



Winter 2012

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Supported by the Community
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**CITY OF
MELBOURNE**

ALP narrowly wins Melbourne by-election

The unexpected mid-term resignation of long-standing ALP State Member for Melbourne, Bronwyn Pike, on 8 May, led to a by-election on 21 July. ALP candidate, Jennifer Kanis, narrowly defeated Greens candidate, Cathy Oke, by 2.8%, on a two party preferred basis (both were Melbourne City Councillors). Pundits had predicted an historic win but this did not eventuate.

The by-election attracted unprecedented State and Federal Government attention. Its sixteen candidates offered something for everyone, except for Liberal voters, because the Bailleau Government decided not to field a candidate. Federal issues played a prominent role in electoral debates.

The Greens attracted a record primary vote of 36% against the ALP of 33%. However, the ALP won the seat on preferences from most of the other major candidates; only Stephen Mayne (Independent) preferred the Greens. It seems the ALP will continue to be successful in the inner ring of long-held seats unless the Greens can attract more widespread support and match Labor's election tactics, particularly with preference dealings.

CRA again collaborated with Dr John Evans, Church of All Nations, to host a very successful Candidates Forum in Carlton, on 9 July. Fourteen of the sixteen candidates attended to spruik their policies and to engage with the electorate. It was a very lively town hall style meeting, with some 200 people in attendance, ably chaired by John Evans. Much positive feedback was received from attendees and there was welcome publicity in The Melbourne Times Weekly. To advertise the event and the election, 2000 households were letterboxed in Carlton and North Carlton.



Dr John Evans (CAN), introducing the candidates in Carlton

Reference Group Reports

Some facts about the State Seat of Melbourne and the by-election:

- the electorate covers an area of 30 square km; it has 44,889 registered voters.
- it has been held by the ALP since established in 1908, most recently by Barry Jones (1972-77), Keith Remington (1977-88), Neil Cole (1988-99), Bronwyn Pike (1999-2012)
- the ALP primary vote has almost halved since 1999 (59% to 33%)
- there was a record low voter turnout of 67% for the by-election. Some 15,000 voters will likely receive a 'please explain' from the Victorian Electoral Commission
- there was a record high informal vote of 8.5%, probably reflecting the large number of candidates and disaffected Liberal voters
- Stephen Mayne, author of the Mayne Report, (Independent) noted he had spent \$2000 on his campaign to gain 4.75% of the vote; he stated David Nolte (Independent) spent \$30,000 to gain 4.70%
- the Sex Party (Fiona Patten) gained 6.6% of the vote and played a major role in the ALP win

The next State Election will be held in November 2014.

Reference group Reports

Corba

CoRBA–Melbourne (Coalition of Residents and Business Associations) is currently compiling its 'City of Melbourne Council Candidates Survey' in preparation for the October 2012 election. Prior to each CoM election, as a service to residents and ratepayers throughout the municipality, CoRBA requests candidates complete the CoRBA Survey. Survey results are placed on the CoRBA website for all constituents to consult on line *before* and most importantly *after* the election.

The hope is that the information gained will:

- ensure that *local* election issues are firmly on the 'radar' for ALL candidates at the looming election.
- indicate to ALL candidates that residents and small businesses have a *right to be heard on the issues which matter to them and that constituents take their vote seriously*
- indicate to all new Councillors that their views are *on the public record* (the CoRBA website) as they commence their term on Council, and that constituents expect action.

So – here is your chance to contribute. If there are questions about issues of concern across the municipality that you wish to have included in the survey – contact CRA now!

carltonresidents@gmail.com

Melbourne City Council will conduct its elections by full postal voting. Election Day is Saturday 27 October 2012.

Kathleen Syme Centre

Further good news for Carlton!

All those who have worked with such dogged persistence – submission after submission, meetings beyond count, endless 'consultations' over many years are thrilled to find that the Council Future Melbourne Committee, last Tuesday, decided to endorse Option B for the redevelopment of the Kathleen Syme Library and Community Centre.

The CRA lobbied for Option B on the grounds that it looked to the future needs of our community not just the present, albeit acute, needs. Option B incorporates a sympathetic extension to the rear of the historic building to extend the total gross floor area to 1870sqm. It allows for additional library, reading and multi purpose spaces, along with separate arts and performance spaces. The estimated costs are: construction \$14.5 million, fit-out costs \$2.6 million, operating costs \$1 million to \$1.2 million per annum. Fortunately the refurbishment is eligible for State Government funding under the Community Support Grant program (maximum \$500,000) and the Living Libraries Grants (\$750,000). Councillors requested the CoM Administration now investigate further funding options and proceed to the next stage of developing detailed design and tender documents for presentation to the Council in May 2013.

Access Option B on the link below, diagram attachments are on pages 5 and 7.

www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/AboutCouncil/Meetings/Lists/CouncilMeetingAgendaItems/Attachments/10104/5.5%20Kathleen%20Syme%20Library%20and%20Community%20Centre%20Concept%20Design%20and%20Management%20Options.pdf

From Jennifer Torrance, Community Infrastructure Officer, CoM

'Next steps:

A detailed design will now be developed from the approved concept and submitted to Council with the proposed tender for construction in May 2013.

At the same time, City of Melbourne will draw on the community's aspirations for the Centre to develop a management model that can deliver multiple services for diverse community needs and well-being.

We will keep you updated throughout the key stages in the progress of the Kathleen Syme Library and Community Centre redevelopment.'

JOIN CRA TODAY

carltonresidents@gmail.com
check out the website
www.carltonresidents.org.au

Carlton Alliance

It is interesting to note that one serious by-election candidate, North Carlton Pharmacist David Nolte, registered his staunch support for the re-unification of Carlton. It was disappointing that our new MP Jennifer Kanis only seemed prepared to make generalised reference to reviewing municipal boundaries overall.

Those in North Carlton, who advocate for reunification with the City of Melbourne, note the disparity between the municipal rates levy in the CoM and the City of Yarra. North Carlton ratepayers perceive they are regarded as an excellent source of rate revenue for the entire City of Yarra. The City of Yarra has recently struck a 5.9% increase in rates, unlike the CoM which has opted for a zero% increase. This will affect those who live in 3054 North Carlton/Princes Hill compared with 3053 Carlton.

What is even more irksome is, of course, the evaluation of services and facilities residents receive from their municipality in return for their rates. Disgruntled North Carlton residents with long memories, recollect the “asset stripping” exercise inflicted on North Carlton/Princes Hill ratepayers when they were hived off, without consultation, to the City of Yarra. The trend continues in 2012 as North Carlton rate revenue is dispersed throughout the City of Yarra while the level of services to North Carlton arguably falls below that of the much more affluent CoM.

The Carlton Alliance is preparing a detailed analysis of the rates issue, based on information requested from the new CEO of the City of Yarra. This analysis will cover rate revenue raised within North Carlton/Princes Hill, compared with localised expenditure, with the aim of clarifying the on-going disadvantage. Clearly, the interest in reunification continues to grow as community awareness of the relationship between rates and council services increases.

Traffic, Transport and Parking

Doncaster Rail independently assessed

We've waited for years for a realistic independent costing of the long debated Doncaster rail-line, outside the influence of the Public Transport Department. At last the truth is out: Doncaster Rail could be built for just 10% of the cost of the controversial \$10 billion Eddington East-West road tunnel.

Transport experts from Curtin University (WA), RMIT, and global engineering company, ARUP, have costed the project at \$840 million; a connection to the proposed Melbourne Metro Rail tunnel would cost a further \$300 million. Consultants on the rail report included Professor Peter Newman, who designed Perth's Mandurah rail-line. Professor Newman is a board member of Infrastructure Australia, a statutory body, advising governments, investors and infrastructure owners on a wide range of issues.

Doncaster rail could move 100,000 passengers per day

(same as projected for the road tunnel) and substantially reduce traffic congestion on the Eastern Freeway, Hoddle St, Princes St, and the north-south arterial roads which traverse Carlton to the CBD. The much heralded Doncaster Area Rapid Transport bus service moves just 8,500 passengers per day and is at near capacity performance.

The landmark rail study was funded by six Councils which form The Doncaster Local Government Group, including nearby City of Yarra. The study challenges the grossly inflated costings for public transport projects over many years by governments of both political persuasions.

When in opposition, both major political parties talk up public transport, but when in government, build roads. The roads lobby and infrastructure bankers see great profit from roads but not rail, and influence governments accordingly.



An exciting future vision: a rail line to Doncaster?
(Mandurah rail-line, WA, courtesy Doncaster Rail Study)

A rail line to Doncaster was first proposed in 1880. It was part of the 1969 Metropolitan Transport Plan which led to the rail reservation along the Eastern Freeway. It has been subject to occasional further assessment since that time. Most recently the Bailleau Government funded a \$6.5 million study of rail options which it undermined by announcing the Eddington Road Tunnel as its top priority transport project for Melbourne on 1 May 2012.

The battle against vested interests which favour roads over public transport has continued for decades. Funds have been diverted from sensible public transport projects to mega-roads construction, resulting in ever increasing traffic chaos. The new report on Doncaster Rail cannot be easily dismissed and ignored by the Government as it pursues its traditional roads-centric agenda. Surely it is time to break from the past and embrace sustainable public transport options, including the rail line to Doncaster along the Eastern Freeway reservation, as a matter of urgency.

For more information: www.yarracity.vic.gov.au search: Doncaster Rail Study.

Reference Group Reports

Traffic, Transport and Parking (cont.)

Doncaster rail link – another perspective

Originally, all the eastern rail lines terminated at Flinders Street, and those to the west terminated at Spencer Street. Now that the underground rail loop has been built, it makes more sense to bring the Doncaster rail line via a more direct route to the underground loop, all stations of which are north of Flinders Street.

The proposed Doncaster route via Victoria Park, Collingwood, West Richmond, and Jolimont, then around the loop stations to places of work, is somewhat circuitous.

A more direct route is called for. This could go underground from the end of the Eastern Freeway, past the University of Melbourne, with a station in the vicinity of Swanston and Faraday Streets, then south to connect with the underground loop in the vicinity of Melbourne Central Station. Such a route would enable access to the University and the city from Doncaster, as well as easier access to the University from south-eastern and western rail lines. Direct connections would be possible; perhaps some trains could be scheduled from, say, Dandenong to Doncaster, via the loop.

The Doncaster railway has the greater potential to remove vehicular traffic from Alexandra Parade compared to other proposals. This proposed route would address chronic congestion caused by traffic on the Eastern Freeway. By providing a direct city link the route would be attractive to residents of Doncaster and may also attract residents on other rail lines, thus reducing congestion elsewhere.

East-West link probable route



East-West Link probable route (courtesy LMA)

Early August 2012, Protectors of Public Lands (PPL) convened a briefing session with the Linking Melbourne Authority (LMA) to discuss the core drilling program and the probable route of the East-West Link. The PPL delegation included representatives from CRA, North & West Melbourne Association., Parkville Association and Royal Park Protection Group. LMA tabled plans which give an indication of the probable route of the Link and differ from the Eddington plans of 2007. The new route avoids Kensington (Holland Park) by taking a dog-leg south along

City Link, then west through the Rail Yards and Wholesale Market (Dyvon Road), under Footscray and on to the Western Ring Road (see map above).

LMA has the task to develop a 'business case' for the Link (tunnels, elevated roads, ramps, flyovers, surface roads etc) which it plans to finalise in 2013. This work will be considered 'commercial in confidence' and not released for public scrutiny or comment.

If only the Government could show equivalent enthusiasm for a rail line to Doncaster.

Core drilling on parkland



Julianne Bell (PPL) addressing the rally at the first core drilling site in Carlton (3053), near significant trees listed on the Heritage Register (drill rig in background)

A major preliminary design component of the controversial Eddington East-West road link is a program of geotechnical core drilling to assess underground conditions for tunnelling (see *Newsflash* Autumn 2012). As much of the drilling is scheduled on parkland under the control of the City of Melbourne, the Linking Melbourne Authority (LMA), which manages complex roads projects for the Government, requested Council approval for its drilling program. This request was an agenda item at the Future Melbourne Committee on 10 July 2012.

On 8 May 2012, the Committee agreed unanimously to incorporate its resolution of June 2008 into the current Melbourne Transport Strategy to 'oppose the use of any parkland for any road or associated activity'. The request from LMA was a direct challenge to this Council resolution. CRA, Royal Park Protection Group, and Melbourne Bicycle Users Group all addressed the Council and urged it not to approve the LMA drilling request, in accordance with its earlier resolution. Protectors of Public Lands (PPL) proposed a management plan for the drilling to protect parkland.

The Council agreed to the LMA drilling request and incorporated most of the PPL management plan. Lord

Mayor Doyle is a strong supporter of LMA, on the basis that the State Government has the power to 'declare' the core drilling, which would sideline the Council from parkland control. Only Crs. Shanahan and Watts opposed the drilling; Cr Oke absented herself from the debate; Cr Kanis was on leave. Objecting councillors noted the decision was against the earlier resolution, Council had not been consulted and it could disagree with the Government.

Core drilling on parkland is now proceeding as proposed by LMA. Our primary concerns are the future destructive impacts on parkland of major earthworks associated with cut and fill tunnelling, ramps and flyovers, all part of the Eddington tunnel project. Will the government continue to hold a whip-hand when the Council is faced with substantial road construction impacts on its parkland (much like the MIFGS approval process in Carlton Gardens)?

Many thanks to CRA members and friends who braved inclement weather to attend a rally, at short notice, on Friday 27 July, at the first drill-site in Carlton (3053), on the roundabout, north end of Swanston St. There was an excellent turnout and several speakers addressed the crowd. Core drilling was undertaken on this unscheduled site, without approval or prior notice, near significant trees on the Heritage Register. This resulted in a protest notice from the National Trust to LMA.

Carlton Gardens and REB – World Heritage Site

Melbourne International Flower and Garden Show (MIFGS)

Community representatives on the Events Advisory Group (EAG) lodged a complaint with the Ombudsman about Council's management of MIFGS, an annual event on our World Heritage (WH) site. The Ombudsman has asked that the complaint be taken again to City of Melbourne for resolution. This led to the community representatives writing to Dr Kathy Alexander, CEO of City of Melbourne, to resolve these issues and avoid the need for a formal review by the Ombudsman.

The letter to Dr Alexander identified the nature of the complaint being primarily concerned with maladministration, misadministration and conflict of interest. Further world heritage considerations were also addressed eg. the use of the WH gardens for commercial purposes.

World Heritage Conservation Master Plan (WHCMP)

Information on the final draft the Ministerial approval of this Plan is still outstanding. It was due for completion by last December, following a public hearing nearly 12 months ago. This plan is required within world heritage obligations

as agreed between UNESCO and the Australian Government. State and local governments are also involved in the planning process. WHCMP is the "principal plan" in a package of documents which includes the Council's Carlton Gardens Master Plan and Conservation Management Plan.

A review of the total package is required every 7 years but we have yet to see the principal plan except in draft form a year ago, despite WH listing occurring July 2004. The second tier plans are now out dated and the principal plan is missing 8 years on.

Public Forum to raise awareness of our WH site

UNESCO has declared 2012, its 40th anniversary of world heritage conservation, as a year to celebrate sustainable communities. A public forum is planned as a community initiative. The aim is to make our community more aware of the history of the Royal Exhibition Building, the reasons it was recognised by WH values, and its national value for the first sitting of the Australian parliament in 1901. The allocation of \$20m in the Federal budget provides a platform to reinforce that message and boost our WH site's public profile.

Public Housing

The Carlton Housing Estate Redevelopment

Progress reports:

Stage 2. (Keppel/Cardigan Precinct) - 50 Public & 98 Private Apartments

Despite the problems associated with the financial failure of the builder at this precinct, the 50 public and 98 Private apartments are almost complete and the residents are expected to begin occupying the apartments this October.

Stage 3. (Elgin/Nicholson Precinct) – 112 Public & 120 Private Apartments

The site excavation has started and the contract for the building works should be awarded in September. 59% of the private apartments have now been sold and completion of construction is expected by mid 2014.

Stage 5. (Lygon /Rathdowne Precinct) – Australian Unity "Wellbeing Precinct"

A builder (Equiset) has been appointed and work has commenced on the first of three stages, the 161 bed aged care facility. The two subsequent stages will each see the completion of 100 retirement apartments. It is anticipated that the next 18 months will see all three stages completed.

Stage 9. (Lygon/Rathdowne Precinct) – 105 Private Apartments

The design and planning of these 1, 2 and 3 bedroom apartments, with some Home Office Units, is well advanced. The preliminary version of planning drawings was presented to the Design Subcommittee on 25 June.

Reference Group Reports

Planning and Development

Applications: Each month, the committee considers the current planning applications for the 3053 postcode, addressing issues that threaten ‘loss of amenity’, e.g. car parking, compliance with heritage overlay, and residential diversity. Access up-to-date information on the status of a Planning Permit or current application at:

<http://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/BuildingandPlanning/Planning/Pages/PlanningRegisterSearch.aspx>

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

Summary: Since the last Newsflash, the Planning Sub-Committee has reviewed 36 Planning Applications for Carlton, and submitted 3 objections to the City of Melbourne.

The number of applications and associated objections appear to reflect a reduced level of activity in the construction and development industry.

APP No./ADDRESS	DETAILS OF WORK/CRA INTEREST
June – 6 Applications; 0 objections	
July – 8 Applications; 1 revised objection TP-2011-805 93 Barkly St	Partial demolition and construction of a three storey addition to the existing dwelling (revised to only a deck at third level). Permit granted At referral – 15 objections The criticisms raised in our objection dated 3 Feb 2011 have largely been addressed by the changes detailed in the revised drawings. However, CRA would suggest that a professional heritage appraisal of this revised design be appropriate, particularly in respect of the streetscape as viewed from Canning Street and to a lesser extent, Barkly Street.
CRA Objections pending TP-2010-294 411-415 Cardigan St	Demolition of the existing building and construction of a four storey building for the purposes of five apartments and associated car parking Processing Suspended – 3 objections The CRA objected on these grounds: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design not sympathetic with the streetscape • Height and setback issues with the 4th storey • To uphold amenity & overlooking of neighbouring properties

New residential planning zones

Planning Minister, Hon Matthew Guy, announced a new residential planning zone regime proposal in mid July. Existing Residential Zones 1, 2 and 3 will be replaced with three new zones:

- **Residential Growth Zone:** will enable new housing growth and diversity, in appropriate locations near activity centres, train stations and other areas suitable for increased housing. A discretionary height limit of 12.5 metres will be retained.* A mixture of apartments and townhouses with underground car parking is envisaged
- **General Residential Zone:** will respect and preserve urban character while enabling modest housing growth and diversity, and is consistent with existing neighbourhood character. A discretionary height limit of 9 metres will be retained.* A mixture of single dwellings, dual occupancies, with some villa units and town houses is envisaged
- **Neighbourhood Residential Zone:** restricts housing growth in areas identified for urban preservation, such as those with recognised neighbourhood character and

environmental or landscape significance. A discretionary height limit of 9 metres will be retained.* Predominately single dwellings with some dual or multiple occupancies are envisaged

- **Existing Zones:** current Activity Centre Zone, Comprehensive Development Zone and Mixed Use Zone will continue with only minor modifications.

***Councils will however be able to specify a local maximum building height that cannot be exceeded.**

According to the Minister: ‘Reformed residential zones will give much greater clarity about the type of development that can be expected in any residential area, will give councils much better tools to identify where existing urban character will be protected and will also assist in identifying appropriate areas where urban densification will occur’. All this is of direct relevance to CRA in our constant battle to defend streetscapes and height and heritage overlays from the predations of opportunistic developers, including at VCAT. The Minister appears to have taken on board widespread community concerns over inappropriate developments as long argued by the State-wide group

Planning and Development (cont)

Planning Backlash (of which CRA is a member). *Newsflash* Autumn 2012 has further background information.

According to planning expert, Professor Michael Buxton, RMIT: 'New planning zones will protect relatively small areas of historic housing, open up other residential areas to major growth and leave much of Melbourne with little protection against piecemeal redevelopment'. Property Council Executive Director, Jennifer Cunich, welcomed the new zoning arrangements: 'For almost two decades communities, planners and developers have been calling for greater certainty in regard to local planning powers... if embraced by local councils, these reforms can be used to shape local communities the way locals want.'

The new planning zone regime is open for public comment until 21 September. More information and comment procedures are available at

www.dpcd.vic.gov.au/reformedzones

Following this public consultation and final Government approval later in 2012, Councils will have 12 months to implement the new arrangements.

Community News

• The Ian Potter Museum of Art

Swanston Street, between Faraday and Elgin Streets at the University of Melbourne.

'Neighbourhood Night at the Museum' is on Wednesday 31 October from 5.30 – 7.00pm. All welcome.

Free entry, live music, food & drink and great art, all within walking distance, an evening to be enjoyed by the whole family.

Explore 3 very different exhibitions: *The Anatomy Lesson*, *Basil Sellers Art Prize* and *Ceramic Art from Ancient Cyprus*

Music will be performed by an ensemble from The Melbourne Conservatorium of Music.

RSVP potter-events@unimelb.edu.au or phone 8344 0327.

LOOK, THINK, DRAW:

Free Children's Art Trail :Stimulate your child's imagination. Surprise them with soccer balls made out of paper, paintings of footy players and a table full of retro hand held video games - all part of the 2012 Basil Sellers Art Prize exhibition. **Inspired by an array of historical and contemporary works by Australia's best artists** - your child will be encouraged to **look, think and respond imaginatively through drawing.**

3 floors of art to explore, a whole campus to run around in, good coffee next door – why wouldn't you plan a visit?

When: Monday 24 September to 7 October 2012

Opening Hours: Tuesday to Friday 10am – 5pm Saturday and Sunday 12pm – 5pm

Cost: Free

Contact: Ian Potter Museum of Art | T: +61 3 8344 5148 |

E: potter-info@unimelb.edu.au

• City of Melbourne (CoM) Graffiti in Elgin St near Swanston.



Before

After

Removal of Graffiti soon after it appears is extremely important – we commend CoM for their prompt removal of graffiti.

To report graffiti contact:

Nathan Bosnjakovic | Graffiti Management Officer | Engineering Services

City of Melbourne | Council House 1, 200 Little Collins Street Melbourne 3000 | GPO Box 1603 Melbourne 3001
T: 03 9658 9573 | M: 0457306824 | F: 03 9658 8886 | E: nathan.bosnjakovic@melbourne.vic.gov.au

Pedestrian monitoring system

The City of Melbourne's 24-hour pedestrian monitoring system (24PM) measures pedestrian activity in the central city and Docklands precincts each day.

The system comprises 18 sensors, which count pedestrian movements 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

The system gives the City of Melbourne a better understanding of how people use these precincts at different times of the day so we can manage the way they function, and plan for future needs.

Read more and access the visualisation tool at

www.pedestrian.melbourne.vic.gov.au

Neighbourhood appointment

CoM recently announced the appointment of Amy Lees to the role of Team Leader Neighbourhood Development. Amy will lead a new team of people to implement Council's future approach to neighbourhood development across the City. The Opportunities for Carlton project will remain part of Amy's portfolio in this new role.

**University Café
60th
Anniversary
in 2012**



Keep up to date with Carlton information on the Carlton Community Website : www.carlton.vic.au

• **Watts Family Shoe Store**



Watts Family Shoe Store, 1950s, the original shop next to a corner bank, corner of Grattan and Lygon Streets. The older style letter box and the hitching post were removed in the 1990s.

The Watts family has been making, selling and repairing shoes on the corner of Grattan and Lygon Streets since 1895. The grandfather of the present owner, Bob Watts, was apprenticed in that year to Mr Luttgens, a surgical shoemaker. His son Joseph then served his apprenticeship in the business, buying it from Mr Luttgens in the 1930s. Joseph's son, Bob, began his long working life in the shop in 1950, when hansom cabs were still seen in Lygon St. Continuing the tradition is Bob's son Joseph, and his three daughters, Megan, Donna and Clare. Bob Watts is proud of his children's academic attainments – all are university graduates – and of their contributions to the family business. Joseph has been an orthopaedic shoemaker in Watts for the last 20 years.

Watts Shoe Store is famous in Carlton for its distinctive window display, with a wide range of shoes set out on wooden racks. The staff say this display is more informative for the customer than the 'three shoes and a feather' style of modern window dressing. Equally renowned is its interior, unchanged since the late 1950s. Bob says the shop's appearance distinguishes it from usual run of modern shoe shops: 'People enjoy a more traditional style of shop...it's not sterile...people like the smell of leather and feel comfortable in homely surroundings'. Generations of people return for the sense of continuity provided by Watts' displays and interiors.

Watts is well known for its customer service. Ensuring that shoes fit well and suit the customer's foot is the shop's speciality. Most foot problems, Bob says, come from buying ill-fitting shoes. His advice is to ensure that shoes are long enough, with a good space at the toe. If not, there are possible health hazards because, 'if the big toe is hitting the shoe, the effects are felt through the spine'.

Apart from the retail and shoe repair side of the shop, the business includes the less visible work of surgical and bespoke shoemaking. Watts' staff visit institutions such as

nursing homes and the Kew Cottages to make specialist orthopaedic shoes for their clients. Bob says this side of the work is a very satisfying one: 'It helps a lot of people... proper shoes give people confidence to move around, so they handle their disabilities better'. Orthopaedic shoemaking is a skilled job, requiring a three year apprenticeship. At present three qualified orthopaedic shoemakers work in Watts' store – Bob, Joseph and David. The bespoke side of the work is a varied one. At different times the shop has shod marsupial, ecclesiastical and movie star customers. Watt's most unusual client is a koala, for whom they once made little boots to wear in an advertisement photo. Watts has made shoes for Cardinal Knox to wear to Rome, while Dr Mannix, Bishop Fox, and Archbishops Henschke and Head, have all had buckled episcopal shoes made to order by Watts' craftsmen. Watts' movie star clientele is equally distinguished. They have made shoes for Greta Saachi, Megan Williams, for Sigrid Thornton in *All the Rivers Run*, and for Paul Hogan films. They have made a copy of General Monash's boots for Andrew Clarke, and army boots for the troops in the *Anzacs* series.

Bob Watts has noted a number of changes in the shoe trade since he began work 62 years ago. One is that casual shoes, which are not usually re-soled or heeled, are more commonly worn. The result is that the repair side of the business is less significant. He notes there are now many more shoe shops, though 'all of them are doing the same thing'. One result of this increase, and of people's greater mobility, is that people travel to shop, and customer loyalty is not the same. Bob is sorry about this, as having known and regular customers is part of the satisfaction of the business. Longer shopping hours are also an innovation, and not one he approves of: 'People haven't got more money to spend, just more time to spend it in'.

There are only five kinds of shoe design and that all styles are variations on these prototypes. The last innovation in shoe design, in the early 1800s, was the Wellington boot. Bob himself has always chosen to wear plain black lace ups. For a wide range of wearable shoes, for a unique retail experience, and for traditional customer service, visit the Watts Corner Shoe Store, corner of Grattan and Lygon Streets Carlton, 9.00 am to 6.00 pm on weekdays, and 9.00 am to 2.00 pm on Saturdays.



Elephants visit Argyle Square