

# THE ROTUNDA

NORTH FITZROY'S COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER

Thumbs up for Rathdowne

Page 4



Fitzroy's leap forward

Page 6



Danny's does it best

Page 7



## THE WORM HAS FLED!

### LOCAL ICON DEPARTS NORTH FITZROY

No disrespect to Liz, but you could forgive some North Fitzrovians for misinterpreting the National Day of Mourning we had the other day. During its long stint occupying the plinth in Edinburgh Gardens, the peculiar statue known colloquially as 'The Worm' stirred a wide variety of feelings – among those, love. Now it's gone.

Perhaps that sentiment was not shared by all. Indeed, one of The Worm's greatest attributes was its ability to polarise the local populace. While Louise from Brunswick Street wrote in to say that she "love(s) the worm and regularly walks by it to pay (her) respects", Daniel from Rae Street denounced it as "rat-baggy" and called for its head. Meanwhile Elyce, also from Rae Street, said Edinburgh Gardens "requires at least two more worm statues".

**"The Worm has left behind its hometown for the flashing lights of the CBD."**

Clearly, it has always been divisive. But surely even those who exuded an attitude of begrudging tolerance towards The Worm



The once-humble Worm flaunts in Federation Square.

would concede that gradually morphed into some kind of soft spot. Local resident Tony declared: "I don't support its removal, regardless of its (non-existent) merit."

But the proof is in the pudding. Any piece of art that's catalysed this much conversation has surely demonstrated its worth. Each day it spent up on that plinth, causing everything from quiet giggles to agitated grumbles, it justified itself.

But it isn't there anymore. It's packed up and headed for Federation Square. The Worm has abandoned us – left behind its hometown for the flashing lights of the CBD. Consequently, there is a sense of loss

around North Fitzroy. 'Wexit', some locals are calling it.

No longer can we bask languidly in The Worm's golden glow, nor find respite underneath its slinky, serpentine shadow. No longer can we find reassurance in its constancy. Nor find humour in its whimsy.

Whether you loved it or loathed it, The Worm was North Fitzroy's Head of State. And now, to us, it is dead. Long live The Worm. What, in the world, will ever replace it?

(Actually, we have the answer to that question – plus an explanation on how The Worm came to be – on page 3. Check it out.)

## EDITORIAL

We're back with a new edition. Spring has officially sprung

The last time a fresh *Rotunda* was making the rounds, winter was ramping up. You were squeezing into your gum boots and reaching for your mittens. It was so, so cold. But you weathered the storm. You trudged through the mid-year drudgery, one step at a time. It was tough.

But we're past that now. Grand finals have been won and lost. The holidays glitter on the horizon. So, stop stressing. Breathe deeply. Keep a straight back. Close your eyes (no, not literally). Picture this:

You're on a beach. It's low tide. A wave announces itself on the sand with a soft slap; comes up and greets you; glides over your ankles. Birdcalls go back and forth in the dusk-orange sky. You see something in the distance. You go over, light on your feet. You are the picture of grace. What is that? Who is that?

**"Contact us if you'd like to contribute or advertise."**

It's an old man in a red short-sleeve button up and brown tattered shorts. He's got a cigarette sticking out from the corner of his mouth like a plank on a pirate ship. He's sitting on a deck chair, reading a newspaper. Is that... No... No, it can't be. Is he reading... is he reading an entirely new copy of *The Rotunda*?

Yeah, he is.

Has that copy got... an article on the statues featured on the plinth in Edinburgh Gardens? How fantastic. And does it... tell the story of Fitzroy's men and women's teams' successful seasons? Amazing. And is that an... unbelievably good illustration of Rathdowne Street, there on pages 4 and 5? And has it got the regular stuff: the crossword, Street Style, Ludo's article?

Yeah, it does. And he's got a whole stack of them at the base of a wooden deck chair right next to him. He asks if you'd like to sit down. The wind blows through your hair. The newspaper's pages ruffle in the breeze.

Why don't you take a seat?

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

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# STREET STYLE

On a blistering cold Sunday in North Fitzroy's village, it was hard to find a human - let alone a stylish one. Luckily, we spied Sienna behind the counter in the pretty clothes shop next door to Dench. She looked like a ray of sunshine, so we harassed her into doing the column. It's always fascinating hearing the details of people's lives. Sisi had visited Japan after a relationship bust-up, fallen in love with the country and gotten the idea for a handbag and accessories label inspired by anime-printed fabrics.

### WHAT IS YOUR NAME?

Sisi

### WHAT DO YOU DO?

I'm a handbag designer, my brand is called Hello Sisi.

### WHAT ARE YOU WEARING TODAY?

I'm wearing a Flowers by Sister denim jacket, a Sister Studios white shirt, a skirt and socks from a random shop in Melbourne Central, fluffy fingers hand warmers and Docs.

### WHAT DO YOU LIKE TO WEAR AND WHAT GUIDES YOUR CHOICES?

Wear what makes you happy!

### CAN YOU TELL US ABOUT YOUR LABEL AND YOUR CONNECTION TO JAPAN?

I started my label in 2018 after a trip to

Japan. I had the best time and love it there so much. My brand started from my love of cute things.

### WHAT ARE YOU DOING IN NORTH FITZROY TODAY?

I'm working at the Sister Studios shop.

### WHAT DO YOU LIKE BEST ABOUT NORTH FITZROY?

The cute dogs and Sister Studios of course.

### WHAT THREE WORDS DESCRIBE NORTH FITZROY?

Busy, friendly, community.

### WHERE DO YOU GET YOUR COFFEE?

Greensleaves.

### ONE WORD TO DESCRIBE YOUR CURRENT STATE OF MIND?

Bubbly.

### WHERE AND WHEN WERE YOU HAPPIEST?

Last Saturday night, cosy and warm watching reality TV with a pizza.

### IF YOU COULD BE STANDING ANYWHERE A YEAR FROM NOW, WHERE WOULD IT BE AND WITH WHO?

With all my friends. Somewhere sunny with a round of drinks on the way!



## ARRIVEDERCI, BELOVED SUPERMAXI



Giovanni Patane outside the front of Supermaxi.

"When we opened there was a lot of hype." (Around Rita, after Ladro).

"We had a lot of response in the first 18 months and then I noticed it began to tail off a bit. But in the third or fourth year we were at capacity again and it stayed that way."

All good things come to an end. But why did this have to?

"We needed to stop and review everything," says Giovanni. "There are more important things than running a business."

Which is, by the way, up for sale - "a 12-year lease for the restaurant and all its fitting and fixtures". But not the building, which they don't own, and not the name either.

Still, Giovanni and Rita are leaving the door open to returning to North Fitzroy.

"If we don't sell it in the next six or 12 months we might go back in there. I'm hoping that we do sell it but if we didn't, we might go back in there and do something different," says Givoanni.

As he said in his profile in *The Rotunda's* debut issue: "The most beautiful times you have is sharing food and wine with people."

Supermaxi was a great place to do that. And between this and the closure of the Moroccan Soup Bar in June (the actual restaurant, not the business), it seems North Fitzroy has stumbled out of a dark winter a little worse for wear. A little bereft, even.

Let's just hope that other places pop up as spiritual successors, if they haven't already - and be grateful that these two fantastic local restaurants even existed in the first place!

**"For 12 years it gave us a lovely sense of community."**

"For 12 years it gave us a lovely sense of community and belonging in the area and we loved every minute of it," he told *The Rotunda*.

Here they are: Supermaxi was the best. Walking through that big clear door and being greeted by Giovanni was a feeling unmatched because you knew what you were in for: consistently great food and a perfect atmosphere.

# OUR LOCAL LOUVRE

The Edinburgh Gardens plinth serves as a canvas for nearby artists. So, what have they been putting on a pedestal?

"Art that is in the world and for the people seems like a good idea. My hope is to imagine positive future visions together."

So says Kathy Holowko, the creator of the Edinburgh Garden's recently departed installation affectionately known as "The Worm".

In an arts-oriented community such as North Fitzroy, the Edinburgh Gardens art program has been many things: a provocation, a salve, a Covid destination and a conversation piece.

Pro and anti-responses each January 26 to the Captain Cook memorial near the Alfred Crescent entrance - and the many lively opinions that have been given on The Worm - suggest that North Fitzroyans feel almost as deeply about public sculpture as they do about coffee.

These animated responses affirm the identity of the Inner North as a culture-hungry and culture-producing corner of Melbourne - testified to by the City of Yarra's "Plinth Program", that acquires artworks to sit atop the plinth in the circular garden bed near Alfred Crescent.

Currently on display is 'Tanderrum (inverted plinth) 2022' by Steven Rhall. Composed of stainless-steel & aluminum, it responds to the statue the plinth was originally made to hold up: the image of Queen Victoria (before it was nicked). It "upsets the authoritarian function of the existing pedestal" and instead serves as a vehicle for promoting the earth on which it stands - "privileging the 'Country' at the plinth's base". (As per the Yarra City Council website.)

Looking a little like a grand birdhouse, Rhall's Tanderrum subverts the traditional plinth/statue dynamic by focussing the eye downwards rather than atop. It incorporates a number of symbolic references to Aboriginal culture - the black, yellow and red colours of the flag and granite and gold panels that relate to the continent's geological foundations.



Photo: City of Yarra.

Whether by intention or accident, three of the recent artworks all subvert the idea of raising aloft an honoured object - instead, they effectively direct the viewer towards the earth's surface.

Adam Stone's "A Fall from Grace (Self Portrait Crash II)", which sat atop the plinth in 2017, was a figurative study of a body in motion: a young man falling headfirst into the plinth, legs askew, arms reaching out to protect his head for impact. Referencing the physical catastrophes that young men in particular experience as a result of risky behaviour, Stone poignantly reminded us of the prevalence of motorbike, car and bike accidents in the neighbourhood and beyond. (Who can forget the sad tribute painted on the wall alongside The Tramway, remembering the skateboarder Shane Cross?)

But the most controversial (and also best loved) plinth piece remains Holowko's "The Unsung Hero" - dubbed "The Worm" by locals - intended to remind each viewer of the earthly cycles they belong to and the soil beneath each step they take, and beneath the plinth itself.

**"You have to have courage putting artwork into public spaces."**

Holowko, who currently divides her time between Brunswick and Blackwood, previously spent her twenties living in the Inner North.

"The Edinburgh Gardens is such a well-loved and used park that it was a thrill to be given this space to respond to. Of course, the plinth itself comes with fascinating historic cultural tropes that artists have been invited to subvert."

Made of wooden components fitted onto a metal tube and painted gold, the three metre earthworm curls elegantly against the sky and glorifies the humble organism - who escapes the dark earth beneath to have its moment in the sun (both literally and metaphorically).

The worm took up residence on the plinth in October 2019 and was created by Holowko as a response to climate change and the extraordinary (and underpraised) work the worm does to support a healthy planet. Says Holowko: "The earthworm is our ally in this heating world". She couldn't help but approve of the graffiti it attracted soon after being erected, that succinctly declared: "Worm is God".

Holowko rallied to praise the earthworm in response to 25 percent of our landfill being composed of green waste - a huge volume of methane-producing rubbish that could be avoided by providing a compost



banquet for earthworms, "the greatest recyclers on the planet".

Dr Tessa Laird, an art lecturer at the University of Melbourne who spoke at its launch, noted that Charles Darwin was a worm-obsessive - along with a host of others, such as the French philosopher Derrida and Queen Cleopatra. Darwin's last book was exclusively about worms: The "summation of 40 years of experiments, in which Darwin played bassoon to his worms, chewed tobacco and breathed upon them, waved perfumes at them, and fed them all number of things... He was convinced that worms possess "a mind of some kind", and that they even display individual character traits".

Holowko's most memorable response was from a conservationist for whom The Worm was a marker on his daily exercise routine. "He would ride to the worm and look up at it before heading off to the Yarra to search for the seal. It was never articulated, but if it became a symbol of hope or strength for someone like that, who is actively working to change the world for the better, then that makes me very happy."

Holowko says she's had a lot of great responses at parties when she reveals she's the originator of the worm: "Eyes widened and mouths dropped."

So where is the worm now?

Originally intended to occupy the plinth for 18 months, Covid allowed The Worm to isolate in Edinburgh Gardens for three years, discombobulating many of its fans.

"The worm had an interesting journey and moment in time," reflects Holowko. "It was placed on the plinth in late 2019 under a Liberal government. In 2020 Black Lives Matter came to prominence and with it a questioning of the role of public monuments. The worm was also there through the pandemic. A time when our green spaces became very precious."

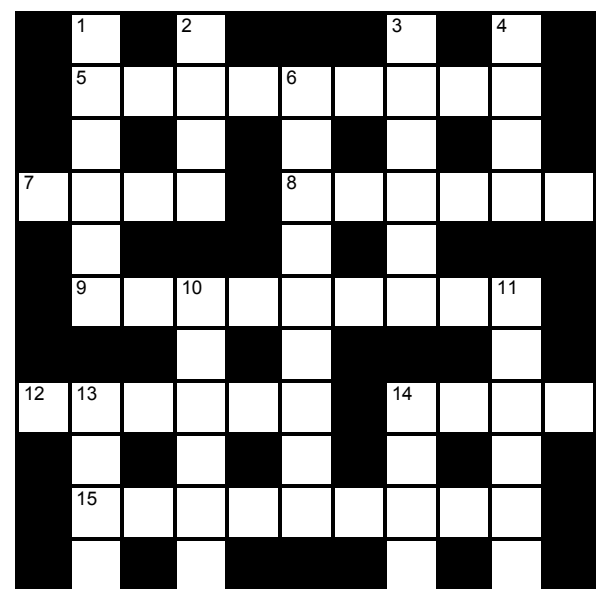
Gaining exposure at a time of enormous social disruption puts greater responsibility on art to defend its role in the public space. Added to that, art is a subjective business and Holowko knows that with public art, an artist's vulnerability is greater.

"You have to have courage putting artwork into public spaces that's for sure. I guess I decided to try to be brave because I like making it so much. Of course, criticism is difficult but it's usually the truth that hurts most."

Those in the hood who disliked the worm might feel differently knowing that these overlooked animals may hold one of the keys to revitalising the planet. Those graffiti artists may have been ironic nihilists or drunk scientists simply stating the obvious. Either way, The Worm, it seems, is God - and while we no longer have the iconic sculpture in our midst, it retains a gleaming golden aura in our collective imagination.

"Wormy got a lot of love," says Holowko. "I think it is the disarming nature of this humble creature sitting with such pride that we can all relate to on some level... I'm sure there are people that don't like it, but I luckily don't hear about that. It's honestly been a lovely experience having it out there in the world and hearing what positive joy it brings people."

### CROSSWORD by LR #7



#### ACROSS

- 5 Fibber reversed twice around intersection of path? (4,5)
- 7 Cricket practice area (4)
- 8 Glass fragments (6)
- 9 Winslet engulfed by fire particle in recreation area? (5,4)
- 12 Soccer keeper (6)
- 14 Die shape (4)
- 15 Crockery to suit venue? (5,4)

#### DOWN

- 1 Demands (6)
- 2 Smooch (4)
- 3 Yellow fruit (6)
- 4 Pleased (4)
- 6 Having no flavour (9)
- 10 Lets (6)
- 11 Doner and shish (6)
- 13 Balls (4)
- 14 Leg muscle (4)

Note: The three clues with question marks are cryptic, and their answers are found in Edinburgh Gardens

Solution: northfitzroyrotunda.com/cheat



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# DMZ RATHDOWNE

A tribute to a charming tree-lined street – and a “demilitarized zone” between suburbs

Illustration by Marnie Florence-McNeil  
Words by our Foreign Correspondent in Parkville

The Inner North was once divided quite simply by religion: in the far east, it was the Pies. Inner East, the Lions. Pilgrims venturing west would encounter the dioceses of the Blues and the Roos. A particularly agnostic region was nominally centred on Collins Street in the city, home to haunts of Demons parishioners (although their spiritual home was obviously Mt Buller).

Today those geographic certainties have faded, the AFL Empire all but purging any anchoring to actual community for most of the faithful. We live in a Godless world.

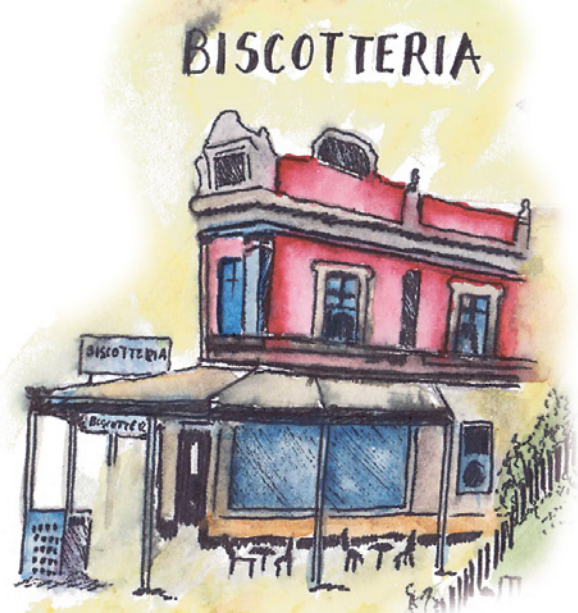
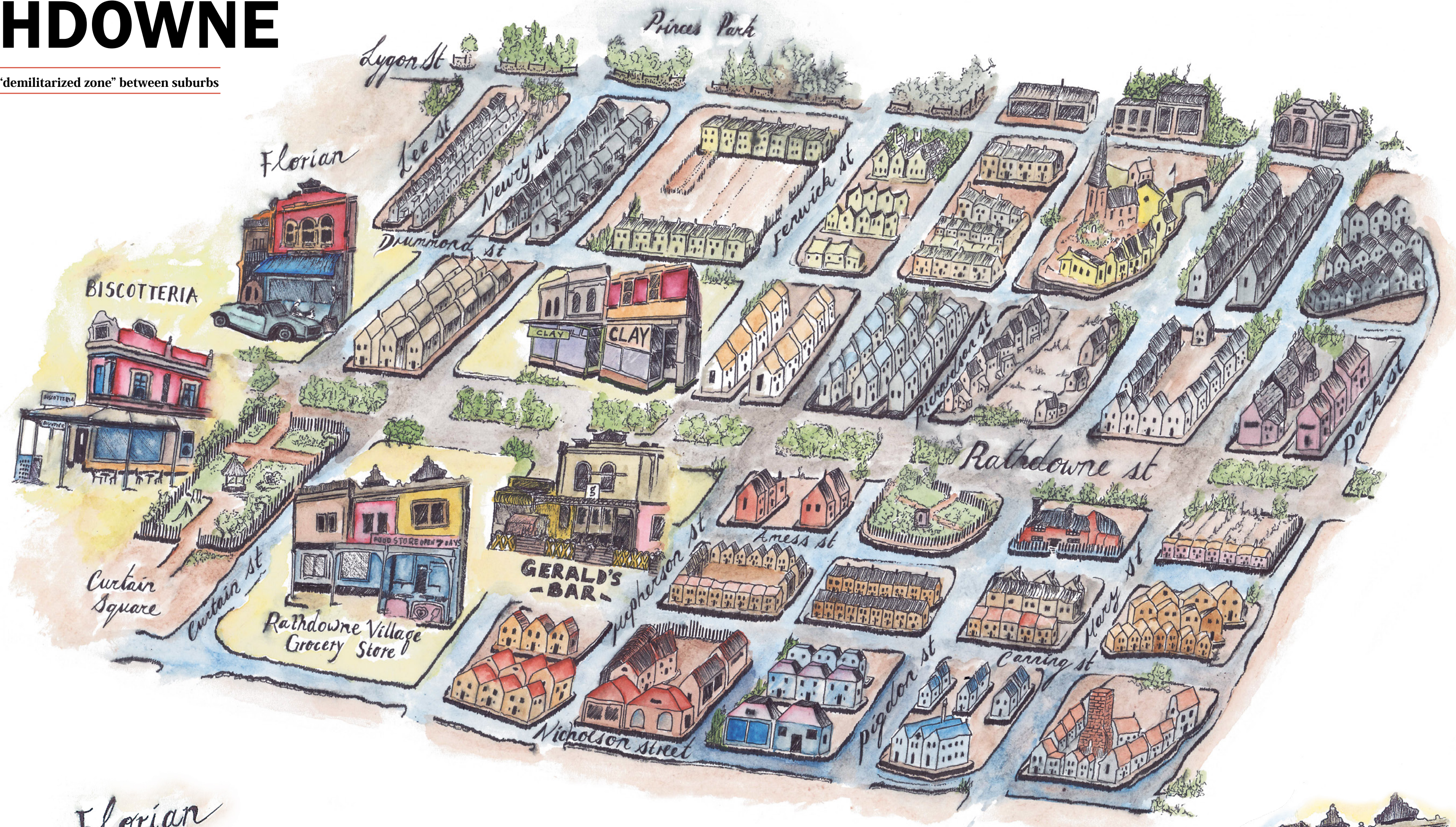
### The distinctions today are real, but nuanced

How now do we understand where one culture starts and another ends? Who is truly a descendant of the Edinburgh Gardens of Eden? And who from the wilderness of Princes Park?

The distinctions today are real but nuanced. Nothing as blatant as a coloured scarf or beanie.

However, after many years of careful anthropological analysis (time spent embedded both in Clay and Wild Things), it has become clearer to your correspondent from my current posting in Parkville that there remains a dividing line between the norths. Between Fitzroy and Carlton.

The border is now Rathdowne Street. Or perhaps more accurately: The Demilitarised Zone. Some eastern-side establishments are quintessentially Carlton – **Biscotteria**, obviously. Others on the West with their quee-happy millennial populations are Fitzroy. Consider **Florian**.



### One of the telling signs of difference is coffee. The more west, the more milk

But more broadly, west of Rathdowne we have the Italian heritage of Carlton proper, historically fused with a student infiltration from Melbourne Uni – a fusion once perfectly captured at Jimmy Watson's but now more properly reflected at **Gerald's**.

Of course, one of the telling signs of difference is coffee. The more west, the more milk (and the more fake milks). The more east, the shorter the coffee and the much greater resonance of Italy. East: backyard roasted, hand-blended and changed daily. West: Lavazza.

While Rathdowne is a perforated border, the phenotype becomes more noticeable on the periphery. Fitzroy culture



seeps into Northcote and its famous 86 tram (remember that song?). Carlton becomes Parkville: a retirement village for ageing students who have undergone the metamorphosis from undergraduate to doctorate to professor to curmudgeon. Octogenarian Nobel Prize winners can be spotted, protesting the redevelopment of pretty, nondescript post-war apartment blocks.

### Rathdowne Street itself is not just a divider but a bringer-together

Or so it appears from your correspondent's vantage point outside Naughton's on Royal Parade. In Fitzroy I would have been at the Public Wine Shop, with a Bodriggy Brewing Stingrays Draught.

Rathdowne Street itself is not just a divider but a bringer-together. North of the Rio Grande (Alexander Parade), the village – and for once that splinter of real estate agent argot rings true – has not only the typical cafés and boutiques, but some truly unique gems.

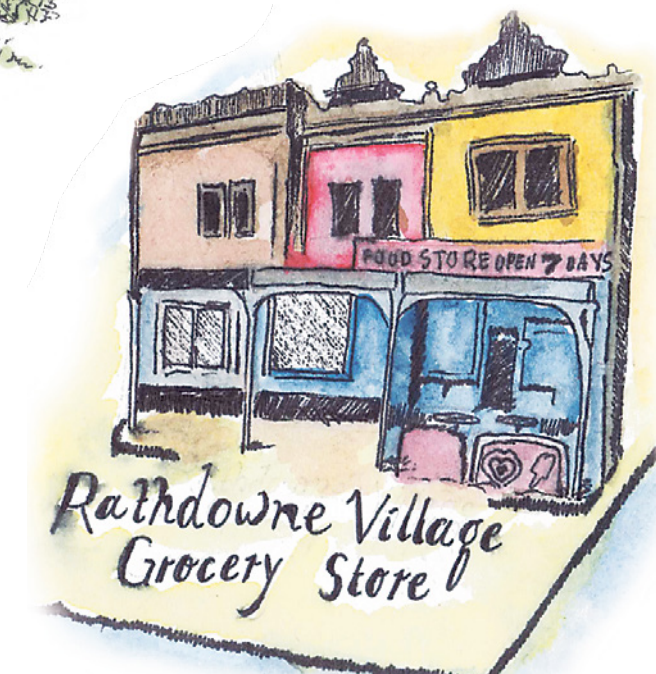


### Rathdowne Street is the perfect fusion of Fitzroy and Carlton

Not just Gerald's, but also its vegetative sibling **Senserrick**. Not to mention the amazing **Rathdowne Village Grocery Store** – a combination of Aladdin's Cave and the Tardis. Forget your soulless major chain supermarkets, forget even Piedmonte's - in this small, packed emporium the great sport is asking for some obscure item the wonderful owners surely can't find.

'Rathers' has a centre plantation and plane trees giving it a truly Euro feel. (Be careful if on the east side early in the morning – one dog owner in particular has a very Parisian attitude to what can be left behind on the daily walk.)

Normally fusion – from fashion to food – is a blaring of Akihabara-quality neon warning lights, but somehow Rathdowne Street truly is the perfect fusion of Fitzroy and Carlton.



# ROY'S' ROLLER COASTER RIDE

In 2022, Fitzroy's senior men's team continued to impress – edging closer and closer towards the VAFA's top flight

By Marshall Toohey

When the AFL kicked Fitzroy out of the competition in 1996, it would not have realised that some 26 years later this club – proud of its heritage – would still be occupying Brunswick Street Oval, and with great success. This year in the Victorian Amateur Football Association, the Roys had four men's sides and two women's sides (plus the burgeoning Fitzroy Junior Football Club). Both women's sides were finalists in 2022 – the Seniors unfortunately going down on Grand Final day. Two men's thirds teams also bowed out during their respective finals series. By late August, the only teams left were the Men's Reserves (sitting second on their ladder) and the Men's Seniors (fourth on theirs). Eager to secure a finals appearance, it all came down to the last match of the season: Round 18, the culmination of a roller-coaster ride that's been going since mid-July.

Let's briefly flashback to Round 12, when the Men's Seniors moved into the top four after defeating Ajax at B.S.O. Fitzroy were missing over 500 games worth of senior experience due to three veterans being out injured or ill. A young brigade entered the fray: First gamer Harry Tauber, second gamer Patty Curcio and young gun Heath Ramshaw. Two 'veterans' in their early 20s – Ted Clayton and Donovan Toohey – led the way in midfield, as they did for most of the season. It was a much-heralded victory.

The side was competitive but unsuccessful against ladder leader Uni Blacks in Round 13. In Round 14, coach Luke Mahoney deployed the traditional quarter time 'spray' to sting the troops into action against St Bede's Mentone. Fitzroy overran the opposition in the end, but all fingernails were chewed to the quick – a one point victory. It had claimed a bit of close-contest spirit from suburban neighbour Collingwood. Working class roots will do that for you.

The next two rounds saw disappointing losses to De La Salle and the highly accomplished Old Haileybury.

Still, the Roys stayed in the four, in part because the threat from below on the

ladder was not pressing as hard as it might. Round 17 saw a comprehensive victory over cellar-dwellers Old Carey. Importantly, a percentage deficit before the game was accounted for, further cementing the Roys' ladder position.

Throughout this period the playing stocks were threatened by plague, illness, injury and unavailability. But the depth of the list, coupled with coaching acumen, saw the Roys continually be up for the challenge. Seasoned leaders in Max Ellis, Matt Kyrrousis, Nathan Ligris, Jack McKay and Julian Turner combined with emerging talent in Jock Green, Jack Hart and Rhys Seakins to strike upon a big opportunity: the club's first-ever Premier B Grade finals campaign. Winning the premiership in B Grade guarantees entry into A Grade – one of the best amateur football leagues in the country.

So, let me set the scene for Round 18 – the very last home and away game. Fitzroy (fourth) play Beaumaris (second). De La Salle (fifth) play Uni Blacks (first). On the ladder, Fitzroy are four points ahead of De La Salle and have a greater percentage by 1.92%. Both these games will be played simultaneously: one down by the bay, the other in the centre of the Melbourne University precinct.

Was one game more important than the other? You bet. I can still hear the clamour of Roys' supporters reverberating across Melbourne.

The Reserves were, of course, playing against Beaumaris as well. So, it was two teams on the bus down, leaving B.S.O at 9:30 am on a Saturday morning. A real sense of team spirit was palpable on the bus – meanwhile, supporters made their own way down south. The Reserves game was first. They consolidated their spot for the finals without much trouble, finishing as minor premiers.

Next, the Senior men were up – and what a committed mob they were. The first two quarters were close affairs, but in the third Fitzroy kicked their way over the top of



The Roys celebrate a hard-earned victory. Photo credit: Phyllis Quealy.

Beaumaris to a 29-point lead. It was a very even team performance with no passengers, and a disciplined final quarter made it impossible for the opposition to slice into the lead. In the end Fitzroy were 28-point victors – and the finals series they'd aimed for was there for the taking in September.

## STOP THE PRESS!

Semi-final weekend started for the Reserves at Trevor Barker Oval in Sandringham on Saturday September 3 against the Uni Blacks. Unfortunately, the opposition flew out of the blocks and Fitzroy were chasing tail from the outset. They got another chance in the preliminary final against De La Salle the next week but lost by 16.

The Seniors' elimination final was also on September 3: Old Haileybury at Piranha Park, Coburg. Haileybury had won comfortably in previous encounters during the home and away season. Fitzroy arrived with a different psyche and structure, and in a cut and thrust affair they trailed by 14 points at half time. A withering third

quarter saw the Roys pile on pressure and end up leading by 16 points at the final huddle. But it was a combination of wind disadvantage and greater opposition numbers in the midfield that saw them fall agonisingly short – a 6-point loss and elimination from the finals.

In summary: the opposition legs – as well as the experience and talent of eight VFL listed players – took over in the end. But only just. The team's method, drive and love for each other was there for the massive Fitzroy supporter base to see. A really strong foundation has been laid for 2023. The club can realistically aim for A Grade.



Photo credit: Peter Harrison

talent coming through the juniors, including the scintillating Zoe Hargreaves and impressive Claudia Hetherington. The sky's the limit for this group of fabulous footballers.

# “LET THERE BE MUD,” DECLARES DEFIANT LUDO

By Ludo

I have spent September getting over winter. Even as spring takes hold – and days of overcast murk are replaced by skies of infinite blue – the memory of a mid-July chill is haunting my every day. In the last issue I railed against the psychotic humans who force their dogs into bizarre outfits in the name of warmth and comfort. But despite the embarrassment it would certainly have caused me on an excursion to the park, I would've happily donned one of those ugly tartan coats or camouflage-patterned jumpers if it bumped up my internal temperature by a sole degree.



Blundstones. The truth is that I need to take my human hat off. I have overheard so many dinner conversations about politics, art and society that my canine mind has been Stockholm syndromed into caring about the tribulations of Homo Sapiens. I mean, I love mud. All dogs do. We see it. We roll in it. If anything, I'd write to the authorities to request more mud. We emerge with blackened tummies and soggy faces, and our owners sigh, and then they laugh, at its those moments that make us love each other.

Excuse my moment of sentimentality – I must be softening as I age. Also, I take back my likening of the human-dog dynamic to Stockholm syndrome. In fact, in such an analogy, you humans would be the victims. You have undergone some strange psychological morphosis that allows you to feed your dog, cuddle it, protect it, pick up its excrement, buy it toys, give it shelter... and pick up the entire tab. What a deal that is! Anthropologists and historians breathlessly exalt the unique ability of humans to found civilisations, invent religion, design monuments and assume control over other species. Fine. Sure and us dogs have been far smarter. We've let you do that all for us. Meanwhile, we'll stay snoozing on your couch and shitting in your corridor.

I'm kidding. Dogs don't secretly rule the world. Unfortunately, no clandestine meetings are held in impossible-to-find locations: German Shepherds guarding the doors, a shuffling in of the Canine Council, a brief sniffing of each other's arses, a murmured discussion around a big round

But since then, I've come to a realisation: I don't really care about my owner's



"MudMMUDDYMudmudMUdILOVEmudMUDI" said Ludo, whilst in mud.

table and a wise old Beagle raising his paw to adjourn the assembly. There are rumours, though. Some say that Barack Obama's Portuguese Water Dog, named Bo, had such enormous involvement in U.S. policy that the famous reform of the United States' healthcare system was almost not called Obamacare, but Bo-bamacare instead. Or take Dodo, Winston Churchill's bulldog – who some dogs believe wrote the first draft of that famous speech delivered to the House of Commons in 1940. Dodo came up with "We shall play on the beaches," and Winston just substituted "play" with "fight".

This is fanciful, though. The creature that you will often see humping inanimate objects, enthusiastically digging through the earth in search of absolutely nothing, swiping a chocolate cake off the kitchen bench and vomiting it up on the carpet afterwards... This is not the sort of animal who cares too much about world events. As humankind chugs forward – its heroes born, its villains defeated and its goals accomplished – dogs will reside happily in the background with our tongues out and our tails wagging. The only thing we ask for? Leave us a little mud. It's worth getting your shoes dirty to keep us happy.

# DANNY BOY, OH DANNY BOY, I LOVE YOU SO

Beloved Danny's Burgers is the spiritual engine of North Fitzroy

By Dawn and Jack Norman

The most American place we could think to celebrate the Fourth of July this year was Danny's Burgers, at 360 St. George's Road. Earnestly starting a historical conversation with the workers, however, we found that Danny's has absolutely no connection to America and is a purely Australian version of the classic burger joint.

We had always imagined it was an ex-American GI who relocated to Melbourne after his Pacific tour, perhaps after some love affair. The dates always seemed right: opened in 1945, as the sign proudly proclaims. But the burger master tells us that it was founded by two Macedonian brothers. My "Happy Fourth of July..." is suitably subdued as we escape into the wintry night with our bag of loot.

Even if the spectre of American history is non-existent, Danny's still gives a homely feel to this expat. Dawn's mother agrees. When she came to visit from Minnesota, she managed to eat only half of her gigantic burger – but we found her happily munching on the second half for breakfast the next morning. Although not technically open for breakfast (12:00 pm - "late", approximately 2:00 am), this is a valid option for those who need their Danny's fix before noon.

The burgers never disappoint. They are massive and delicious. The patty is juicy and meaty, the toppings are varied. We got two 'double meats' with a side of fries – it felt unpatriotic to order dim sims on America's

birthday. We could've cheated on our country and its celebrations by adding various Australians toppings – beetroot, pineapple, a fried egg – but stuck with what we know and love: onions, bacon, ketchup, mustard, and pickles, tomato and lettuce on both.

The various flavours cut through and enhance the fundamental meatiness of the patty, well held together by a lightly toasted bun. These are real burgers, done properly, with little fuss and much care. And you watch the magic happen as your order is fried up before your eyes, twisted into a carrier bag and handed to you with a gruff smile.

**"Your order is fried up before your eyes, twisted into a carrier bag and handed to you with a gruff smile."**

The first Five Guys might have arrived in Melbourne in August, but Danny's has always had them beat, stuffing huge quantities of fries in Fitzroy North's bags of burgers for nearly 75 years. The fries are basically perfect. Crispy on the outside and fluffy in the middle, with a nice size chunk to them. Being married to a European, we eat ours with (Japanese) mayonnaise.

There are also milkshakes, with possible flavours written in coloured chalk on a



chalkboard off to the side. We haven't tried them yet (what have we been doing with our lives?!). Fundamentally, our reasoning is that a milkshake would stop the two-year-old from eating anything else. We wish we could get milkshakes without sparking some kind of meltdown. Maybe we can sneak out late one night one, and get a sense of what Danny's is like at its real peak. In fact, writing this article has got us salivating almost enough to head out right now and cross St. George's Road. But it's cold.

Danny's mighty fine burgers come at a wonderful price. A single plain burger costs only \$7.80 while at the top end, a Triple Patty with 'The Lot' is \$18.00. And the vat of fries, poured virtually by the gallon into our bag, is an amazing calorie-per-dollar treat (\$5.50 small/\$7.50 large).

The atmosphere is just like the burger: very good and similarly non-fussy. We have been in our fair share of American diners, and Danny's is the real deal. While

you wait, you sit on shiny red bar stools pulled up to a Cadillac of counters, with a mirror behind stretching the length of the long and skinny venue. There are various community notices posted around (sitting in our American idyll, we almost believe in the promise of 'stress free driving courses'). A TV in the corner silently plays MTV. Only the occasional glimpse of a tram reflected in the mirror reminds you that you're in Melbourne, rather than the side of Interstate 35 in the good old U.S. of A.

Danny's Burgers stands proudly near the top of St Georges Road like a sheriff's office in an old ghost town. Down our street, you can sometimes see their hamburger wrappers rolling like tumbleweed. They are a constant reassurance. Who knows what lies out there past the Merri Creek? No one can be sure. What we do know is that Danny's will forever sit there – a bastion of civilization – protecting us from the beyond.

# Are 10,000 steps enough?

**All Australians should incorporate strength training into their weekly routine, but it is especially important for those over 40.**

The recommendation of 10,000 steps a day is well known as the key to staying fit and healthy, however walking and aerobic activities are only part of the story.

The Australian Physical Activity Guidelines recommend at least 2.5 hours of moderate intensity physical activity per week as well as muscle strengthening activities at least 2 days per week. While many Australian adults participate in the recommended amount of physical activity, only 1/3 complete the recommended amount of muscle strengthening activities. This number gets even lower as we age, with only 11% of those aged over 55 participating in strength training twice per week.

“These numbers are hard to understand when we know the incredible benefits that strength training can have on an individual, especially as they age”, says Physiotherapist Jess Hiew. Jess is the Clinic Leader of Kieser in Fitzroy, which welcomes clients of all ages to their strength training programs and has seen first-hand the benefits strength

training can have on those aged over 40.

“We see clients everyday with back pain, knee pain and chronic conditions such as osteoporosis and arthritis which are currently on the rise in those aged over 40. Clients are surprised to hear that many of these conditions can not necessarily be managed with aerobic exercise alone.”

Muscle mass decreases approximately 3–8% per decade after the age of 30 and this rate of decline is even

**“Many conditions can not necessarily be managed with aerobic exercise alone.”**

higher after the age of 60. This involuntary loss of muscle mass, strength, and function is a fundamental cause of and contributor to pain and injury as we age. However, these changes in muscle mass can be counteracted by strength training, which increases muscle protein synthesis in both younger and older adults.



**Strength training at Kieser**

A common myth for those with osteoporosis is that strength training is unsafe and can lead to fractures. However, numerous studies have shown that progressive resistance training is actually one of the most effective forms of exercise for clients with osteoporosis due to the dynamic and rapid loading of bones which induces bone strains.

Kieser is a unique Physiotherapy and exercise facility, which changes the paradigm of the traditional fitness facility to welcome clients of all ages and provide older clients with a safe and supportive environment in which to improve their strength and

physical function. Our training facility is designed to support our clients, with a quiet, non-invasive environment that has a focus on physical performance, rather than physical aesthetics. With an average client age of 55, our members are able to train in a safe and supported environment surrounded by their peers.

**Kieser has a clinic on Brunswick Street in Fitzroy North and new clients are eligible for 50% off for their initial assessment. To learn more about Kieser, call 9445 7900 or visit [kieser.com.au](http://kieser.com.au).**



**Fitzroy team with Freddie**



**Kieser Fitzroy**