



NORTH MELBOURNE ASSOCIATION

"For those who live or work in North and West Melbourne"

P.O. Box 102

North Melbourne 3051

HISTORY OF THE NORTH MELBOURNE ASSOCIATION :

1966 - 1982

BY RUTH
CROW

What Would Happen Without the N. M. A?

The North Melbourne Association is now sixteen years old. It is not possible to exactly measure the effectiveness of urban action groups such as the N.M.A.; but this sketchy history shows how, over the years, members have tried to carry out the original aims of the Association.

These were

1. "To initiate and, where necessary, implement action which will assist the integration, development and/or the advancement of the communal well-being of the residents of North and West Melbourne.
2. To encourage such activities as are likely to help the people of North and West Melbourne to become constructively involved in matters affecting their life and work.
3. To provide effective means of approaching State, Municipal and/or other public authorities and instrumentalities.
4. To co-operate with others, both inside and outside North Melbourne and West Melbourne, who have similar aims and interests."

A L T E R N A T I V E S:

During the past sixteen years the Association has found that one of the most effective ways of campaigning against a "wrong" is to carefully work out an alternative. Thus the N.M.A. does not campaign in a negative way.

Our alternatives have sometimes been presented as publications . . . for example, "Happy Valley" (Lothian Street Redevelopment Scheme) 1969: Preschool Education in North and West Melbourne 1972: Citizen's Action Plan for North and West Melbourne (C.A.N. Report) 1973: Less Energy . . . More Enjoyment in North and West Melbourne 1981. (Some of these reports are available for reference in the North Melbourne Library).

SIX MAIN STREAMS OF ACTIVITY:

Scanning this history of activities will indicate that there have been six main broad streams of activity. These are . . .

1. Campaigns around Education; Welfare, Recreation, and so on: For example, since right back in 1969 the Association has been continually involved in a variety of activities around the needs of young children and their parents. Some reports on these campaigns are available in the North Melbourne Library. Primary education and secondary education have also been prominent in the N.M.A. activities.
2. Campaigns to Implement the Melbourne Strategy Plan: Starting in 1971 the N.M.A. welcomed the announcement that the State Government had called on the Melbourne City Council to prepare a Strategy Plan. The Association contributed to the preparation of this plan (see C.A.N. Report) during 1973 and has been in the forefront of campaigns to defend it ever since.

3. Campaigns on Building Permits: This is a never ending responsibility for members. Some of the highlights around campaigns on the building stock include the Happy Valley campaign, which started a few months after the Association was formed and continued for many years; the ever recurring efforts to "Keep the Queen Victoria Market"; the campaign around demolitions of Capel Street buildings; two large efforts to prevent the Children's Hospital building tower flats in Chapman Street, and numerous smaller efforts around permits for factories, warehouses, flats and massage parlours and drive-in shopping centres.

4. Campaigns around Traffic and Parking: The history of activities shows how frequently members have had to consider these pressing problems.

5. History of the District: From its very first days the Association began to make a collection of material on the history of the district. This has now been placed in the North Melbourne Library as the "Blanchard Collection". The Association has helped students with projects about the district and has conducted a number of history tours.

6. Convivial Activities: Members of the Association do not only meet together at meetings or to write letters or to demonstrate or deliver leaflets and so on. A very important part of the life of the Association is the social activities which have ranged from street parties to concerts of classical music and have included dinners, barbecues, picnics, book discussions, art exhibitions and in more recent years THE COMMUNITY FAIR AND GALA COMMUNITY BALL. The on-going relationships developed from such conviviality are not reported in this history but are very important.

A PLACE FOR ALL IN THE N.M.A.

The Association's structure consists of a combination of groups - for example, a Permit Group or a History Group. Some of these may meet only once or twice for a specific purpose; others may meet on a more permanent or formal basis at regular times, for example, monthly.

All members who choose to be active in these groups are invited to attend the meetings of the N.M.A. Committee, which usually meets each month.

The ad-hoc structuring of groups means that a particular commitment may need to be only for a certain, often short, period of time. Many members of the N.M.A. are only able to support our organisation through the payment of their annual subscriptions. This support, too, is greatly appreciated.

THE DATE, THE PROBLEM, THE ACTION, THE RESULT

The presentation of the history of the Association in a schematic way has been the advantage of giving the bare facts; but it has the disadvantage of not showing the human effort of those involved in the campaigns. No attempt has been made to list the gains nor to estimate the losses. The most important gain has been the ever-increasing involvement of people in the day to day life of the area in which they live or work.

Here in chronological order are some of the main activities of the Association over the past sixteen years.

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1966 Hundreds of New Residents moving into North Melbourne Flats:

Action: A group of people (mainly residents in Hotham Gardens O-Y-O flats delivered a questionnaire to the 250 residents in the newly-built units.

Answers to the questionnaire showed that "compared with the general populations there is a high proportion of business and professional people. Compared with the rest of North Melbourne, there are very few Migrants. The proportion of single people is relatively high and most of the married women seemed to work outside the home. There are about three women to every two men. There are comparatively few children and old people."

Result: A public meeting was called on 16th September, 1966, and it was unanimously agreed that "an association of North Melbourne residents be formed to initiate and carry out action designed to promote the development of North Melbourne and the well-being of the community."

Note: The information in the 1966 questionnaire has not been updated; it seems as if there is now a higher proportion of elderly people in these flats than there was in 1966.

In 1970 the N.M.A. included West Melbourne as part of its area of responsibility and changed its constitution to state . . . "Membership shall be open to everyone who lives, works or has a special interest in North and West Melbourne". Thus the N.M.A. is not solely concerned with matters affecting residents.

1969 - 1972. Inequalities in Provision of Preschool Education: (Migrant families having little knowledge of services available)

The N.M.A. began to collect information about preschool services, using a questionnaire which was translated into Italian, Greek, Maltese and Yugoslav (the main ethnic groups then living in North and West Melbourne). Maps showing location of preschool services were prepared by the N.M.A. and displayed on several notice boards throughout the district: 374 families replied to the questionnaire.

Result: The Association prepared a submission for the State Health Department Consultation on Preschool Child Development in 1972. Reports from community organisations influenced the findings of this Consultation.

Note: There has been continuous involvement of N.M.A. members on issues relating to preschool education and child care culminating in the report to the 1980 M.C.C. Community Consultation "Children of our Time".

1968: Housing Commission Demolishes "Happy Valley".

1968 - 71. Concern over demolition of "Happy Valley" shops. Eleven shops - by H.C.V. for the redevelopment of the area as part of Hotham Gardens type of flats.

Action: Deputations, petitions, support from all local Councillors and both Federal and State parliamentarians. Two documents prepared by architects, planners and others. ("Proposals for Lothian Street Redevelopment") giving alternatives and "Retail Requirements in Happy Valley" . . . a survey of shopping provided in the whole of North Melbourne. Support from three residents' committees of Hotham Gardens Flats (total of about 350 flat owners represented through service company committees), demonstrations, including a "pegout", supplements in Northern Advertiser - paper distributed locally.

Result: H.C.V. built arcade at Haines Street Shopping Centre - diagonally opposite Happy Valley shops - to enable four more shops to be developed, including a laundrette; plans for Lothian Street Redevelopment project to include a restaurant open to general public.

Note: The three-acre site has been cleared and left vacant since August 1971. Plans have been announced for the area, but no sign of any building activity. This has deadened the whole area, especially the Haines Street Shopping Area.

1970. Secondary School Needed for North and West Melbourne Families:

Action: The N.M.A. wrote to the Victorian Teachers' Union, the Victorian Secondary Teachers' Association, the Federation of Mothers' Clubs and the Victorian Council of School Organisations to inform them of our concern and asking that University High School be made into a district high with enrolments at Form 1.

Result: In 1972 University High School enrolled local children at form 1.

Note: Since the early seventies there have been a number of campaigns to ensure that the doors of University High are kept open to local families.

1970. Lack of Services for Migrant Families:

The N.M.A. wrote to the Melbourne City Council requesting books in ethnic languages for the library.

Result: No immediate response but in recent years the library has included books in the main languages of people living in North and West Melbourne.

Note: In early seventies the N.M.A. published some of its leaflets in several languages . . . see in particular about preschool education in 1972.

1973. Preparation of the C.A.N. Report: (Citizens' Action Plan for North and West Melbourne.)

This report was prepared in response from an appeal for participation in planning during the preparation of the Melbourne City Council Strategy Plan. The report is based on the value judgement that what really matters are "the human values, not material wealth, nor status, nor freedom at the expense of others; but a life that sees social values as distinct from economic ones as the prime objectives."

Result: Some of the ideas in C.A.N. were incorporated into the Strategy Plan . . . The C.A.N. report helped greatly in the campaigns to implement the Melbourne Strategy Plan, particularly the proposals for West Melbourne . . . the mixed use areas of the municipality. The C.A.N. has been used by the Community Planning Groups and many of the C.A.N. proposals have been endorsed in these draft plans.

Note: This report on the History of N.M.A. will include some facts on how the N.M.A. has been in the forefront of the campaigns to implement the Strategy Plan . . . see about the Mixed Use Area Studies (1 and 2) and Amendment 96 and also some of the permit cases.

1973. Keep Doors of U.H.S. Open to Local Children:

The N.M.A. was one of the main initiators of a public protest meeting called late in 1973 when there were proposals to exclude local children from U.H.S.

Result : U.H.S. continued to enroll local children at form 1.

1973. History Tour and History Exhibition:

The N.M.A. History Tour Group and the National Trust organised a history bus tour through North and West Melbourne. The N.M.A. and St. Mary's Church of England organised a History Exhibition in the North Melbourne Town Hall. Articles contributed by the N.M.A. History Work Group were a regular feature in the Northern Advertiser. The N.M.A. started a collection of historical documents about North and West Melbourne.

Result: History documents are now at the North Melbourne Library.

Note: The N.M.A. has conducted many different tours through our district - for example, organising tours with the National Gallery Society, the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology, the Environment Studies Association, various schools and pre-schools of the district as well as schools from other parts of Melbourne and Victoria.

1973. Street Parties and Other Social Functions:

The very first street party was held in Carroll Street, North Melbourne, in December, 1972: this inspired other streets to follow. In 1973 street parties were a special feature of public participation in the preparation of the Strategy Plan. Parties were also held in the parklets and in Royal Park.

Result: In several parts of our district street parties are now a looked forward to annual event.

Note: The N.M.A. also organised a dinner attended by about one hundred and twenty people. The 1973 dinner was held at the North Melbourne Football Social Club. Annual dinners were a feature of the early years of the N.M.A. and the guest speakers were usually people who lived or worked in our district. Most dinners were held at the Marco Polo Motel and the guest speakers included Prof. Fitzgerald, Ronald Farren-Price, Dame Peggy con Prague, Kevin Borland and Lorna Hannan.

1974. Keep the Queen Victoria Market:

Early in 1974 representatives of the Association met with the Premier's Working Party on Queen Victoria Market and later the Association sent representatives to meetings called by the Leader of the Opposition on this issue.

Result: The threat to Q.V.M. temporarily removed.

Note : The N.M.A. has continually backed the Keep the Queen Victoria Market Committee in its valiant campaign to preserve this asset for the people . . . Some of these efforts are referred to in this report.

1974 Inquiry into Housing Commission and Tenants' Rights:

The Association joined with other organisations calling for an inquiry into the H.C.V.; it also participated in the campaigns around the rights of tenants in private rental accommodation.

Result: Campaigns on housing continued through the seventies, with varying success.

1974. Amendment 45 - a Threat to Strategy Plan:

The M.M.B.W. Amendment 45 would have allowed very high office towers to be built in the St. Kilda Rd. extension. The N.M.A. realised that this would be contrary to the principles of the Melbourne Strategy Plan and initiated opposition to Am. 45. Objections to Am. 45 were made by the Melbourne City Council, Prahran Council, Sth. Melbourne Council and a number of St. Kilda organisations, as well as by the N.M.A.

Result: Amendment 45 was modified and thus threat to Strategy Plan reduced.

1974. Freeways and Traffic:

The N.M.A. joined with other inner urban organisations to campaign against the proposals for the Eastern Freeway (F. 19 to Doncaster-Templestowe). The N.M.A. advocated a rail line along the freeway route. The N.M.A. also opposed the Melbourne City Council Traffic Committee Report which proposed upgrading some of the streets through our district.

Result: Freeway constructed without rail line. The campaigns on traffic and parking in the district have continued throughout the seventies . . . see later.

1974 Errol Street Shopping Hub:

The N.M.A. made a submission on the rehabilitation of Errol Street shopping area. This was prepared with assistance of Melbourne University Students of Architecture. A number of well attended meetings of Traders was held. The submission was presented to the Federal Government, the State Government and the Melbourne City Council.

Result: No direct action by Governments or Council, but the campaigns have continued.

Note: The submission advocated siting of community facilities in this hub . . . the C.E.S. has now located nearby; the submission also wanted the Victorian character to be enhanced . . . the posted

verandahs have replaced the canti-levered verandahs on seven shops; the Bank of N.S.W. has rehabilitated a shop in Victorian era style. The Strategy Plan proposals for increased residential uses in West Melbourne and in the area in the immediate vicinity of Errol Street would result in this important shopping centre becoming more viable.

The Association was also active around the closing of the north end of Errol Street. This street closure not only protects the school but also ensures that there is less through traffic past the shops.

1974 Community Resource Centre:

The Association requested the Council to establish a District Community Resource Centre as proposed by the Strategy Plan. (Action Plan One in the Strategy Plan Action Plans). Representatives of the Association met with the Council Social Worker to work out plans for this amenity.

Result: The Neighbourhood Centre was opened in a room at the North Melbourne Town Hall. This Centre was mainly staffed by volunteers for its first years but it is now part of Centre 56. see reports from Centre 56.

1974 Tower Flats in Chapman Street:

The N.M.A. appealed for the second time against tower flats in Chapman Street which were to be constructed by the Royal Children's Hospital. The Association was represented by a Q.C. who donated his services to the Association. An architect also donated his services and prepared a full plan which showed that three storey walk-up flats could be built on the site and provide about the same amount of accommodation as the towers.

Result: The N.M.A. lost the case and the flats are now built.

Note : The N.M.A. wrote to the Royal Melbourne Hospital requesting information on any plans they may have for buildings in the district. Since then the R.M.H. has discussed its plans with representatives of the N.M.A. The N.M.A. approved the R.M.H. flats in Courtney St. as they are in keeping with the human scale of that part of our district. We have also discussed other plans with R.M.H. representatives.

1974. Ward Redistribution:

The Carlton Association spearheaded the movement for redistribution of Melbourne City Council wards. The N.M.A. supported the move and gave evidence at the Inquiry.

Result: Ward boundaries revised and more equitable representation but North and West Melbourne separated from each other and combined with parts of Carlton.

Note: Redistribution had not been fully implemented when the Council was sacked in 1980. In May, 1982, there is another Inquiry into ward boundaries. Results not yet available.

1974. Warehouse near Macauley Station:

The N.M.A. objected to the building of this sprawling warehouse close to the station and said that it contravened the Strategy Plan. The N.M.A. submission was supported by hundreds of people living in the H.C.V. flats who signed a petition, also by teachers at Boundary Rd. School and St. Aloysius College.

Result: The permit was granted and the warehouse was built.

Note: See later in this report "Breaches of Strategy Plan" 1977 letter to Minister of Planning.

1974. Indiscriminate Building of Flats:

The N.M.A. appealed against the building of flats at 47 Brougham Street.

Result: The N.M.A. won this appeal.

Note: This was a significant victory as it deterred other speculators from attempting flat construction in North and West Melbourne. See "Ode to Permit Group".

1975. Permit for Showrooms in Sheil Street:

The N.M.A. appealed against a permit for a showrooms to be built in Sheil St. (near Dryburgh St.) The N.M.A. was joined by Inge Bros., the developers of the new flats in Dryburgh St. Residents in Shiel St. and in Dryburgh St. supported N.M.A. submission with petition. The N.M.A. also approached University High suggesting that this site and the gasometer site could be used appropriately for an education annex.

Result: The appeal was lost and the "showrooms" constructed; now used as panel beating factory.

Note: During 1975 the N.M.A. prepared a kit on permits called "Everyone's Guide to Planning Permits." This greatly helped the permit group of the Association.

1975. Traffic in North Melbourne:

The N.M.A. made submissions on traffic and parking problems to the Country Roads Board and the Commonwealth Bureau of Roads and made representations to the Melbourne City Council and the local Member of Parliament in the district, basing submissions on the C.A.N. Report. The N.M.A. endorsed protests on the proposed outlets for the Eastern Freeway through the inner suburbs and supported the United Melbourne Freeway Action Group in its opposition to freeway construction.

Result: For a short period the Melbourne City Council, the Collingwood Council and the Fitzroy Council co-operated in discussions on the solution to these problems. Eventually the Eastern Freeway was constructed.

Note: Traffic and parking problems have been a central feature of N.M.A. campaigns during the 1970's. The N.M.A. welcomes the reports prepared by the Community Planning Group on these matters.

1975. Implementing the Strategy Plan:

The Association presented a submission to the M.C.C. opposing the Mixed Use Area Study which undermined the Strategy Plan and which would have resulted in office towers spreading into West Melbourne and considerable traffic increase in the district. The N.M.A. produced a leaflet summarising its reasons for this submission. The N.M.A. also opposed the redevelopment of Flinders Street station and the construction of the Trade Centre and called on the Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works to prepare amendments to the Metropolitan Strategy Plan which would recognise the principles of the M.C.C. Strategy Plan.

Result: The Mixed Use Area Study was not implemented by the M.C.C. Flinders St. station was not redeveloped. The Trade Centre was constructed.

Note: The Trade Centre is now called a "white elephant" and is mainly occupied by Government departments. There has been recent publicity over some of the scandals about the Trade Centre . . . see North Melbourne News No. 20, May-June, 1982.

Residents Paid Rates on Loop:

The N.M.A. joined with other member organisations of the Combined City of Melbourne Association in opposing rates being paid by residents as a levy for the construction of the Loop. The N.M.A. collected names on petitions and distributed leaflets about this issue.

Result: Residential properties relieved of loop levy.

1975. CO-OPERATION WITH UNIVERSITY HIGH SCHOOL:

The N.M.A. co-operated with the Council of University High School in their investigations over the possible use of the gasometer site for an education annex to U.H.S. The N.M.A. also provided material for school projects for students at U.H.S.

1976. Design of Community Centre, Swimming Pool and Children's Centre:

The N.M.A. helped to ensure that there were opportunities for community participation in the planning of the design of the Hotham Community Centre. Members of the N.M.A. had several discussions with architects and the M.C.C. City Baths superintendent about the rehabilitation of the North Melbourne Swimming Pool. A number of ideas suggested by the N.M.A. were incorporated in the report on the future of the pool. The N.M.A. helped the Presbyterian Church Pre-school Centre (now Curzon Street Centre) to find an architect who could re-design the building to more adequately cater for the changing needs of children and their parents.

Result: The Hotham Centre has now been built and includes many of the ideas suggested from the participation experience. The Swimming Pool has not yet been rehabilitated and the Curzon Street Centre has now been reconstructed and it is now used for a much more varied program of activities than would have been possible if the original alterations had been carried out.

1976 Capel Street Reclamation Scheme:

The Government's plans for the redevelopment of the Queen Victoria Market included the area to Capel Street. Many properties in this area were acquired by the Council in readiness for this redevelopment scheme. The area began to deteriorate rapidly. The N.M.A. and a group of Capel Street residents campaigned against this redevelopment scheme.

Result: The campaign to Keep the Queen Victoria Market has so far resulted in plans for this vast redevelopment scheme being shelved. Nevertheless the Council has continued to acquire properties and thus there is still great uncertainty about the future of this area.

Note: See North Melbourne News July-August, 1981. Issue No. 16 Front Page story. This part of West Melbourne has not been part of North and West Melbourne Community Planning Group's brief so there has been no opportunity for community plans to be developed for this area as part of the M.C.C. Community Planning process.

1977. Nuclear Free Melbourne:

The N.M.A. supported the Australian Conservation Foundation in opposing nuclear mining except for medicinal purposes. The Association wrote to the Melbourne City Council calling on it to declare Melbourne municipality a Nuclear Free Zone.

Result: The Melbourne City Council did not heed the request. Members of the N.M.A. co-operated with the Movement Against Uranium Mining in painting anti-nuclear murals on homes in North and West Melbourne (in Adderly Street, Courtney Street and more recently in Errol Street). N.M.A. members also joined in the anti-nuclear rallies with the North Melbourne M.A.U.M.

1977. Rate Reform:

The N.M.A. held a protest meeting on rate rises.

Result: No immediate result, but campaigns on rates an on-going affair.

1977. Mixed Use Area Study, No. 2

The N.M.A. prepared a submission in opposition to the Melbourne City Council Mixed Use Area Study No. 2. This study was no improvement on the Mixed Use Area Study No. 1. (see earlier 1975 "Implementing the Strategy Plan"). The N.M.A. called a press conference to publicise its views.

Result: Mixed Use Area Study withdrawn by Council. Another threat to the Strategy Plan was thus defeated.

1977. Royal Park:

The N.M.A. prepared a submission on Royal Park and held a public meeting to discuss Council plans for the Park.

Result: Some of the N.M.A. proposals were accepted in the final draft of the plan.

Note: The section on Royal Park in the C.A.N. Report (available in the North Melbourne Library) formed the basis for our submission in 1977.

1977. Breaches of the Strategy Plan.

The N.M.A. wrote to the Minister of Planning showing how the M.C.C. Strategy Plan was being undermined. The letter gave the examples of the permits for tower flats in Chapman Street; the warehouse near Macauley station and the showroom-factory in Shiel St. It also objected to car parking and traffic plans for the district.

Result: This action helped the campaign to fully implement the Strategy Plan.

Note: During this period there was considerable discussion in Parliament about the Strategy Plan and the Member for Melbourne, Barry Jones, was very forthright in his support for the immediate implementation of the full plan.

1977. First North Melbourne Community Ball:

Result: \$1,000 raised for the rebuilding of Hotham Community Centre . . . a good time was had by all.

1977. First North Melbourne Community Fair:

Result: \$4,000 raised by 22 local organisations. The N.M.A. Garden Stall raised \$264 for our own funds. "It was a Fun Fantastic Fair".

Note: The Community Fair is now an annual event and the Community Ball is held every two years. These are two very important social functions for the whole district and have greatly helped to give a sense of belonging to the district and to strengthen community networks.

1977 Traffic Plan:

The N.M.A. submitted a "Traffic Plan for North and West Melbourne" to the Melbourne City Council and the Country Roads Board. The submission was based on the C.A.N. Report. The N.M.A. joined in protests over the construction of F.19, the eastern freeway.

Result: Traffic planning a continuous campaign for the Association.

1977. Community Uses at the Library:

The N.M.A. welcomed opportunities for community groups to make greater use of library facilities and arranged several discussion groups, displays of crafts and history materials and in other ways helped to popularise the new slogan of Victorian Libraries - "Libraries are Great, Mate . . ."

Result: Such opportunities helped to develop community networks throughout the district.

1978. Amendment 96:

The M.M.B.W. Amendment 96 was strongly opposed by the N.M.A. Amendment 96 would have destroyed the principles of the Strategy Plan. The N.M.A. was one of the main groups to co-ordinate a campaign of opposition to Amendment 96 and the following organisations made similar submissions in opposition to it . . . The Combined City of Melbourne Association and member organisations of the C.C.M.A., the Town and Country Planning Association, the Melbourne Chamber of Commerce, the Victorian Chapter of the Royal Australian Institute of Architects, and the Royal Australian Planning Institute, Victorian Branch.

Result: Amendment 96 was withdrawn by the Government.

1978. Cosy Cottage Project:

The N.M.A. initiated the Copsy Cottage Project through bringing together representatives of local welfare organisations, hospital social work department and unions (with offices in North and West Melbourne). Through a series of work bees a dilapidated terrace house was rehabilitated and furnished and equipped as a "home away from home for country families." The project took about four months of work bees.

Result: The Cosy Cottage has provided accommodation for families from many different parts of Victoria and from some far away places such as Fiji and Bali and Perth. The rent is only \$40. 00 a week for the fully furnished cottage, which accommodates families of up to five or six members.

1978. Early Childhood Development Project:

During June and July there were four public meetings in North Melbourne to discuss the State Government's Health Department's plans for an Early Childhood Development Project for the Melbourne municipality. There was considerable concern about some aspects of this proposal.

Result: Meetings on this issue continued until in late 1979 the Melbourne City Council decided to hold a Community Consultation with a special focus on children's services.

Note: The six reports from the Consultation were published in 1980 and are available for reference at the North Melbourne Library. The reports were endorsed by the Melbourne City Council a few weeks before it was dismissed and the Commissioners also endorsed the reports in the First Threshold Statement from the Administration of the Council.

1978: North Melbourne News.

The North Melbourne News was initiated by people associated with the Neighbourhood Centre. The N.M.A. strongly supported this effort. The North Melbourne News is now publishing its 21st edition and has been published every two months for the past four years. Congratulations to the North Melbourne News Collective.

1979. Community Planning Groups:

The N.M.A. welcomed the formation of the Melbourne City Council Community Planning Groups for North and West Melbourne and in particular were strongly in support of North and West Melbourne being regarded as one district.

Result: The Community Planning Group is now finalising its reports. (See Reports in the North Melbourne Library).

Note. The N.M.A. supplied material to the Community Planning Group; for example copies of the N.M.A. submission on the revitalisation of Errol Street . . . (Town Hall Neighbourhood Focus); reports on the N.M.A. policies on early childhood development; a comparison between the community proposals in the C.A.N. Report and the Strategy Plan and other such documents. (These reports are available at the North Melbourne Library).

1979. Traffic Campaign Continues:

The N.M.A. wrote to the Minister of Transport and the M.C.C. clarifying our conditional support for a by-pass route from the Tullemarine Freeway connecting the Freeway to Footscray Road; the letter stated that so long as the by-pass road "was accompanied by appropriate street closures so there

would be no nett increase in road space and would not generate any further traffic in Flemington and South Melbourne and North Melbourne."

The N.M.A. made a submission to the M.M.B.W. Heirarchy of Roads Study. These documents were submitted to the North and West Melbourne Community Planning Group.

Result. The Community Planning Group accepted the N.M.A. proposals for street classification as "the long term objective."

1979 International Year of the Child:

The N.M.A. initiated the preparation of a four-page supplement for the North Melbourne News and involved children and teachers in this publication.

Result. Closer links were forged between the N.M.A., some schools and the North Melbourne News.

1979 City Lights Weekly Broadcast:

The N.M.A. made a weekly broadcast over 3 C.R., calling the series "City Lights".

Result. News and views on inner urban issues were popularised.

1980. Planning to Conserve Energy:

The N.M.A. called a public meeting to discuss planning to conserve energy.

Result: A work group was formed which prepared two reports - "Principles for Local Plans" and "Less Energy More Enjoyment In North and West Melbourne." A broadcast based on these reports was printed by North Melbourne News and distributed to every home in North and West Melbourne.

Note: These reports are available for reference at the North Melbourne Library. A few copies of "Less Energy More Enjoyment" are available for sale at \$5.00 each . . . 'Phone 328 - 2345 for further information). The North Melbourne Reports were used as a basis for discussion at a seminar organised by the Monash University and the Municipal Association of Victoria, which was held during 1981).

1980. Threat to Close Tram and Train Lines:

The State Government Report on transport (the Lonie Report) recommended the closure of the Maribyrnong tram line (trams 57, 54, 50) and the closure of the Upfield railway line (which passes through Macauley and Flemington Bridge). The N.M.A. collected over 1,600 names on a petition opposing the closure of the tram and calling for the tram section to be at Flemington Road rather than at Arden St. The N.M.A. also supported the Flemington and Kensington Associations in their campaigns about the closure of the Upfield railway line.

Result. The trams and trains are still running. The section changes have not been made.

1980. Keep the Queen Victoria Market:

The N.M.A. supported the renewed campaign by the Keep the Victoria Market Committee, and a representative of the Association attended a deputation to the Premier.

Result. The Market is still in existence. There have been a number of other occasions when the N.M.A. has supported the K.Q.V.M. Committee . . see also 1974.

1980. Sacking of Melbourne City Council :

The N.M.A. helped to initiate the formation of the Melbourne Voters' Action. This organisation was formed within hours of the announcement of the sacking of the Melbourne City Council on 23rd December. The M.V.A. called for retaining and restructuring the Melbourne City Council.

Result. The M.V.A. ensured that some views of the ratepayers could be presented continually to the Commissioners (Access Time, although only limited was at least one way of keeping administrator in touch with the community).

Note: The decision by the State Government to hold Council elections in 1982 is a magnificent victory to the M.V.A. Congratulations to all.

1980. University High School:

The North Melbourne Association opposed proposals to change the system of intake of students at U.H.S. as the entrance exam. may exclude local children.

Result. Children from North and West Melbourne are enrolled at U.H.S. but the campaign to keep the doors of U.H.S. open as a district high school is still being waged.

1981. Inquiry on Land Deals:

The N.M.A made a submission to the State Government Inquiry on land deals made by the Housing Commission. A case history of the Lothian Street redevelopment scheme (Happy Valley) was prepared. This showed that eleven shops were demolished and many terraces and cottages. (See Happy Valley in section of this report on 1969 - 71. The land was sold to private developers at a price subsidised by the Government. The flats are now being used as luxury holiday apartments.

Result. The N.M.A. did not expect any direct result from this submission.

Note. The "Happy Valley" submission is available at the North Melbourne Library. The preparation of the submission resulted in material being gathered together from campaigns that started in 1967 and continued through to 1980, around the Happy Valley issue.

1981. The Library and the Community: The N.M.A. nominated Linda Stevenson and those associated with the North Melbourne Library for the 1981 Robin Boyd Award. This helped to draw attention to the changing role of librarians in the community.

Posted Verandahs in Errol Street:

Following the fire in a council-owned shop, the City Council agreed to restore posted verandahs on the seven shops which are part of the Municipal Building (the old Mechanics Institute Building).

Result. This has greatly enhanced the Victorian character of the Errol Street shopping hub.

Note. The N.M.A. has campaigned against shopfronts being modernised and have protested to shopkeepers and the Council whenever possible.

1981 Community Notice Boards:

The N.M.A. formed a small committee with representatives of the News, the Neighbourhood Centre, Hotham Centre and the North Melbourne Social Service to provide a monthly newsheet informing the community of "What's On" in the district. These community notices are placed at over forty outlets throughout the district and are changed every month.

Result. This has provided an opportunity for better communication between organisations in North and West Melbourne.

1981. Sacking of the Council: The N.M.A. held a public meeting to discuss how to ensure that our services are not adversely affected by the sacking of Council.

Result. The meeting decided to fully back the Melbourne Voters Action in its campaign to restore and restructure the M.C.C. The association opposed the hiving off of any part of our district from the C.B.D. and re-affirmed the need for North and West Melbourne to be regarded as one district.

1981. Community Fair and Community Ball: These two gala occasions were combined on the one day and night. Strange and wonderful things happened at the Ball, ranging from the "three Graces" greeting guests with posies to jazz ballet of waiters and a flying hippopotamus disgorging balloons, and including a sumptuous supper provided by magic by parents from the Errol Street School.