

A move without moving

SAMANTHA LANDY

THE addresses of more than 5000 homes and businesses in the Melton area will be changed, after the State Government approved the creation of 11 new suburbs.

They will be named Harkness, Weir Views, Cobblebank, Strathulloch, Thornhill Park, Grangefields, Bonnie Brook, Aintree, Fieldstone, Fraser Rise and Deanside.

Melton City Council says they will be established across the "growth corridor" between the Melton township, 35km west of the CBD, and Caroline Springs, in areas including Plumpton, Rockbank and Truganina.

"Smaller changes will also take in long-established localities such as Melton South and Melton West, effectively changing the address of over 5000 homes and businesses," a council statement said.

The State Government's Office of Geographic Names recently approved the new suburbs, which Melton council expects to come into effect midway through the year.

The council said the changes were needed to ensure suburb densities didn't exceed 20,000 residents, with population growth strong in the area.



OILS REUNION ON HORIZON

MIDNIGHT Oil is poised to announce a reunion concert.

Mushroom Promotions yesterday invited media to join Midnight Oil for an announcement in Sydney on Friday.

Last year, frontman Peter Dinklage (above) released a solo album, *A Version of Now*.

BRAVEHEART



Teenager Chloe Downs underwent pioneering surgery. Picture: LAWRENCE PINDER

Chloe plays her part in helping pioneer a life-saving surgery

THE NEW OPERATION

- Performed on children and teenagers who have had a series of surgeries called the Fontan procedure to make their heart operate with only one pump.
- Some will develop the life-threatening complication, protein-losing enteropathy, caused by high pressure in the liver and gut.
- In the new operation, surgeons connect the three veins of the liver directly to the heart, so the blood flowing from the gut and liver bypasses the lungs.
- A stent is threaded into a thigh vein and up into the main lower vein of the body.

SURGEONS at the Royal Children's Hospital have pioneered an operation to save the lives of children suffering from a devastating health condition.

The world-first procedure has cured Victorian patients of a complication of heart surgery that can kill within five years.

After almost 20 years of research and investigation, Associate Professor Christian Brizard, director of the Cardiac Surgery Unit at the RCH, has performed his unique operation on children with incredible outcomes.

"This is a big breakthrough for us and for these patients," Prof Brizard said.

"It's never been done before and, on the patients we performed the operation on, their gastroenterologists say they are now cured."

Melbourne teenager Chloe Downs was the first female in the world to have the operation after developing protein-

EXCLUSIVE LUCIE VAN DEN BERG

losing enteropathy (PLE), where proteins leak in the gut.

Her parents, Simone and Stewart, did not hesitate when asked if they wanted to trial the experimental surgery.

"It has saved her life and we are so grateful to be able to spend more time with our delightful and joyous daughter," Mrs Downs said.

Born with half a heart, she had operations called the Fontan procedure.

It leaves the heart to operate with just one pump and it relies on increased pressure in the veins to push blood into the lungs.

"Most of the organs can tolerate this high venous pressure, particularly the brain, heart and kidneys, but the liver cannot," Prof Brizard said.

The increased pressure is more than double what is seen

in a normal heart and 5 per cent of patients with a Fontan procedure develop PLE.

It impacts on everything from the immune system and metabolism of the organs to the blood's ability to clot.

Chloe's parents signed the 16-year-old up for the experimental surgery after months of suffering and deterioration.

"She had put on weight; her face, stomach and legs were big and swollen from all the fluid that was building up," Mrs Downs said.

"Not only was she compromised physically, then she was put on a no-fat diet and fluid restrictions so she couldn't even eat cake at a birthday party or drink water when she wanted and her gut was a real mess. It was horrible.

"We were beginning to lose hope when they told us they had an experimental operation that could work on Chloe."

The surgery restores a nor-

mal pressure in the liver and gut, stopping the proteins leaking.

It has taken Chloe a year to recover from the surgery, but it has been a stunning success.

"We are so grateful to Christian, the man who saved her life, and we are so proud of her," Mrs Downs said.

"We feel privileged that we have been chosen to parent such a unique and incredible young woman."

As for her part in helping surgeons pioneer a surgery that will help children worldwide, Chloe couldn't be more pleased.

"Thank you to all the doctors and nurses and especially Christian Brizard for doing the surgery and looking after me and thank you to my family and friends for your support and prayers," she said.

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