



The Carlton Residents Association
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Carlton Residents Association

28th ANNUAL REPORT for 2023

Presented at the AGM held 19 February 2024
At The Studio, Melbourne Connect

CRA is a democratic, non-party-political association acting to sustain Carlton's identity and improve its assets and liveability.

2023 CRA Committee

Martin Brennan – Vice President

Lyn Cracknell – Secretary

Marissa Doyle

Blair Healy,

Dr Les Kilmartin

Trish O'Loughlin - President

Peter Sanders

Megan Stevenson

Philip Watts - Treasurer

2023 CRA Planning Committee

Malcolm Foo

Warren Green

Blair Healy

Ewan Oglivy

Elizabeth Pearce

Dennis Toth

Peter Sanders - Convenor

From the President Trish O'Loughlin



Reflection on the achievements, challenges and general business of 2023.

Monthly meetings were held at various committee members' homes which lasted approximately an hour and a half. They were well attended despite the frequent travels of the members who joined with Zoom when and where possible.

- The CRA operates in an inclusive non- hierarchical way through a series of reference or working groups.
- There is always some overlap between working groups such as Heritage issues. The need for a close working committee is invaluable.
- Committee members are all involved in community issues between monthly meetings.

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The main areas of CRA involvement during 2024 were:

Communication – Convenor Lyn Cracknell - Newsflash & Website, Inner City News & Media. Huge thanks to Lyn for her indefatigable action in these areas.

- See Lyn's report on page 4

Community Involvement – Committee members.

“Carlton Conversations” at the Clyde Hotel. These evenings continue to be hugely successful for members and others.

The 2023 speakers were;

- March - Peter Doherty
- May - Stephen McIntyre
- September - Arnold Zable

CRA Christmas Celebration at La Mama

We were thrilled to be back at La Mama Courtyard – thanks to Caitlin Dullard and Staff. Members past and present enjoyed a beautiful evening with food prepared by Committee members, drinks at La Mama Bar and delicious delicacies donated again by Brunetti's. Raffle Prizes were donated by Committee members and Carlton Traders.

Community Involvement (continued)

Committee Members attended Community Meetings throughout the year, followed up when required and reported back to the committee on:

- The University Square Proposal,
- University of Melbourne Estate Master Plan,
- University of Melbourne sponsored Neighbourhood meetings,
- Melbourne City Council - Greening of Melbourne Proposal.
- Melbourne City Council - Parking in Carlton Review
- Melbourne City Council - Presidents meetings
- City of Melbourne's People's Panel on Affordable Housing
- Harmony Day
- Melbourne General Cemetery.
- Friends of the Queen Victoria Market.
- PCCC – Police Community Consultation. Thank you to CRA members who represent the CRA at these meetings and keep us informed. Crime and safety concerns to Carlton and other inner city areas are raised and communication with the local Police is fostered. Safety cameras are to be installed in Lygon Street. There is no indication so far about the positions proposed.
- Faraday Street Toilet – Huge thanks to Ian Bird for never giving up on this one.

Planning Working Group Convenor – Peter Sanders

Another challenging, active and ultimately very successful year for the Planning Committee. Particularly thrilling was the victorious success at VCAT for the old Cancer Council building.

- See Peter's report page 5

Traffic, Transport, Parking and Noise Pollution

Convenors – Peter Sanders, Martin Brennan and other members as appropriate.

- See Peter's Report on Page 5

Planning and Mobility. e-scooters, e-bikes

Royal Exhibition Building and Carlton Gardens Convenors Trish O'Loughlin & Martin Brennan

- Friends of the Carlton Gardens – See Trish's Report on Page 5

Melbourne International Flower and Garden Show

(MIFGS) See Martin's letter to MCC on page 7

Finance & Membership Convenor – Philip Watts

- See Philip's Report presented separately

REPORTS 2023

COMMUNICATION

The Newsflash:

Newsflash was published for March, June, September and December in 2023. Mary Healy has continued to proof read the copy, her contribution is most appreciated.

Each edition has featured a view of Carlton – if you have a photo you think might be appropriate for the front page, usually best in portrait layout, please email it to:

carltonresidents@gmail.com

Copies are emailed to CRA members, politicians, inner city resident groups and other interested parties. Printed copies are distributed to politicians (Local, State and Federal) and to those who request one. Please email: carltonresidents@gmail.com if you are receiving a printed copy and do not wish to or if you would like to receive a printed copy in the future.

The aim is to inform all those with an interest in Carlton about CRA activities and events in the area. Past editions are available in the archive at:

<https://www.carltonresidents.org.au/cra-2012/newsflash-archive-3/>

The Website:

The CRA website provides information for you to stay informed about the work of CRA and broader aspects of life in Carlton. It also provides an archive of activities and past projects.

The site menu:-

Home Page: Current News and Events

About Us: About CRA, How CRA Works – Working, Associated and Support Groups Meetings, (includes committee members and reports), Achievements

News: The Newsflash – copies back to 2002, indexed from 2004

Events: Community Events that have been significant

Living in Carlton: useful and interesting information

Join Us:

Contact us:

The Working Group page hosts Parkland and Streetscapes; Planning: information is found on planning applications, CRA objections and VCAT appeals; Heritage information is also available from here, along with Traffic, Transport Parking and Noise Abatement.

Take some time to become familiar with our website.

Members are invited to comment or make suggestions regarding any of the above.

Please do so using the carltonresidents@gmail.com email address.

eflash: published incidentally to inform of coming events.

Inner City News: CRA – has worked towards contributing a column or comment to each monthly edition, in order to inform the wider community of CRA interests and activities.

Lyn Cracknell

PLANNING WORKING GROUP.

CRA Planning Group

1-23 Rathdowne Street - The highlight of the year was the permit application appeal to VCAT in relation to this site. VCAT refused to grant a permit. Will the applicant re-apply?

Clyde hotel - CRA have objected to their application for extended trading hours and additional patron allowances.

King and Godfrey - A similar application to the above. CRA objected and CoM have determined to grant a permit with conditions. We have not decided whether to appeal to VCAT.

El Giza – CRA submitted an objection to the application for an extension to the liquor trading hours. The application was refused.

TRAFFIC, TRANSPORT, PARKING & NOISE POLLUTION.

CRA Mobility Plan

Grattan Street changes - CRA supports the proposed changes to Grattan Street including reduced traffic lanes and improved bicycle lanes and pedestrian access.

We are insisting that Queensberry Street traffic be reduced to the former levels when Grattan Street is reopened. We await plans for Grattan Street between Bouverie Street and Royal Parade that runs through the University of Melbourne Estate Plan area.

We are pushing City of Melbourne to formulate an acceptable e-scooter policy.

ROYAL EXHIBITION BUILDING & CARLTON GARDENS.

CRA Report from the Friends of Royal Exhibition Building and Carlton Gardens – (FREBCG)

WORLD HERITAGE DOES MATTER

This National Treasure deserves to be carefully managed, protected and preserved under one Governing Body only.

The CRA has been part of the Royal Exhibition Building and Carlton Gardens Review which began in 2020 when the world Heritage Steering Committee sought feedback on how the plan could be improved. Why we review? Because in accordance of the requirements of the *Heritage Act 2017* every seven years the World Heritage Management plan for the Royal Exhibition Building and Carlton Gardens is reviewed. Now after four years of reviews and planning we are still waiting to get approval from the minister for planning.

[Read more at Engage Victoria](#)

The **Royal Exhibition Building** is managed by the Victorian Government through Museums Victoria.

The City of Melbourne manages the **Carlton Gardens**.

(However, the Museum manages part of what is known as the Carlton Gardens).

What we want:**An Independent Statuary Authority responsible for the management of the World Heritage site and the Buffer Zone.**

Our plan in 2024 is to continue to lobby the different bodies who manage the Gardens on the importance of the Heritage Carlton Gardens and especially the importance of preserving the trees.

We will continue to voice our other concerns regarding:

- Our concern that the Melbourne City Council has given the Garden Show a three year lease, seemingly without consulting any other governing bodies such as Heritage Victoria or the Heritage Council.
- The trees are suffering badly - despite care by the gardeners and adequate water. Why is this happening?
- The disregard for the Wildlife of the Gardens - thus wrecking the delicate ecosystem.
- The damage from heavy equipment, huge vehicles and concrete blocks which damage the trees and lawn each year.
- Huge fences which are put up weeks before and after - cutting out the public from using the Gardens.
- In the last 12 years especially, the population of the area surrounding the gardens has increased exponentially. People use the Gardens not only for walking, running, get fit classes, escaping the heat of the city and weddings but also for leisure gatherings - every day - not just weekends.



I want to acknowledge Margaret O'Brien's continued support and involvement and urge everyone to read her recent Application.

MARGARET O'BRIEN'S APPLICATION re
MIFGS Jan 2024

Re: Application for MIFGS 2023 to be held in
the World Heritage REB and Carlton Gardens,
Carlton. P3851

This will be added to the CRA website when
available

[Fiona Bell of PPL also made a submission
which is also well worth reading.](#)

Trish O'Loughlin

A leaning elm on the east side of the gardens

Proposal presented to City of Melbourne regarding the Garden and Flower Show – Martin Brennan

Proposal to evaluate the current venue (Carlton Gardens) for the Melbourne International Flower and Garden Show and to consider an alternative venue (Birrarung Marr) following the conclusion of the current contract in 2026.

Background

In 2004 the Royal Exhibition Building and Carlton Gardens was included on the National Heritage List under the Commonwealth Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 and on the State Heritage Register of Victoria in 1998 under the Heritage Act 1995. The listing requires that any proposed use inside or outside the boundaries of a National Heritage or a World Heritage Property that has an impact on the heritage values is not permissible under the Heritage Act 1995 or without the approval of the Federal Minister.

In 1996 the City of Melbourne as the Committee of Management for Carlton Gardens issued a licence to Melbourne International Flower and Garden Show Ltd to conduct the show in the Carlton Gardens. This was to be an international show that would attract visitors from across Victoria, Australia and beyond to Melbourne to enjoy the role of flowers and gardens in our lives and spend time in the City and the State. However the MIFGS has attracted only around 100,000 paying customers over 5 days each year and its pull and positioning of Melbourne and Victoria has not been reflected in the impact as was promised.

The MIFGS occupies a large section of the southern section of the Carlton Gardens and requires for set up and staging purposes this area of the Gardens being closed to the general public for 2 to 3 weeks plus the 5 days of the Show. The closure of the gardens make it difficult for those who traverse the Gardens on their way to and from the City and also children often with their parents who make their way to and from the two adjacent schools. The closure also impacts on those who spend time relaxing and enjoying the ambience of the garden environment 7 days a week. This is a high price for users of the Gardens to pay for the commercial use of the Carlton Gardens.

The repair to the Carlton Gardens following the heavy traffic of bumping in and out of the exhibitors and those who visit the Show has according to the Council provided 'no evidence of long term damage'. However many would argue that the impact in the short term is observable in the form of long term scarring of the lawns and the long term damage is arguable.

In September 2022 a 3 year licence was granted to MIFGS (2024 – 2026) with 3 year option (2027 – 2029) by mutual agreement. As reported in the Inner City News (September, 2022) under the headline, 'Flower and Garden Show issued new licence for Carlton Gardens, but heritage concerns remain', the article stated 'City of Melbourne councillors have given the all clear for the Melbourne International Flower and Garden Show (MIFGS) to continue to be held in Carlton Gardens despite continued concerns from heritage groups over the event's "damaging impact" on the World Heritage-listed site'.

Proposal

The Carlton Residents Association believes that following three decades of locating the MIFGS in the Carlton Gardens it is time for to consult on the future of the MIFGS and provide an evaluation of the short and long term impact of the use of the Carlton Gardens as a venue and how the City of Melbourne can gain additional value from the hosting the MIFGS in the future.

This should include the added value in terms of audience reach and City trader buy in that could be derived by staging the MIFGS in a central city location such as Birrarung Marr, a purposebuilt event

venue, the leveraging of the MIFGS into a 14 day festival, and the refocusing of the MIFGS on Greenline and its staging posts including Federation Square.

We therefore believe that there is an arguable case for the Melbourne City Council to give consideration to relocating the MIFGS to Birrarung Marr. The CRA has identified a number of advantages that we believe the Council and the community and stakeholders should consider in an appraisal of the current location and a relocation of the MIFGS..

In 2002 the City Council established Birrarung Marr as an urban park on the north bank of the Yarra River, next to Federation Square as a place for community and to celebrate public activities, major events, and festivals. It is the first public space in the City to be created for over a century and holds a special place in the indigenous history of Melbourne located on the lands of the Wurundjeri of the Kulin Nation. In the 2018 Masterplan it was estimated that some 4.6 million visitors annually visit Birrarung Marr with 90% coming from metro Melbourne and across Victoria and interstate. The planned Greenline project along the northern banks of the Yarra will extend from Birrarung Marr to the Bolte Bridge. It's a green infrastructure intervention that will add to the City of Melbourne's credentials as a liveable and sustainable city. It follows that existing and proposed developments along the northern banks of the Yarra will be enhanced by the Greenline including Federation Square which will be activated as a focal point for the City to display, celebrate its past, present and future.

The opportunity to move the MIFGS from Carlton Gardens to Birrarung Marr and the centre of the city will enhance its status both nationally and internationally. The MIFGS could be expanded into a 14 day 'Festival of Flowers' that would increase both participants and audience and place the City of Melbourne at the epicentre of the international greening cities movement. A 'Festival of Flowers' would extend from Birrarung Marr along Greenline and be celebrated at Federation Square in a Community Gardens display bringing those from across Melbourne in an exhibition and promotion of gardening for food and health. It would allow city based businesses, in the retail and hospitality sectors, to promote their venues with flower displays and green produce and could culminate in a 'Blooming Ball' at the Melbourne Town Hall. There are many opportunities to be gained from a venue move to Birrarung Marr in 2026.

This is an opportunity needing to be explored.

2024 CRA Planned Areas of Engagement

- Grattan St. - opening date? , bike lanes
- Queensberry St. - opening date? , bike lanes
- Melbourne University Estate Plan
- Pelham Street proposal.
- Heritage issues re Planning, Carlton Gardens, Flower & Garden Show
- Melbourne General Cemetery connection
- Rent rises, affordable housing & Social Housing issues.
- Carlton Conversations
- Carlton History Walks
- Continued involvement with other resident groups
- Continued involvement with Melbourne City Council re Greening of Melbourne
- Parklands, Street scapes, Graffiti,
- Mobility Issues

Report prepared by Trish O'Loughlin.