

T H E

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M E L B O U R N E



PRESIDENT’S LETTER

Welcome to this very special Mother’s edition of the The Port Magazine!

With Mother’s Day just around the corner, we’re taking the opportunity to celebrate some special mum’s who balance business and motherhood in Port Melbourne. Eight fantastic Mum’s who work in Port have taken the time to share their insights, their struggles and their passions for raising their families in 2015.

And whilst Christmas past is now a distant memory, I do want to take the opportunity to acknowledge the amazing performances at our 2014 Christmas in Port Melbourne event. In a celebration spearheaded by our now famous Bay Street storefront decorations, our free celebration concert on Bay Street was a tribute to all the schools and choirs that participated. Christmas 2014 also saw one of Port’s favourite son’s, Mike Brady AM, make the inaugural award in the ‘Mike Brady’ School Students Christmas Composition Competition for School Choirs & Ensembles. The award went to St Silas Choir. A special thanks goes out to Mike Brady for his attendance, and for gracing us with a little bit of festive song.

Blessed by good weather, March 2015 saw the Port Melbourne Business Association proudly present its first ever Melbourne Food & Wine event on the Port Melbourne Beach! This successful event encouraged families down to our very special foreshore for activities and a Picnic by the Bay.

Don’t forget to “look-up” this month to ensure you catch the winners of PMBA’s Street Banner Design Competition. The winning designs of local Port Phillip artists are lining Bay St now for all to enjoy.

I sincerely hope you enjoy this very special edition of The Port Magazine dedicated to Mum’s. We hope this Mother’s day, you take the opportunity to enter our 2015 Ultimate Mother’s Day Competition. One lucky winner and their mum can again enjoy the best Port Melbourne has to offer with an Ultimate Mother’s Day of pampering, fine food and shopping in Melbourne’s best beachside strip!

Happy Mother’s day to all Port’s special mum’s, we hope you find yourself showered with love for all that you do!

Paul Littmann
President of the PMBA

The Ultimate Mother's Day

Win the Ultimate Mother’s Day by participating online at:

pmba-mothersday.com

APRIL 2015

IN THIS ISSUE:

President’s Letter	2
Soul Impressions Photography	3
Ann Le	4
Marissa De Liso	6
Sophie Christopoulos	8
L-J Lacey	10
Goldie Theodosiou	12
Danielle McCaffrey	14
Bernadene Voss	16
Holly Carthew	18

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With years of branding experience, Aliki helps professionals access their ‘personal brand’ with a full service that includes styling and portrait direction. As Aliki explained “whether it’s an in-studio, or location shoot, we work to connect the client with the feeling their image is intended to evoke. Some people seek classically styled portraits to compliment their LinkedIn page or business website, others are looking for lifestyle images that speak to their professional brand values.”

Keen to capture and convey the heart and passion of our very special Port Melbourne mum’s, Aliki kindly gave her time and photographic expertise to capture the hard working women featured in this Mother’s Day edition of The Port Magazine. As she explained, “I want readers to feel the heart of these busy mum’s and celebrate what it is to be a working mum in Port Melbourne.”

Soul Impressions Photography

Aliki Dimitrakopoulos is passionate about creating powerful photographs that evoke emotion. But it’s her desire to tell a story through her images that really sets her work apart.

Producing commercial images for the likes of Epicure, Melbourne & Olympic Parks and some of Melbourne’s top hotels including The Sheraton, The Westin, and Crown, Aliki and her partner Michael have amassed an impressive portfolio of images and clients in the world of commercial photography.

Their commercial photographic studio, ‘Soul Impressions Photography’, is now located in a recently renovated shopfront at the Paris end of Bay Street. The fully outfitted studio allows them to service a growing range of clients seeking product photography, imagery for commercial and residential property campaigns and print publications. A specialist in lifestyle and food photography, Aliki’s inviting images are quite simply, good enough to eat.

But it’s her growing work in corporate and business portraiture that is getting Aliki excited about the future of commercial photography. As Aliki explains, “corporate websites and the emergence of social media sites like LinkedIn, have driven a growing demand for personal images that speak to people’s professional brand. The ‘selfie’ has very much had its day in the professional setting. People want to present clear, professional images of themselves that speak to their authority.”

If your business is trying to attract new customers and stand out from the pack, or if you’re a professional looking to advance your professional profile, let Aliki capture your story, your image and your brand at Soul Impressions.

Soul Impressions Photography Studio
Located at 371 Bay Street, Port Melbourne.
Enquiries can be directed to; 0418 399 657
email at hello@soulimp.com.au





For Ann Le, there is never enough time in the day. This busy mum of three juggles being a new mum to a two week old baby, with managing her ‘other baby’ – Port Melbourne’s first nail salon, Nail Safari, that she started at 78 Bay Street back in 2006.

The Port Melbourne: *How many kids do you have and what are their ages?*

Ann: I have three boys, William - 6, Edmond – 3 and baby Henry, just two weeks old.

PM: *Of all the challenges of motherhood – what is your greatest achievement?*

Ann: Managing both my family and the business at the same time. Running a small business is really hard work, but in a lot of ways, Nail Safari is just like a child to me. I brought it to life and every day is like parenting it into adulthood.

PM: *What’s most important to you when it comes to parenting?*

Ann: Just spending time with my kids. They are everything to me, but there’s never enough time for them. I wish I could be with them every moment of every day, but running my business is important too.

PM: *Tell me a bit about the motivation behind your business – what started it all?*

Ann: I come from a long line of self-employed people. All my family were self-employed, so I think it was always in my blood to have a business of my own. I trained to become a nail technician in the USA whilst living and working there after completing my studies in Melbourne. I actually completed a qualification in IT, but I knew it just wasn’t me when I had finished it. I had family in the USA, so I spent some time there and just loved being a nail technician. Working in the USA gave me the confidence to start a business of my own. When I returned to Melbourne I got some more experience working in nail salons locally and knew I could do it better.

PM: *You were the first nail salon in Port Melbourne. With so many nail salons in the area now, what’s the biggest challenge to running your business?*

Ann: Definitely the cost of rent and the rising competition. People often ask me about the impact of so many competitors in the area, but I really don’t think much about it. We have a really strong and loyal customer base that we built before all the competitors got here, so I just focus on what we’re doing. If we’re doing what we do well, we won’t need to worry about the competition.

PM: *What do you think sets your business apart?*

Ann: Our staff and our products. A lot of salons use cheap Chinese products – but all of the products we use are quality brands. Most of our consumables are supplied by OPI, who are the world leaders in the profes-

sional nail care industry. All our staff are qualified nail technicians, who undergo regular industry training on new products and technologies, so they are the very best at what they do. We’re also really proud to be the first salon to release new initiatives and products direct from the big brands.

PM: *Has a lot changed in the nail salon industry since starting your business?*

Ann: Yes it really has. There’s been a move away from acrylic nails, for a more natural nail. Long-wearing shellac polishes have also been a real industry changer. We’re really excited to soon be able to offer a brand new long-wearing polish innovation which will be very gentle on natural nails.

PM: *What do you find most challenging about juggling motherhood and running a business?*

Ann: The hours required to keep the businesses running well. I also have a salon in Docklands, so there’s no stepping away from the demands of my business for extended periods. I really miss the kids when I’m working, but I took 12 months off after my second child, and the business suffered. I plan to take only 8 weeks off work this time around. I’ve also been really lucky as my husband is able to take some time off from his work to help out.

PM: *You must have really great support to return to work so soon?*

Ann: I have my parents here in Australia now, so I do have great support, but before their move to Australia I relied on a nanny. I had the confidence to have my third child only after my parents moved here from Vietnam. It took a lot of work to get them here, but I know the kids are in great hands with them.

PM: *I think all mums wish they had the level of support you do from family.*

What are the benefits of that intergenerational care and support for your young family?

Ann: I feel like my kids are getting the best of both worlds. Their Vietnamese heritage is respected and preserved by my parents, but they also get the benefits of an Australian style of parenting. In Vietnam, relationships are very hierarchical and respect based. Children are not encouraged to have conversations with elders. I love that in Australia, parenting encourages an openness that really fosters friendships in families. I see my boys being great friends in the future, not just brothers that obey their older sibling.

PM: *Do you think women can ‘have it all’?*

Ann: I do, but it’s hard to find the balance. I’m really proud of everything I’ve achieved with my business, but I’ll always wish I had more time for my kids.

PM: *You started your business first, and then your family. Do you think there’s an ideal time for women to start a business?*

Ann: If I could do it all again, I think I would choose to have a family first

and wait until they are school age before starting a business. But life doesn’t work that way. Sometimes business comes first and sometimes family does. Either way, I think it’s always hard to balance both.

PM: *Do you think women run businesses differently?*

Ann: Yes I do. I think women put more emotion, more heart and soul into their businesses. We also have to find a balance between work and family that maybe men don’t need to find.

“I work 6 days a week, so it’s really important to me that when I’m with my kids, I’m really ‘with them’.”

PM: *Being as involved and close to your business as you are, how do you separate business and family?*

Ann: I work 6 days a week, so it’s really important to me that when I’m with my kids, I’m really ‘with them’. I want my time with them to be quality time so I always put the phone away, and try to shut the door on business issues. I also know that spring and summer is going to be our busiest time with the races and Christmas parties, so I plan time with family around that.

PM: *Now 8 years down the track running Nail Safari, where do you think you’ll be in another 8 years?*

Ann: I’m not sure. Port Melbourne has grown so much in the time we’ve been here. We never could have anticipated that so many other nail salons would come into the area, so who knows? Some of my staff have been with me since the very beginning, so the business feels very much like a family business now. Like all family businesses, I guess you just keep going.

PM: *What does success look like for you – in business and in life?*

Ann: For my business, it’s about providing great service to our clients. It’s about clients finding a familiar face every time they come in and feeling special to us. Personally, success is all about family. Getting my parents out here to Australia was really important to me and now the focus is getting my kids a good education.

PM: *You work so incredibly hard. What do you see as the benefits of being a working mum?*

Ann: Being able to provide financial opportunities for my family. Being able to take them on holidays and give them important experiences and a good education.

PM: *Do you feel like you’ve followed your dreams?*

Ann: Yes I do. I have a business and a growing family. I didn’t expect it would be so hard to have it all, but this is definitely my dream.

For determined single mother of three boys, Marisa Di Liso, Bella Cosi really is a “Family Business”. Living, working and holidaying with her three adult sons is Marisa’s version of bliss – and she wouldn’t have it any other way. This soon to be self-published book author brings home-style cooking and hospitality to Port Melbourne’s foreshore in her family run restaurant and cooking school – Bella Cosi at 71 Beach Street.

The Port Melbourne: *How many kids do you have and what are their ages?*

Marisa: I have three boys, Vince 29, Christian, 25 and Anthony 22.

PM: *How many of your son’s work in Bella Cosi?*

Marisa: All of them! We really are a “family business” in every sense of the word. They don’t just work here, they each own a part of the business. Vince is the barista, Christian our chef, and Anthony is the sous chef. It’s the perfect combination of all their best skills and abilities.

PM: *Of all the challenges of motherhood – what is your greatest achievement?*

Marisa: Being a single mum, I would have to say it was bringing them up on my own. Despite all of the challenges, my boys are amazing, hard working young men and I couldn’t be prouder.

PM: *Tell me a bit about the motivation behind your business – what started it all?*

Marisa: I worked as an Event Manager in the city to support my family. I was always a passionate cook, so I used to bake for my colleagues. A colleague mentioned to the café owner downstairs in my workplace that they should sell my biscuits and before I knew it, I was baking through the night to supply biscuits to several cafes in the CBD. Back then I was basically working around the clock. I would collect the boys from afterschool care after work, feed and bath them and then put them to bed before cooking through the night until 3 or 4am.

I’d then get a few hours of sleep before getting the boys to school. Then I’d drop the biscuits off in the city before starting my day job. I did that for years before finding myself providing evening cooking classes at the Council of Adult Education. That led to a food oriented spot on talkback



Courtesy of Soul Impressions Photography

radio with 3LO. Four years ago, the boys and I decided it was time to take a chance on bringing my dream of a home-style restaurant and cooking school to life – I’m a firm believer that where there’s a will there’s a way.

PM: *That sounds like a massive amount of work, how did you juggle it all?*

Marisa: With the help of my late parents Lucia, Carmine and the boys. As soon as the boys were old enough to help, they would help bake and package the biscuits in the evening after dinner with me. It was an absolute team effort and to this day we still call our team the “circle of trust”.

PM: *How did you decide on your Port Melbourne location?*

Marisa: It was actually a random suggestion by my son Anthony to take a drive through Port Melbourne. When we saw the ‘for lease’ sign on this location, I was immediately sold. On the day I signed the lease, I randomly uncovered a picture of myself, at 18 months old, standing directly opposite

this location on Beach Street. It felt like an affirmation from my late mum and I cried like a baby!

PM: *Was your mum a big influence on your path to Bella Cosi?*

Marisa: She was. My Mum, Lucia, was a cook herself and arrived here in Port Melbourne with my Dad Carmine, as immigrants from Italy. I would come to Port Melbourne in the summer as a child and hear stories from my parents of their journey to Australia. It’s funny to think that my journey continues right where they started theirs.

PM: *What’s most important to you when it comes to parenting?*

Marisa: Honesty and trust. I’m old school when it comes to morals, communication and trust.

PM: *What’s the biggest challenge to running a business today?*

Marisa: Consistency in service. Your food and coffee should be fantastic, but what’s more important to me is that we create an environment that is a sanctuary for our customers. The vast majority are locals and they come here to wind down and get away from it all. Our customers are like our extended family. My own personal kitchen table sits in the restaurant as a reminder of what we’re creating here – a place that feels like ‘home’ – a home away from home.

PM: *How do you find the time to take care of yourself and when you do, how do you do it?*

Marisa: I’m learning to do it better. I used to burn the candle at both ends, tackling everything at a million miles an hour, but I’ve learned to meditate in recent years and take the time to pamper myself. Some recent health challenges have also reminded me to slow the pace down and enjoy the little things.

PM: *For someone who’s taken on so many challenges, what does success look like for you?*

Marisa: It’s all about the passion for me. The word “tired” doesn’t exist in my vocabulary. When you’re doing what you love, you’re busy, but you’re not tired. Success is not about the money for me. It’s not about the accolades. It’s about taking every opportunity – everything I’ve done has led me to this place.

PM: *Would the way you run your business be different if you weren’t a mum?*

Marisa: I think so. First and foremost I’m a mum and a nurturer. I remind customers to eat their greens, give parenting and life advice if it’s requested, and agonise over which son needs my help more when we are frantically busy!

PM: *What does the future hold for you and Bella Cosi?*

Marisa: I’m really excited to launch my self-published lifestyle cookbook later this year. It’s a book I’ve been drafting since Bella Cosi was conceived over 17 years ago. The book documents my family’s history and my personal story alongside my favourite recipes. It’s dedicated to my late parents and my sons and is really a story of perseverance and the joy that good food has brought me and my family. We’re also hoping to launch our wholesale line of café food this year, which will be a full circle moment on my café biscotti baking days.

Sophie Christopoulos

After 20 years on Bay Street running her boutique travel agency, Sophie Christopoulos has seen a lot of changes in the Port Melbourne landscape. Six years ago Sophie and her husband welcomed a change of their own - daughter Christina. Visit Sophie and her specialist travel team at 303 World Travel & Cruise at 303 Bay St.

The Port Melbourne: How many kids do you have and what are their ages?

Sophie: We have one daughter, Christina, who is now 6.

PM: Of all the challenges of motherhood – what is your greatest achievement?

Sophie: Waking up in the morning and feeling happy and positive about life. I think kids pick up on the energy around them so it's important to me that my daughter meets the day with a smiling, happy mum.

PM: What do you like best about being a Mum?

Sophie: Having the hugs and unconditional love of your child. Kids don't judge – they just love you in the moment.

PM: What's the most important lesson your daughter has taught you?

Sophie: That every year is different. The answers I'm giving you today would be very different if you'd asked me 6 years ago, 5 years ago or even one year ago. And I would imagine they'd be very different in another 5 years. No year since having my daughter has been the same, and all have had their challenges and blessings.

PM: Tell me a bit about the motivation behind your business – what started it all?

Sophie: My dad owns the building we're in and was struggling to get a tenant, so he suggested that I set up a business. Everyone in my family owns their own business, so it didn't seem like a foreign thing to do for me. I had been working as an agent for Travel Land, so with a database of zero clients, I opened up 303 World Travel in 1995.

PM: Your industry has seen an incredible amount of change with the introduction of 'DIY online travel bookings'. How has that impacted your business?

Sophie: It's definitely been hard, but we're not comparing apples with

apples here. People booking their own travel online can't get access to the level of information about accommodation and local amenities that we can. We can VIP upgrade a client for rooms and services that they could never access by booking online themselves. We're still dealing direct with suppliers so we know the exact square meters of the hotel rooms we book, the level of concierge service available, and can provide a list of the top restaurants within walking distance of your hotel. Having said that, we know that in 98% of cases we can match or better the prices people are getting online for 'like' products.

PM: You started your family many years after starting your business. Was that a difficult transition to make?

Sophie: It was definitely challenging. I've often thought I would love to write a book on the experience of being a first time working mum. It's very different to being just a first time mum. I went back to work around 3 months after having my daughter and it took me a long time to find the balance. My client's never knew, but I had a nanny walking my daughter to my business in a stroller so I could breastfeed her between clients. When my daughter was 12 months old I placed her in childcare and my husband, Eddy, cared for her on Saturdays.

PM: Do you think women can 'have it all'?

Sophie: Yes. It's just that you'll be tired doing it! I think we have to believe that we can, or we'd give up? But it's definitely about balance.

PM: How do you achieve that balance?

Sophie: For me it's about getting the mornings right. It took me a long time to get into a rhythm that would ensure that the rest of my day had momentum. It's important for me to get up, get moving, get to the gym, take that first look at the day's emails and plan my day.

PM: What do you see as the benefits of being a working mum?

Sophie: I think it's good for children to see their parents working. It helps them to understand that you have to work hard to have what you want. I don't ever want my daughter to think that things come easily in life, particularly in an age where things are only going to get harder. There's so much competition now for educational opportunities and jobs – so I want her to see what it takes to get ahead.

PM: I understand that you live in Port Melbourne. What's great about raising your daughter here?

Sophie: Being able to access the beach and the beach parks. We make a real effort to get out and walk to a café for a coffee on the weekends or ride our bikes. I feel we really take advantage of living in this great area.

PM: With all the travel you do for work, how do you juggle the demands of motherhood?

Sophie: I've been on 8 planes since January, so it's an absolute team effort. I couldn't do what I do without my staff, my husband, my nanny, the cleaner, Christina's grandparents and my sister. They are all such an enormous help to me. I see the help as a way to be more of a mum. I don't want to spend my weekends cleaning when I could be spending quality time with my daughter. I've never felt threatened by the idea that a nanny would 'raise my child' – I simply don't see it that way. I'm raising my daughter. The short-term care and help we've had has just given us opportunities to be a family.

PM: How do you find time to take care of yourself and when you do, how do you do it?

Sophie: Taking care of myself is often the last thing on my list of priorities, but I'm trying really hard to get fit again. I was very fit before having my daughter, so getting back in to the gym has been important to me. I also love to indulge in a day spa treatment or catch up with girlfriends.

PM: What has been a career highlight or achievement for you?

Sophie: A recent invite to G'Day USA in America was pretty significant for me. I attended as a guest of Qantas and got to walk the red carpet. It was a great experience for me personally and professionally.

PM: What are you most passionate about?

Sophie: My family, business and the industry on the whole. I love meeting new people and learning from their stories and experiences.

PM: What top 3 travel destinations do you most want to see?

Sophie: South America (which I'll do this year), the Northern Lights and any of the worlds top 10 beaches – I love a great beach location for really winding down.

PM: Given your extensive travel experiences; what three places are "must sees"?

Sophie: Africa, you have to have a safari experience, Santorini and New York.



Courtesy of Soul Impressions Photography



Single mum L-J Lacey is quite literally opening the bookshelves and toy baskets of her home. Her independent children's book and toy store for children aged 0-14 years, showcases many of her and her children's childhood favourites. 222 Bay St.

The Port Melbourne: How many kids do you have and what are their ages?

L-J: I have 2 daughters, Lilu, 11 and Lija, 8.

PM: Of all the challenges of motherhood – what is your greatest achievement?

L-J: Giving my girls cuddles every night at bedtime. I say it's an achievement as I'm not always in the mood after a really busy day! So many things want my time and attention, but it's important to me that we have that special time to connect. It also tends to speed up the process of getting them into bed!

PM: What's the most important lesson your kids have taught you?

L-J: Just how strong I really am. It's so easy to give up on things when you're on your own, but now, the buck quite literally stops with me. They've also really changed me. It's so important that I model the behaviours of the women I want them to be.

PM: Tell me a bit about the motivation behind your business

– what started it all?

L-J: The idea came to Danielle and I on Melbourne Cup day in 2009. I was unhappy in my job, and so was my sister. My sister has a background in conference and event management and I had a background in web development, which was not conducive to raising kids. When I moved to Australia in 2007 I was struck by how hard it was to access quality books and toys, so in January of 2011, we turned our harebrained idea into reality and opened the doors to "Three Four Knock on the Door".

PM: Why did you choose Port Melbourne for your business?

L-J: I had spent some time in Port Melbourne and loved the vibe of the area – it felt like a place that would welcome the community building aspect of our business model. We've been so pleased with the response to our story time group and book club for under 14 year olds.

PM: What prompted you to offer your story time group in the store?

L-J: I moved a lot as a child because of my father's work, so it was so important to me to make my kids feel grounded and part of a community. Story time in the store is about that – creating community for mums who are doing the hard yards at home with little ones. Our groups are really small and intimate, which gives us and the kids, the opportunity to interact with the story, the storyteller and the group. It also includes a bit

of sing-along which the kids love. We've had kids that started in the story time group when they were born and they're still with us!

PM: For a web developer, there seems to be a real "teacher" in you. Where do you think that comes from?

L-J: Having kids! I came from a strong "reading" family, books were always made available to us and a lot of value was placed on reading. I've tried to instil the same values in my own girls and have always read to them and encouraged them to read aloud. For me, reading is more important than housework – it's going to have far more impact on their education and lives in the long run!

PM: As a busy working mum, how do you find the time to read? What are you reading at the moment?

L-J: I read nearly every book that we stock in the store. So does my sister. We rarely disagree on book selection, but when we do, they don't make it onto the shelves. It's so important to us that we know the literature we're selling and can speak to it personally. I currently have four books on the go; Queen Bees and Wannabes by Rosalind Wiseman, the first in the new 'Penelope Perfect' series by Chrissie Perry, The Adventures of Sir Roderick, The Not-Very Brave Knight by James O'Loughlin, and Awful Auntie by David Walliams (which is also our book club book).w

PM: Reading children's books can't be the most stimulating read for an avid reader?

L-J: They actually are! Children's books are a bit like children's film, they're layered with something for every age group. When we run our monthly book club for 9-12 year olds I try to explore some of those layers with the kids. They get a lot out of the discussion and activities and we get to be a little bit challenged.

PM: If you hadn't chosen motherhood what would your life look right now?

L-J: Probably a lot simpler, but the girls have also given me a happiness that I wouldn't have found without them. They really saved me. I had some dark days after my mother died when I was pregnant with my first child. I can say now that I'm through it, but my girls quite literally held my hand and walked me out of those hard times.

PM: How do you find time to take care of yourself and when you do, how do you do it?

L-J: I'm still working on the balance, but when I can give time to myself I like to sleep! Up until a year ago I hadn't had any regular time off since opening the store. It was a difficult decision, but we now close on a Monday. That Monday off has quite literally been a life and sanity saver. This year we closed after New Year for two weeks to take a holiday with the kids. I realise some customers found it trying, but I know that that time



away from the store helps us to love and appreciate what we have created and that's good for everyone.

PM: We hear of lot's of mum's starting a business from their passion. Is passion enough in business today?

L-J: No. Running your own business is like a marriage. There are times when you hate it and times when you love it – but if you remember why you're there, you can survive it. Like a marriage, you don't resent the hours you put in to it because you know why you're doing it and who you're doing it for. A good idea is not enough. Business smarts and a level head are imperative.

PM: What's the biggest challenge to running a business today?

L-J: People who think we have an agenda or motive for making the product recommendations we do. We work so hard to bring people the high quality, hand selected product that we stock, so the suggestion that we have some other motivation is really disheartening. We are so deeply invested in what we're doing that the criticism can be hard to take. The theft in the store is also really hurtful. In a business the size of ours, every theft has an impact. But on the bright side, we get such lovely feedback from our customers. Our Santa mailbox was a really huge success last year and the personal feedback from things like that makes it all worthwhile.

For this busy optometrist and mum of 3, running Eyes to Port is a family affair. Goldie Theodosiou and her husband Louis, bought the Bay Street practice 8 years ago and are raising their three young children to love travel and hard work. Eyes to Port at 248 Bay St.

The Port Melbourne: How many kids do you have and what are their ages?
Goldie: We have 3 children, Anastasia, 4, Alexandra, 12 and Nicholas who is 13.

PM: Tell me a bit about the motivation behind your business – what started it all?
Goldie: I’ve been working in this practice for 18 years, but about 8 years ago, my husband and I bought the practice from dispenser, David Watson. My husband is now the optical dispenser for the practice. It’s been a great career to combine with motherhood as I can work sessionally around the kids. I actually returned to work five days after having my last child. I placed her in a bassinet in the corner of the shop and just kept working. My client’s were fantastically supportive – even cuddling my daughter as I tested their eyes.

PM: What is your biggest challenge as a mum of three?
Goldie: I think the biggest challenge is spending enough time with them all. We’ve recently started closing the practice in the middle of the year for four weeks to travel with the kids. It’s a great way to be together and have quality family time. We also close for a couple of weeks after Christmas.

PM: It’s a tough decision to close the doors of your business. How do your clients feel about the closures?
Goldie: It is, but we get no RDO’s and no sick days. If we don’t take the time, no one will give it to us. We are an essential service, but not an emergency service, so our clients just get used to the times we’re not available. Our clients are actually really positive about it – I think they accept that as a family run business we need to take that time away.

PM: How have you juggled motherhood and running your business?
Goldie: I am very organised. Almost military in my approach. I have a place for everything and everything in its place. My big thing is to never leave until tomorrow, something I can do today. But I have to say, the afternoons are the hardest. Getting the kids to their swimming, dancing,



Courtesy of Soul Impressions Photography

basketball, or soccer after school is the biggest challenge. It’s hard, I feel like I have a constant running sheet in my mind of the all the things that have to be done. We’ve got great support though. The kid’s grandparents are rostered on for weekend sports as we both work in the practice on Saturdays.

PM: If you hadn’t chosen motherhood how would your life look right now?
Goldie: It would feel very empty! I can’t actually imagine life without the kids now, but I’m sure I’d still be working as an optometrist.

PM: What do you like best about being a Mum?
Goldie: I actually find it really rewarding. Seeing the kids grow and change and experience achievements in school is what makes it worthwhile. I had my first 2 kids in twelve months, and to be honest, those early years were just a blur. Having my third child gave me a chance to take it all in at a slower place and be a bit more involved.

PM: How do you balance the professional and personal aspects of your life working with your husband?
Goldie: Whilst there’s lots of common ground in what we do, we also have our own territories in the business. I run all the books and admin and complete the vision assessments and my husband manages the front of the practice and the dispensing. We have a great working relationship as we know each other so well. We can read each other and just know what needs to be done. I think it would be more difficult to work with someone I didn’t know so well. Our common goal also makes it easier. It’s a real family effort – the kids even come in and help with filing and cleaning glasses.

PM: How do you find time to take care of yourself and when you do, how do you do it?
Goldie: It’s rare, but when I do, I get my hair done. Prior to having my last child I would regularly go to the gym and had managed to run a half marathon. But having my last daughter has had a big impact on my available

time. I still aim to get back to that level of fitness however and complete a full marathon – even if I have to crawl through it!

PM: Do you suffer from ‘mummy guilt’?
Goldie: I do. I can be short tempered sometimes with the kids when I have a lot on my mind and I always feel guilt over that. Rushing through leisure activities with the kids can also make me feel really guilty.

PM: What is the biggest challenge for your business today?
Goldie: The growing online environment. I think it’s impacting every retailer. We used to stock a big range of sunglasses, but there’s just no demand for them anymore. We still supply prescriptions sunglasses, but not off-the-shelf ones. But the locals always come back for our service – we provide an important service to the Greek speaking community in the area.

PM: If you have time to read, what are you reading at the moment?
Goldie: I read voraciously and then not at all for ages. I recently read Khaled Hosseini’s ‘And the Mountains Echoed’; ‘Nightmares in the Saudi Arabian Desert’ by Alexandra Symeonidou; and ‘I am Malala’ by Malala Yousafzai.

PM: What worries you most as a mum?
Goldie: Social Media. I have so much less control over what influences them and their opinions. I also think that there’s a lot of pressure on kids today. And whilst I’m struggling to keep up with getting them to all their commitments, they’re also struggling to meet them.

PM: What is the one thing you’ve found most helpful in saving your time and sanity as a busy mum?
Goldie: Online shopping! It’s become my best friend and lifesaver. I just decided that I didn’t want to waste my weekends trawling through the shops when I could have that time with the kids doing more valuable things.

PM: What are you most passionate about in life?
Goldie: ensuring that my kids are well looked after and happy. I also like to think that through my work, I’m a better parent and that my kids understand the reasons why we work as hard as we do.

PM: Do you have any personal goals?
Goldie: That’s a simple one – to travel more.



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Mother of two Danielle McCaffrey works for Inner South Community Health as part of the Social Health & Inclusion Port initiative (SHIP). Danielle currently coordinates the Social Connections component of the SHIP project in Port Melbourne, including the volunteer aspect of the ‘Waterfront Welcomers’ project.

The Port Melbourne: *How many kids do you have and what are their ages?*
Danielle: I have two girls, Minna is 6 and Bessie is 4.

PM: *Of all the challenges of motherhood – what is your greatest achievement?*
Danielle: Sometimes just getting out of bed in the morning! But I would have to say finding the ‘balance’. I’m really lucky as I have a fantastically supportive husband, workplace and community.

PM: *What’s your secret to juggling it all?*
Danielle: Primarily my employer and my husband! But really, it’s all about communication. My employer is really flexible with hours and my husband does all the cooking and picking up of the girls from kinder and school, so I’m really lucky.

PM: *What’s the most important lesson your kids have taught you?*
Danielle: They’re definitely still teaching me patience! But more and more, I realise that they don’t care about anything but having my time and attention. None of the toys matter, what they really want is me. Besides, they can get great amusement from a cup and a flannel in the bath!

PM: *Tell me a bit about your work with the SHIP program and your role in it?*
Danielle: The SHIP project is about getting people from across the whole community in Port Melbourne working together to make the community as healthy and socially inclusive as it can be. My role is focused on helping people to build connections with others in the community, through initiatives like the ‘Waterfront Welcomers’ volunteering program. We’ve been so lucky to have over 50 volunteers come forward and 28 participate in the program. I’m always amazed by the pride that residents in Port Melbourne have for their suburb and its history. Most of our volunteers are retired or semi-retired and some have only lived in port Melbourne for a handful of years, but their enthusiasm for the area is incredible.

PM: *What’s the biggest challenge in your work?*
Danielle: Because it’s still a pilot project, understanding what works and what doesn’t is a big part of my role.

PM: *If you hadn’t chosen motherhood what would your life look right now?*
Danielle: I’d probably be working overseas in humanitarian aid and development. I had completed eight weeks of Spanish language classes and was scheduled to go to Peru for a four-month project when I discovered I was seven weeks pregnant with my first child. On the basis of some sound advice, I decided not to go. I’ve since learned not to plan too much – life tends to get in the way of plans!

PM: *Do you think women can ‘have it all’?*
Danielle: It’s funny I would never have described myself as a feminist before I had my kids, but staying home full time with them when they were young and understanding the inequities of parenting, I realised I probably always was one! I don’t think we can even debate ‘having it all’ until we view parents “equally”. All parents, regardless of gender need equal access to parental leave, flexible work arrangements and work opportunities.

PM: *What do you like best about being a mum?*
Danielle: The silliness and joy of it all. The yoghurt my kids had on their toast this morning! The dancing and hilarity of everyday life with kids.

PM: *If you have time to read, what are you reading at the moment?*
Danielle: I use public transport, so I often get the chance to catch up on a few novels on my kindle. I’m currently reading ‘The God of Small Things’ by Arundhati Roy and Russel Brand’s ‘Revolution’. I also take the chance to catch some podcasts when I’m doing the laundry or cleaning.

PM: *How do you find time to take care of yourself and when you do, how do you do it?*
Danielle: I like to go for a walk for 30 minutes to an hour a few times each week. It’s good alone time!

PM: *How do you maintain your personal identity as a mum?*
Danielle: I think you have to fight for it. You go from being the only self you’ve ever known, to having a child and being just a “boob”, to then being “mum” when your kids learn to talk. You wait so long to hear them say “mum”, now every sentence they say starts with “mum”!

PM: *How has being a mum changed you?*
Danielle: I think I developed certain strengths and a confidence in my own abilities. You leave your dignity at the hospital room door when you give birth, but I think I’ve come out of it with a better sense of who I am and what I can achieve. I have a very different perspective on the world since having kids and a real confidence in what I do and how I do it.

PM: *What are the benefits of being a working mum for you?*
Danielle: working has been great for my parenting. The time away from the kids makes me really appreciate them and the time I have with them. Work also gives me some much needed ‘balance’ in my life.

PM: *Does your success in the workplace bolster your confidence as a parent?*
Danielle: No. My kids don’t care what I do when I’m away from them. No amount of success makes me any more “right” when my kids don’t agree with me! But I do enjoy the accolades and delight on their faces when I come in from work.

PM: *What’s most important to you in raising your kids?*
Danielle: Building a sense of community. I want my kids to feel connected to the place and the people around them. One of my current projects focuses on the reactivation of Garden City and the Fishermen’s Bend Community Centre. I would love local mums and families to share their ideas for what their local community needs so that we can better understand how we can connect them and their kids to their environment. If you have suggestions for activities or programs you’d like to see at the Fishermen’s Bend Community Centre, contact Danielle on 03 9525 1300 or dmccaffrey@ischs.org.au



Mother of three Bernadene Voss, juggles family, children, her husband and the needs of our community in her role as Deputy Mayor/Councillor of Sandridge ward. While any one of those roles would constitute a full time job, this enthusiastic and dedicated mum is determined to meet the needs of Port Phillip’s community and its youth during her tenure.

The Port Melbourne: *How many children do you have and what are their ages?*

Bernadene: Lachlan 9, Caitlin 8 and Eliza 6. And yes, I had three in three years. When I look back on it now, I’m not sure how I did it.

PM: *What do you like best about being a Mum?*

Bernadene: Seeing the kids grow and develop. Seeing my influence and the impact I’m having on them as they grow is really rewarding.

PM: *Of all the challenges of motherhood – what is your greatest achievement?*

Bernadene: Just having them really! But I guess the fact that I manage to pull off juggling the needs of the children, my husband and my job is a big achievement.

PM: *What’s your secret to juggling all the competing demands in your life?*

Bernadene: I think it’s about having a job you love and sharing the load. I’m really fortunate that my job affords me the flexibility to take the kids to school and pick them up most days. I also try to get the kids down in the evening before going back out to work in the evening. I’m really lucky because I have a dedicated husband and amazing network of friends, who are also mums, that provide great support when I can’t be somewhere for the children. I’m just really lucky for all the support I have.

PM: *Do you have extended family providing support for your all-hours work schedule?*

Bernadene: No I actually don’t. I was raised on a farm in the country, so most of my family is not in the Melbourne metro area. I rely on the support of the friends I’ve made since the kids were young. I really couldn’t do what I do without them. But I consider myself lucky, my Dad died very unexpectedly when I was young, so my 6 siblings and I were raised by our mum. I look back and wonder how she did it as a single mum, but she managed to work and raise us on her own.

PM: *How did you find your way to Port Melbourne after growing up in the country?*

Bernadene: I went to boarding school in Melbourne before going to uni,

so I had spent a lot of time in the city. I moved to Port Melbourne when I met my husband in 2000 – it was neutral ground for us and seemed like a really great growth area. It also allowed us to walk to our respective workplaces and enjoy the great parks and beaches.

PM: *There’s a really strong sense of community in Port Melbourne – why do you think that is?*

Bernadene: The sense of community in Port Melbourne is incredibly strong, I think it’s on account of the area’s diversity and adversity. The people of Port Melbourne have had to fight for what they have and out of that fight has come a great community spirit and connectedness.

PM: *How do you find raising a young family in Port Melbourne?*

Bernadene: I think there are enormous challenges and opportunities. We’re fortunate to have our kids in a fantastic local state school, but I think every parent in the area worries about the secondary education opportunities for their kids. There’s a real need to address the amenities and resources available to our young people and I hope to be able to influence that. Aside from the educational challenges, the proximity of everything in Port Melbourne means we don’t have to travel very far for anything the kids are doing.

PM: *What motivated your decision to run for council?*

Bernadene: First and foremost my decision was motivated by having kids and being involved in the local community. But I was also tapped on the shoulder by another women who suggested that I give it a go. Having first hand insight into the issues facing young people and their families, I was really motivated to step up and give it a go.

PM: *Do you think women can ‘have it all’?*

Bernadene: No, I don’t think you can have it all at the same time. I think women are capable of having everything they want, but you need to be realistic – you can’t be all

PM: *How do you find time to take care of yourself and when you do, how do you do it?*

Bernadene: I don’t. I’m actually really bad at that. But I’m actively trying to make time to walk each day and watch my weight.

PM: *What’s the biggest challenge in your job?*

Bernadene: I think the biggest challenge is balancing the needs and expectations of my family, children, husband and the community. No one goes into this job for the popularity or money and there’s often little appreciation for the work we do.

PM: *Given that you’re not in it for the popularity or money, what keeps you going?*

Bernadene: It’s a four-year term! But really, I feel very strongly about serving the community that elected me. I’m very driven to address the very important issues facing our school-aged children. There are so many unmet needs that are impacting on their opportunities, health and well-being. I want to see that change. There’s also the ‘smiles’ and thanks when I walk down the street that make the tougher days easier.

PM: *What would you consider your greatest success in the role to be so far?*

Bernadene: That I’m still enjoying it! I’m not sure that the aspects of the role I’ve enjoyed the most would be interesting to the general public? But for me it’s about impacting council direction and planning. It’s the little wins in the strategic planning that feel like big successes to me.

PM: *If you hadn’t chosen motherhood how would your life look right now?*

Bernadene: Probably much the same? I would still be really active in the community, still looking for volunteer opportunities and ways to serve the community. It’s very much in my DNA.

PM: *If you have time to read, what are you reading at the moment?*

Bernadene: I read around 600-700 A4 pages of text every week, but it’s not fiction! My role requires me to read papers for endorsement, board papers and relevant legislation. I wish I had more time to read for pleasure, but time doesn’t always permit it.

Bernadene Voss



For this energetic and active mum of two, ‘having it all’ is all about how you see it. Holly Carthew is living out her passion for pies and motherhood with a creative spirit that seems limitless. The business she runs with husband Michael makes decadent pies for a growing number of cafes and wholefood grocers. You can get your hands on a fresh Pure Pie at 383 Bay Street, everyday between 10am and 4.30pm.

The Port Melbourne: How many kids do you have and what are their ages?

Holly: We have two boys, William who is 4, and Fred who is 3.

PM: Of all the challenges of motherhood – what is your greatest achievement?

Holly: Right now? Just doing it ‘all’! It’s a big undertaking to start a business with such small children, but I think you just have to get in there and do what has to be done.

PM: What’s most important to you when it comes to parenting?

Holly: I would have to say, teaching them good manners and gratitude

for the opportunities that they have, and ensuring that they experience a sense of freedom. I want them to feel that with hard work and passion, they can achieve any of their goals. It’s also really important to both of us (as parents) that our children be connected to nature and the world around them while still having a sense of their place in it.

PM: Do you think those values were instilled in you by your parents?

Holly: Yes, definitely. I was raised in an incredibly happy, active family that was always outdoors. I was skiing by age four and spent my entire childhood on a bike, or rafting, or canoeing or running around doing

something physical. I hope our boys can have the same experience of the world when they’re old enough.

PM: What do you like best about being a Mum?

Holly: The laughter and the silly things little kids do. Kids have a wonderful way of bringing you back into the moment and I love that. I love that my kids can decide that throwing rocks in puddles is the most important thing in that moment and that I can now enjoy that too.

PM: Tell me a bit about the motivation behind your business – what started it all?

Holly: It was really just about taking a ‘punt’. My husband was a chef working long hours, so I figured if I was ever going to see him, we would need to find a way to work together. I’ve got a design background so I felt we could create something really unique in the marketplace. I felt that there was a real niche market for luxury pies that we could fill.

PM: Why pies? Where did that inspiration come from?

Holly: It was really a very nostalgic thing. I think there is something very lovely and heart warming about a beautifully decadent pie. Both my husband and I remember eating beautiful pies as young children and felt that a lot of other people could relate to that too.

PM: Your business has gathered a great deal of momentum in a short period of time – what do you attribute that to?

Holly: The retail shop in Bay Street has given us a presence that not even we really anticipated. It was kind of a happy accident that it’s done so well. Our pies are also available at 10 farmers markets each month, so that’s given us some great exposure. We’re currently building the wholesale arm of our business and will welcome some great new pie technology from the USA this year to streamline our production processes.

PM: You started Pure Pies only a couple of years ago, at the same time that you started your family – what were the biggest challenges in those early days?

Holly: Looking back on it, it was a crazy thing to do, but the timing seemed right. We had Will in December of 2010 and then started Pure Pie in early 2011. We then had Fred in 2012. I don’t recommend driving around delivering pies with a newborn in the car, but back then, we were the ‘business’. If something needed to be done, I just had to do it.

PM: Do you think there’s an ideal time for mum’s to start a business?

Holly: When your kids are out of nappies! I think it’s fair to say that you probably can’t raise little kids and start a business without going mad, but who said that going mad was a bad thing?!

PM: Do you think women can ‘have it all’?

Holly: Absolutely yes, but at a cost. I think women generally take on so much more than men.

PM: Do you have it all?

Holly: Yes I do. Sometimes I forget that, but when I look closely at my life, I really do. I have so much to be grateful for.

PM: What are the top three things on your list of ‘things to achieve’?

Holly: The first is being really fit. I think that if you’re ok with your body, you’re ok with the universe. Secondly, I want to travel. I have so many places to see still. And thirdly I want to lay roots down in a home that can be my boy’s forever home. Culturally, it’s really important for me to ‘keep the home fires burning’, so a space where my boys can always come back to is really important to me. I’d also just love to have a big garden that the boys can play in, and some personal space to explore my creative interests.

PM: Living, working and parenting with your husband must make it hard to separate your personal and business life?

Holly: It does. It’s actually really hard and takes a lot of work to manage all those relationships – but we are a team in everything we do. I think creating some boundaries is really important though. We bring two very different approaches and skill sets to our business, but I think we complement each other well. I’m a creative by nature and a real risk-taker, my husband is more methodical and very much a ‘thinker’. For the most part, I work ‘on’ the business, while my husband works ‘in’ it – on the production side.

PM: How do you find time to take care of yourself and when you do, how do you do it?

Holly: I love to run. I’m currently getting inspiration from ‘Soaring Jane’. She has developed a number of 20-minute workouts that are perfect because well, they’re only 20 minutes!

PM: You seem fearless in motherhood and life – is there anything that scares you?

Holly: I think not achieving a sense of security for my children scares me. I’m also way more cautious about the kids than I thought I would be.

PM: Do you feel like you’ve followed your dreams?

Holly: Yes, but the dream is still there. It’s not complete yet. I still have so much more to achieve in business, family and life.



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