

THE



ROTUNDA

NORTH FITZROY'S COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER

Laughter club
Page 3



Local drafted to Hawks
Page 3



Musos take world stage
Pages 4-5



A VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS!

The Rotunda is back for one final issue for 2021.

Of course, we felt a desire to knock off early long ago – but we just had to end the year with a Christmas edition. Everyone knows that age-old North Fitzrovia aphorism: "It's not holiday season until *The Rotunda* says it's holiday season." Well: It's holiday season. So sit back, relax and enjoy our last issue for the year.

This issue is packed. We've got a double-page spread on the many talented musicians who hail from in and around North Fitzroy, including the primary school teacher who suddenly found himself performing his global smash hit on the steps of the Paris Opera House. We feature the fascinating story of our suburb's very own laughter club, who meet weekly by the Rotunda to find respite from our chaotic world.

As always, this issue includes the word from our dog Ludo, whose infamous cynicism is buckling under the joyful weight of the Christmas spirit. (As you can see in the drawing to the right). We have, of course, a new crossword that's sure to send North Fitzroy's abundant amateur cryptologists up the wall. We've got another recipe – and this one's perfect for the festive season.

Thank you so, so much to our loyal volunteer distributors – whether you delivered three newspapers or three thousand – who can finally rest after six months of roaming the suburban streetscape. I hope Santa gets you some new shoes.

To anyone who read, spoke about or recommended *The Rotunda* this year – thank you, too. You make it all worthwhile, truly. And to anyone who advertised or donated, a simple 'thank you' is inadequate – but know that your help has been absolutely integral to *The Rotunda's* existence. Hopefully, we can keep this thing going.

And lastly, whether you've been naughty, nice or a mix of both – Merry Christmas and a Happy Holidays. See you next year.

We respect and acknowledge the traditional custodians of the land, the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin Nation.

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Illustration by Marnie Florence-McNeil

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LETTERS

Dear Editor,

As a resident of McKean Street for the past 68 years, I wish to congratulate the success of *The Rotunda*. I have taken the liberty of extrapolating the growth of this magazine, and feel qualified (Maths teacher for 40 years) to predict that *The Rotunda* will be bigger than the *Herald Sun* within three short years.

On a more serious note, what a wonderful article by Tom Petsinis (*Fitzroy Raw: Tales from the 60s*, Issue 4, November '21) – compulsive reading. More articles like that will only enhance the quality of this magazine.

Also, a comment on the Golden Worm in the middle of our beautiful Edinburgh Gardens – they have been a huge part of my life and I walk them everyday. In my day, I scaled the wood stacks and the piles of briquettes. I fully agree with Louise from Brunswick Street that this sculpture has a place in our gardens, but not in its current position. Put the worm closer to ground, surrounded by beautiful plants. When I walk past that spot, I want to give thanks to someone special.

Here is a thought... A life-size statue of Sir Pastor Doug Nicholls, spreading his arms towards the old Fitzroy Football Ground. Why do I recommend Doug Nicholls, you may ask? Well, it's obvious – he's a pastor and I like pasta (being of Italian origin).

Tony Marinelli from McKean Street

Dear Editor,

While I respect the earthworms (plural and underground) of The Edi Gardens, this sculpture of a (singular and pedestalized) worm is just simply too reminiscent of Jeff Koons with all that gold. It's had more than its 15 minutes of Warhol pop fame, it's time to go.

Von from Alfred Crescent

Dear Editor,

My wife and I founded Fitzroy Community School in 1976. I write in response to the criticism of FCS in the letters column of the last *Rotunda*.

Why were we so eager to get kids back to

school after world-record home isolation? The most troubled sector of our population are those in the years immediately following schooling. The founding motive of FCS was to cater to the needs of the whole child.

Primary schools are now, by default, the best hope we have left to boost much-needed social skills and self-confidence.

Phillip O'Carroll
Co-founder, FCS 1976

Dear Editor,

Where was the hard hitting local politics section in issue 4? During a 774ABC radio interview about the recent, shambolic Mayoral election, one of the City of Yarra Councillors described the hegemony that is our Council as an embarrassment. When is *The Rotunda* going to make an offer to Adele Fergusson or Nick McKenzie to move across? It can only enhance their careers!

Glenn from Brunswick Street North

Dear Sir/Madam,

In your fine edition for November 2021, your editor has made a serious mistake. He or she writes, 'The past month or two has been littered with disasters – earthquakes, outbreaks, hailstorms, Melbourne winning the premierships...' This last comment is very wrong, for in fact Melbourne winning the premierships has been the best thing that has happened in the last 57 years. It is not a disaster but a triumph and has made 2021 the best year of all. I trust that the editor will correct this terrible error.

Cheers,

Andrew from Eastham Street

Editor: The Rotunda would like to issue an amendment. We apologise for describing Melbourne's premierships as a disaster – we should have been far less equivocal. It was a complete and utter catastrophe.

Send your letters to:
northfitzroyrotunda@gmail.com

STREET STYLE



Amy was walking through the village with her buddy and colleague Matt. She had that certain something that draws the eyes of passers-by – a slightly tough, don't-mess-with-me look that contrasts with her soft and genial manner, long faux lashes and pretty nose ring. All up, it's a recipe for super style.

NAME:

Amy Pamsey.

WHAT DO YOU DO?

Day manager and bartender at the Great Northern and RMIT student (Youth Work).

It's just been voted Melbourne's best pub by *Time Out*. It has very friendly staff, not to blow my own horn. It's great for families or housemates. You can bring your dog.

I know a dog correspondent who'll be glad to know that. He likes a martini dry. With a stick.

WHAT DO YOU LIKE BEST ABOUT YOUR WORK?

It's brought me out of my shell.

HOW LONG HAVE YOU LIVED IN THE ENVIRONS?

I live in Brunswick West but I'm house-sitting my aunty's house in Rae Street. I'm minding her poochie, a longhaired chihuahua, Bluey. He's a character.

WHERE HAS YOUR AUNTY GONE?

She and her girlfriend have a pimped out caravan and they've gone for a big long drive.

THREE WORDS TO DESCRIBE THE HOOD?

Funky. Vibrant. Community.

WHERE DID YOU GROW UP?

Sydney. But Melbourne's now my home. Sydney's all suits and bumbags. It's snobby. I can't take it. I'll NEVER move back to Sydney.

WHO ARE YOU WEARING?

Op-shop chic! T-shirt from Savers. When we came out of lockdown I ran into an op-shop and bought my yellow Crocs. I'm wearing my Granny's pants. I go over to her place and she lets me raid her cupboard. She has the BEST fashion sense. Everyone compliments me when I'm wearing her clothes. She's very out there, very North Fitzroy actually. More your extreme styles rather than subtle. I'm the same. And my cap is from my friend's

business called Closing the Gaps, about spreading awareness of Indigenous issues.

I LOVE YOUR LASHES.

They're from the Brow and Lash Bar right here. Basically I got them right after lockdown just because I was so excited to be able to do things.

YOUR TATTOOS ARE INCREDIBLE.

I've been accumulating them since I was 18. At first they had lots of meaning but now I just like getting stabbed.

WHICH IS YOUR FAVOURITE?

The ones on my knees. They're from a Chinese Yin and Yang story. It's a wolf (one knee) chasing a deer (the other knee). In the story, the wolf always lets the deer run away so the game keeps going.

My new one is the grim reaper playing pool. My Mum won't like it.

ONE WORD TO DESCRIBE YOUR CURRENT STATE OF MIND:

Kerfuffled.

WHEN AND WHERE WERE YOU HAPPIEST?

When my godson, Ciaran was born and I was asked to be godmother. He's seven now and lives in the States. I get up at 2AM so we can have a Facetime chat. We're big on Facetime. He tells me about his swimming lessons.

IF YOU COULD BE STANDING ANYWHERE A YEAR FROM NOW, WHERE WOULD IT BE?

With my family (Sydney). I haven't seen them in three years. I would like to be able to give my Mum a hug whenever I see her.

IF YOU COULD INTRODUCE ONE THING TO NORTH FITZROY, WHAT WOULD IT BE?

Cheaper rent.

WHAT DO YOU LIKE BEST ABOUT NORTH FITZROY?

Wherever you walk, it's green with all the trees. I also love house perching, looking at houses and pretending I live in them. I especially like any house with a big red or blue door.

WHERE DO YOU GET YOUR COFFEE?

Piccante, with my Dad who's in Melbourne caring for his mother. He and I go to the movies once a fortnight. We just saw a Danish film, *The Rider of Justice*. I think it's my new favourite film. It's like the new *Die Hard* – about Christmas.

LAUGHTER: THE PERFECT ANTIDOTE

North Fitzroy's very own laughter club meets weekly to chuckle their stress away

By Charlie Gill

Edinburgh Gardens on a Saturday morning hosts a wide range of activities, from group exercise classes to Tai-Chi on the boule court. Passers-by don't stop and stare – until they walk by the Rotunda and see a bunch of people standing in a circle, laughing and clapping energetically.

Maniacally, even. But this is no coalition of deranged evil geniuses remarkably open about their plans for world domination. In fact, these might be the sanest people in our society: people who have realised that – when life's zest is drained by stress, work and endless obligation – laughter is, as Jim Lord describes it, "an antidote to the seriousness of the world".

Jim is the leader of the Fitzroy North Laughter Club, who meet by the Rotunda and engage in 'laughter yoga'. Popularised by Indian doctor Madan Kataria, it requires one to force laughter, effectively tricking the brain into processing it as real. This improves both psychological and physical wellbeing – apparently 15 minutes of belly laughter is equivalent to ten minutes of jogging. Either way, the fake laughter soon turns real enough, which I soon found out after joining a session last month.

James and Lisa, a pair of young local primary school teachers; Jim (who is 70 and a semi-retired electrician); Kalanam, a visually impaired long-time laughter yoga enthusiast; myself; four young women – it was a diverse crowd. But we were, of course, united by a shared goal: a determination to chuckle.

Each laughter session is structured by a chorus – "Ho, Ho, Ha Ha Ha!" – which we chant between exercises, such as the 'John Wayne laugh' or 'electric handshake laugh' – Jim draws from a page listing hundreds. The 'dog walk laugh' involves

laughing with an imaginary dog on a lead pulling you in different directions. At one point, Jim invites us to laugh at ourselves from the perspective of someone walking past, amused at such a ridiculous sight. Very meta.

The 69-year-old Kalanam's favourite is the 'laughter drink', which requires everyone to throw an ingredient into an imaginary cauldron and stir it with gusto whilst vigorously cackling.

"When I pull that out, everybody laughs," he says.

I think about mentioning that, you know, they kind of have to. That's the whole point, right? But I think back to when Kalanam did pull it out – we looked and sounded like a drunken coven of witches – and my laughter in that moment wasn't contrived at all. It was genuinely funny. I was genuinely laughing, and I was genuinely happy.

"We looked and sounded like a drunken coven of witches."

Kalanam, like Jim, is also a trained 'laughter leader'. He lost his eyesight to glaucoma in 1994 and appreciates that everyone – no matter their circumstance – can laugh.

"This is something I can participate in. I find this enjoyable."

Does he ever practice laughter yoga by himself?

"Sometimes, when I finish my shower and I'm drying up, I go 'hahaha'. My wife comes



The laughter club warms up at the start of their session. Photo courtesy of Jim Lord.

and says, 'Did you laugh? and I say 'Yes! It's good for me'."

Laughter yoga was popularised in 1995, but Jim suggests the healing power of a giggle has pre-historic origins.

"I heard an evolutionary psychologist say that laughter probably emerged long before language did."

Indeed, babies start laughing before they can speak, and it seems Lisa and James were inspired by spending time with their primary school students.

"We're just trying to replicate the natural joy and spontaneity of children," says Lisa. "It frees to you up to see the world in a more joyful way."

I think Lisa's right. When I awoke up at the ungodly hour of 9:00 AM for the session, I felt unmotivated. I'd been drowning in university assessments and scrambling for newspaper stories, with a dread doggedly following me that the rest of my life would be spent constantly playing catch-up. Would I really be able to weather the storm

of adult-life? To cope with its ominous forecast of big mortgages, expensive bills and hungry children?

But over the course of the session – as I madly laughed with people I'd never met before – nature's most essential elements began to sing together in beautiful chorus: the gentle November breeze, the warm sunlight, the smiles of the strangers around me...

It was quite weird and uncomfortable at first, but I was seeing the world in a more joyful way.

Of course, it's not for everyone. Jim admits that "some people don't get it...mostly old fellas". And, yes, it might seem strange to make a specific time to laugh the same way you would a parent-teacher interview or business meeting. But if you're in the business of being happy – which all of us are – I think it's worth a try.

The Fitzroy North Laughter Club meets on Saturday mornings at 10:00 AM. They will return on January 8th 2022. Join the Facebook group (just search up Fitzroy North Laughter Club) to get involved!

North Fitzroy boy drafted to Hawks

Moggs Creek has Patrick Dangerfield, but we've got Josh Ward

Last month the AFL held the yearly National Draft, in which clubs select the most talented young players in the country to play for them. As the evening of November 24th drew near, Hawthorn had their eyes set on an exciting prospect named Josh Ward.

Ward is a 181-centimetre midfielder whose high football IQ and ball-winning abilities have invited comparison to Essendon gun Zach Merrett – with an elite aerobic capacity rivalling that of Carlton superstar Sam Walsh. It's a dangerous combination.

Ward supported the Hawks growing up and his great-grandfather played for them in the 1930s, but they aren't the only club he's associated with. He also won a junior premiership for Fitzroy in 2015 (and was a bowler for the Edinburgh Cricket Club).

Subsequently, when November 24 rolled around, one of *The Rotunda's* deliverers – a keen follower of the draft – watched eagerly to see where Ward would fall. Indeed, he was taken by the Hawks at pick number seven. The draft coincided with the release of *The Rotunda's* November edition, and

the next morning that same deliverer was dropping off copies at North Fitzroy's cafes.

When he arrived at Mitte – on the corner of Michael Street and Rowe Street – he spotted a familiar face standing outside, waiting for his coffee. It was none other than that very same ball-winning, elite decision-making endurance machine he saw on TV last night.

"Josh Ward!" said the shocked deliverer, stretching out his hand to the Hawthorn rookie and North Fitzroy resident. "Congratulations."

It was presumably the first time a member of the public had recognised Ward; the first time he'd rendered someone starstruck. But he was – as the deliverer later reported to friends and family – a very gracious, humble and polite young man.

Next year we'll be able to take pride in the fact he's one of our very own, as he lays tackles and kicks goals for Hawthorn (a club *The Rotunda* typically has little time for). He'll be joined by his good mate Ned Long – also drafted to the Hawks, also a midfielder and also a premiership player for the Fitzroy juniors.



Josh being interviewed at the draft. Inset: Josh and Ned celebrating the 2015 flag.

What a romantic circumstance it is for Ward: A Hawthorn supporter playing for Hawthorn, the same club his great-grandfather represented in bygone days.

Hopefully he requests a trade to Carlton in two years.

Just kidding. Congratulations Josh! Go well.

LOCAL MUSOS TAKE

Melodies made in the Inner North are set to conquer the globe – or, in one case, already have

By Jo Margrett

According to the national census – alongside Climate Activists and Unemployed Journalists – North Fitzrovians chart highest in the country for Musical Wunderkind (yes, that's a real category). Our local musos are kicking global goals and making a lot of noise doing it.

I lassoed some of our local musos for this deep-dive into the Inner North, the meaning of success and even the philosophical labyrinth: "What Is Punk?"

Local muso Jack Madin, and colleague Ed Service, have just taken the pop world by storm as dance-electronic duo Shouse, playing live on the steps of the Paris Opera and dominating European pop charts with their fabulously uplifting "Love Tonight". The single harnesses a gospel-like chorus of euphoric voices and a synthwave bassline, and has surpassed 200 million plays on Spotify – becoming the anthem for post COVID freedom-lovers the world over.

I had a prophetic sense of this when I asked him to be my daughter's Grade 2 VIP guest at Fitzroy North Primary School some years ago. (He accepted the invite and was great.) Live from Ibiza, Jack explained to *The Rotunda* how a teacher at Brunswick North West Primary (Jack) and a Community Manager at Collingwood Yards (Ed) blitzed Europe and found mega-fame.

"We recorded "Love Tonight" way back in 2017... We thought it would be fun to make a song like those "We Are The World" and Live Aid charity songs, but to record it with a bunch of our friends instead of famous folk."

"Some were professional singers but many were just enthusiastic amateurs, and we recorded the song in one day in a Brunswick warehouse... I have always remembered that day as a very special moment I was so glad to share with all those people."

After a "lukewarm reception", the song started to go simultaneously viral online while COVID went viral off line. "People

started to listen and share the song everywhere... Then after the pandemic, the song became one of those big summer hits that everyone knows the words to, so all the big DJs started to play it at massive festivals."

While their words and music were topping the charts across the continent, Ed and Jack were locked down in Melbourne.

"The song was only ever meant to be an ode to the little Melbourne music scene I was in. I wanted to encourage a bunch of Inner North folk to come together and to sing, dance and have fun. And now millions of people around the world are too! Who would have thought it?"

The success of Shouse only confirms that when it comes to cultural currency, our neighbourhood punches above its weight, to which *The Rotunda* itself amply attests.

While rents have risen faster than a jug of soy milk under the steamer at Toast, North Fitzroy's artistic cred still holds strong through the remaining student digs, the established artists living here and the sounds of acoustic guitars on balconies wafting over Edi Gardens.

Beloved songwriter, performer and angel-faced goddess, Clare Bowditch, immortalised North Fitzroy in her song, "Divorcee at 23":

Well it seems you've got a baby girl/ To a man who will not love you well/ And you're walkin' down Brunswick Street/ And you're buyin' the baby's tears with treats...

What makes a neighbourhood hospitable to an artistic community? Clare says: "a long history, with true...diversity, with old people and kids, with kind people who share stuff from their gardens, and access to big trees, good coffee, a good library, a good mechanic, a place to sit and think, a local pool, a corner shop that's been there forever...inspiration for artists."

Jack Madin confirms the importance of proximity to live venues, such as "Johnston St's Tote and Old Bar, to Brunswick St's Evelyn and Bar Open".

"The Birmingham was my favourite when I started. Polyester records closed, which supported an amazing scene, but now it's a new bar called Avalon. Things change and people adapt, no scene lasts forever!"

Bassist Mark Wilson, from super successful band Jet, cites "walking adventures with my daughter" as one of the things he misses most about the 'hood when he's on tour, adding that "lots of pubs helps" in making a neighbourhood artist-friendly. He finds plenty to admire in many local musos, including King Gizzard and The Lizard Wizard "who blow me away constantly".

Jet formed in 2001 and boasts one of the catchiest hits of the new millennium "Are You Gonna Be My Girl", along with 6.5 million record sales and several gigs supporting The Rolling Stones on tour.

(Did they teach the Stones anything? "I don't think so. They did invite us to some nice parties, though.")



Primary school teacher Jack Madin and his mate Ed Service have amassed over 200 million Spotify streams.

Monte Morgan, the front man of pop-dance duo Client Liaison (with Harvey Miller), has lived in North Fitzroy for ten years. They have recently released a new album *Divine Intervention* and are gearing up for live shows.

"I believe in making art for – and with – your community. Even if they don't like your song as much as some Europeans do!"

"I really love Fitzroy North and can imagine living here for the rest of my life," notes Monte, confirming a fine intellect. He cites Shouse as one of his favourite local acts.

Stevie Williams, of punk-group Clowns, has lived in the Inner North for five years, a seismic shift from being lead singer of a bunch of Bayside kids with musical dreams.

"I was cold calling...booking agents point blank to book us our first tour. One booking agent told me that they would never consider booking any band until they had played at least 500 shows".

"I thought 'Alright, we'll play 500 shows. We'll race as fast as we can to 500 and when we hit it, I'll call you back and rub it in your face that you can't work with us'... If I could speak to them now, I would say thanks and that they were right."

Stevie's local favourites: the Mary Miller Café, Just Felafs, the Moroccan Soup Bar, Super Tasty Rooster and Neighbourhood Wines. These are all ballast against the emotionally discombobulating reality of touring:

"It's being overwhelmed with attention at shows and feeling lonely in hotel rooms on the other side of the world from your loved ones. It's being massively inspired to write music and then suffering severe episodes

of writer's block. It's feast after you get home from tour and famine in the two weeks leading up to your next. It can be a rollercoaster but there is a reason people... ride rollercoasters."

Such an intense lifestyle is made easier by living near Edinburgh Gardens, which Stevie appreciates as something of a sanctuary:

"Even just walking through there in the last 18 months seeing people picnicking, skating, tight rope walking, enjoying their lives; it's giving me hope that we'll be ok."

Linda Bull agrees, citing Edi Gardens ("site of the most exciting New Year's party ever") and boutique Muscrats as her favourite spots in the 'hood. She adds: "And if I get reincarnated, I want to come back as a North Fitzroy pooch because they seem to be so loved."

North Carlton raised siblings Lilli and Rory Trobbiani have spent much of their youth in North Fitzroy. Along with bassist Luke Scott, who has shared-housed his way through the Inner North, they form HighSchool – a sexy poetic hybrid of Byron and the Smiths, which Lilli adds is "powered by progressive harmonies, driving choruses, emotive instrumentals and strong synth lines that are in line with the post punk sound but have a new wave/dance kick."

Their digital album *Forever at Last* has just launched and their elaborate, charismatic and theatrical music videos – with Gothic and biblical themes – are as strong a drawcard as the music itself.

"We believe strong aesthetics along with music is not a mutually exclusive thing, having both occur only heightens the experience and interest for the audience."

Their recent signing to the U.K.'s Dalliance Recordings is, says Lilli, "a perfect fit". After Christmas, they are being flown to London to bring a little Inner North magic to Outer North climes.



Jack performing in Europe.

WORLD BY STORM



HighSchool are taking their talents to the U.K. Photo: Hannah McKimmie.

"At times it baffles us and others that we've signed to a label, agent and publishing as a COVID-born band."

"We have a string of shows lined up in London early next year, so we'll be over there and playing live and recording with a producer - which is exciting as we haven't really collaborated with anyone on the musical production side of things."

Surely - whilst conquering Europe - they'll desperately miss our little suburb? They're certainly full of praise for it:

"We love that North Fitzroy is quite flat, so good for riding bikes. We love that it doesn't lack in cafes... We love *The Rotunda!*"

So, is there "an Inner North sound"? Monte Morgan is brutally realistic - as brutal as a gorgeously coiffed, gently spoken superstar can be.

"Music of the Inner North? Well, it comes from so many computers nowadays, it doesn't sound localised... It comes from an algorithm."

"It can be a rollercoaster but there is a reason people...ride rollercoasters."

Mark Wilson reflects: "It really depends on the mood. Sometimes you are inspired by your surrounds and other times you want to transcend reality and dream of a narrative that isn't your own."

According to Lilli, HighSchool is not "an overly Australian sounding band... I feel like where we are from remains a bit of a mystery to people, which we like."

For Clare Bowditch, "place" is reflected in the soul of her songs. "I'm not sure even

the most sensitive listener can hear that Merri Creek's nearby, but they can almost certainly hear the subtle influence of my musical contemporaries from the inner Melbourne live music pub scene."

Jack Madin agrees. "Your community, and the people you know and love in it, has more influence on your creative expression than anything else. I believe in making art for, and with, your community. (Even if they don't like your song as much as some Europeans do haha!)"

So what defines success for these musos?

"Surrounding yourself with good people is what I consider a success," says Mark.

Stevie Williams puts showbiz in its place, citing the most fun he's ever had as "my 12th birthday at Bounce Trampoline Centre in Glen Iris". Continuing the theme, HighSchool defines success as playing Disney World.

But Monte paints the most evocative picture: "Playing mainstage at Splendour in the Grass at sunset and Tina Arena coming out to sing with us... the energy got bigger and bigger, we played daylight into sunset in front of 17,000 people...that was incredible."

Asked how punk continues to survive, Stevie Williams of Clowns observes: "It lives on like COVID bacteria in a petri dish. Constantly thriving, evolving, mutating through the environment of the Inner North. No one asked for it, maybe no one really wants it, but it exists and will pervade any attempt to eradicate it."

And the age-old question: what exactly is punk?

"I'll write my answer on a piece of paper and leave it in a sealed envelope, buried underground in a time capsule under the giant golden worm in the Edi Gs. In the event of my death, I permit you, Jo, to dig it up and publish it in *The Rotunda.*"

The Rotunda asked our celebrated interviewees to name their most-listened to records getting them through the pandemic.

Clare Bowditch:
Gretta Ray - *Begin to Look Around*
Bon Iver - *For Emma Forever*
Bill Evans - *Undercurrent*

Mark from Jet:
Alice Coltrane - *Ptah, the El Daoud*
Neil Young - *Harvest*
Haruomi Hosono - *Hosono House*

Monte Morgan from Client Liaison:
Annie Lennox - *Diva*
The Temptations - *Masterpiece*
Róisín Murphy - *Róisín Machine*

HighSchool:
Gary Numan - *The Pleasure Principle*
Pink Floyd - *Wish You Were Here*
Spacemen 3 - *Forged Prescriptions*

Linda Bull:
Bill Withers - *Live At Carnegie Hall*
The Weeknd - *After Hours*
This is Ella Fitzgerald - *Essentials playlist on Spotify*

Jack Madin from Shouse:
The Flying Pickets - *Lost Boys*
Arcade Fire - *Neon Bible*
Paul Kelly & Uncle Bill - *Smoke*



Photo: Lisa Businovski.



FITZROY NORTH, WELCOME TO BRUNSWICK!

Have you heard that Fitzroy North (or is it North Fitzroy?) will soon be part of the state electorate of Brunswick?

The Victorian Electoral Commission has set new boundaries for the electorate, which will come into effect at the next state election in 2022, bringing postcode 3068 into the Brunswick electoral district.

FILL IN THE SURVEY

I'm Dr Tim Read, I work in the Victorian Parliament for the people of Brunswick electorate.

I want to know what Fitzroy North people care about.

From big picture issues like climate change and the housing crisis, to things that could be improved locally, like more bike lanes - let me know how I can help!



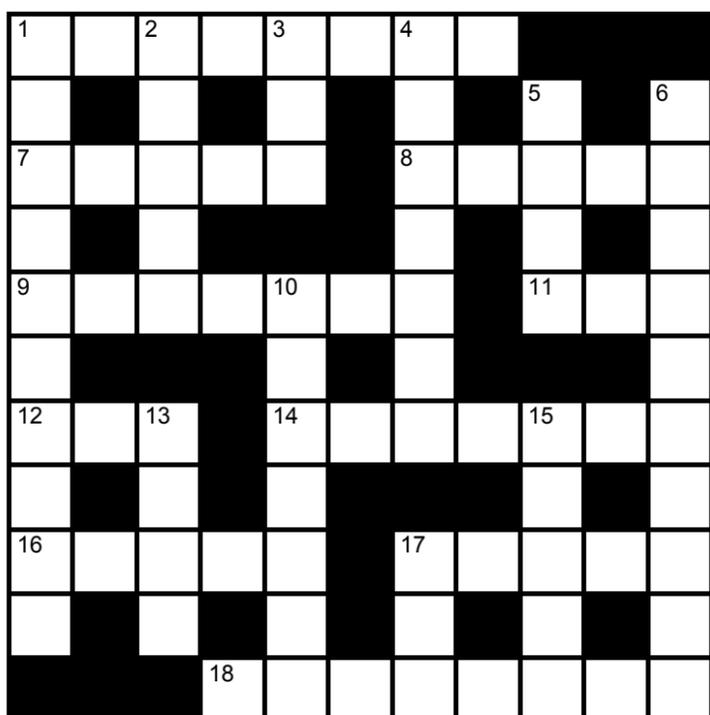
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CROSSWORD by LR

#4



ACROSS

- 1 * Named for what it lacks (8)
- 7 Holy book (5)
- 8 Type of timber (5)
- 9 * Broadly gauge your sobriety (7)
- 11 Go after, legally (3)
- 12 "Impressive!" (3)
- 14 Red, berry-like fruit (7)
- 16 US TV awards (5)
- 17 Not true (5)

- 18 * Dawn's light, with dark romance (8)

DOWN

- 1 Went from bar to bar (3-7)
- 2 Jewish leader (5)
- 3 Compete (3)
- 4 Fertilised eggs (6)
- 5 * Good when you're legless (4)
- 6 * Maybe tonight,

- Josephine (3,7)
- 10 Gets ready to play sport (5,2)
- 13 Coward (4)
- 15 G'day (5)
- 17 Distant (3)

Note: *In your cups

Solution: northfitzroyrotunda.com/cheat

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31 McLachlan St Northcote



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Illustration by Csilla Dwinckley

Basque-ing in the holiday glow

Our culinary-curious couple celebrate the perfect festive-season cake

By Jack and Dawn Norman

One of the consolations of Melbourne's lockdowns the past two years has been the discovery and subsequent consumption of (ahem, a few) Basque cheesecakes. We had our first one for a lockdown birthday, from Attica at Home, and the dazed and pleased look that spread over our faces lasted far beyond the consumption of the cheesecake. Ever since, we have been on the lookout for where we can get some closer to home.

What makes a cheesecake Basque, you ask? It's not that they are part of the typical cuisine from Basque country. They were created by La Viña in San Sebastian, Spain - a little Pintxos bar with a lot of cream cheese - and from there gained a cult status. La Viña threw caution to the wind in their cheesecake revolution, removing the solid and reliable buttery biscuit base. More daring still, they made the bold decision to place the cake in a very hot oven until slightly burnt on top, yet still wobbly underneath. Like the feminists of the 70s, they removed their supports and set things ablaze. The result is as beautiful as it is tasty, a dark, cracked surface that gives way to a creamy yet almost caramelised interior.

If you are looking for a sure-fire way to fill out your Santa costume, we suggest eating as many of these as possible this holiday season. Summery yet indulgent, rustic yet elegant, the Basque cheesecake might be the perfect holiday dessert.

So, where can you get your hands on one of these delightful things, now that your mouth is watering?

Parent #1 of this writing duo often takes our two little kids to Edi Gardens on Saturday mornings. A stop at Aphro and Wolfe is a welcome extension. Imagine our delight when we realized that they stock individual-sized Basque cheesecakes, made by Señor Simón. It's hard to imagine a lovelier way to eat a hand-sized cheesecake than strolling through Edi Gardens on a beautiful summer's day. Highly delicious, highly recommended.

"If you are looking for a sure-fire way to fill out your Santa costume, we suggest eating as many of these as possible this holiday season."

Dench on Scotchmer make their own Basque cheesecakes! They are a slightly cakier cousin of the Señor Simón version, also hand-sized and yummy, set proudly amid Dench's beautiful display of goods.

McCoppins on Queen's Parade (officially Clifton Hill, but it's still 3068 after all) stocks small Basque cheesecakes made by Sebastian, a Basque restaurant in Williamstown Beach. Biting into a Sebastian cheesecake would be a fantastic introduction to the Basque cheesecake world.

Or make your own at home! There are only five ingredients, and it's an incredibly simple process. The crème fraiche in this



The burnt basque cheesecake from Aphro and Wolfe.

version adds a lightness and tartness that balances the fatty richness of the cream cheese (and nine egg yolks!).

Mix together four blocks (1000g) of cream cheese, 1 1/3 cup sugar, nine egg yolks, and 1/2 tsp salt until smooth. Stir in 1 1/4 cups crème fraiche, and you're done! Pour into a parchment-lined 9-inch springform pan and bake for 20-25 minutes. It will be very wobbly, even cresting to a small wave when shook at this point, but rest assured that with time to set (especially overnight in the fridge), it will firm up nicely.

There are other recipes of course - whole egg versions; ones that add flour; most without the crème fraiche - but for us, this hit the perfect spot.

Where will they pop up next? Might Loafer find a way to make a sourdough edition? Will Piedimonte's be willing to reach across the Mediterranean Sea to try out some other European treats? Will the Basque cheesecake fade with the lifting of restrictions? We certainly hope not. Fitzroy North has to keep up its reputation of being the San Sebastian of...well, at least the Inner North.

An unlikely friendship

As Christmas nears, a little sunshine is let into Ludo's turbulent interior world

By Ludo

Last issue, I used the allotted space given to me by my editor/owner to lambast humans for taking up precious parkland on the Edinburgh Gardens' dog-field. The anger I directed at your entire species should've been directed only at him. I wouldn't be so neurotic about it if he took me on walks more often, which are always incredibly fun. (And no, that isn't praise, walks are fun no matter who they're with. If you catch me saying nice things about him, be sure he's added things to my column before it goes to print. I would never, ever compliment that gorgeous man.)



I'd like to tell you about a new friend of mine, Ruby, an eleven-year-old Bull Arab cross Staffy. When she was three months old, she was found by her owners tied up outside some flats in Fitzroy. They bought her and took her home.

Ruby is kind of crazy. She doesn't like other dogs and isn't afraid to let them know it. If an overconfident dog tries to intimidate her, she'll quickly lunge at them - so her owners put her in a hi-tech harness when they go on walks. Meanwhile, my owner lets me off the lead because he knows I wouldn't have the balls (literally) to do anything about it.

"In the spirit of Christmas, I've forgiven everyone who's wronged me this past year."

Ruby is a tough and tenacious mutt whilst I'm a gentle, non-confrontational poodle cross. She's the queen of the concrete jungle, stalking the gritty backstreets of Fitzroy. I frolic peacefully upon the picturesque green plains of Edinburgh Gardens. We could not be more different - despite this, we've become friends recently.



In Ruby, Ludo has found a kindred spirit.

We go on walks together. We discuss our deepest, most innermost desires (steak) and I reveal my most intense and profound fears (thunderstorms).

It's the Christmas spirit: making unlikely friendships; mining an untapped reserve of love that's been hiding somewhere in your heart. I'm being quite sentimental, I know. It's unlike me, but what can I say? I can't resist taking pleasure in the invisible waves of joy that float through the air this time of year. I'm only canine.

Yeah, I'm feeling optimistic. I know the last two years have been tough on you humans, but things are looking up. The Omicron is lurking, but you're vaccinated now. (Sidenote: I heard some of you were hesitant because the vaccine might contain a microchip? If that were even true, trust me, it's not that bad.)

Anyway, Merry Christmas. Happy Holidays. Smile. Laugh. Buy some tennis balls for your dog. Don't be mad when they eat something off the kitchen bench. They love you, you know.

FESTIVE SPIRIT RADIATES FROM ROTUNDA



Locals are flocking to the neighbourhood icon in spades

There's been a mistake. The abundant folklore that characterises this time of year - Santa Claus, the elves, Rudolph and his big red nose - is, by and large, utterly verifiable and completely based on fact. But there's one detail essential that's simply a complete untruth, most likely borne from an unfortunate typo made centuries ago. The Christmas spirit doesn't emanate from the North Pole - it emanates from North Fitzroy.

More specifically, the Rotunda itself. First came the carols held at the iconic

structure on the evening of December 9th as part of the Garrawang festival - named after one of the seven seasons of the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung. Local choirs ascended the Rotunda steps and gave full voice to the iconic songs that soundtrack this time of year.

The MC announced the first act with gusto: a small choir from the Primary School Which Must Not Be Named. He was diplomatic and used both of its titles: "Whether you call it Fitzroy North Primary School or North Fitzroy Primary

School - I know it's a point of contention - give it up for..."

Either way, the scene that evening was never going to be one of discord - not when the Rotunda was adorned with mirrors and mistletoe (that may have been gum leaves); not when our ears were filled with the joyous melodies of *Last Christmas* and *All I Want For Christmas Is You*. The pop songs were expertly performed by the primary school students, who then vacated the stage for The Yarra Voices, a larger ensemble of kids accompanied by a live band.

Earlier, in late November, Fitzroy Community School headed to the Rotunda to award the winners of their poetry competition. Congruent with the festive feeling, the poems were required to contemplate joy: its meaning and its source. Of those award-winning poems (all of which are brilliant), *The Rotunda* has published four.

Burning to be free
By Alex, aged 11

*I had escaped
My old life left behind me
Then I noticed I was being pursued
I felt the hot breath of contest on my flank
The bush rose up around me
I heard the crack of the stockwhip behind me
My unshod hooves clattered
Against the rocky hills
Mist enveloped me, clouding my vision
But shrouding and protecting me from searching eyes
The mist cleared
I galloped to my right
My will forcing me on
My heart burning to be free
I flew up a hill
Gazing behind me, an area of dust had grown
Men were tiny dots in a universe of grass*

Rich and Rare
By Cecilia, aged 11

*Some people think gems and coins are the most precious things in the world,
they are right,
the emerald of the grass,
trod on by our feet,
the sapphire of the ocean,
sprinkled with fishing boats,
the silver of the pigeon's wings,
as it soars through the air,
and the gold of the sun,
shining brighter than a coin ever could*

Scootering
By Tyge, 10

*Scootering is a dangerous sport
balance is key
lose your balance
and over you go
split lip,
broken arm,
missing tooth,
hospital trips*

*But I really love it
The very life for some,
Worst nightmare for others*

*Naturals do tailwhips
Ollies too
but best of all
a 180 into a fakie*

River Sailing
By Patrick, aged 5

*How lovely to sail on the river with Mum
The sun is shining like gold
The clouds are warm and pink
Mum gives us cake
With red icing
We feel comfortable on our boat.*

A message from two housemates on Rae Street.

We need to talk.

Are we really laughing when we type lol? Is the silent, grey and unemotional QWERTY keyboard communicating how we actually feel? Everyone who ever lived has used their voices to have conversations. Why do we now try to communicate with our thumbs?

We misinterpret our friends, become frustrated and feel separated. We aren't made for texting and we know it.

We made Yatter because we believe the technology in our lives should actually support the relationships of our lives. We made it because we want privacy and no ads. We made it because when we're in person our phones should be left in our pockets, and when we're apart we should still feel together.

We have totally redesigned voice messaging so it's like a real conversation. We sent it to our friends to try, and now their friends are using it too. It was a surreal moment when someone in Monty's told us she was already using it. So we decided to make it available to the rest of our neighbours in North Fitzroy, before we put it on the App store for the world. Tell us how we can make it better: feedback@yatterfriends.com.

Zuck you Mark,

Now we're talking.



Get Yatter on Apple TestFlight
yatterfriends.com/the-rotunda



Yatter
Now we're talking.