up to 6 weeks.

BILINGUAL STORY TIME

Our libraries offer a Bilingual Preschool Story Time in English, Vietnamese, Mandarin and Hindi in various locations across the city.

DIGITAL SUPPORT & TRAINING, AND ONLINE COLLECTIONS

We offer free basic internet training classes that will help you learn the basics of internet searching and free web-based email. We also offer free mobile device help classes. Once you have mastered your device, borrow from our digital collections.

PRESCHOOL STORYTIME

Fun, educational and free, Preschool Storytime can be a special sharing time with your child. All two to five year olds and their carers are welcome to join us each week for 45 minutes of stories, songs, rhymes, and a simple craft activity. Storytime provides your child with an introduction to a wide range of children’s stories and books; the experience of meeting, socialising and sharing with other children; an opportunity to develop language and motor skills and a love and appreciation of books and libraries.

COMMUNITY LANGUAGES COLLECTIONS

Maribyrnong Library Service has specialist collections in community languages for adults and children. The collections include books, magazines, DVDs, and CDs in community languages including Amharic, Arabic, Chinese, Greek, Hindi, Italian, Polish, Somali, Spanish, Swahili, Tigrinya and Vietnamese. We also have ebooks in Spanish and Chinese, as well as Zinio digital magazines in Chinese, Vietnamese and Spanish.

For more information on Maribyrnong Libraries, visit www.maribyrnong.vic.gov.au/library

WOMEN OF THE WEST

Gender equity is at the forefront in the City of Maribyrnong as Council recently launched the 'Women of the West' film and photography project. 'Women of the West' celebrates and showcases the achievements, experiences, diversity and leadership of women and girls in our vibrant city.

Four short films have been produced, covering four distinct and important themes of our city, including Arts, Sport & Leisure, Work, and Family & Community. These films present real women doing real things in our city, reaching their full potential. The films also creatively and gently challenge gender stereotypes and social norms.

One of the participants of the film, Laura Rouhan (pictured right) got involved for two very specific reasons. "Firstly, it was an opportunity for recognition. I know I at times find it difficult to accept praise and recognition – I also think this is something a lot of girls and women struggle with too, so I felt I should step up. Secondly, if I can be a positive representation of anything...an idea, a foster carer, a community member, then again, I ought to step up. As I said in the film, I cannot expect others to do so if I am not prepared to myself."

Laura recognises the way that the films really illustrate diversity amongst women – diversity of experience, achievement and our community.

"Girls and women are amazing! Business owners, mothers, sisters, friends, students, educators, artists, leaders, athletes, advocates for change and empowerment...are all present in these films. If anything, I hope that women and girls see these films and see opportunity, the richness of diversity and a place for themselves within it."

Laura and her partner Shelly have had plenty of experience giving back to the community. They had a long standing interest in becoming foster carers. Timing and opportunity met and they got involved in foster care through Mackillop Family Services.

"Supporting children and young people in out of home care is hugely rewarding and challenging. I have often said I feel



like I am getting more than I am giving, I get to tell all the Dad jokes and have a lot of fun and I am constantly learning and reflecting on life and all the big questions the role brings."

"Gay and lesbian carers are supported and now included in the foster care system in Victoria and I believe it sends a strong, positive message to LGBTI kids in care, that they are valued, supported and accepted in society," said Laura.

Human rights and community development is something that Laura is passionate about. For her, community development is looking at the big picture, listening and supporting people to become agents for change.

"I have worked and researched disability rights and social inclusion, digital and LGBTI rights and activism internationally and locally and I think working in my own backyard is one of the most enjoyable and valuable things I can do as an individual. I have recently started a not for profit organisation which aims to free people from loneliness. There is so much you can do to give back locally."

And her own backyard just happens to be the City of Maribyrnong, which she loves calling home.

"It has everything! We enjoy shopping at markets, exploring local parks, cycling along the Maribyrnong River, trying new restaurants, Sunday morning coffees and being so close to the city and the opportunities that brings too. Above all, Maribyrnong is a diverse, vibrant creative and inclusive community and it's our home."

To view the 'Women of the West' films and photos, visit www.maribyrnong.vic.gov.au/genderequity

INFRASTRUCTURE



Dales Stables gets a makeover thanks to Council's capital works program

As one of the few remaining examples of horse stables connected to the historic racing industry, local icon Dales Stables recently received a much needed facelift.

As part of a \$250,000 structural upgrade, the heritage site was re-levelled, the roof was replaced and the building has been painted to help restore the significant site to its former glory.

Dales Stables is one of many facilities across the City of Maribyrnong that have recently been renewed as part of Council's Capital Works Program. Alongside the upgrades to buildings and facilities, almost 1,500 trees have been planted in streets across the City and 280 in parks and reserves over the past four months.

MARIBYRNONG COMMUNITY CENTRE

Frequent users of the Maribyrnong Community Centre will have noticed some recent upgrades at the centre, the bi-fold walls have been replaced and the main kitchen and kitchenette have been redesigned. **Budget: \$100,000**

PUBLIC TOILET STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION

As part of the ongoing strategy, a new public toilet has been installed at Pipemakers Park and to make way for the Little Saigon development, the Leeds Street public toilet has been removed and a new toilet will be located within the development. **Budget: \$350,000**

ANGLISS RESERVE PAVILION

Works are also well underway at Angliss Reserve, a refurbishment of the sports pavilion is nearly complete and is sure to be a welcomed upgrade to the popular Yarraville reserve that hosts cricket in the summer and lacrosse in the winter. **Budget: \$1,550,000**

MILLS CLOSE

As an important new connection to the Maribyrnong River, Mills Close has recently been given a makeover. With the addition of some new landscaping, stairs and the demolition of a shed, car port and garage, the area now forms a welcoming path down to Footscray Park. The new concrete staircase includes balustrades, a bicycle channel, lighting and artwork in reference to Footscray Park's history.

Budget: \$650,000



FOOTSCRAY PARK CARPARK

The new Maribyrnong Boulevard carpark, adjacent to Footscray Park, has been recently redeveloped, providing an enhanced entry to the park and more parking for Footscray's premier open space. Extensive tree and garden bed planting has also accompanied these improvements and continues to build on the heritage character of Footscray Park. **Budget: \$1.25 million**

TRUCK BANS EXTENDED IN YARRAVILLE

Extended truck curfews are now in place in Francis Street near the Wembley Primary School in Yarraville.

The extended school drop-off and pick-up curfews complement the truck bans already in place on Francis Street and aim to improve the safety of our local children as they make their way to and from school.

The curfews are in place on weekdays during the school term from 8am to 9.30am and 2.30pm to 4pm.

These extended curfews follow the curfew announcement in January last year where similar bans were placed on Somerville Road during school times.

Truck curfews are monitored by VicRoads Transport Safety Services patrols, the on the spot fine for disobeying a 'no trucks' sign is \$148.



COMMUNITY FEEDBACK MAKE DESIGN PLANS FOR BRAYBROOK TAKE FLIGHT

After extensive community consultation this year, Council has developed a draft concept plan for an iconic new playground at Skinner Reserve in Braybrook, at the site of the much loved aeroplane park that was destroyed by a fire in December 2015.

The strong connection the community feels to the old aeroplane park was highlighted by over 450 responses received during the consultation period.

The consultation reached our community members from far and wide, engaging residents and park users of all ages and cultures, using a range of different methods. We hosted a sausage sizzle with local residents and park users, as well as consultations with the Churchill Avenue traders. Workshops and classroom activities were carried out with schools, kindergartens and playgroups to hear ideas from the young people in our community, resulting in

over 200 responses. Fliers, posters and a suggestion box were featured at the Braybrook Community Hub and 1,500 households were letterboxed with the relevant information, encouraging residents to bring forward their ideas. There was also a significant response from the community through our online survey featured on our engagement site – www.yourcityyourvoice.com.au More than 93% of people who responded said they would like to visit the new park. The feedback Council received included making the space unique, creating a safe site with clear site lines, providing plenty of



gathering places, using robust materials and providing a wide variety of play opportunities and public toilets. The feedback was also very clear about wanting to keep the flight theme. In response to this very thorough feedback, the draft plan has retained the theme of flight, journey and travel from the original park, celebrating Braybrook's history. The proposal includes a variety of play experiences and challenges for children of all ages. The draft design creates a safe, welcoming space with multiple spaces for family and community gatherings and respects the need for a robust and vandal resistant

design. Some of the features include a giant plane structure that includes swings below the wings, slides and a climbing net structure for the cockpit. The playground will also have a spinner, flying fox and pole maze and scooter/ trike track. Council has committed \$803,000 towards the redevelopment of the playground and will also seek philanthropic support. For more information on the redevelopment of Skinner Reserve, visit our website. To provide your feedback on a range of other Council projects, visit www.yourcityyourvoice.com.au

THE SONS OF THE WEST

The Sons of the West men's health program has wrapped up for another year with 500 men presented with their graduation hoodie at ceremonies across Melbourne's west.

The free men's health program expanded in a big way in its third year going from five sites to 12, including Ballarat for the first time, and included The Locker Room, separate sessions dedicated to mental health.

Western Bulldogs acting CEO Michael Quinn said the Club was delighted with the way that men have embraced the program.

"It gives men of the west a friendly, open and inclusive forum to learn more about their health and wellbeing," Quinn said.

"We hope our participants will graduate with knowledge and skills they can apply to their everyday lives."

52-year-old Frank Vella graduated for the first time in 2016 and won the Club Champion award for outstanding individual achievement in the program.

Vella admitted feeling anxious on his first night, but couldn't have been happier with the welcoming environment.

"First night I thought 'this is great,'" he said.

"Sometimes you get a whole bunch of blokes in a room and everyone is cliquey – they stay in their own groups but it wasn't like that.

"Everybody was really welcoming, very interested in where you came from and what you did."

Vella said that he thought the reason was that everyone was

there for the same reason.

"Internally they may have different reasons, some may have come to lose weight, others for medical type things, or the health side of things, but I think it's all for being able to be part of a team and help each other out.

"Even when we're doing simple exercises it's all about the teamwork and helping each other out. It's all about asking your mate if he's ok and just being more aware and offering a helping hand."

Of the 800 men who took part this year, over 500 will graduate the program in ceremonies across Melbourne's West, as well as Ballarat. That is up from 230 last year and 90 in year one.

The Sons of the West Leadership Academy will be open for applications later and will return in 2017.

For more information, visit www.sonsofthewest.com.au

Maribyrnong City Council is a proud partner of the Sons of the West program.



HELPING EACH OTHER TO KEEP OUR CITY SAFE

Both Council and Footscray Police are encouraging everyone in the City of Maribyrnong to look out for each other to help keep our streets safe, and to take simple steps that can reduce crime in our neighbourhoods.

Vehicle theft is often preventable. Theft of vehicle contents can often be easily avoided by locking your car doors at all times. Always remove valuables, such as wallets, phones, sunglasses or laptops from your vehicle. If you see suspicious behaviour around cars, phone triple 0.

If you see something, say something. Often times, when Police are investigating crimes, there were community members who heard or saw something suspicious at the time, but did not report it. Please help your fellow community members by looking out for suspicious behaviour and reporting anything you see. You can take

comfort in knowing that you have the option of remaining anonymous on these calls.

Working together as a community to address family violence. Some victims of family violence aren't able to make the report themselves to get the help they need. If you see any incidences of family violence, whether it be in your personal or neighbourhood environment, or even something you witness in the street, please report it to the Police.

Local Area Commander for the Maribyrnong Police, Adrian Healy, encourages the entire community to be vigilant and proactive in reporting crimes to the Police.

"We rely quite heavily on community reporting and we need support from far and wide, in every corner of the City of Maribyrnong in our investigations. Let's work together to keep our community safe and reduce incidence of crime and violence," said Inspector Healy.

For more information on community safety, visit www.police.vic.gov.au or like the Facebook page at www.facebook.com/eyewatchmaribyrnongpsa



COUNCIL ELECTION

In October this year, seven Councillors will be elected to govern the City of Maribyrnong over the next four years.

Councillors are key to setting the direction and vision for the city. They are responsible for advocating for the needs of the local community and for making decisions across many areas including economy, infrastructure and development, health and wellbeing, environment and sustainability; and arts and culture.

Councillors will be entrusted to make decisions that will affect your life on a daily basis – from child care centres, sporting facilities, playgrounds and public spaces, building developments and more.

Democracy is not a spectator sport

It's important to get involved in the election process by learning who the candidates are and what they stand for.

Voting

The City of Maribyrnong election will be conducted by postal voting. Ballot packs will be posted to all enrolled voters between Tuesday 4 and Thursday 6 October 2016. Make sure you follow the instructions in the ballot pack to complete the ballot paper.

For more information on the elections and voting process, visit
[www.maribyrnong.vic.gov.au/Council/Council Elections](http://www.maribyrnong.vic.gov.au/Council/Council%20Elections)

For information on candidates and voting, visit
www.vec.vic.gov.au/MaribyrnongElection

FRINGE OUT WEST TO DELIGHT AUDIENCES IN MARIBYRNONG

The Melbourne Fringe Festival, in September, has a big audience out west, and for the fourth year running, Fringe is partnering with Council's Festival City program to bring Fringe to the west and west to the Fringe!

This year's Fringe Out West program will be the biggest yet, with 16 shows being staged across the City at six different venues.

One of the program's highlights, Distraction Society, presents

contemporary dance duo Anna Seymour and Amanda Lever in a dance work at Footscray's Bluestone Church Arts Space inspired by graffiti artist Banksy's Mobile Lovers. This highly visual and physical dance



duet examines the forces of attraction, attention and distraction in our so-called highly connected society. Anna was successful in being a recipient of Fringe's Compass Mentoring Program which supports artists from diverse backgrounds to present their first ever Fringe work. We chatted to Anna about her latest work, which is her first time producing her own work for Fringe.

"It has been a huge learning curve. It's overwhelming at times but I'm really enjoying the challenges," said Anna. "It has given me more confidence to know I have the skills to produce my own work. The folk at Melbourne Fringe have been incredible and supportive."

Anna, who is deaf, and Amanda, who is hearing, have worked together before on two projects. "We danced together in Under My Skin for The Delta Project (a dance company employing deaf and hearing dancers) which premiered at Next Wave Festival this year. I also danced in Amanda's work, Hypnagogia. I run a short course for Auslan (Australian Sign Language) which Amanda attended, but she mainly picked Auslan up from working with me and other deaf artists. So, we communicate in

Auslan during rehearsals which is great as it is direct communication rather than going through an interpreter."

"Bluestone Church Arts Space was chosen as the venue as it was recommended by Fringe Festival. Bluestone Church Arts Space is committed to supporting and nurturing artists and they provide free venue hire during production and performance week. I also am a sucker for church-converted spaces and it's a beautiful space."

"We hope to attract a diverse audience of different ages, cultural backgrounds and languages. I think most of the audience will relate to the themes in the work – how we are constantly distracted and preoccupied. How technology has changed society and us in personal ways. It is a visual work with no spoken text. Movement tells the story which is accessible for anyone and everyone." Distraction Society is presented at the Bluestone Church Arts Space in Footscray as part of Fringe Out West on the 16, 17 and 18 September.

Fringe Out West, from; 15 September – 2 October. For program details go to www.festivalcity.com.au

FIG & WALNUT

11-13 Bellairs Avenue | Seddon

There's a sense of warmth as soon as you walk in the door of Fig & Walnut. This quaint little shop opposite Seddon station has been transformed.

"I always thought that this area needed a cafe," said Vera Xanthis who was tired of corporate life and seeking a "passion project".

"I thought that these shops would be the perfect location. I wanted to pay respect to the heritage of the building and I also wanted it to feel like home – all about food and feeling welcome."

There's exposed brick, panelled walls, chandeliers and a view of the kitchen. A little side room with a leather Chesterfield. The backyard complete with cute cubby house and hopscotch.

Vera partnered with Goran Boskovski, another local resident and coffee specialist who also owns Kinship & Co in the city.

The menu is Mediterranean in flavour, with a children's menu also available. You'll have a hard time choosing what to order and the coffee and the pastries are great.

But it's not just the decor and the food that make this place. The staff are warm and welcoming and you're greeted with a smile every time you walk through the door.

As to the name Fig & Walnut? It came from the owner of the building. Growing up in Italy during World War II, he had worked for a wealthy lady. One day he asked if he could have a fig and she refused him. On that day, he vowed that he would plant a fig tree in any property he owned.



For requests, comments and questions about Council services and programs, go to **www.maribyrnong.vic.gov.au** or call Customer Service on **9688 0200**.

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You can also write to your Ward Councillor:
c/- Maribyrnong City Council, PO Box 58, Footscray 3011.
 If you don't know who your Ward Councillor is, please contact
Customer Service on 9688 0200 or fax 9687 7793.

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