Iceberger News
Editor: Ria Bleathman

BRIGHTON ICEBERGERS

22nd October 2026

Melbourne's year-round open water swimming group



Rupert Hugh-Jones 2nd August 2026 *photo by Ria*

Dangerous When Wet

by Ria Bleathman

I recently attended the world premiere of *Dangerous When Wet: The Musical* in Sydney about two Australian women who, through the medium of swimming in the early days of the 20th century, changed the world.

The vaudeville style musical was backed by the Randwick City Council and tells the story of two local swimmers, Fanny Durack and Mina Wylie in their fierce struggles to be the first Australian women to compete in the 100m freestyle at the 1912 Stockholm Olympics.



The musical is an aquatic version of *Muriel's Wedding* and is a clap-along, sing-along joy. The storyline was also impressively accurate from a factual-historical perspective.

The audience was peppered with swimmers from the various Coogee Beach clans who had traded their goggles and bathers for the sartorial accoutrements of polished theatre goers.

The musical was held under the glorious golden proscenium arch of the heritage-listed Randwick Town Hall which added lustre and significance to the historical context of the storyline.

Readers will recall my barely restrained fandom when it comes to these two women: they appeared in Newsletters 28th March 2024 (Fanny Durack) and 25th April2024 (Mina Wylie). After being largely written out of history for over a century these two remarkable Australians are finally receiving their dues - they smashed taboos, overcame barriers and continue to inspire women around the world.

Iceberger Calendar

Date	Event
Friday 11th December 2026	Rob Hooper Memorial Swim - Scott Buchanan
Sunday 13th December 2026	Olsen-Hooper Classic - Ross MacDowell
Monday 21st December 2026	Iceberger Christmas Lunch at RBYC. Bookings required - Sam Paynter

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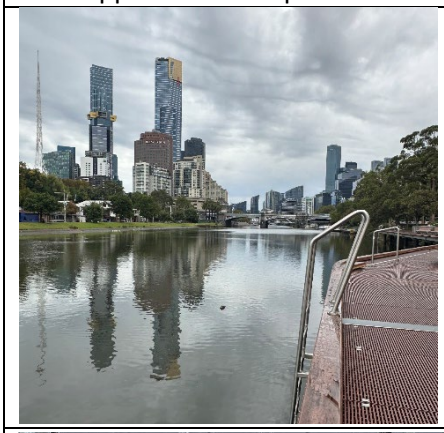
…	**…meanwhile, back in Zürich**	by Ria Bleathman

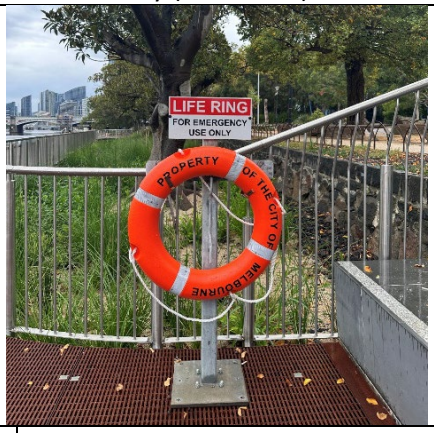
Readers will recall two seemingly unconnected Newsletter articles, the first being my slow-burn excitement about the prospect of swimming in the Yarra River (refer Newsletters 20th August 2020 and 14th March 2024) and the recent quirky message I received from Mischa in Zürich (refer Newsletter 8th October 2026).

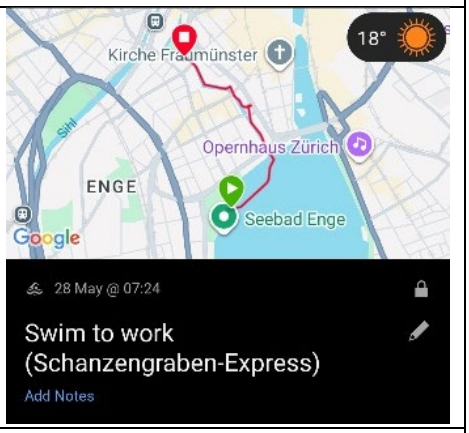
So, what's the connection? Well Mischa has the unique habit of swimming to work in the historic canals of Zürich. Mischa explains his "slightly odd" commuting routine in terms to which Icebergers can relate:

> "Brighton Icebergers might particularly appreciate the idea that swimming does not always need a race, a challenge or even a special occasion. Sometimes it can simply be how you start a working day".
>
> "On suitable mornings, I take public transport into the city, then get into Lake Zürich and swim the last 1.35 km of my commute through the Schanzengraben, Zürich's old city moat. My clothes and work things come with me in a waterproof tow float".
>
> "I swim in rain and sometimes snow (most fun!) where the water is below 5°C. Most fun swims are after really heavy rain the current becomes much stronger. That is why I jokingly call it the "Schanzengraben-Express" — once I am on board, it helps carry me towards the office with doubled or tripled speed. Indeed, people on the street and in the train look somewhat strange at me sometimes. Not sure what's wrong with them. 😉 "

The City of Melbourne has a stated objective of making the Yarra River swimmable by 2050 which is a bit of a wait before we can include a swim-to-work as a commuting option, although the recent update of Birrarung Marr appears to anticipate a swimmable waterway (below left):









Icebergers will relate to Mischa's concluding comment about his "slightly odd" habit:

> Another great thing about a morning swim is that it takes you out of bed before the sunrise - allowing you to become part of Nature's wake up ritual.

…and even moreso for us Melbourne locals should the Yarra River became a commuting option - swimming in a great river in one of the world's great cities, now that would be Marvellous Melbourne!

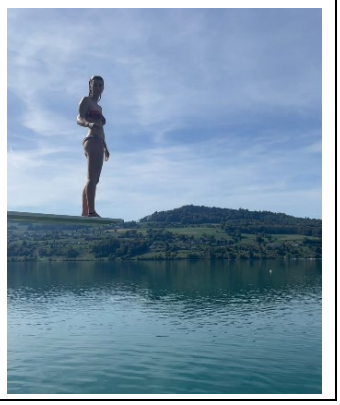
Above LtoR: Yarra River and Melbourne City at Birrarung Marr and the Schanzengraben Express, Zürich

Left: Mischa Gurov – and another tough day at the office.

Letters to the Editor

Peter Maddison - Thank you, Ria, for your ever interesting Newsletter. 175 editions is some milestone. It is exactly your generosity that keeps us bound together.
Yours Peter (aka '*Water in the Veins*').

Penny Szatmary - How wonderful to receive a digital 'message in a bottle' from the other side of the world. He's right [Mischa from Zürich] the masterful way you bring to life the kaleidoscope of characters at RBYC and weave that in with (always) interesting tidbits would read as quirky. My daughter has been swimming in Zürich this week and it looks incredible, the water is so clear (not like us this week). Here she is...(pictured right).
Thanks again Ria for your Newsletters.



Joe Tsalinidis – Dear Ria, Thank you for the wonderful work with the Iceberger Newsletter. I particularly enjoy your poetry and finding out about new members.

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