MELBOURNE LIVEABILITY AND GEOGRAPHY – IDENTITIES
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Alfred Deakin Leader of Federation (1856–1919)
As a young man I was a lawyer, journalist, philosopher and poet. My first job was as reporter for the Age newspaper in Melbourne. I rose to become deputy Premier of Victoria at Parliament House. For years I fought to make Australia a Nation. When it finally happened in 1901 I Prime Minister three times. One of the secrets to my success was that as Spiritualists my wife Patti and I always sought advice from the dead. Luckily they were always right. Julia Gillard should have tried it.

Tim Flannery, Scientist and climate change campaigner
I grew up in Sandringham exploring fossils in the bay as a teenager. Since then I have discovered more than thirty new species of mammals and become Australian of the Year. My books such as The Future Eaters’ and ‘The Weather Makers’ explore how technologies and attitudes can save our planet. I was sacked from the government’s Climate Commission but endlessly campaign for action on the greatest threat to our planet.

I am an artist and writer and professor of urban design at Melbourne RMIT. Nearamnew is my design for the Federation Square piazza using 500,000 natural stones from the Kimberley’s. It is from an 1860 Aboriginal bark painting of the Milky Way reflected in water. It reminds us that Melbourne is on a flood plain preserved by traditional ecology for millennia. We can use Aboriginal technologies to preserve our environment.

Nonda Katsalidis, Melbourne Greek-Australian architect. Eureka and 108
* Melbourne retrofit 1200 strategy
Others talk about ‘reaching for the sky’ but I actually do it! I changed the skyline of Melbourne with Australia’s tallest buildings such as Eureka Tower (2007) and Australia 108 (2019). Eureka tells the story of democracy invented in Greece. A sustainable society is a democratic society. Some say my buildings reduce sustainability. But I believe beautiful high rise, high density residential architecture is essential for sustainable city living.

Rob Adams, Melbourne City Council, architect and designer. *Council House Two
I am responsible for the City Design of Melbourne. Since 1985 I have helped Melbourne become one of the most liveable cities 7 times. Our council projects include Swanston Street mall, laneways, Yarra boulevards, Birramung Marr Park. Our Council House Two was the first new office building in Australia to achieve a Six Green Star energy rating. I am planning for the the CBD to be carbon neutral by 2020. Today my main goal is how to sustainably accommodate a million-extra Melbourne residents in the near future. Any ideas?
The Koori Heritage Trust and The Three Amigos

In 2003 the Koori Heritage Trust Cultural Centre was opened by Jim Berg to preserve Aboriginal history, culture and artefacts with the help of the ‘two Ronnies’ from the Aboriginal Legal Service - Ron Merkel QC and Ron Castan QC. Jim and these two Jewish lawyers were known as the Three Moogjis or Three Amigos. Following this partnership, over 6000 stolen Aboriginal skeletons were returned. Aboriginal cultural items were impounded or purchased and the Mabo case which created Native Title.

Evan Walker. Father of Melbourne’s renewal 1935-2015

My favourite saying was a liveable city is designed to delight its people. Are you delighted when you look out from Fed Square to Birramung Marr, Southbank and the MCG sporting precinct (and Evan Walker Bridge)? In 1982 as an architect and planning minister I reserved a muddy Southbank on the polluted river with a vision for a great city on the Yarra. Planning is a thoughtful process in practical and aesthetically pleasing problem solving.

John Chun Sai So 苏震西: Multicultural Lord Mayor of Melbourne

In 2001, I served as the 102nd Lord Mayor of Melbourne, the first directly elected by the people and the first of Chinese descent. When re-elected, I become the longest-serving Mayor of Melbourne - Australia’s most multicultural city: 140 cultures and 118 religions. I even had a fan club – ‘John So, he’s my Bro!’ In 2006, I won the World Mayor Award

Peter Lalor, Rebel (1827-1889)

As Eureka stockade leader in December 1854 I took the oath of the rebel miners: ‘We swear by the Southern Cross to stand truly by each other to defend our rights and liberties’. I lost my arm in that battle yet later became the only outlaw ever elected to parliament! On 24 Nov 1857 all men received the right to vote. Our Southern Cross flag is now the Australian flag. Down with tyranny!

Simcha Baevski, Founder Retail Empire (1878-1934)

I was born in Russia, youngest of eleven children. When I came to Melbourne I was just a street peddler with no English. I still managed to build up a great store in Bendigo with 200 employees. In 1914 I changed my name to Sidney Myer and opened Myers - Melbourne’s greatest department store in Bourke Street. In 1957 our family created the Bourke Street Xmas windows to celebrate the Olympic Games. Our family has given huge donations to Melbourne arts, science, medicine and culture. We believe in everything Melbourne!
Ron Clarke, Runner 1937-
I had the great honour of carrying the torch into the stadium in the Melbourne Olympic Games in 1956. I was also the first man to run three miles in under 13 minutes. They said I was fastest man on the planet when I broke 17 world records and 25 Australian records in 1965. After retirement I started a Melbourne sporting business.

Harry Norris, Inter-war Architect (1888- 1966)
Melbourne is covered with my buildings - the earliest skyscrapers of the city! 27 of them! I built most of them in the Jazz Age or ‘Roaring 20s’ between the two world wars. My favourites are the fabulous Majorca Building opposite Degraves Street and the Nicholas Building at 37 Swanston, David Jones at Bourke Street and Block Court on Collins Street. I built lots of the Coles Stores for the Coles Brothers. I visited America constantly to get new ideas for taller and taller buildings.

Edward Cole, Marvellous Melbourne Bookseller (1832–1918)
I created Melbourne’s greatest attraction - the Cole’s Book Arcade in Howey Place with a million books, a Monkey House, Band, Aviary, Fernery, Indian Bazaar and a Chinese Teahouse I also wrote Australia’s most popular children’s book ‘Cole’s Funny Picture Book’ in1879. I advertised on the front page of the Herald offering 20 pounds reward for anyone who could find me ‘A Good Wife’. I wrote often about how all people are equal no matter what religion or colour! I predicted flying planes and the Internet in the future!

Robert Hoddle, Surveyor 1794 -1881
I laid out the original streets of Melbourne in 1837 known as the ‘Hoddle Grid’ and ‘the Golden Mile’. I liked very wide streets but hated narrow lanes. Unfortunately I put Elizabeth Street in a rain gully and several people drowned. Hey that’s life! Perhaps I shouldn’t have rushed the plan in time for lunch. I also laid out Williamstown, Geelong and lots of other suburbs and towns. It’s great that they named Hoddle Street after me so people can curse my name during traffic jams.

Francis Clapp, 1833–1920 - creator of Melbourne’s trams
My wife Isabel and I started with Cobb and Co in the gold rush, then horse trams and horse omnibuses. I used 1600 horses. In 2019 however the city trams are solar powered not horse-powered. In 1885 I ran the first tram or cable car in Bourke Street. Next year we carried sixteen million passengers! For 113 years, until 1997, there were ‘connies’ or ‘trammies’ collecting fares and punching tickets and shouting ‘TICKETS PLEASE!!’. Bring the Connies back I say!
Ron Barassi, Football player and coach 1936 –
I began playing VFL football at the age of 17 for Melbourne Football Club. I’ve been involved in 17 premierships and won ten! I captained Carlton to a premiership in 1968 and coached North Melbourne to two premierships. A couple of years ago I tackled a guy on the street who struck a woman in St Kilda. Even if I’m over 70, I’ll give you some free advice: NEVER give up and NEVER say die!!

Ned (Edward) Kelly, Bushranger (1855–1880)
I have been described as a horse thief, bushranger and rebel and was captured in my home-made armour at the siege of Glenrowan. I was sentenced to death by Judge Sir Redmond Barry for the murder of three policemen but after they put my mother in jail, they had to pay! I cursed the Judge ‘I will see you where I go!’ and he died 12 days after my execution at Old Melbourne Gaol. Every man must come to judgement some day. Many films and books are about my controversial life.

Sir Redmond Barry, founder of State Library (1813–1880)
I was a hard-working young man who arrived just after settlement and rose to the very top of Marvellous Melbourne. I helped founded Melbourne University and the State Library and became a judge of the Supreme Court. I worked long hours and endured the arduous travel by coach, train or horseback to country courts. I died only not long after Ned Kelly cursed me when I sentenced him to death for murder. Go see my statue is on the front lawn of the State Library, corner Lonsdale and Swanston streets.

John Monash, General (1865-1931) Father of the Gallipoli legend
I was raised in a Jewish German family in country Victoria and became an engineer. My command of the Australian Army WW1 won brilliant victories in France. I created a new form of warfare to win battles and to save as many Australian lives as possible. After the war I was a leader of civic institutions such as the SEC and Luna Park in Melbourne. I worked ceaselessly to create the Gallipoli legend with my writings, support for the Shrine and for injured and unemployed soldiers.

Callum Neilson-Bridgefoot, (11) *Community involvement
I was one of the leaders of Melbourne’s Big School Strike on 30 November 2018. We came down from Castlemaine on the Bendigo train and were joined by 8000 primary and secondary school students. We want action on global warming. Just because we don’t vote, does not mean we have no say in our future. We were inspired by Swedish student Greta Thunberg (15),
Isa Clapp
My Husband Francis and I started with Cobb and Co in the gold rush, then horse trams and horse omnibuses. I used 1600 horses. In 2019 however the city trams are solar powered not horse-powered. In 1885 I ran the first tram or cable car in Bourke Street. Next year we carried sixteen million passengers! For 113 years, until 1997, there were ‘connies’ or ‘trammies’ collecting fares and punching tickets and shouting ‘TICKETS PLEASE!!’. Bring the Connies back I say!

Mina Guli of Thirst, Melbourne athlete and water advocate
I was born in Glen Waverley and have been honoured as one of Australia’s 100 most influential women. In seven weeks in 2016, I ran 40 marathons across 7 deserts on 7 continents including Antarctica. In 2017 (aged 46) I ran 40 marathons in 40 days on 6 continents down 6 of the world’s great rivers. I did it to persuade young people to save water. My organisation Thirst has educated two million students in China alone.

Kirsty McKenzie, ‘Good 2 Go’ - Social Enterprise Café
In 2014, I started our little shop in Hosier Lane to give homeless people work experience and sell food, coffee and clothes. Our profits go our Youth Projects service next door where our medical and legal services help young people with mental health and other challenges. You can ‘pay a coffee forward’ here which is good because the 60-70 young people who come to the drop-in ‘Living Room’ daily are often hungry and lonely. Over 2,000 tourists a day walk past our café.

Germaine Greer, Author, radical, commentator, member of the Drift
I was born in Melbourne and went to Melbourne University and associated with the bohemian ‘Drift’ group which often gathered at the Swanston Family Hotel, cnr Lt Bourke and Swanston Streets, such as Barry Humphries, Arthur Boyd, Leonard French, John Perceval, Clifton Pugh, Justus Jorgensen. My first book put me on the map - *The Female Eunuch* (1970) was an international best-seller. It urged women to define their own values, order their own priorities and decide their own fate. Many said it changed their lives. Some though it was outrageous heresy. I tried to change the world. Perhaps I succeeded.

Julia Gillard, Welsh-born 27th Prime Minister of Australia (1961 - )
I migrated with my family to Australia in 1966 and graduated from Melbourne Uni in 1986 as a lawyer. I was elected the 27th Prime Minister of Australia when Kevin Rudd resigned. The 2010 federal election saw the first hung parliament since in fifty years so I was forced into minority government with bitter battles against many opponents. Perhaps some people didn’t want a female PM in a common law marriage and without children, but I worked hard and got a lot of reforms done. My rant ‘I will not be lectured on misogyny by this man’ is still popular on YouTube! On 26 June 2013, I lost the leadership of the Labor Party to Kevin Rudd.
Mary Gilbert Arrived by wind power 1835. *MCC Windpower station
I travelled around the world to Australia using natural wind power to arrive on the ‘Enterprize’ at the Yarra River 30 August 1835, I was 18, pregnant and the only European woman in Melbourne. Today Federation Square with councils and Universities are building their own wind-power energy farm at Ararat. John Fawknner gave me Melbourne’s first cat for company! Not great for the environment! We first settlers were very self-sufficient, grew our food and had few possessions. Rely on yourself - not stuff.

The Lady in Red Flinders – *Sustainable Gender equality
A sustainable society is an equal opportunity society. From March 2017 the City of Melbourne Committee is trialling walking women at ten traffic lights to discourage the ‘unconscious gender bias’ against women. See me at the Flinders Street station and Bourke Street crossings. It only cost $8,000! Gender equality is an essential part of fighting global warming as women are essential to agriculture, irrigation, population control and afforestation.

Val Eastwood 1910 - 1995, Café owner
Val Eastwood was already working as a model and dancer when, at 17, when she opened a café opposite the Town Hall. Val’s Café was a haven for artists, dancers, actors, political activists, bodgies and widgies and students and gay women and men. By insisting that people who were outcasts of respectable society had a right to be themselves and to relax with others of their kind, she flew in the face of social norms. Today Val is an icon of the gay pride movement and Gender workshops are called Val’s Cafès.

Patti Deakin, Reformer 1863-1934
I was 19 when I married Alfred Deakin who wrote me hundreds of love poems. My parents opposed the marriage. Obviously they didn’t know Alfred was going to be Prime Minister one day! I worked for children’s welfare, particularly establishing the kindergarten, crèche and playgrounds movements, and also to help servicemen in World War. I helped found the famous women’s Lyceum Club in Little Collins Street. Alfred and I are buried side by side in St Kilda Cemetery.

Anastasia Hayes –Pioneer and Irish Eureka rebel (1818 - 1892)
After a hellish trip on a ship in October 1852, I arrived at the Ballarat Diggings. Ever tried to raise 6 children in a tent? I began teaching children - 90 of them! - in another tent at Bakery Hill. They say I was blue-eyed, red-haired, good looking, fiery temper and politically active. They were right! I sewed the giant Eureka flag with Anastasia Withers and Anne Duke. When Peter Lalor was shot at Eureka, I helped to amputate his left arm and dumped it down a mineshaf. When my husband was arrested I told those damned troopers: ‘If I had been a man, I wouldn’t have been taken by the likes of you!’ Give us the vote!’ Up with democracy and down with tyrants!

My husband Matt and I started City Rooftop Honey. We harvest over 50 hives including Federation Square. The honey is then sold in cafes below. Bees are essential for a sustainable city as we need bee pollination to grow food. I give Aussie bees a helping hand as they are under threat from diseases, harming them. Our bees love plane trees and the Botanic Garden. And I love bees!

Betty Cuthbert, ‘The Golden Girl’ 1938-

I was only 18 when in 1956 I became the first athlete ever to win an Olympic Gold Medal at the Melbourne Games. Australia went crazy when I also blitzed a world record in the Women’s’ Relay. I also won medals at the next two Olympic Games. In fact I have the honour of being the only athlete ever to have won Olympic gold medals in every running event: 100, 200 and 400 metres. That picture is my bronze statue at the MCG near the Bill Woodfull Gate.

Constance Stone, first doctor 1856 – 1947

Despite great opposition I became the first woman doctor in Australia. In fact I inspired my sister, cousin and daughter all to became doctors after me and together we dispensed free treatment to the poor in La Trobe Street in Melbourne. We campaigned for every woman on Victoria to give us one shilling each and with the Shilling Fund we built Australia’s first Women’s Hospital! Go see my building – the Womens Centre at 210 Lonsdale Street.

Vida Goldstein, Campaigner 1869-1949

I was a Suffragette for the Womens’ movement and proud of it. In 1891 we went from door to door collecting signatures for the ‘Monster Petition’ demanding that women have the right to vote. We got 33,000 signatures. We ran the Peace Commune at RMIT’s Storey Hall in Swanston Street and were very unpopular but a person without principles is nothing! Stand up and be counted! I became the first woman to stand for parliament in the British Empire. Finally in 1908 women in Victoria could vote. A sculpture of my Monster Petition is in Spring Street.

Helen Garner, Writer, 1942 -

I am an award winning Australian novelist, short-story writer, screenwriter and journalist. I wrote my first and most famous book ‘Monkey Grip’ sitting under the Great Dome – the Reading Room at the State Library 328 Swanston Street. So many Australian writers have written books there in the Great Dome – it’s an inspirational place!
Dame Nellie Melba, Opera Singer (1861–1931)
I was a Prima Donna i.e an opera singer. My real name was Helen Porter Mitchell and I was the eldest of ten children. I called myself Melba because I loved Melbourne and Melbourne loved me! I became a world famous singer and. From 1904 I produced over one hundred records for the new invention of the gramophone. Peach Melba a dessert is named after me – go and eat one, they are definitely delicious! My funeral was at Scots Church in Collins Street which my father David Mitchell built and other Melbourne buildings.

Marion Sargood, Pioneer 1838-1878
My husband and I were the owners of Ripponlea Mansion and also our great hardware store at Ross House 251 Flinders Lane. I died in 1878 on my 40th birthday while giving birth to our twelfth child Frederick. It was a risky business in those days. The National Trust has bought my home. Please visit my house, gardens and lake in Elsternwick that I was so passionate about.

Eliza Cole, Shop Owner and Spiritualist
At 29 years of age I answered an advertisement by Edward Cole for a wife in 1884. I agreed to marry him and we raised six children. I assisted in the running of the Coles Book Arcade in Howey Place, the biggest book store in the world. I also acted as ‘medium’ receiving messages from the spirit world as did many other leading persons at the time.

Tully Boyle (15)
I was one of the leaders the Big School Strike on 30 November 2018. We came down from Castlemaine on the Bendigo train and were joined by 8000 primary and secondary school students. We need action on global warming. Just because we don’t vote does not mean we have no say in our future like Swedish student Greta Thunberg (15).