

**Cremorne UnderPark on Yarra/Birrarung – community-led in the making - in ten + pictures... & summary sentence (in bold)**

**This RIVERSIDE underutilised public space is being rethought and reinvigorated through a community-led and lighter, quicker, cheaper approach. Imagine linking Indigenous culture (showcasing design by Indigenous artists and designers from the longest surviving living culture on the planet, including local stories!), the 18<sup>th</sup> century Cremorne Pleasure Gardens (that was on this site in 1853 with it's wild play space) and creating a connection to nature for urban residents, people that work in the area and visitors to enjoy.**

The site is the entrance to Cremorne from the Yarra Trail bike path running alongside the river and provides the entrance to Cremorne.



## **The Project**

Cremorne is a rapidly emerging and prosperous creative, tech and social innovation hub and close knit business and residential community providing much opportunity to the broader area.

Cremorne is riverside, although there is not a strong connection to the Yarra River / Birrarung, nor a good access. The river has been important in people's lives, as a source of food and spiritual connection to the land for Indigenous people. And in the 1850s the area included a ferry service to an amusement park known as Cremorne Pleasure Gardens. People also arrived by train, to Cremorne Station located near the river.

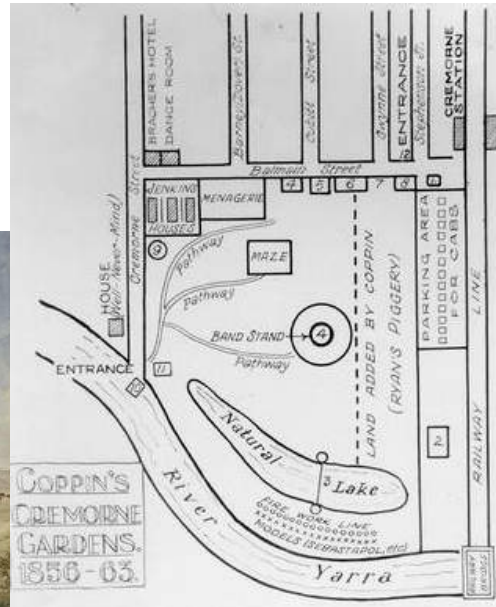
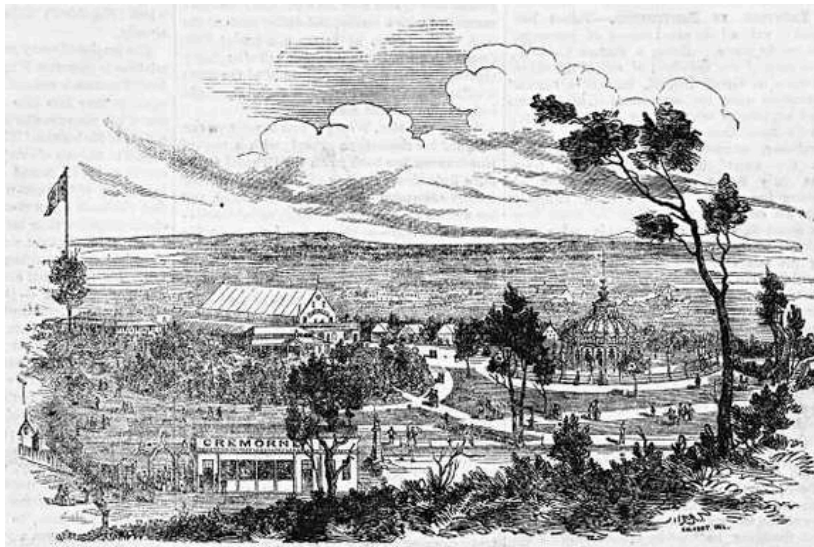


image Yarra Library (publicly accessible)

Locals, whose parents or grandparents also lived in Cremorne have passed on stories of Cremorne's public jetties and how they used to walk down from their homes, drop a small boat in the water to enjoy the river.





## **The community has envisioned an Underpass Park or UnderPark**

**This same riverside space is now an undercover, underutilised public space – bursting with potential!** A shared inclusive space for locals to enable the co-creation of a piece of Cremorne identity in an extraordinary location for people to come together to learn from each other, celebrate Indigenous culture, work, play or even just contemplate and chill out from the dense and warm urban area on a hot day.

We didn't think this up, credit goes to several people who added this as an idea after seeing the spray painted stencils linking to a website that asked 'what do you love about Cremorne and what's needed in Cremorne?' – apparently.. an Underpass Park!

Apart from an Underpass Park, locals wanted more urban greenery and keeping the local streets walkable, rideable and skateable, plus more. Ideas people have added for the UnderPark space include: connectivity, flexible -seating, a community info wall, information on local river wildlife, ice-cream stand, coffee cart, a place to climb and skate, a makers market, makers spaces and the Indigenous story of the river plus lots more ideas.



## Project important because

Cremorne has a rich but vulnerable culture.

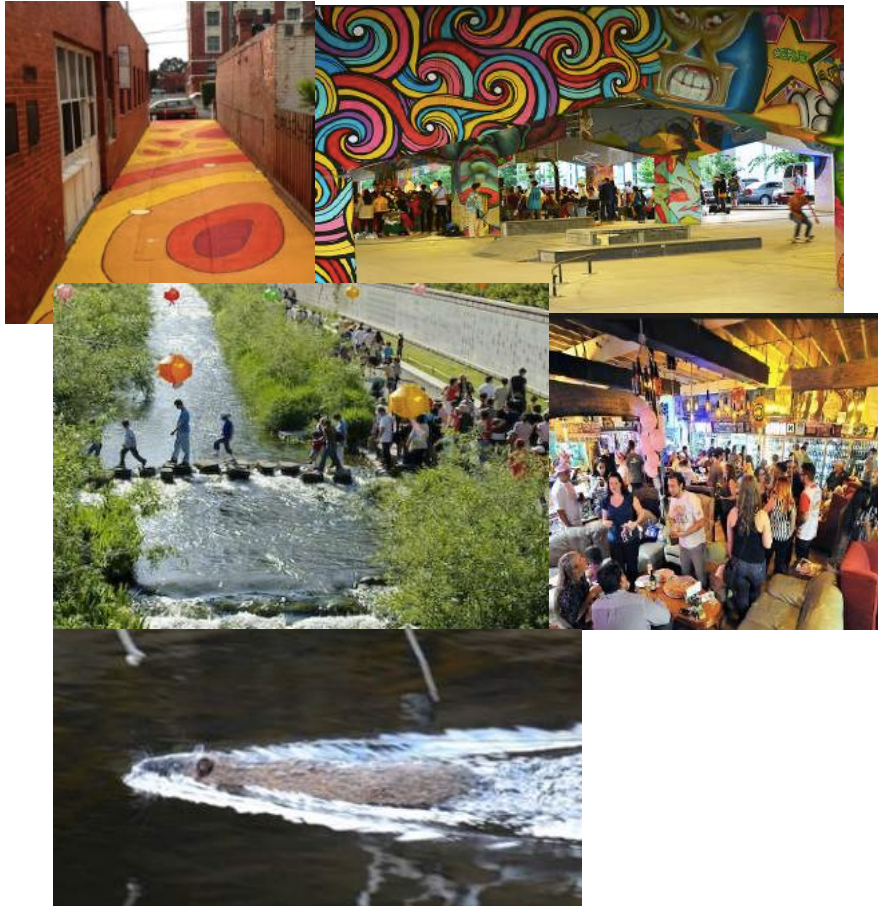
There is an opportunity for the creation of culture responsive public spaces to **facilitate closer connection** among the **existing community** as well as engagement with the **broader social context** for shared prosperity.

Cremorne UnderPark is a local project that responds to the **documented lack of public space, green areas** and suitable facilities for people to gather and socialise, but also to reconnect with the riverside nature.

The sheltered riverbank space provides a cool environment on hot days, which is a sustainable way to offset some adverse effects of climate change on the urban environment, also providing a test site for the new Greater Yarra Urban Parklands.

The project is a model of community-led placemaking, in contrast to a top down approach that seeks limited opportunity for community engagement after a concept has already been developed.

Central to the project is the celebration of nature, urban environments, Indigenous culture, technological innovation, local craft and business making traditions.



from Underneath Rails and Roads a Seattle example, a colourful street example from Walnut St Cremorne and regenerative approach from South Korea and an inspirational underpass skate area and market. Rakali (native water rat) image courtesy of DELWP

## **Connections/contributions, skills and resources to date**

226: strategic communications, design visual and service design, wayfinding and communication design

DPG385: arts & event management, videomaking, social media & online

CCC core network: transport, planning, art, theatre, dance, environmental audit, animal welfare etc. indicated volunteer hours and help where needed

DESIS-Lab CCC sub group: helping guide and inform cocreate cremorne.co

Chuck Wolfe, author of Seeing the Better City: visited the UnderPark during his book tour/visit on 3 Oct 2017

Yarra River Keeper: met at the UnderPark and discussed ideas to bring people to nature/water cleaning islands

Riverside Bike-Fix: precedent set for underpass services/activity

IADV Indigenous Architects and Designers Victoria: offered to connect with recommended Indigenous designers

LaunchPad: meeting space, network and resources

RMIT Digital Ethnography: sound art/research, potential collaboration

Nature Conservancy: potential collaboration

Irwin & Maclaren: offered support for ongoing projects

Hikari photography (offered support for future events)

Melbourne University and partners: Myer Foundation funded Placemaking project Tour and presentation<sup>45</sup> placemakers from around Australia visited the UnderPark to see a community-led project

Other support: Coe&Coe, Earl, The Big Group (supported previous event organised by Cremorne.co)

Yarra City Council has assisted in identifying ownership and management of the land and a shared vision for a good community outcome for the space, given the lack of public space in Cremorne in particular.

## **What's needed next?**

Next step is to meet with the broader and key stakeholders, Melbourne Water, Parks Victoria, DELWP, the Birrarung Council, the neighbouring developers Caydon, etc. etc.

## **Background/track record – cocreate Cremorne.co has produced local events and placemaking as a community network**

In the last 18 months we've promoted initiatives to engage with locals at the street level, to publicly discuss and share opinions and ideas: chalk stencil street painting, Cremorne community tea towel fundraisers, UnderPark catch-ups, a community street party, featuring installations, music, food and beverage and free external contributions. Built a small bee-friendly community garden.



Broader interest in Cremorne UnderPark and community-led approaches, the UnderPark (below M1) next to Nylex sign and silos and small local gatherings in the very limited public space of Cremorne – publicly printed tea towels in background to fund the site improvements.

Locals have generated wonderful ideas. For a dense urban area with a documented lack of public space, the riverside space is very underutilised and has huge potential!

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