



In this edition

Annual General Meeting

Working Groups

Parkland and Streetscapes

- **Royal Park Heritage Registration Planning**
 - *Developer Donations*
 - *Donations to candidates, Melbourne City Council elections, 2012*
 - *Vacant Apartments*
- **Carlton Heritage Shake-Up**
- **Planning Applications**
 - *Carlton a History*

A Message from Ellen Sandell State MP for Melbourne

Community News

- Farewell John and Jean Evans**
- Carlton Gardens Tennis Club - CAN Family Learning Program - Executed in Franklin Street**
- Xmas Party Raffle**
- CRA Christmas Party**

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Annual General Meeting

On February 15th, the Carlton Residents Association held its annual general meeting, which over fifty people attended.



It was a great opportunity to celebrate our group's achievements during 2015. In his report, George Janko, our President, highlighted two major wins. He said that it was appropriate for CRA to be holding its AGM in the recently opened Kathleen Syme Centre. It had been long term CRA advocacy that had ensured that this former

Carlton Primary School building had become a library and a community meeting place. Built in the 1870s, the school site is listed on the Victorian Heritage Register and had cost over \$15.5 m to refurbish. It now has a library with 40,000 items to borrow, bookable spaces including a recording studio, a social enterprise café and free Wi Fi.

George also stressed the major role that the CRA Planning Group had played in stopping the inappropriate redevelopment of the current Downtowner Hotel site on the corner of Lygon and Queensberry Streets. A planning application had been lodged to build a 13 storey apartment block when the area has a height limit of only eight storeys. It was proposed to construct small one and two bedroom units with inadequate light and ventilation.



The guest speaker with CRA members

Our very informative and interesting guest speaker Stuart Macintyre, the recently appointed Chair of the Heritage Council of Victoria, talked about the group's role in protecting places and objects of importance to the history and development of Victoria and how it works in partnership with the Australian Heritage Council and local governments to realise this goal. He also discussed heritage issues for the local Carlton community. The meeting was followed by a delicious supper donated by the Brunetti Cafe in Lygon Street.

Check out the CRA website: www.carltonresidents.org.au

Working Groups

Parkland and Streetscapes

Royal Park Heritage Registration

We are delighted that permit exemptions to accommodate the destructive East West Link on Royal Park were rescinded on 3 December, 2015. Mr Tim Smith, Executive Director, Heritage Victoria, announced ‘Royal Park was included in the Victorian Heritage Register in October 2014 with permit exemptions to facilitate the construction of the East West Link. The project is no longer proceeding and it is proposed to remove these permit exemptions’.

This announcement ends the long and bitter saga, involving much community activism to save Royal Park and its invaluable inner-urban parkland, from the predations of development. The EW Link would have destroyed a major slab of Royal Park, including 5000 trees, wetlands, parkland, sportsgrounds, underground water storage facilities, and rare native flora and fauna: all this at a time of burgeoning population growth and parkland and sportsground scarcity within the City of Melbourne.



Julianne Bell, Protectors of Public Lands, addressing a ‘Save Royal Park’ Rally

Planning

Developer Donations

Federal Government and Council elections are scheduled for 2016. The issue of property developer donations to political candidates is again before us via a report from the Victorian Ombudsman, Deborah Glass. She observed these donations ‘create a perception that politicians can be bought’ (*Ombudsman Report, 25 November, 2015*). ‘Those who argue, in the face of all evidence, that Australia’s political donations disclosure laws are robust are fooling themselves and voters. That goes for every level of Government – Federal, State and local council – and every political party and opportunist that feeds off this woeful regime’ (*The Age Editorial, 2 February, 2016*).

Recently, State Labor and Coalition Parties banded together to ensure a private members Bill to ban developer donations, introduced by the Member for Melbourne, Ellen Sandell

MLA. It was rejected without debate in the Victorian Parliament. Ms Sandell observed ‘Victoria’s lax political donations laws mean the property developers can fill the coffers of the major political parties and hope their skyscrapers get approved in return’ (*The Age, 25 November, 2015*). The Bill followed a High Court decision in October 2015, which upheld NSW laws banning political donations from property developers.

For the Melbourne City Council, developer donations have been a live issue during the life of the Doyle Council. The tabulation below lists donations received by candidates for the 2012 Council Elections.

Group	Amount donated	Percentage of total	Number elected
Team Coyle	\$399,637	63.16%	5
Gary Singer John So Melbourne Living	\$67,500	10.67%	1
Morgan Elliott – Prosperity for Liveability	\$98,088	10.44%	1
Shanahan ChamberIn for Melbourne	\$15,000	2.37%	0
Our Melbourne	\$39,350	6.22%	1
The Greens	\$26,922	4.25%	2
Forward Together	\$11,545	1.82%	0
Community and Business Leadership	\$4,795	0.76%	0
Ungrouped candidates	\$1,680	0.27%	0
Put Public First	\$250	0.04%	0
Stephen Mayne: Independence Experience, Transparency, Accountability	-	-	1
Residents First: Stop the Rates Rip-off	-	-	0
TOTAL	\$632,766	100.00	11

Donations to candidates, Melbourne City Council elections, 2012

Lord Mayor Doyle and his team attracted a lion’s share of donations with \$400,000. These donations funded the election of a group of five councillors who have dominated Council proceedings. A Fairfax Media investigation (*The Age, 13 February, 2013*) reported ‘curious’ aspects to these donations: ‘You have a number of individuals with no clear connection to the City of Melbourne making substantial donations. Why would they be doing that?’

‘Conflict of interest’ has dogged consideration of many planning proposals before the Council which has regularly lacked a quorum to deal with them. Several have been referred to Planning Ministers Guy and Wynne for resolution. For example, in mid-2015 important planning decisions in Dockland were unable to be resolved because of councillor conflicts of interest (*Dockland News, 29 July, 2015*). According to Cr Leppert, ‘If the State Government needs proof of why the Act needs to change then this is the perfect example’. There are many other examples. *The Age Editorial (2 February, 2016)* concluded ‘It is time to stop ducking and weaving on this important issue.

Politicians and parties that refuse to support reforms towards transparency, efficient and timely disclosure must be condemned’.

Lord Mayor Doyle is a declared candidate for the 2016 Council Election (his third term). He stated his team election campaign will be funded ‘from anyone the rules allow you to take a donation from’ (*The Age*, 25 November, 2015).

Local Government Minister, Natalie Hutchens, said ‘The system has worked so far – I have not heard a groundswell from residents who are concerned’. The unique City of Melbourne Act gives business the whip-hand over residents at Council elections. Every attempt to reform the Act has failed to date, but we live in hope.

As ratepayers, we surely expect our Council to deal with the business of the day unencumbered by conflicts of interest. If a Council quorum is not achieved then no councillor can vote and our democracy is undermined.

Vacant Apartments

Amid developer pressure for approval of ever more small apartments within inner-urban areas, it was surprising to learn that up to 30% of existing apartments remain vacant. A City of Melbourne analysis has revealed 85% of apartments are purchased by investors, many off-shore based.

Some investors choose not to rent out their properties because of management costs and troublesome tenants. ‘For off-shore buyers, it’s not a question of a property providing a yield. For them the yield is built into the premium they get on their capital from a lower dollar and lower cost of [off-shore] capital’ (*Financial Review*, 28 August, 2015).

Annual rental might return \$18,000, while capital gain in the current buoyant apartment market could top \$60,000, making the rental option unattractive for some investors. ‘--- the super wealthy ones understand that if they left 10-20% of their [property] portfolio empty it enforces scarcity and pushes up rent and property prices’ (*Prosper Australia Speculative Rental Report*, 5 November, 2015).

Our housing crisis and costly rentals might be solved if long-term vacant apartments became available to the rental market. In the meantime we face on-going developer pressure in Carlton and elsewhere across Melbourne to cater for a largely investor based market for apartments. Recent reports of a potential apartment glut might resolve the issue.

Carlton Heritage Shake-Up

It would be no exaggeration to suggest that the Heritage Review, instigated by the City of Melbourne in 2014, could result in the greatest transformation of the heritage planning arrangements in over thirty years.

Over summer, concerned residents were asked to comment upon a new Statement of Significance for the large Carlton Heritage Precinct, and revisions to the two local policies which guide decision makers responsible for assessing planning applications that impact upon heritage places. But,

it is the replacement of the A to D Grading system [a system that has been in place for thirty years] with a revised system, that categorises properties as significant, contributory or non-contributory that will have the most impact. Hundreds of heritage places that were previously designated as significant will be categorised as contributory, if the recommendations from the consultants are accepted. While there is certainly a need for a Statement of Significance for the large Carlton Heritage Overlay, there is probably an even stronger argument for separate statements for some of the smaller precincts where significant heritage assets are located. The separate Heritage Review undertaken as part of the City North planning study [concerning that area west of Swanston Street and south of the University] included Statements of Significance for quite small precincts, including the Lincoln Square South Precinct [see image below]. If they can be justified for this precinct, they can be certainly justified for the site of the first Children’s Hospital on Pelham Street, and for the University Square area of Carlton [see image below].



A Statement of Significance has been gazetted for those Heritage Places on Lincoln Square South



The HO1 Heritage Precinct west of Swanston Street requires a separate Statement of Significance; it includes the University Square and significant heritage places on Barry Street, Leicester Street and Grattan Street [east of Leicester Street].

**IT'S TIME TO JOIN CRA :
DO IT TODAY!**

Working Groups

Planning Applications

APP No./ADDRESS	DETAILS OF WORK/CRA INTEREST
<p>Previous Carried Forward -</p> <p>TP-2014-399 53 Queensberry St Objection</p> <p>TP-2014-734 66-88 Lygon St Objection</p> <p>TP-2015-273 100-102 Bouverie St Objection</p> <p>TP-2015-295 176-178 Canning St Objection</p> <p>2015-384 101-103 Drummond St Objection</p> <p>TP-2015-440 23-33 Lincoln Sq Sth Objection</p> <p>TP-2013-337/A 701-703 Swanston St Rydges Hotel Objection</p> <p>TP-2015-583 391-395 Rathdowne St Objection</p> <p>TP-2015-694 79-87 Canning St Objection</p> <p>TP-2015-279 107-109 Drummond St No action</p> <p>TP-2015-636 1-23 Rathdowne St Objection</p> <p>TP-2015-742 86-94 Pelham St. Objection</p> <p>TP-2015-983 4-12 Leicester Place Objection</p> <p>Other Applications for which further information is still awaited.</p> <p>TP-2015-265 171-175 Grattan St</p>	<p>Alterations to existing church. Awaiting VCAT Ruling</p> <p>VCAT upheld CoM Refusal. A substantial victory for CoM and opponents. Ruling suggests that any alternative proposal would need to be severely diminished.</p> <p>Due to be heard at VCAT mid February unless resolved prior. CRA was struck out and the other objector MFB, had their grounds of objection restricted due to C196.</p> <p>CoM issued NOD to grant a permit.</p> <p>CoM issued NOD to grant a permit. CRA concerns addressed</p> <p>VCAT upheld CoM Refusal. A pleasing outcome for CoM and opponents, however the ruling does not preclude an alternative submission.</p> <p>CoM issued NOD to grant a permit, conditions imposed should address concerns.</p> <p>5 Storey mixed use. CRA concerns were height, inappropriate facade treatment, and diminished amenity for nearby residents.</p> <p>Permit issued</p> <p>CoM issued NOD to grant a permit, no concerns.</p> <p>Change of use, amenity issues for nearby residents.</p> <p>8 Storey mixed use in a 4 storey preferred height DDO with heritage implications.</p> <p>20 storey mixed use. Applicant has appealed to VCAT on the grounds of CoM's failure to make a decision. CRA grounds limited to heritage, parking, unloading due to C196.</p> <p>Multi storey mixed use development.</p>
<p>November - 19 Applications - 1 Objection</p> <p>TP-2015-1057 558-566 Swanston st</p>	<p>17 Storey mixed use and waiver for unloading provisions. CRA concern is excessive height, site has a preferred height limit of 9 storeys and unloading.</p>
<p>December - 19 Application - 1 Objection</p> <p>TP-2015-1146 122-136 Berkeley St</p> <p>Further information awaited on 4</p> <p>TP-2015-1120, 1134, 1169 & 1178</p>	<p>12 storey mixed use and waiver for unloading provisions. CRA concern is excessive height, site has a preferred height limit of 32 metres (9 storeys) and unloading..</p>
<p>January - 8 Applications</p> <p>Further information awaited on 2</p> <p>TP-2016-46 205 Pelham St /81 Barry St</p>	<p>This is a consolidation of the 'Reece' site, which was the subject of a previous CRA objection and VCAT hearing and an adjoining Barry St site. It is subject to C196, so CRA involvement will be limited.</p>
<p>February Applications</p> <p>Further information awaited on 1.</p> <p>TP-2016-98</p>	<p>Alterations and additions to existing dwelling</p>

Planning (cont)

A cause for concern is the number of applications being lodged for multi-storey developments which exceed the height limit for their respective locations. In addition to the Downtowner and 100 Bouverie Street above, there are six more to contend with, they are TP-2015-265 for 171-175 Grattan Street and TP-2015-440 for 23-31 Lincoln Square South, TP-2015-742 for 86-94 Pelham Street, TP-2015-983 for 4-12 Leicester Place, TP-2015-1057 for 558 Swanston St and to a lesser extent TP-2015-583 for 391-395 Rathdowne Street. More detail is being sought for the latter two applications and objections are anticipated.

At the beginning of each month, the CRA's planning sub-committee meets to consider the previous month's planning applications for the 3053 postcode area. The committee is particularly alert to the following:

- overlooking or any other loss of amenity to neighbouring properties
- loss of amenity to the wider surrounding area (bulk, aesthetics, car parking)
- whether the application complies with the council's heritage overlay and height restrictions
- internal amenity (chiefly in multi-dwelling developments)

The City of Melbourne has an easy to use online search facility for the Planning Register, which provides up-to-date information on the status of a Planning Permit or current application, searching by application number or address.

<http://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/building-and-development/property-information/planning-building-registers/Pages/town-planning-permits-register.aspx>

It is also possible to subscribe to weekly planning alerts : email to planning@melbourne.vic.gov.au with 'Subscribe to weekly alert' in the subject line.

If you are aware of developments needing attention, please contact the Planning Committee: planningcra@gmail.com

Carlton a History

Wanted - a used copy of 'Carlton a History' – must be complete, but may be “battered”!

Our hard working planning committee is in need of a copy of this book, preferably the soft cover version, the condition of which is unimportant. It is an invaluable source of reference material for the ever increasing number of heritage related planning issues they are encountering.

Anyone with a spare or under utilised copy willing to sell or donate, please contact the planning subcommittee planningcra@gmail.com

A Message from Ellen Sandell State MP for Melbourne

2015 ended on a high note for Carlton residents, with the opening of the fantastic Kathleen Syme Library and

Community Centre. Congratulations to everyone at the CRA who worked so hard to make this a reality, and brought such a great new space to the Carlton community.

The Greens are continuing to speak out against the removal of third party notice and appeal rights in the Capital City Zone. With some big projects on the horizon, including the development of the Melbourne Metro, residents need to be fully empowered and engaged in the process, and able to have their voices heard. I'm excited about the improvements to Melbourne's public transport system, as are many Melbourne residents. We also need to make sure that residents are looked after and properly informed and that the process is transparent.

This is even more important in light of the Labor and Liberal parties continuing to take donations from property developers - the Spring CRA Newsflash was right to be worried about the role of property developer money. At the beginning of February we found out that State Labor alone received at least \$214,000 from property developers, with the State Liberals at \$346,000. This calls into question the commitment of the Government and the Liberal Opposition to community consultation and independent assessment – especially at a time of creeping high-rise growth in Carlton and North Melbourne. We are continuing to push for reform, and will introduce a bill in June of this year to finally ban the practice (the old parties refused to even debate the Bill when I introduced it last year!).

Rapid growth in the inner city continues to put strain on local services and communities. I am working with local groups to get these issues onto the agenda for the Labor government, and to find local solutions where we can. Overcrowding is a huge issue at inner-city schools, as Carlton parents know all too well. This creates problems that range from children having to use portaloos when renovations aren't completed in time, all the way through to children and their parents not being able to get a place at a local school. Successive governments have known that building up the CBD, Southbank and the Docklands would eventually mean a school is required, but they have not acted to provide a long term solution.

In the lead up to the upcoming budget I will be working towards funding to build a new school - I hope this will have an immediate impact on Carlton residents. The parents of the Docklands have come together to push for this - you can see their petition at www.cityschools4citykids.com. I hope you will join me in telling the Minister that the inner city needs services to meet the needs of its growing population, and keep our city a vibrant and accessible place to live.

I am excited about the year ahead, despite these challenges. Please feel free to contact my office to let me know your thoughts, or if you need assistance with any state matters. I am always happy to talk to residents, and want to make sure I'm doing all I can to effectively represent you in Parliament.

Ellen

Farewell John and Jean Evans

Rev. Dr John and Jean Evans leave Carlton shortly for retirement and new challenges in Queensland. Since they arrived at the Church of All Nations (CAN) in 2008 they have actively immersed themselves in our diverse Carlton community, including as CRA members. John hosted and chaired numerous memorable 'Meet the Candidate Forums' at CAN for Federal, State and Council elections, in association with CRA. He was active in the Carlton Local Agencies Network (CLAN) and chaired the Community Liaison Committee (CLC) for the Public Housing Estates. Both Jean and John have been leaders in support of the disadvantaged in our community, including material, educational and spiritual needs. Jean provided computer literacy support for many; local choirs and pageants have benefited from her musical skills.

At a community farewell dinner at CAN on Friday 29 January, John observed 'Tonight is a waystation for the Church of All Nations ----- the values of justice and fairness, of openness and hospitality, of love, compassion and hope – are very much still evident'. Staff, volunteers and public housing tenants banded together to prepare and serve a memorable dinner for more than 100 people. We will miss John and Jean in Carlton and wish them well for their new life in Queensland.



Jean & John Evans enjoying their farewell dinner

Carlton Gardens Tennis Club - Horn Of Africa Tennis Program - runs again in 2015

The program first ran for 10 weeks in 2014 (see *Newsflash*, Spring 2014) The tennis club continued to work with Church of all Nations and Tennis Victoria after the program ended on such a high note in 2014 by repeating it in 2015. The fifth consecutive 10 week block of coaching commenced on 10 October and ended on 12 December with

a BBQ and speeches including news of another visit to the Australian Open on 19 January 2016.

On behalf of the Carlton Gardens Tennis Club, Church of All Nations, Carlton and Tennis Victoria, the program was nominated for an award to celebrate those members of the community who have done the most to improve understanding between Muslims and non-Muslims in Australia.



The Australian Open visit 2016

With continued financial support for 2016 from Tennis Australia, Rotary Carlton, Carlton Residents Association, Delaware North, Church of All Nations and the Carlton Gardens Tennis Club, another successful visit to the Australian Open occurred and the professional coaching resumed shortly thereafter on Saturday 6 February. Back on the courts, the children showed that they have further improved their tennis and social skills. Moreover, the parents have become more confident about attending meetings and arranging the Open excursion, which has noticeably built their self-esteem.

CAN Family Learning Program - Holiday Activities at Kathleen Syme January 2016

The CAN (Church of All Nations) runs a program of educational support for Carlton families from Monday to Wednesday after school during term time. Most families are from the Horn of Africa and live on the Carlton Housing Estates. Students from prep to year 12 are welcomed into the program where they are tutored by volunteers. The tutoring sessions are held at the Kathleen Syme Library and the emphasis is on assisting students to tackle homework and improving literacy and numeracy skills.

With generous support from the Readings Foundation, the program was able to offer holiday activities during January, and it will also start literacy enrichment classes for parents this year. Tutors and families of all faiths and of none are welcome to attend. The positive learning strategies used at Carlton Primary School - Be a Learner, Be Safe and Be Respectful are the basis of the program.

New tutors are always needed, please contact the tutor recruiter if you are interested in being involved. email: jenny.john@internode.on.net

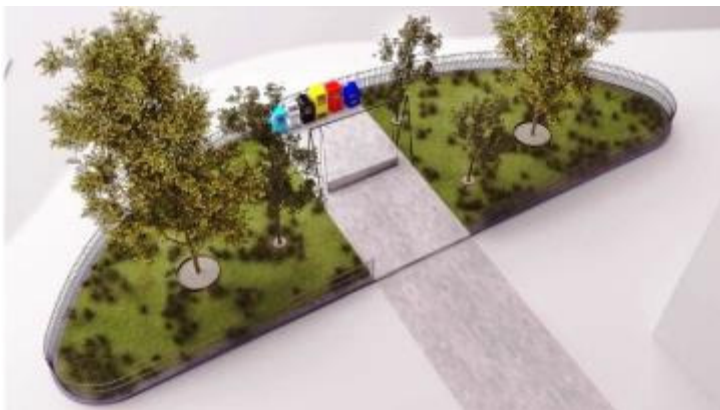


Executed in Franklin Street

The Council has now finalised the design for a \$155,000 memorial to two aboriginal men, Tunnerminnerwait and Maulboyheenner, executed for murder in 1842 (see *Newsflash*, Winter 2014). The memorial, designed by artist Brook Andrew, will serve to commemorate 'frontier wars' between indigenous 'freedom fighters' and colonialists. It is to be built at the corner of Victoria and Franklin Streets, at the rear of RMIT (the gallows site), and includes an indigenous garden, a child's swing (to represent the gallows) and brightly coloured newspaper vending boxes with metal newspapers reporting the event.

An annual community gathering, initiated by Dr Joseph Toscano (well known to many CRA members) and local aboriginal leaders, is held on 20 January, at the execution site. This is followed by a march to the burial ground at Victoria Market (former Melbourne Cemetery).

The new memorial will help educate the community and visitors 'about forgotten colonial wars between Europeans and Aborigines' during the early settlement of Victoria.



Artists impression of the Memorial

Xmas Party Raffle

Most sincere thank you to the generous people and businesses who donated the wonderful prizes:

Artist Joan Gardiner donated a beautiful painting of the

restored Kathleen Syme Library and Community Centre value \$500

CRA President George Janko donated a voucher for Dinner for 4 at **The Flying Duck**,

67 Bendigo St Prahran, Voucher value \$200

Jimmy Watsons Wines: 1 Sparkling Shiraz and 1 Chardonnay \$80

Botega Tasca: two bottles of premium Italian wine \$80

Avia Hairdressers: Faraday St: haircut & blowdry \$80

Pickford Pharmacy, Elgin St: Health products \$110

La Mama: 2 Double Passes for a production of choice in 2016, plus drinks \$50 ea

Carlton Gardens Tennis Club: 2 Vouchers for Tennis Court Hire \$25 ea

Carlton Gardens Tennis Club: Gift voucher for Tennis Coaching \$50

Joan Gardiner: 4 specially crafted Christmas hampers

The Ark Clothing Company: Gift Voucher to attend clothes styling workshop

for 10 people (in North Carlton) Value \$500

CRA Christmas Party

Even more fabulous than in previous years, our celebration took place on a balmy December evening in La Mama's unique, renovated forecourt, to the dulcet tones of singer Mirko Angeli and his backing group *No Strings Attached*. We enjoyed an abundance of delicious nibbles prepared by our committee, and scrumptious cakes generously donated by Brunetti. The famous raffle of wonderful prizes, generously donated by Carlton people and businesses, provided much enjoyment. President George Janko warmly welcomed members, friends, and guests from other residents associations and activist groups. We were honoured by the presence of Mary Drost from Planning Backlash, and representatives of the three major political parties including the Federal and State Members for Melbourne, Adam Bandt MHR and Ellen Sandell MLA, former Lord Mayors Trevor Huggard and Kevin Chamberlin, and former councillors of the City of Melbourne.

Together we celebrated CRA's most wonderful achievement. After many years of intense campaigning, the Kathleen Syme Library and Community Centre was opened on July 4th. CRA had advocated for the Victorian Government to transfer the historic Carlton Primary School across to the City of Melbourne to be used as a community meeting place and library. This impressively renovated building is now most enthusiastically embraced by our diverse community.

Greta Bird, who coordinated our KSC Reference Group, thanked members and friends for their unreserved support throughout the long years of the campaign: attendance, year after year, at rallies, council meetings, consultations, photos for the press, wholehearted response to our letter-boxed appeals to email and to write appeals to Premiers Bracks,

Brumby and parliamentarians, requesting the release of Carlton's first primary school, the Kathleen Syme building, for council purchase. Reference Group members Jackie Watts and Ian Bird were thanked particularly for their absolute commitment, inspiration, and participation throughout the campaign, despite the many setbacks and obstructions. Carlton icons Liz Jones and her team at La Mama Theatre, and Mark Rubbo, managing director of Readings Book Shops, were thanked for their vital role, as were Megan Gathercole and the Carlton Gardens Primary School.

Our Library/Community Centre was hard-won indeed, but so vital for Carlton.

We celebrated two further extraordinary wins, at VCAT: the rejection of two highly inappropriate planning applications for (a) 13 storeys at the Downtowner Motel site, 66-88 Lygon Street, and (b) 15 storeys at 23-32 Lincoln Square South. Both applications would have been horrendous over-developments and created precedents for these relatively low-scale and heritage areas of Carlton. Heartiest congratulations were extended to our planning group and nearby residents for their hard work and strong advocacy at VCAT. These decisions should cause developers to rethink their arrogant disregard of the Melbourne Planning Scheme.

Our Speakers Councillor Jackie Watts, Federal Member Adam Bandt and State Member Ellen Sandell warmly congratulated us on our work to retain the amenity of Carlton, and impressed us with substantial contributions they have made to the Melbourne electorate.

In the true spirit of Christmas all celebrated Carlton's wonderful community spirit, and resolved to renew our efforts in the New Year to overcome the ravages of developers and The University

CRA Christmas Party 2016 La Mama



Your Association NEEDS YOU ... if you have expertise in planning law, heritage conservation, copyright law, transport planning or environmental impact assessments ... Contact our Secretary. Your advice could be invaluable!