

Life

honour
celebrate

SMCT NEWS UPDATE WINTER EDITION 2018



Patty Holten, Director – People, Capability & Change, Sue Renkin, SMCT Trust - Chairman, Angela Uilderks, Director – Customer Experience & Operations and Jane Grover, CEO SMCT



Jane Grover, CEO SMCT and the Most Reverend, Bishop Terence Curtin DD at the official opening of Saint Michael the Archangel Mausoleum



Rolf Stok, SMCT Head Rosarian and family at Springvale Botanical Cemetery for daughter Kandis' wedding

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN AND CEO – OLD WAYS WON'T OPEN NEW DOORS

We are dedicated to creating unique experiences and work in partnership with our surrounds to support the living throughout their grief journey. Whether it is through our reflection spaces, natural environment or our food offering, we believe in providing meaningful service.

With this in mind, I wanted to share our organisation's new vision:

Our beautiful, iconic locations empower all communities to honour and celebrate life. We support the living throughout their grief journey, through our innovative approach of personalised care and compassion.

Our vision articulates our aspirations; the importance of practical care, authentic compassion and the respectful contemporary service our team provides to the Victorian community – all clearly focused on meaningful support of the living.

The journey our vision will take us on puts me in mind of an exchange between Alice and the Cheshire Cat from *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* by Lewis Carroll. When Alice asks for directions, the Cheshire Cat gives an insightful response to someone not sure which way to go:

"Would you tell me please which way I

ought to go from here?"

"That depends a good deal on where you want to get to," said the Cat.

"I don't care much where –"

"Then it doesn't matter which way you go."

Our vision has directed us through our changing environment over the past few years. As we have become more curious as an organisation, new concepts have shaped our strategic thinking, our role in the community, and our understanding of who we are and who we need to become to serve our families better.

It is not what we say but how we demonstrate our care to the Victorian Community that makes our words and actions fitting with our PURPOSE.

SMCT Trust members and the Leadership Team are often asking, "What's next?" being mindful of the importance of remaining curious whilst having clear strategic objectives. Our Centre for Care & Wellbeing, cafés and florists, curated sculptures and poetry throughout our locations, historical tours and events, and of course 'food glorious food' are all outcomes of being curious and having a roadmap that reflects what we have heard

from our Victorian community. It's about offering you choice...we can even arrange an Alice in Wonderland tea party!

Our *Life* newsletter has a firm focus on warmth and the delicious offerings of our cafés and functions rooms. Our doors are open and ready to make your winter visits feel brighter. This may seem like a paradox, but it helps to remember that when times appear darker; no winter lasts forever; no spring skips its return. So, please enjoy our food focused edition and know how this important offering contributes to your emotional wellbeing through our care, love and support.

Jane Grover
SMCT
CEO



Sue Renkin
SMCT
Trust Chairman



GLORIOUS FOOD & FLOWERS

LIFE AT CAFÉ VITA ET FLORES

On an average day, our Food and Beverage and Florist teams can serve upwards of 2,000 customers, prepare over 10,000 servings of food and over 2,000 points of sandwiches!



“I love giving back to our community through the care I give them.” – Emily

“My food idol is my mother, she taught me how to cook Chinese food and she makes the best dumplings!” – Jerry



“I feel inspired coming into work knowing I will be helping people” – Shelley

Whether it's the ritual of saying a final goodbye, enjoying a catch up with friends or choosing just the right bouquet of flowers to brighten someone's day, helping members of our community in our service DNA.

“My passion for flowers began from an early age with the care I took of my grandmother's immaculate hyacinths...I was the only grandchild who didn't trample her garden!” – Vicki



“I do really like that we are the last leg of someone celebrating the life of their loved one, if we can provide good food and good hospitality during a not so good time then that makes me happy” – Paddy


Café Vita
et flores

We couldn't think of anyone better than the Café Vita et flores team to describe in their own words what inspires their passion for delivering their very best every day.



“Being a part of a community filled with love and compassion who put customers' best interest first is something I'm so grateful to be a part of” – Lily

“I'm inspired by my team and my manager every day as we work together to satisfy our customers” – Vicki



“What I love best about my work is knowing that when our guests get a nice dish it might help them feel better at a sad moment” – Jerry

COMMUNITY AT THE HEART

BUNURONG FINDS URBAN GOLD

Bunurong Memorial Park has won gold in the Urban Design category of the Driven x Design, Melbourne Design Awards.

The award celebrates the creativity and innovation in the process of designing and shaping what a modern memorial park can be. Bunurong was acknowledged for making connections between people and places, nature and urban form.

SMCT consulted closely with community stakeholders before working with BVN and ASPECT Studios on the implementation of a new type of cemetery complex unseen in Australia.

The creation of Bunurong's series of buildings and gardens encapsulate a deep reflection of place and provides adaptive uses for the diverse communities.



This has been realised within one year of operation with weddings, training seminars, informal group gatherings, individual visits, functions and other celebratory occasions being organised alongside funerals and memorial services.

Jane Grover, CEO SMCT said, "We are delighted by the recognition of Bunurong Memorial Park as a safe

haven for everyday life activities as much as celebrating life and death. It is a place for reflection, solace, gathering and celebration for our varied and broad community.

Bunurong changes the notion of a cemetery as something associated with margins of life to a mainstream destination for south-east Melbourne."

WE REMEMBER OUR MOTHERS AT BUNURONG

On Thursday 10 May, our Mother's Day Remembrance Service was held at Bunurong Memorial Park. The moving service offered over 200 community members some tender moments of reflection about the incredible role mothers play in our lives. We would like to thank our event partner, Templeton Family Funerals, for their care and compassion throughout the service and leading up to this meaningful event honouring mothers.

Celebrant, Lyn Pallsey led the evening's moving service

which was designed to be a stepping-stone in the journey to healing. The service gave community members the opportunity to reflect on cherished memories. Families created messages, lit candles and shared an evening with others.

The theme for the evening was 'high-tea' and included colourful flowers sitting in teacups, which were symbolic of enjoying precious moments together with loved ones over a cup of tea.



PRESERVING CULTURE

SAINT MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL MAUSOLEUM OFFICIALLY OPEN

On Thursday 17 May, the beautiful Saint Michael the Archangel Mausoleum at Melbourne General Cemetery was officially opened and blessed by the Most Reverend, Bishop Terence Curtin DD. Over 100 members of the community enjoyed the service alongside SMCT Trust members, CEO Jane Grover and representatives from Webb Plus Designs and Allmore Construction.

Jane paid tribute to Italian heritage in her closing speech and said, "Here, in the heart of Carlton, the hard work and perseverance of migrant Italian families can be seen in every aspect of this vibrant location. From the famous Borsari sign that lights up Lygon Street to Toto's Café, this city's food, retail and manufacturing industries owe much to the enriching influence and the strong identity of its Italian families. We continue our commitment to preserving Italian culture and customs to this

day, with this wonderful mausoleum; the final one to be constructed at this iconic location.

Respect for Italian traditions remained at the forefront across all phases of planning, design and construction. From the 19th century, to the present and well into the future, we are proud to be offering our Italian community such

a significant and culturally meaningful space to honour and celebrate the lives of the loved ones entrusted to our care."

For further information on the Saint Michael the Archangel Mausoleum please go to mgc.smct.org.au/NewMausoleumMelbourne or call 1300 058 901.



Sue Renkin, SMCT - Trust Chairman, Leigh Mackay - SMCT Trust Member, the Most Reverend, Bishop Terence Curtin DD, Philip Davies - SMCT Trust member, Julie Busch - SMCT Trust Member, Jane Grover - CEO SMCT, Brian Oates - SMCT Trust Member, Simon Webb - Webb+ Architects



The Most Reverend, Bishop Terence Curtin DD, with devoted community member.



Members of the community with Jane Grover, CEO SMCT



Italian community connecting through tradition



Community connected through heritage during official blessing



The Most Reverend, Bishop Terence Curtin DD blessing the commemorative statue of Saint Michael the Archangel



The Most Reverend, Bishop Terence Curtin DD during the official blessing

WEDDING OF THE YEAR AT SPRINGVALE

When SMCT Head Rosarian, Rolfe Stok's daughter and her fiancé were looking for a venue to host their wedding, Springvale Botanical Cemetery quickly became Kandis and Nathan's preferred choice.

The couple were able to source their flowers, stunning bridal bouquet,



One of many photos taken at the Garden of No Distant Place

and seated reception from our very own Café Vita et flores and Clarence Reardon Centre function rooms. The beautiful Gardens were the perfect backdrop for their photos.

Rolfe, as always, kept a close eye on the roses and gardens in the lead up to the big day.



Flowers arranged by Café Vita et flores

"Kandis and Nathan enjoyed their day knowing that everything was taken care of. The set-up of the venue and service by the staff ensured the guests loved the event." Rolfe proudly expressed.

Congratulations Kandis and Nathan.

**Image credits: Bright Light Weddings*



Guests enjoying the reception held at the Clarence Reardon Centre function rooms



Function rooms at the Clarence Reardon Centre set up and ready for wedding reception



Happy couple during a quiet moment at Song He Yuan



Reception catered and held at the Clarence Reardon Centre function rooms

VALE POLIXENI PAPAPETROU

The SMCT community was saddened to hear of the death of Melbourne Photographic Artist, Polixeni Papapetrou, on Wednesday 11 April. Our heartfelt condolences go out to her family and friends.

We feel thankful to have been witnesses to Polixeni's talent over the years, particularly through her connection with Melbourne General Cemetery. From her mid-80's portraits of Elvis fans paying homage at his memorial, to more recent works depicting the cycle of life, Polixeni's work captured such complex and difficult themes as

identity, belonging and mortality.

We will miss her talent, but more importantly, her warmth and generosity of spirit which was evident when she took time for a personal conversation with us late last year.

This loss is best described by Polixeni's husband, Robert Nelson, "Polixeni left, nothing to do or be said, but a sorrowful emptiness now that she's dead."

We are honoured to continue Polixeni's legacy by continuing to showcase her work through our blog honouringlife.smct.org.au



Portrait of Polixeni Papapetrou and Lexie:
© Robert Nelson

VICTORIAN HONOUR ROLL OF WOMEN AWARDED TO MAHA

We were delighted to hear that Leading Senior Constable Maha Sukkar, Multicultural Liaison Officer with Victoria Police, was awarded a Victorian Honour Roll of Women Award. As a former member of SMCT's Community Advisory Committee, we have firsthand experience of Maha's dedication to service in a multicultural community. Maha was recognised for her commitment to promoting cross-cultural understanding to better serve the needs of the Victorian

community. This award adds to the many achievements of Maha's career, including being the first Muslim policewoman in Victoria to wear a hijab, challenging stereotypes and setting a trailblazing example for police forces around the world.

In 2009, Maha was named Australian Muslim Women of the Year, in 2010, she was awarded the Australasian Council for Women and Policing Bravery Award. She is the founder and president of the Victoria Police Muslim Association (VPMA), the first police



Leading Senior Constable Maha Sukkar

association of its kind in Australia.

Maha is dedicated to creating a Victoria where everyone feels welcome and safe and we congratulate her on the well-deserved recognition of her efforts within our community.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS AT SMCT LOCATIONS

EVENT	DATE	LOCATION
Free Italian Carlton Bus Tours	Monday 18 June, 10.00am Wednesday 20 June, 10.00am Monday 25 June, 10.00am (visit mgc.org.au for more information)	Melbourne General Cemetery
Historical Day Tours	Wednesday 13 June, 10.30am Wednesday 11 July, 10.30am Wednesday 8 August, 10.30am	Melbourne General Cemetery
The Conversation Project	Part 1: Wednesday 6 June, 10.30am Part 2: Thursday 21 June, 1.30pm	The Centre for Care & Wellbeing at Springvale Botanical Cemetery
Write your Bucket-List and Life Letters	Tuesday 12 June, 1.00pm	The Centre for Care & Wellbeing at Springvale Botanical Cemetery
Bus Tour of Springvale Botanical Cemetery with Free Lunch	Tuesday 19 June, 10.30am Monday 6 August, 10.30am	Springvale Botanical Cemetery
MYLifebook - Getting Started, Story Telling	Thursday, 19 July, 2.00pm	The Centre for Care & Wellbeing at Springvale Botanical Cemetery
Open House Melbourne	Saturday and Sunday 28 - 29 July, 10.00am - 4.00pm	Melbourne General Cemetery
Living and Dying Well – An Opportunity to Learn, Contemplate and Value Life	Tuesday 31 July, 2.00pm	Springvale Botanical Cemetery
Advance Care Planning - Let's Get Started	Thursday 9 August, 10.30am	The Centre for Care & Wellbeing at Springvale Botanical Cemetery
Vanitas - in partnership with Melbourne Writers Festival	Saturday and Sunday 25 - 26 August Saturday and Sunday 1 - 2 September	Melbourne General Cemetery
Father's Day Remembrance Service	Thursday 30 August, 7.00pm	Bunurong Memorial Park

For further information about SMCT events visit 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 and St Kilda cemeteries.

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