

# Life

honour  
celebrate

SMCT NEWS UPDATE AUTUMN EDITION 2019



Our Florists offer beautiful fresh flowers and floral arrangements



Shane Delia from Maha and Melbourne Food and Wine Festival come to Melbourne General Cemetery



Latin for 'life and flowers', Café Vita et Flores serves its own wine range and a seasonally inspired menu

## NURTURING YOUR HEART AND SOUL

Our organisation has a uniqueness that nurtures the heart and soul. In this autumn edition of "Life" we will unpack how and why we do this.

I remember my mother inquiring - how does this make you feel? It is a question that goes straight to the heart and emotionally re-connects you with the essence of who you are and where you have been on life's journey.

Our organisation connects with the Victorian community in a number of ways: through the tours and talks that we give; through the publications that we write; The Centre for Care and Wellbeing that provides spiritual and emotional nurturing; and in many cases the offering and human connection through our food, beverages and when words cannot express your feelings - our beautiful flowers say it all.

We are honoured to partner with Shane Delia the amazing Chef from Maha on the 8th of March 2019 to celebrate the essence of our multicultural community through food

and learning about Melbourne's fascinating culinary past. Hosted at Melbourne General Cemetery, a place of great pride for all Victorians, we explore how glorious food connects, supports, nurtures and demonstrates love to our community.

Our team of florists are working closely with our mechanics, our gardeners, and our marketing and digital team and are entering a major floral display at the Melbourne Flower & Garden Show from the 27th – 31st March. The theme is centred around honouring and celebrating life, the importance of flowers the season of growth and how a floral embrace symbolises this miraculous thing we call life and love.

Our Café and Florist at Springvale is open 365 days of the year and offers nourishment for the body and soul. Our team provides heartfelt service that demonstrates care and compassion.

We are thrilled to announce that we are enhancing our Café offering; a newly designed Café Bar and takeaway home-made meals.

*Let food be thy medicine and medicine be thy food.* – Hippocrates

This edition of Life focuses on nurturing – nurturing each other, our community, our surrounds and most importantly ourselves. As we start this New Year together, on behalf of the team at SMCT we welcome you to 2019 and look forward to caring for you – the Victorian community.

Jane Grover  
SMCT  
CEO



Sue Renkin  
SMCT  
Trust Chairman



# THE YEAR AHEAD

## WELCOMING JOY, IDEAS AND FOCUS

A few short months ago, we welcomed in the New Year. For some in our community this is a time for a fresh start, a line in the sand that helps us separate trials of the previous year and for others, the mark in the calendar is less significant as themes from days gone by continue to weave themselves into our present time.

The year ahead will undoubtedly bring us new challenges, joy and ideas for focus. At SMCT we are deeply connected with the United Nations declaring 2019 as the International Year of Indigenous Languages.

An International Year is an important mechanism dedicated to raising awareness of a topic or theme of global interest or concern.

As reported on the UN website:

*“40 per cent of the estimated 6,700 languages spoken around the world were in danger of disappearing. The fact that most of these are indigenous languages puts the cultures and knowledge systems to which they belong at risk. In addition, indigenous peoples are often isolated both politically and socially in the countries they live in, by the geographical location of their communities, their separate histories, cultures, languages and traditions”*

Australia will have a rich connection with this International Year declaration and we are one of six countries on the steering committee. SMCT feel a strong connection with this theme.

The guiding principles of involvement, human rights, geographical balance, gender equality and disability inclusiveness resonates strongly with our value and purpose driven organisation

This year also hopes to foster and promote unique local cultures, customs and values – objectives that resonate strongly with SMCT’s vision. Celebrating the rich tapestry of cultural diversity makes our world a better place and we are proud to honour the uniqueness of each Australian’s homeland.

We look forward to observing the UN International Year of Indigenous Languages.



The Centre for Care and Wellbeing - Bianca Graham and Dianne Lee after Bianca’s heartwarming community talk



The Centre for Care and Wellbeing Celebrates



Torres Strait Island Community Member - Bianca Graham @ CCW second birthday



Community Garden @ Springvale Botanical Cemetery



Community Members @ Springvale Botanical Cemetery



Decorating Stars @ Springvale Botanical Cemetery

# NURTURE

## FOOD GLORIOUS FOOD

As our CEO Jane eluded to in her opening article, SMCT are very proud to be hosting a Melbourne Food and Wine Festival event at Melbourne General Cemetery on Friday March 8th. This event is the culmination of many months of work and showcases to our community the importance of food.

Food in bringing people together is dear to the heart of our organisation. Every day we see people say farewell to a loved one and connect over shared plates. Food is nurturing, enjoyable and necessary to sustain life.

The event will commence in the iconic MGC Gatehouse. From there we will be guided through a fascinating tour of some of Melbourne's most notable foodies. We will discover people from the market, wine and restaurant scene, all of which we owe a huge thanks, given we all today enjoy the world class food scene that is contemporary Melbourne.

Our ambassador for the night is none other than Shane Delia, who has curated a menu along a Mediterranean theme, richly in line with our early foodie creators and we invite you to join us on this amazing journey.

SMCT connects to the Melbourne Food and Wine festival as a way of reminding our community that we take our promise of looking after those you have loved very seriously and just as importantly, we also make a promise to look after those who did the loving as well.

***Tickets for the event are available through <http://www.melbournefoodandwine.com.au/program/shane-delias-homage-to-melbournes-culinary-pioneers-7208> or call (03) 8523 1617.***



Shane Delia of Maha creates delightful canapes for our 'culinary past' tour



SMCT - Paul Boyco, Maha's Shane Delia, SMCT CEO Jane Grover and Cafe Vita et Flores' Patty Kelly

# LOVE

## REMEMBERING OUR MOTHERS

There is no doubt that the bond between Mother and Child can be a very unique connection. And as we approach Mother's day 2019, mixed emotions will be felt in our community. To say 'I lost my mum' out loud puts you in a club that you probably never wanted to join. Losing such a significant physical relationship brings change in routine and tradition. Places

can look different, moments have different meaning, symbols change and a new normal emerges.

On Thursday 9th May, SMCT will hold a remembrance service at Bunurong Memorial Park in honour of the mother's we have lost. The day is provided free and is our way of helping our community to reflect and remember the dear life that gave

us ours. The service is one of the most significant in the SMCT calendar and exists for the wellbeing of our community as they journey through grief.

***For further information, please visit <http://smct.org.au/SMCT-New-Media-Events/>***



A selection of images from the 2018 Mother's Day Remembrance Service at Bunurong Memorial Park

## “WHERE FLOWERS BLOOM, SO DOES HOPE” LADY BIRD JOHNSON

The Southern Metropolitan Cemeteries Trust is proud to announce their acceptance into the Melbourne International Flower and Garden Show 2019 program.

Our amazing team of florists, builders, designers and marketers have been working feverishly to bring to you a design worthy of a showcase event entry.

We will be telling the story of celebrating and honouring life and hope you can pop by for a visit and see this amazing work. Our team will be on site to answer any questions you may have, however if you cannot make it, please visit us at either Springvale Botanical Cemetery or Bunurong Memorial Park. We wish our team the best of luck

Melbourne International Flower and Garden Show runs from 27th – 31st March.

[www.melbflowershow.com.au](http://www.melbflowershow.com.au)



SMCT Melbourne Flower and Garden Show Gold Medal Winner 2017

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# GRIEVE WELL

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We often hear in the corridors of our organisation, a little saying “grieve well, live well, love well”. It is a statement that captures our imaginations as it is not often in society that we see or hear the words ‘grieve’ and ‘well’ placed side by side. When we look at the statement end to end, what we love about its intent, is the light it creates and the permission it gives us.

In sharing how this may be a concept of value to our community with a friend of SMCT, we were told the story of Audrey and John and Springvale Botanical Cemetery. With kindness, both have granted permission for us to publish this story. The below is an excerpt from an article Audrey has written to mark a special occasion.

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*I sit by the grave in quiet grief. The peace and tranquillity of this verdant botanical cemetery envelops me like a cocoon. Its serenity is like a healing balm, as I mourn the sudden demise of my only child. I can hardly come to terms with this tragic loss. Thrust upon the cycle of grief, I am angry - why me?*

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*“I feel for you,”* says a voice softly, yet strong with compassion. It startles me out of my reverie. I am ill-disposed to being civil at the intrusion, but manage a polite *“Thank you.”*

My visit to the cemetery is a daily ritual. One morning, as I approach the grave, I notice a beautiful orchid on the tombstone. I am completely overwhelmed with emotion that someone – perhaps a stranger – did such a beautiful gesture. Tears cascaded unabated down my cheeks. I look around. No one is in the vicinity. I notice, however, that a grave nearby has a similar orchid.

Weeks later, as I take a short cut through the cemetery, I notice a man sitting near a grave quite close to where my child is buried. I stop the car. I get out and walk up to him.

*“Did you put the orchid on my child’s grave?”* I ask softly. *“Yes,”* he answers. *“I am deeply touched by your kindness,”* I say humbly and leave.

On two further occasions, we exchange pleasantries - two very lonely

souls from different walks of life.

It’s raining heavily. Umbrella in hand, I am about to leave the cemetery. He is just arriving. He stops me at the rotunda. Our conversation centres on our loved ones. We cry and it’s such a comforting relief.

It’s Father’s Day. I am sitting by my child’s grave when he approaches me. He looks very debonair in a brightly coloured jumper. *“Will you have a coffee with me?”* he asks. *“Yes, thank you”* I respond. I don’t know why I accept his invitation - perhaps it is meant to be. *“I’ll catch up with you later.”* *“First, I want to visit my father’s grave,”* I say. We confirm the venue and he leaves.

Forty minutes later, coffee invitation all but forgotten, I race to the venue. The stranger was still waiting.

Today, ten years later, we have formed a delightful partnership of love and companionship.

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We sincerely thank Audrey and John for sharing this beautiful story with us.

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# SUPPORT

## CONNECTIONS FOR OUR COMMUNITY

In April 2019, SMCT will be launching a new website. This new site is the culmination of eighteen months work and aims to deliver easier access to the information you need.

The website will provide support for people pre-planning and for those who need immediate advice. It will be the central point for community event information, tours, products, check lists and contact details and searches to name a few features.

We would like to invite your contribution. If you would like to share your story and connection with one of our cemeteries, café, events or wider organisation we would love to hear from you.



SMCT New Website coming May 2019

Please send your story to [stories@smct.org.au](mailto:stories@smct.org.au) and we will be in touch to discuss.

## FORTHCOMING EVENTS AT SMCT LOCATIONS

EVENT	DATE AND LOCATION	ABOUT
Melbourne Food & Wine Festival	Friday 8 March Melbourne General Cemetery	An event where guests can explore the hidden history of Melbourne's culinary past. A fascinating cultural tour with stops at notable grave sites along the way, with Mediterranean cuisine and jazz music
Melbourne International Flower & Garden Show	March 27 – March 31 Royal Exhibition Building & Carlton Gardens	The smell of freshly cut grass and bursting blooms will scent the Melbourne air once again for the 24th annual Show, hosted in the exquisite heritage listed Royal Exhibition Building and Carlton Gardens over five glorious Autumn days. Featuring the best landscape and floral talent from Australia and around the world alongside an extensive array of garden retail products, the Show is a celebration of lifestyle and our great outdoors.
Ching Ming Festival	Sunday 31 March 10:30am-12:00pm Springvale Botanical Cemetery Song He Yuan	Annual event at which members of Melbourne's Chinese Buddhist community gather at the cemetery to pray for their departed loved ones. Transfer of Merits - Di Zhang Wang Temple – 10:30am-11:30am
Mother's Day Remembrance Service	Thursday 9 May 7:00pm	Annual event attended by 200+ members of local community to honour their mothers.
Rose Pruning Demonstrations	13 May – 17 May at Springvale Botanical Cemetery 20 May – 24 May at Bunurong Memorial Park	Annual series of activities to connect with rose lovers and garden enthusiasts to showcase our unmatched rose gardens.

For further information about SMCT events visit [smct.org.au](http://smct.org.au)



**SOUTHERN  
METROPOLITAN**  
CEMETERIES TRUST

Honouring and celebrating life

The Southern Metropolitan Cemeteries Trust is a not for profit, community based organisation that cares for Bunurong and Cheltenham Memorial Parks, and Brighton General, Cheltenham Pioneer, Dandenong Community, Melbourne General, Springvale Botanical, Sorrento Community and St Kilda cemeteries.

Telephone (03) 9546 9377

600 Princes Highway Springvale – PO Box 1159, Clayton Vic 3169

Website [www.smct.org.au](http://www.smct.org.au) Email [enquiries@smct.org.au](mailto:enquiries@smct.org.au)