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the South Sydney Herald

VOLUME ONE NUMBER SIXTY-SIX NOVEMBER '08 CIRCULATION 22,000 ALEXANDRIA BEACONSFIELD CHIPPENDALE DARLINGTON ERSKINEVILLE GLEBE KINGS CROSS NEWTOWN REDFERN SURRY HILLS WATERLOO WOOLLOOMOOLOO ZETLAND

REFUGEES REUNITED, FINALLY

Nicholas McCallum

The “quick fix” of the Rudd Government to decrease the populations of detention centres hasn’t adequately addressed the problems of those seeking refugee status, and some are now being deported.

One Bangladeshi man who experienced hardship in a detention centre is Abul Monsur. He is now working hard to make a life for his recently arrived family. Babul, as his friends call him, spent more than three years in detention after it was alleged that he had been working whilst living in Australia on a bridging visa.

To this day, no evidence has been supplied to prove that Babul was in breach of his visa conditions. For immigrants, and other people seeking refugee status in Australia, there is no presumption of innocence.

When Babul left Bangladesh he left behind his pregnant wife and one-year-old daughter. Now, after a 17-year absence, he is reunited with his wife, Selma, and his teenage daughters, Sheraka, 17, and Suchona, 16, a mix of excitement and nerves as they start their new life in Australia. And Babul couldn’t be happier.

“When I left she was a little baby I could hold,” Babul said of his eldest daughter who will be entering year eleven. “Now I want her to be a doctor.”

The long awaited reunion of the Monsur

family almost failed to materialise. It may not have happened without the help of their “aunty,” Natalie Gould, a Newtown resident who is now playing host to the newly arrived family until the time when they can establish themselves in their own home.

The Department of Immigration had at first refused to recognise Babul and Selma’s application for a spousal visa, due to the length of time they had spent apart. But Natalie puts this down to a simple cultural divide. “The period that [Babul and Selma] spent apart is nothing. Bangladeshi women will wait for a long time,” she said, stressing the point that many people have their visas refused without receiving any explanation as to why. “They’re simply trapped in the system.”

Most people are not fortunate enough to receive the support that Natalie Gould has shown to Babul and his family. Those who find themselves in similar situations are on their own, with no job, no Medicare and with nothing definite about their future.

“On a bridging visa you can’t even afford to eat,” Natalie stated. And whilst she is almost regretful that she can’t help everyone, she believes that the current Federal Government should take responsibility for the policies of the past. “We’re a multicultural nation and this whole thing should be fixed up,” she said. “Labor needs to start showing some leadership.”

SSH



Abul Monsur with daughters Sheraka, Suchona, and wife Selma Photo: Ali Blogg

Elderly residents at risk in public housing complex

Aaron Jones

Emergency services have been denied simple access to a public housing complex in Darlington.

Elderly residents in need of emergency services are unable to speak to paramedics upon their arrival as there is no intercom to communicate. Alan Chapman, one of the residents concerned, says that while the state of the housing is in a dreadful condition, the need for an intercom and easy emergency access is a high priority.

“The ambulance can’t get in, police can’t get in, security can’t get in,” he said. “There’s no intercom at all and

it’s an inconvenience for all people. We have to go all the way downstairs to let people in.”

Mr Chapman said that phone calls are now being made to residents to ensure their safety and wellbeing since a resident’s death had been unknown for six weeks.

Diana Lambert, who is also a resident of the public housing estate, said that the need for an improved setup for emergency access is very important. “Amputees, stroke victims and the elderly are all being put here. It’s the wrong place for them because they don’t get the care they need,” she said. Residents must come downstairs themselves and physically open the door in order to allow

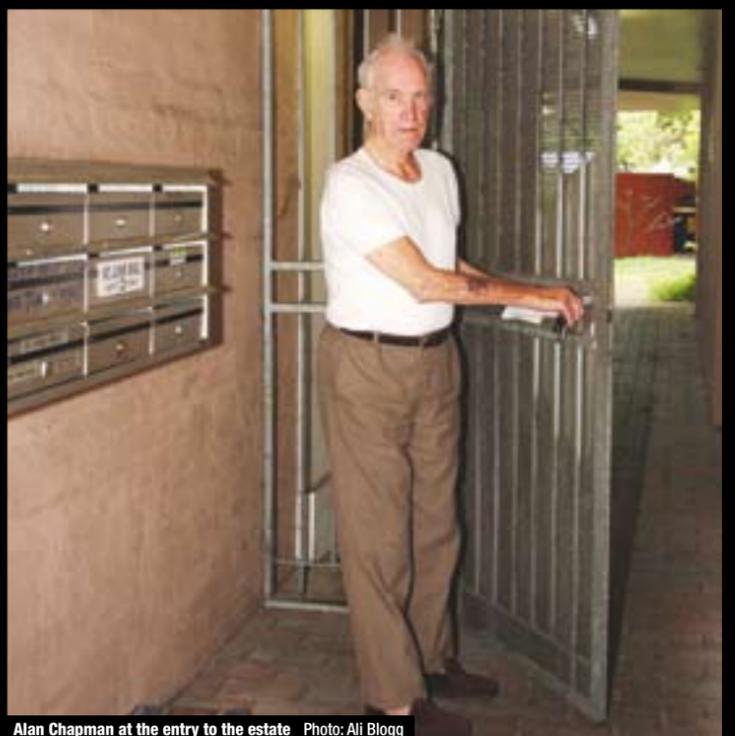
visitors entry.

Mrs Lambert also said that the grounds are in a poor state and that something needs to be done immediately. “The grounds are so neglected and the lawn is just dust now,” she said. “Ninety per cent of people here are elderly, who are on high dosage medication and can’t hear emergency staff from the road.”

Mrs Lambert said that she will continue to petition local authorities in order to improve the current situation.

Both Mr Chapman and Mrs Lambert said that they are in communication with NSW Deputy Premier Carmel Tebbutt about the improvements needed at the public housing estate which, for so long, has been ignored.

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Alan Chapman at the entry to the estate Photo: Ali Blogg

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News

CUB development to cast shadow over Chippendale

Pam Dagwell

The history of Carlton United Breweries is one of mergers, acquisitions and continual growth, and the company is one of the success stories of corporate Australia. The inner Sydney suburb of Chippendale dates back to 1819 when William Chippendale was granted the area as an estate. It has been dominated by the Kent Brewery for over 170 years. The village atmosphere of the suburb has been endangered since it was announced in 2003 that the brewery (which was sold to CUB by Tooth & Co in 1982) would close in February 2005 and the 5.8 hectare site would be sold. Chippendale residents and business owners are determined to salvage what they can.

Since the then Minister for Planning, Frank Sartor, approved the new owner's (Fraser's Property Australia) concept plan for the site in February 2007, concerns have been raised over a number of issues. There have been gains along the way - in the heritage and environmental debates, in the acquisition of more parkland for the existing community, in the reduction of car spaces, and in the funding of more affordable housing for the inner city.

Still, the locals are objecting to the \$2 billion "over-development" of the site.

David Polkington of the Chippendale Resident Action Group says: "The situation was bad enough before, but now that Frasers have submitted an application to vary the Masterplan, things are worse." The Combined Chippendale Community Groups (CCCG) say the amended plan seeks to increase the bulk and density of the development by between 8-10 per cent, resulting in an estimated \$150m-\$250m of extra profit for Frasers.

Due to the increased height of the buildings, local streets such as Abercrombie, Queen, Wellington, O'Connor, Kensington and many more, will be in shadow for most of the day. Main Park, the 5,000 square metre public park sought by Council as a condition of the original development application, will also be overshadowed, and it will be difficult for grass to grow.

Ownership of other open spaces such as the "open area" to the east of the Brewery Yard will not be retained



The view over the CUB site Photo: Ali Blogg

by the City but will be privately held, offering little security of recreational space for future generations. Frasers also proposes that the new roads are to be privately owned.

The montage of pictures obtained by the CCCG clearly illustrates the huge bulk of the new L-shaped building which will run up Abercrombie Street - a 62 metre street wall dwarfing The Clare Hotel on

the corner. The super-imposed view from City Road shows a massive structure looming over other already tall buildings, the whole vista looking like a scene from *Gulliver's Travels*.

With commercial and residential blocks on this scale, the almost 2,000 car on-site parking area proposed by Frasers will be well-used, especially if a rumoured 24/7 supermarket takes up a

tenancy offer. "This traffic will flow onto Broadway streets which are already grid-locked," says David Polkington.

Greens Councillor, Chris Harris says: "Car parking allowances are too generous...and three times what the rest of Chippendale has voluntarily accepted. The area is better serviced by public transport than any other site in Australia."

Linda Scott, who ran as a Labor candidate for the last Council election, is also concerned about the traffic impacts of the site. "I do think the Lord Mayor will have to work very hard to ensure the community can cope with the resulting traffic changes in the area," she says.

Dr Meredith Burgmann, the ALP Councillor on City Council, says there needs to be adequate pedestrian access. "We don't want to end up with a 'gated' community which will cut Chippendale in half." She says she supports the residents in their concerns and has found the CCCG to be "knowledgeable and reasonable". "They know there will be high-rise buildings on the site but the issues they speak of need attention," she says.

Cr Harris says that if the changes to the concept plan are approved, the density ratio will be 33 per cent more than that recommended by the independent studies commissioned by the City in 2006. The Greens do not support the increase and "if the Minister [of Planning] relents and approves the over-development she should ensure that the affordable housing levy is increased together with the contribution to the City of Sydney so that public facilities can be expanded and upgraded."

Following the 30-day public display of the amended plans in August, the new State Minister for Planning, Kristina Keneally, accepted submissions for and against the changes from residents, Sydney Council and State agencies. A spokesperson from the Department of Planning said the submissions had been passed to Frasers for a response and when that comes back "the Department will finalise its assessment of the proposal".

The SSH was unable to obtain an answer as to when the final decision was likely to be made.

Demolition of the site will be completed by the end of 2008, and Stage 2 will begin in 2009 with the pouring of the concrete building slabs. SSH

Supermarket a threat to "village life" in Erskineville?

Ellice Mol

Erskineville residents met again on Wednesday October 15 to plan the next phase in a 12-month-long fight to stop the development of a supermarket on the corner of Erskineville Road and Gowrie Street. City of Sydney Council refused the development on the grounds that it was too large. However, Harold Finger, the developer, has since appealed the decision, taking the matter to the Land and Environment Court.

Council lawyers organised a briefing of the case at the Holy Trinity Church on Roachford Street, where residents read prepared statements for the hearing.

The owner of Deli Erskineville, Saso Boseviski, said Erskineville does not have the infrastructure to support the development, and the population in the area is not large enough to sustain a two-storey supermarket, adding: "The village as it is, is perfectly suited to a village life with a sense of community. This is the thing a supermarket will take away."

Local resident, Brett Mason, voiced his concerns about the additional noise and environmental implications at a time when the world is looking to reduce energy consumption. He says truck deliveries increase pressure on the environment as they wait to unload their deliveries, sitting idle and spreading pollution into the nearby surrounds.

Mr Mason said it is impossible for a truck to "navigate the already narrow streets and rejoin the traffic on Erskineville Road which also suffers from gridlock".

Catherine Spooner, from the Friends of Erskineville Working Group, offered the thought that the gathering was a rehearsal for the court case. The turnout at the Holy Trinity Church was considerable. With every pew in the church occupied, some people had to stand outside the entrance.

Leslie Clarke, Friends of Erskineville member, said that the residents of Erskineville were not anti-development. "We welcome appropriate development that will compliment the Erskineville area," she said.

Council lawyer, Chris McEwen, says the case will begin at the site of the proposed development on November 24. The presence of residents is more than enough, he says, to send a strong message about the opposition to the development. SSH

The hearing will begin at 9.30am on the corner of Erskineville Road and Gowrie Street on November 24.

Apology: Last month the SSH included an article and interview with Supt Luke Freudenstein, Redfern's Police Commander. Supt Freudenstein was NOT found "guilty of colluding with a fellow officer". Indeed, he was never charged to have had to appear in court. We apologise for the inference.

News



The Toxteth Hotel in Glebe Photo: Ali Blogg

Once were activists

James Diak

Toxteth Talks is a "Politics in the Pub"-style public forum where various personalities are invited to speak on a certain topic. Held at the Toxteth Hotel on Glebe Point Road, the regular event is organised by local Labor Party member, Kate Barton. My first visit was on assignment for the SSH to cover a discussion entitled: "Community Activists - Parochial Partisans or Community Caretakers?"

Assembled as speakers on the topic were: Dr Meredith Burgmann, former president of the NSW Legislative Council; Frank Sartor, former Independent Mayor of the City of Sydney and more recently Labor Planning Minister; Jon McEnhoe from the Glebe Society; Gary Moore, former CEO of the NSW Council of Social Services; and Kate Lamb, recently re-elected as an Independent Councillor on Willoughby City Council.

Each of the speakers felt that at one time in their lives they were community activists, with most now having moved into the political establishment. The contrast could not have been sharper than with respect to Frank Sartor, who rose to the heights of Planning Minister,

only to end up implementing Part 3A of the Planning Act. Part 3A places unprecedented power with the Minister, and erodes the capacity for community input into planning decisions. This point was not lost on Cr Kate Lamb whose background includes fighting State Government motorways on Sydney's northside.

Best known to many Greens for her partisan behaviour as President of the Upper House of NSW Parliament, Meredith Burgmann was keen to offer some explanations for Labor's poor showing in the recent Local Government elections. Citing developer donations as an issue with bite, Dr Burgmann claimed developers were not making donations, something Greens researchers might take issue with. Check the facts for yourself on the website www.democracy4sale.org.

"Politics in the Pub"-style events can be a great way to get a fix of local politics. Toxteth Talks may be designed for a Labor audience, and I suspect the compere can be prone to make the odd tactless comment, but for those who like to express their opinion over a couple of drinks there can be nothing better than the cut and thrust of heated debate.

James Diak is the Education Projects Manager for the NSW Greens.

SSH

Tell your kids about Peter Norman

Elizabeth Koorey

A community street party to celebrate Peter Norman Day was held on Thursday October 9, from 5 to 9pm, at Leamington Lane, near Macdonaldtown Station.

At the time of Norman's death in 2006, the US Track and Field Federation declared October 9 Peter Norman Day. "Go and tell your kids about Peter Norman," Olympian Tommie Smith said at his funeral.

In 1993-1994 house owner Silvio was asked by muralists if they could recreate a famous photograph from the 1968 Mexico Olympics on his wall.

Three Proud People was re-born: Tommie Smith, John Carlos and Peter Norman on the dais at the medal ceremony for the 200 metres final, as a three-metre mural on the corner of Leamington Lane and Pine Street.

2008 commemorates forty years since the photo was taken and a free community street party was had by locals.

Kids faces were painted as locals and their friends arrived. Central and

Latin American DJs had the laneway jumping, after a cracking collection of acoustic songs by local, Cash Weijers. Special guests, CuzCo, checked in with a First Australian flavour that was exquisite, their lyrics maintaining an edge and groove. Backed by Peter Strong on turntables, Wire MC & ChooChoo finished off the party with an inspirational funky tone.

Peter Norman is an able spirit for reconciliation - check out the movie/book Salute and Wikipedia with comprehensive links to his story.

Organisers of this community celebration want to extend a thank you to local residents (especially Silvio), performers, helpers, and everyone who turned up.

However, there is a problem for those who want see the mural from the Station. Rail Corp over the last couple of years has erected a barricade in the area to minimise the noise levels for residents in Erskineville. The noise may have been lessened but the mural is less visible from that position. The organisers were asking people to sign a petition asking Rail Corp to make the barrier transparent.

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New Minister for Redfern-Waterloo

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Last month saw NSW politics in turmoil with a new Premier and Deputy Premier, and the departure from the scene of Frank Sartor, the former Planning Minister and the Minister responsible for the Redfern-Waterloo Authority. Kristina Keneally, the former Minister for Ageing and Disability, was given Frank Sartor's previous areas of responsibility, alongside her being the Member for Heffron. Some are suggesting that this may be a problem, others that local people will find her easier to deal with than her predecessor. The SSH asked Geoff Turnbull of REDWatch to collate a few questions for Ms Keneally.

Q. When setting up the RWA, Frank Sartor told residents he hoped his successor would not change what he put in place. Will you review the implementation of the RWA Act?

There are no plans to review the Redfern-Waterloo Authority Act.

Q. Central to the success of plans for Redfern Waterloo is what happens with Redfern Station. Minister Watkins's promise of community consultation on the design options while still on the RWA website has never happened. Will you release the proposed and preferred options for community comment?

The Government has determined that the net proceeds from the sale of surplus lands at North Eveleigh will be committed to the upgrade of Redfern Station. When detailed proposals for the upgrade are developed they will be subject to community consultation in the normal manner.

Q. Minister Sartor promised quarterly community meetings with residents but never delivered, he set up "Ministerial Advisory Committees" that the minister never attended and which don't ask for advice. What will you do to provide community input into the RWA?

The RWA has numerous mechanisms for seeking community input into the



Kristina Keneally Photo: Ali Blogg

work it undertakes, including Ministerial Advisory Committees. These mechanisms have proved to be effective and I intend for these to continue.

In my view, community input must take several forms. It bears remembering that the RWA has sought community input on each of its major plans: Human Services, Built Environment, and Employment & Enterprise Plan. The consultation provided not only the opportunity for submissions, but also information sessions - at various times of the day and with interpreters - to facilitate input from as wide a range of people as possible.

Of course, other projects undertaken by the RWA also seek public comment. For example, the Eveleigh Heritage Walk Project Application just came off public exhibition in August.

As the local member, I also regularly hold mobile offices, as well as meetings with public housing residents, in the Redfern-Waterloo area. This supplemental source of information will be of great use to me as the Minister for Redfern-Waterloo.

Q. What will you do to ensure that public tenants in Redfern-Waterloo receive the level of services needed to enable them to live harmoniously in an increasingly

gentrified high density area?

The RWA's Human Services Plan is premised on the more efficient and effective delivery of human services. The work currently being undertaken by the RWA and Housing NSW on Stage Two of the Built Environment Plan is also intended to deliver improved public housing over time.

Q. Redfern-Waterloo is cut off from the Station by the impact of the twin arterial roads of Gibbons and Regent. Is this an issue you will address as Minister for Planning and Redfern-Waterloo?

Improved connectivity is a key objective of the RWA's Built Environment Plan (Stage One) and will be addressed through future developments in the Regent St/Gibbons St commercial precinct and through the upgrade to Redfern Station.

Q. Do you support an integrated Heritage Interpretation Strategy across the entire Eveleigh Railway Heritage precinct?

The RWA is undertaking a heritage interpretation strategy for the Eveleigh rail precinct.

SSH

Rolling up the shutters, getting down to business

Nicholas McCallum

Shopfronts in the Redfern-Waterloo area continue to display depressing and uninviting shutters and cages, the ornaments of crime and antisocial behaviour. The recent market turmoil could see more of these shutters becoming permanent fixtures, with the financial crisis already decimating one local business. A Darlington company went into liquidation on October 13, and another Darlington-based construction company reduced its staff from 30 to just three - the result of a financial relationship with one of Australia's largest real-estate companies.

However, the world's money issues are not too grave a concern for all local business people. As one local café proprietor, James, said, while business has slowed over the past couple of months, he is maintaining a positive outlook. After living and working in the area for the past four years, James states that even over his short tenure, the area has become a lot safer than it was.

"There're more young families with young babies contributing to local business," he said, adding that future development will encourage the positive perspectives of long-time locals.

James maintains that the unique area is a fantastic part of Sydney, but signalled that any future development will have to suit the very particular requirements of the area. "If they do it properly, it will be good," he said. "But they need to get it right."

The ongoing redevelopment of the area is ensuring that the once decrepit no-go zone is fast becoming a cultural hub for the inner city. Currently, there are numerous projects awaiting the green light, many of which are expected to generate sterling yields for local businesses.

The Redfern-Waterloo Chamber of Commerce is conveying a positive attitude toward the future development of the area. But whilst there are advances being made that will provide for a desirable spike in profits for the business community, the social welfare of the disadvantaged runs at a deficit. As budgets are restructured to concentrate

on sustaining the economic status-quo, whether current market disturbances will cause social maintenance to be pushed off the agenda remains to be seen.

President of the Chamber of Commerce, Mary-Lynne Pidcock, disagrees with this assessment. She is confident that the area's strong community spirit will persevere in and through coming economic and physical developments, as long as there is continued community consultation. "For any future successful developments, it is essential that there is community consultation," Ms Pidcock said. "We're looking for vibrant, viable, sustainable businesses to attract people to the area."

The Chamber of Commerce is also rallying behind the "Roll-up Redfern" campaign, concerned with reopening the dormant shopfronts in and around Redfern, and keeping them open. And whilst there is growing support for the drive, let us hope that when Sydney University's summer hibernation begins, the gravity of current financial woes is not too strong a force for the shutters and businesses that are presently open.

SSH

News

EVELEIGH MARKET INFORMATION BREAKFAST

The RWA invite interested people to a free information breakfast to find out about business and fundraising opportunities available at the new Eveleigh Market, Wilson St, Darlington.

The breakfast event will include professional advice for people thinking about starting a small business and becoming a market stall holder.

Local schools and community organisations can find out how the Eveleigh Market can help them raise funds through the community stalls.

Details of the event

Tuesday 25 November

8.00am til 9.00am

Yaama Dhiyaan,

Hospitality Training and Function Centre

255 Wilson St, Darlington

To register please contact the RWA on 9202 9100 or email Natalie.culverhouse@rwa.nsw.gov.au



FREE CHRISTMAS PARTY LUNCH

The Redfern Waterloo Authority is pleased to invite local Seniors and Elders to a free Christmas Party Lunch on Tuesday 18 November, 12pm at the Australian Technology Park.

To reserve your seat contact the RWA on **9202 9100**

Free transport will be available from central collection points in Redfern and Waterloo. Please advise the RWA if you require transport.

The Christmas Party Lunch will be held in the Dining Room, Australian Technology Park Conference Centre, Bay 4 Locomotive St, Eveleigh. For those considering driving, please note that there is a fee for parking.

The RWA look forward to seeing you at this exciting free community event.



Australian
Technology Park



Life on Council – First impressions

The City of Sydney has four new Councillors: Meredith Burgmann, Irene Doutney, Di Tornai and Robert Kok. The SSH asked them each to share some of their initial impressions and priorities for the next four years of their office. We expect to hear from Councillor Robert Kok for our next issue.

Meredith Burgmann (Labor)

Don't know what I expected Council to be like. It is a bit weird ending up as the only Labor Councillor. Although we only lost 0.8 of a quota, we unexpectedly lost two positions because of the fact that we lost a little to the Clover Party and a little to the Greens, which put both parties just ahead of our second candidate.

Because the Wards referendum was also lost, I am now in the position of singlehandedly trying to service the 28 suburbs that make up the City of Sydney. This is an almost impossible task. I obviously have to set myself realistic goals, so I have decided that I will concentrate on the plight of the marginalised and dispossessed, and that mainly means the homeless in this wonderful city of ours.

I'm also absolutely committed to

ensuring that the Aboriginal Housing Company's Pemulwuy Project actually gets built. The City of Sydney should be acting as a catalyst in the mix and getting the parties to co-operate over this essential project.

The final issue which I will concentrate on is climate change and I am especially interested in innovative ways to retro fit the carbon criminals of the past, the old skyscrapers which are responsible for so much of our carbon footprint.

The fact that I will be concentrating on these big picture items does not mean that I will be neglecting the more local issues. I am already holding street stalls in conjunction with Tanya and Verity, the Federal and State MPs for the area and have found that this one-stop-shop approach has been very successful.



Irene Doutney (Greens)

It is interesting for a grassroots activist like myself to be propelled into the halls of corporate power and I must admit it's very exciting. There is so much to learn and get my head around, but I love the challenge. I must admit I was a bit disheartened after my first Council meeting, in the face of the Independent power bloc, but I believe it's a progressive Council, unlike so many in NSW, and I will be able to get things done with their support.

I have already had very positive talks with Council staff and am working on my first motion which will be about ethical food. I have had talks about fresh food markets on housing estates and more support for seniors. I am also seeking support for a community day on the Block on November 6.

I have also been alerted to a problem with the needle bus in Hugo Street,

which is currently parked daily next to a children's playground. I will be investigating why it hasn't been moved back to the position it was allocated in Hudson Street.

I joined the Deputy Mayor at the Northcott Building on Friday October 9 to talk about mental health issues, and spoke, the week before, from the Town Hall steps, for the Aboriginal Rights Coalition rally against the NT Intervention.

Thus, so far, I'm finding Council a powerful way to combine my social justice concerns and the issues that I believe I was elected by residents to represent, with the regular functions of a Councillor. It's going to be long, hard work, but I'm looking forward to it immensely. My one big concern at the moment is how the global financial crisis is going to impact on Council's finances.



Di Tornai (Independent)

As in any new job, I felt the early days should be devoted to clarifying my role and responsibilities – in an organisational sense, but also as defined in the Local Government Act. I interpret the role of Councillor as being likened to that of a Director of a Board. Firstly, it's essential that councillors see themselves as setting the policy framework in which the CEO works with staff to conduct the day-to-day business of the Council. In my professional career I've seen many instances where people have been confused on this front and in the main; this led to dysfunction and disharmony. I don't want to go there!

Of course, I'm actively involved in an extensive range of issues, through representation on many committees. At present it's a bit challenging to bring myself up to speed on the enormous range of projects and strategies that the CoS has underway. I could do with an extra two hours of reading time each

day. But I must say it's been a delightful surprise to work with people who have such a "can-do" attitude. As a resident I've always been aware of Council's strong drive to produce good work, and now that I'm on this side of the fence, my impressions have been strengthened even further. There're no quiet corners around here – the productivity level for everyone is high.

Even though it's early days yet, I'm keen to work on the urban renewal plans to turn Green Square into a reality. Of course, this will require a strong level of consultation with all the residents in the suburbs affected – Zetland, Beaconsfield, and Rosebery. I'm pleased to say that already there's been a stirring of interest to form a new group that better represents residents across the entire area. It is, in essence, a new community in the making. It's quite exciting to think that only four kilometres from the CBD of Australia's global city a new village is emerging, a place of new beginnings and new possibilities.



News



HAVE YOU HEARD? **THE FAST NEWS** WITH TREVOR DAVIES

Notre Dame expanding

Notre Dame University is trying to expand, and Chippendale residents are not very happy. The University wants to use premises in Grafton Street six days a week until 9pm. Onsite parking is not provided, nor open space. Some car parking spots on Grafton Street will be lost. The residents point out the site is directly opposite and alongside a large residential area. The University development application is due to go to Council early in November. We will have a full report next month.

Pull the other one

The long battle over the use of Callan Park is over. In a joint media release with Verity Firth, the Local Member, and Kristina Keneally, the Planning Minister, it was announced that, apart from the bit of Callan Park that the University already uses, the NSW Government will hand over the 61-hectare park in Rozelle to Leichhardt Council. In her statement the Planning Minister denies it is a decision caused by the massive swing away from the Labor Party in Council elections, especially in relation to Leichhardt Council. Well, undoubtedly, the determined activities of the Friends of Callan Park and their local supporters had something to do with persuading the government to change its mind, and no doubt the departure of Frank Sartor from the Ministry was a factor but, Kristina, please! People aren't stupid. The original decision was a mistake, and Verity is in grave danger of losing the seat of Balmain. The original policy had to be reversed, and that was a decision, at least to some extent, motivated by political survival.

One Saturday night in October

Police Media reported on just one night in our city: "As police investigate three separate glassing incidents which happened at licensed premises across the city centre overnight, drinkers across the state are reminded that alcohol-related crime and anti-social behavior will not be tolerated. "In the first incident, a 24-year-old Croydon Park man was at a nightclub on Oxford Street, Surry Hills, when he became involved in a verbal altercation with another man about 11.15pm. "Police have been told that during the altercation, the second man grabbed a bottle and struck the Croydon Park man across the face, before punching him in the head a number of times. "As a result, the Croydon Park man has received a wound to his forehead and was taken to St Vincent's Hospital for treatment. He received eight sutures to his wound. "A 20-year-old Lane Cove man was arrested at the scene and taken to Surry Hills Police Station for questioning. He was later charged with reckless wounding and has been granted conditional bail to appear at Downing Centre Local Court on November 17. "In the second incident, about 1.20am this morning a 19-year-old Woolloomooloo man witnessed a physical altercation between two groups of men when he has allegedly attempted to break up the fight at a licensed premises at Darling Harbour. The two groups have then allegedly turned on the Woolloomooloo man, punching and kicking him before he was struck repeatedly over his head with a glass bottle which did not shatter. "The 19-year-old escaped and left the nightclub, but police have been told he was followed by the other men who allegedly continued to assault the Woolloomooloo man outside the premises before staff came to his aid. "The Woolloomooloo man suffered a laceration to his face as a result of the incident. He was conveyed to Sydney Hospital where he received four stitches for his injuries. The men involved have been described to police as being of Asian appearance. "In the third incident, a 30-year-old Sydney man was approached by two men whilst on the dance floor at a licensed premises on George Street about 2.20am. It is alleged the two men assaulted the 30-year-old, including throwing a schooner glass at the victim which has struck his head and broken. "The man was taken by ambulance to Sydney Hospital where he received four sutures for his injuries." Do you agree with the Police Commissioner that there should be no more 24-hour licenses? Email me with your comments: fastnews@ssh.com.au

See you next month

TD



Ian Hickie, Win Childs (Convenor of Politics in the Pub) and Simon Tatz at the Gaelic Club Photo: Andrew Collis

No health without mental health

Wendy Collis

Simon Tatz, of the Mental Health Council of Australia, nearly brought up his breakfast when he viewed the press conference given recently by Morris Iemma. Upon his resignation, Iemma nominated mental health as one of his key and finest achievements. Speaking at "Politics in the Pub" (at the Gaelic Club in Surry Hills on Friday October 24), Mr Tatz wondered whether the people of NSW believed that Mr Iemma had delivered in relation to mental health.

"More than two million Australians had a mental health disorder in the past 12 months and did not use a service for their mental health problems ..." he stated, citing statistics recently released by the Australian Bureau of Statistics. Such statistics are "appalling" and show that Australia has gone "backwards" over the last 10 years regarding treatment of mental health.

The Mental Health Council of Australia, which advocates for changes in policy, has produced a document entitled Weaving the Net (based on the analogy that if a person is hungry it is helpful to weave a net so that s/he can catch a fish for him/herself) which suggests that mental health and wellbeing can be promoted through resilient communities. Mr Tatz commented on

the misconception on the part of many politicians that the best way to address mental health is to have bigger hospitals and more hospital beds. "Often it's the men's shed in a local community that can do more good than 'x' number of acute hospital beds. Often it's the drop-in centre...the importance of a skateboard park..."

Mr Tatz believes there needs to be a linking up of all the disparate "silos" - e.g. Social Inclusion, Homeless Task Force, Mental Health Advisory Committee, Health & Hospital Task Force - to achieve "collaborative care", and ultimately help people get better in their own home and in their own environment.

Professor Ian Hickie, Executive Director of the Brain/Mind Research Centre at the University of Sydney (who prior to this was the inaugural director of Beyond Blue) agrees with Simon Tatz in regard to the co-ordination of government services. He believes the ABS results reveal that everyone who is "sitting outside the system" is as disenfranchised today as they were 10 years ago.

But while the system may not have changed much, Prof. Hickie stated that over the last decade "community attitudes have changed". He said this community support and understanding now needs to drive political action. "For God's sake, write letters...to people

such as Tanya Plibersek, Julia Gillard and the PM.

"You cannot function in a modern society without good mental health. There is no health without good mental health," he added.

This involves a serious commitment to housing, employment and family support services in addition to health services. "Mental health is about not only whether you are well...it's about whether you've got a home, whether you've got a job, whether you are part of a community, whether you've got a meaningful role in life, and whether you are supported if you have a disability to actually participate," Prof. Hickie said.

Prof. Hickie also stated that research trials he has been involved in over the last five to 10 years has indicated how the brain interacts and responds to the community in which one lives and that "employment is an excellent treatment, as good as most of the medicines that we have, actually being in a job, not getting ready to be in a job, but being in a real job, is highly effective on an ongoing basis".

Politics in the pub has been running for over 20 years and is currently held weekly on Friday nights at the Gaelic Club, Surry Hills.

Further information regarding upcoming topical and informative discussions can be found at www.politicsinthepub.org



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AUSTRALIA
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News



Deborah Mailman with actors Madeline Madden and Margaret Harvey Photo: Ali Blogg

Deborah Mailman's directorial debut

Wendy Collis

During her primary school years in the 1980s, Deborah Mailman was so obsessed with Ralph Macchio, the American teenage heart-throb actor of the era, that she sent him a letter expressing her admiration. She has yet to receive a reply.

The experience will now be immortalised in film, as Mailman, whom most would associate with the character, Kelly, from the successful TV series, *The Secret Life of Us*, has recently been behind the lens and on location in Redfern filming *Ralph*.

"He was my idol," says Mailman of Ralph Macchio. "*The Karate Kid* was my favourite movie."

The 10-minute short film portrays an 11-year-old Aboriginal girl, Maddie, who is so obsessed with the actor that she wears her *Karate Kid* bandanna to bed every night and writes him a letter inviting him to her school dance.

But the film also portrays Maddie's experiences of being a Koori kid in a predominantly white primary school. Though Mailman attended primary school in Mount Isa, which has a strong

Indigenous population, there were times when she was the only Aboriginal person, or the only Aboriginal girl in the classroom. She wants her short film (the draft script was co-written with Wayne Blair) to reflect the experience she had of growing up in such a different political climate.

"The '80s were certainly an interesting time in terms of the attitudes that were quite acceptable at the time that you would not have in a classroom now," she says, and adds that not all, but a couple of her teachers "allowed" certain racist behaviours and attitudes from kids towards her.

Mailman taking on the Director's cap for the first time arose out of an initiative by Screen Australia's Indigenous Unit, which in conjunction with the ABC, has given new Indigenous filmmakers the chance to make seven short films. It is anticipated that *Ralph* will be screened on the ABC.

Mailman believes that directing requires a different skill and approach, compared to both acting and storytelling, because "as an actor, a lot of the times you are given a story that you have to make personal. With *Ralph*, because I wrote it and directed it, it was personal right from

the beginning".

Though a Queensland girl originally, Deborah has been living in Darlington for the past few years. She chose the location of Redfern due to her love for the area and its "strong character and strong history of community".

"I just think it is a great, vibrant, energetic place to be and so I really wanted to use that as another character in the story."

Lights, Camera, Action, a community organisation which operates to assist young Indigenous people wanting to get into film, assisted with the casting process which resulted in Madeline Madden and Stephen Carr being chosen to play the two Koori kids who ultimately become friends, in the simple and understated story with an '80s feel.

It is a busy time for Deborah Mailman who will fly to Broome in a couple of days to act in a feature film. She will return in five weeks to continue the editing work on *Ralph*.

But she has given up waiting for Ralph Macchio to reply to her, and says that the 11-year-old Deborah "moved on" after a while, and wisely chose to form crushes, requited or otherwise, on real people, "more attainable" and "closer to home".

Innovative models of mental health care

Amanda Robb

On October 7 the Wayside Chapel presented another of its Wayside Speaks forums. Guest speaker, Sebastian Rosenberg, Deputy CEO of the Mental Health Council of Australia, discussed strategies to enhance the delivery of community care in inner city Sydney. Introduced by Wayside's Youth Ambassador, Tim Brunero, the night promised hope and improvement for community services. "This will be a great opportunity to discuss real options with those of us in inner-city Sydney who are grappling with these issues every day," said Wayside Pastor, Graham Long.

The actions Mr Rosenberg recommended in order to improve mental health services include: earlier intervention when symptoms of mental illness appear, instead of the focus being on the acutely unwell; appropriate

funding to support rehabilitation after institutionalisation; and collaboration of community and private divisions, in distributing quality mental health care.

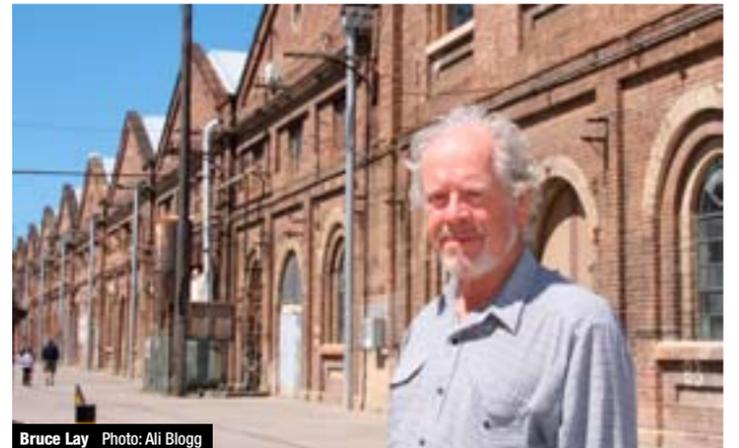
Mr Rosenberg discussed the innovations in other countries, and how Australia can follow. In Trieste, Italy, 94 per cent of the health budget is spent on community services. From this development, the suicide rate has dropped by 30 per cent, and there is almost zero homelessness. In New Zealand, community services access 30 per cent of the health budget. Strategies such as consumer participation in treatment plans are producing continually better health care. "We need to capitalise on what we do know works," Mr Rosenberg said.

In a shocking comparison, Mr Rosenberg informed the gathering that eight per cent of the Australian health budget is for mental health services even though the burden of the disease is 15.5 per cent. People requesting help are continually knocked back, and told they

need to be severely unwell to access the services. Although one in four people with a mental illness maintains a job, this is still the lowest of disability sectors. "Many with a mental illness don't have anything to do due to unemployment," Mr Rosenberg added. "This is pretty grim."

Overall, the innovative movement for better mental health care involves the need to build and foster community understanding and engagement, with and around a person dealing with a mental illness. "We need to support autonomy, independence and freedom of choice in treatment options," Mr Rosenberg concluded.

Next installment of Wayside Speaks: Nov. 20: "Alternative Public Housing" 6-8pm. A panel of speakers will discuss whether public housing is working - and what other options are available. There will also be an opportunity for input and discussion. For details contact: beres.jackson@thewaysidechapel.com



Bruce Lay Photo: Ali Blogg

North Eveleigh – questions persist

Kate Lamb

The reshuffle in the NSW Government, with a new Minister for Redfern-Waterloo, Kristina Keneally, and a new Premier, Nathan Rees, "creates a unique opportunity to rethink the methodology of the Redfern-Waterloo Authority," said REDWatch spokesperson, Geoff Turnbull.

In a meeting with Ms Keneally last week, he raised issues of accountability and transparency within the RWA. Mr Turnbull admitted that Ms Keneally was "keeping cards close to her chest". Although there were no definitive outcomes of that discussion, he was pleased that she was at least meeting with key stakeholders to assess the issues in the area.

"The review period of the RWA body, designated for late 2009, is a chance for the community to open up a dialogue about potential exit strategies," Mr Turnbull said.

Local resident and town planner, Bruce Lay, believes that unresolved issues and rushed planning on the proposed development in North Eveleigh, highlight the need to re-evaluate the existence of the

authoritative body. "There are inherent conflicts of interest," he says, "between mixing up power control with developmental and planning control".

Mr Lay believes that the North Eveleigh concept plan is looking increasingly flawed under technical analysis. The proposed designs do not satisfy a range of basic technical issues, such as increased parking facilities and equity of access for pedestrians and cyclists on Wilson Street.

Mr Lay is also unhappy with the proposed density – people to land ratio – of the current model. The proposal will exceed prevailing guidelines by up to four times the normal level. Open space requirements that must accompany all new major development sites in the inner city, he claims, are unsatisfactory in the North Eveleigh concept plan.

Lack of community consultation is a concern for both Mr Turnbull and Mr Lay. The RWA process for the North Eveleigh plan involved a public exhibition that was followed by community feedback. Some modifications of the plan have been implemented as part of this process. However, the revised concept plan is no longer open to public revision or consultation.

A dog called Wanja

Tara Clifford

Screened outside at night, on The Block in Redfern, *Wanja* cast light on a community which is often overshadowed and overlooked. Writer Angie Abdilla, who is of Tasmanian Aboriginal descent, says that she wanted the film to challenge people's thoughts on how communities live on The Block and who they are, showing a different side to a neighbourhood that is often misrepresented as negative.

The short film is based around a dog called Wanja who was owned by a popular local known as Auntie Barb Stacy. Stories about the dog (that died three years ago) are recounted. Not only was she famous among locals, but also with the police.

During the film, residents of The Block talk movingly about their memories of Wanja. One of the most amusing recollections is of a time when Wanja jumped onto the front seat of a paddy wagon, barking at the police as if to say they couldn't get in. Stories are told about Wanja chasing police officers, barking to warn locals of their presence, and even an instance where a gun was cocked and pointed at her.

But the stories of the blue heeler are not simply to amuse and entertain. The

interviews are cleverly separated by confronting images of the run-down surroundings and sounds from the railway line across the street, which act as a commentary on the alienation between local residents and those in authority. An audience is reminded of more serious issues to be dealt with in this community – such as neglect, violence and substance abuse – and also what it means to be an Aboriginal Australian.

According to Ms Abdilla, there is a really strong sense of a community of people who stick together, which is represented by Wanja as the spirit of The Block.

The idea for the half-hour film was found in a storybook called *Wanja*, and Ms Abdilla regards it as her first serious film. It took five years to complete, a testament to the challenge it was to make. The controversial issues explored meant the film faced resistance and problems in getting funds. In the end, it was made on half the budget, but this allowed Ms Abdilla to examine the situation in a totally creative way.

Wanja was officially selected for the Sydney Film Festival and will be screened at Parliament House in November and at the 2008 International Documentary Film Festival in Amsterdam.

Hip-hop workshop for kids with something to say

MICHELE FREEMAN

In a graffiti-clad building on the edge of a park in Marrickville, Ozi Batla (Shannon Kennedy) is encircled by a raucous bunch of kids. He is here to lead a hip-hop workshop as part of the Marrickville Youth Resource Centre's (MYRC's) Links to Learning Program.

Hip-hop has a history of giving voice, and there is an increasing trend towards using it as a tool for working with young people and with disadvantaged communities.

The MYRC Links to Learning project (funded by the Department of Education & Training) is a creative and practical program for young people experiencing difficulties in formal learning environments, and who are at risk of leaving school. It has been using hip-hop as one of its creative components for four years.

Trevor Parkee, a youth worker with the Centre, thinks it is a particularly good tool for working with kids from the Inner West from diverse backgrounds. "They can identify with hip-hop because they see people from minority groups doing it. It's

beneficial as a voice for them."

And from the results of the uncontained energy of the workshop, it seems this is true, as one young girl finally plucks up the courage to sing a song (from the safety of underneath a pool table) she has written about losing her sister.

These kids have something they want to say, and this is the medium that lets them. The beauty and strength of hip-hop is that it's accessible and gratifying, explains Shannon. "Hip-hop is a genre that has a history of rebellion or challenging authority, it allows young people to feel more comfortable expressing themselves and getting their problems off their chests."

In the workshop the kids listen to the music they have made. As the bass kicks in, their faces crack open in smiles, and a loud cheer momentarily unites them. "The groups often don't have heaps in common and the hardest thing is keeping them all engaged," Shannon says.

"Beyond that, hopefully those participants with a greater passion for the music will continue after the sessions are over. That's the ultimate outcome – that young



Ozi Batla (of the Herd) with young people from the Links to Learning program Photo: Anthony Powell

people continue their contact with the youth services and discover a passion for creativity."

But the ultimate outcome is also the ultimate challenge. All too often people working in community development and youth services complain that things are just bunny-hopping from one short-term project to the next. And the big question is what happens

when the project finishes.

Anthony Powell, the coordinator of the MYRC Links to Learning project says: "A strength of this program is that we've received stable funding for the past eight years, but for many projects in the community sector obtaining long-term project funding is very difficult. It's a big waste of resources for services to go from small project

to small project. A longer-term focus means these kids can get the sustained support they really need."

MYRC has a recording studio and also offers free internet, recreation afternoons, school holiday activities, and occasional hip hop workshops for young people. For more information see <http://www.beanbag.net.au/Marrickville/> or call 9564 3222.

Get Off Your Arts – prizes to be won!

ANDREW COLLIS

Get Off Your Arts (GOYA) is an arts festival and competition aimed at celebrating and supporting creativity in all its forms.

Co-ordinator, Jodie Goldney, whose young children, Finlae and Jesse, are keen participants, anticipates an enthusiastic response this year (just the second year of the event) from artists and art lovers. "We've already received many entries [entries close November 25], and we'll endeavour to show all the works submitted," she says.

"Artists are important people," Jodie continues. "Their work pushes us to think about the world and about the future. It's a unique profession – to raise issues and questions in accessible, confronting and safe ways." GOYA actively seeks to be self-supporting.

"We're in the process of setting up an online gallery and store, so we can support emerging artists all year round," Jodie says.

GOYA promises to be a stimulating and eclectic event. The four-day festival will open on Thursday December 4, from 7.30pm, at the Glebe CafeChurch space

in St John's Road. Entry is free.

The theme for 2008 is "beginnings". Artists are encouraged to produce creative works in any of the following categories for the opportunity to win great prizes.

Music Composition

Winning entry receives \$500. Other prizes include \$250 for composition featuring the recorder (soprano, descant, treble, bass) and inclusion in the 8 O'Clock Sharp concert series for a work of excellence in music composition up to 10 minutes duration.

Visual Arts

Winning entry receives \$500. Other prizes include a dinner for two at "Selah" restaurant in Circular Quay, \$100 gift voucher from Glebe Picture Frames and exhibition space for a work of excellence in the visual arts (sculpture/painting/photography/installations, etc.).

Picture Book

New unthemed picture book section for a previously unpublished work of excellence. Winning entry receives \$500. Work can include text but must be primarily illustration. Also a possibility of



Jodie Goldney and Steph Gesling (CafeChurch) with Finlae and Jesse Photo: Andrew Collis

publication for the winning entry!

Performance

Winning entry receives \$500. Finalised prizes are inclusion in the 8 O'Clock Sharp concert series for a work of excellence in dance, drama, poetry or other performing arts up to 10 minutes duration. Unthemed.

Film & Video

Winning entry receives \$500.

Finalised prizes are inclusion in the 8 O'Clock Sharp concert series for a work of excellence in film/video up to 10 minutes duration. Unthemed.

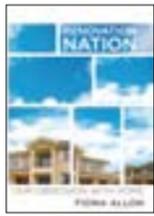
12 Years & Under

Winning entry receives \$100 for a work of excellence in the visual arts (sculpture/painting/photography, etc.) or film/video up to 5 minutes duration.

The event is presented by the Glebe CafeChurch. It's also supported by the Uniting Church in Australia Inner City Development Fund along with local businesses. A percentage of all proceeds will go to Boonah Creative Arts program (fine arts tuition for people with a disability). For more information contact Jodie Goldney getoffyourarts@cafechurch.org.au or visit www.getoffyourarts.com.

The Reviews

Book Review by Adrian Emilsen



Renovation Nation: our obsession with home
Fiona Allon (UNSW Press 2008)

Most Australians regard their own home as their primary asset – the most secure investment that is “safe as houses”. Seventeen per cent of Australians own one or more investment properties – the highest rate amongst English-speaking nations. Housing wealth and real estate speculation have an almost religious quality within Australian culture.

Not so long ago, Australians could watch home renovation television almost every night of the week. If we weren't buying houses, we were vicariously watching others live out their fantasies.

Abounding with housing fever, Australians have renovated and speculated to unprecedented dimensions over the past two decades. However, in the context of the recent “credit crunch” and a looming global financial crisis, this oasis of wealth may disappear as more mortgagees default soar and house prices fall.

In her first book, *Renovation Nation*, the University of Western Sydney academic, Fiona Allon, considers just what has fuelled Australia's obsession with property, and what are the broader consequences of placing so much wealth in real estate.

Using the concept of “home” as a guiding theme, Allon provides a sharp analysis of Australian contemporary cultural and economic life, moving swiftly from discussions of national economic policy to iconic films such as *The Castle*.

The former Prime Minister, John Howard, is also a major focus of the book. Howard identified home ownership as an “article of faith” for his government. For Howard, the “home” is the cornerstone of Australian citizenship and cultural values.

According to Allon, Australia's obsession with home is nothing new but part of a long-standing problem in our culture. The Australian Dream of home ownership has been founded on an incongruous belief that we can have social egalitarianism with unbounded

personal wealth and prosperity. *Renovation Nation* presents a timely critique of the Australian Dream, and the consequences of living in a society fixated on real estate.

books@ssh.com.au

Film Reviews by Lindsay Cohen



Body of Lies
Director: Ridley Scott
Starring: Leonardo DiCaprio, Russell Crowe
Genre: Shoot to thrill

Ridley Scott has a split personality. The Director of classics such as *Blade Runner* and *Thelma and Louise* is also the standard-bearer for films such as *Alien*, *Gladiator* and *Black Hawk Down*. Frighteningly realistic and bloody (perhaps gratuitous) violence and special effects, in an easily digestible and uncomplicated formula that draws you in and keeps you there without making you think. The only consistent factor is that he inspires good performances from excellent casts, especially Russell Crowe on multiple occasions.

Earlier this year I reviewed *American Gangster*. It threatened to be a great film with complex characters in a politically charged and dynamic era, but fell short. Russ was good, of course.

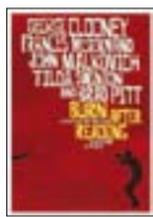
So with *Body of Lies* Scott had the opportunity to take the *Gladiator*/*Black Hawk Down* route or push boundaries he threatened to nudge in *American Gangster*. He went for the former. That's not necessarily a bad thing. *Body of Lies* is occasionally edge-of-your-seat stuff, putting you in the (Iraqi and Jordanian) line of fire and getting your blood pumping. But you aren't challenged to contemplate the bigger picture.

This is no *Syriana*, more a sequel of sorts to *Black Hawk Down* (again, not necessarily a bad thing).

And Leonardo DiCaprio is no George Clooney, an actor who is good enough to overcome his chiselled good looks. Even with his serious face on, DiCaprio looks like he should be cruising the Atlantic on the Titanic. Russell Crowe is Russell Crowe. And that's not necessarily a bad thing either.

Rating: Full price admission if

you're into that sort of thing, one choc top, medium popcorn, medium drink and a kebab afterwards.



Burn After Reading
Director: The Coen brothers
Starring: The usual
Genre: The Coen brothers

Just for the record, I am no relation to either of the Coen brothers, although my brother and I are, indeed, Cohen brothers. The spelling

is slightly different for a start, and I tend to appreciate films with sensible plots that are about something.

Regular readers of my reviews (i.e., my editor and my wife) would be quite aware of my frequent (perhaps my incessant) arguments (rants) about the lack of character development in movies these days (he says, harking back to his childhood watching silent films and agreeing wholeheartedly that sound and colour would ruin movie making). That is one criticism that can't be levelled at the Coen brothers (either of them, though, honestly, who can tell the difference?).

Coen brothers' films are character driven, meaning they are loaded with million-miles-per-hour dialogue that is witty, creative, insightful and occasionally demanding of an audience. Indeed, so character and

dialogue laden are Coen brothers' films that there is often little space left for a storyline. It would be fascinating to sit in on a Coen brothers' movie planning session – “Here's ten characters that are essentially normal or simple people. Let's add a few quirks, some social disadvantage and a bit of Struggle Street. Now, let's find some torturous, tentative way to link them together. Don't worry about the ending. Indeed, that's not even necessary.”

So in other words, *Burn After Reading* is just your typical Coen brothers' film. I loved it.

Rating: Full price admission, two choc tops, medium popcorn, medium drink and warm cup of milk to settle you down.

film@ssh.com.au



The cast of Shakespeare by Northcott Photo: Ali Blogg

Shakespeare – Northcott style

DOROTHY McRAE-McMAHON

Shakespeare himself might well have laughed and cried with delight, just as most of the audience did, as we witnessed the folk from Northcott Housing Estate performing their version of Shakespeare at the Belvoir Street Theatre on October 20.

There they were, old and young and in-between – some fitter or more mobile than others – declaiming passages from various Shakespearean comedies and tragedies, interspersed with all manner of contemporary asides.

Some recited passages in tones that echoed the stage voices of

seasoned players. Others gave the lines their own style and paid close attention to a script in hand.

There were witches chuckling wickedly, with prominent long noses and plenty of nasty things to put in their pot. Then children became part of a *Midsummer Night's Dream*, surrounding the sleeping Fairy Queen, taking their small lines very seriously and guiding the younger members – one of whom preferred to focus on a series of soap bubbles behind them – around the set.

Sweet voices sang to us at intervals, touching in their melodies. Then the grief and pain of Ophelia was played out before us in great drama as a grand finale.

Most of all, we enjoyed the dynamic of a bunch of ordinary people guiding and supporting each other through imaginative portrayals and glimpses of the great bard. Good for the Belvoir Street Theatre in its support of the project too!

I am sure we all await the next splendid effort coming out of Northcott!



Photo: Supplied

A spiked love story

LEONIE TILLMAN

Working out of the Old Fitzroy Hotel in Woolloomooloo, theatre company Tamarama Rock Surfers is collaborating with Redfern locals, Luke Cowling and Melinda Dransfield of Unit 107. Their new production of *Kiss Me Like You Mean It*, written by Chris Chibnall of *Doctor Who* and *Torchwood* fame, is a play of parallel love stories and the bittersweet joy of enduring love that must

confront the ultimate sacrifice.

The lobbying for the reinstatement of voluntary euthanasia by Greens senator Bob Brown and YouTube videos to the PM have caused recent social debates. *Kiss Me Like You Mean It* brings a human perspective to this issue with raucous humour coming off the back of deeply touching moments.

Three years ago, when reading the script for the first time, Melinda Dransfield had her friend Maggie Blinco in mind for the role of Edie.

Maggie is a veteran performer with over 30 years in theatre and television. The two met in 2000 while working on the touring show of *The Importance of Being Ernest* and have been friends ever since. Melinda says: “I never in my wildest dreams imagined actually being on a stage with her. When I showed the script to her I was concerned about her reaction to it, having suffered cancer herself.” Nevertheless, after doing a reading of the play, Blinco came on board.

Melinda goes on to say: “To have someone of her calibre and her age agreeing to do a co-op production for the first time in her life is a testament to the strength of her involvement in the show but also the story that she wants to tell.” After working in theatre for many years, Melinda has noted that most people don't realise that nobody is getting paid in productions like these. “When you get two people like Peter [Carmody] and Maggie agreeing to do something like this, it just shows the strength of the story we're trying to tell and just how important is.”

Kiss Me Like You Mean It runs from October 23 until November 22 at the Old Fitzroy Hotel, 129 Dowling Street, Woolloomooloo. www.rocksurfers.org.

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Cycling tribes gather for Big Bike Love

SSH

The Big Bike Love and International Bicycle Film Festivals roll into Sydney this month, bringing enough bike fun – film, art, fashion and parties – to satisfy the most hard-core cyclist.

Bicycles are in. Recent bicycle fashion parades in London, Las Vegas and Vancouver point to the growing popularity of the bike as a cool way of getting around town. And celebrities like Matthew Modine are actively promoting riding bicycles to protect the environment.

The Sydney festivals are organised

and run entirely by volunteers. Proceeds go towards BIKEsydney and making Sydney an even better place to ride your bike.

“The Sydney cycling scene is huge and diverse, and even though it’s on the streets, it’s not until you’re a part of it that you see it,” says Elaena Gardner from BIKEsydney. “Sydney’s active cycling communities include commuters, messengers, club riders, triathletes, recreational riders, BMXers, track riders and unicyclists. The Big Bike Love Festival is an exciting opportunity to bring together the many cycling tribes of Sydney in a fun celebration of what it means to ride a bike,” Ms Gardner says.

ROAD: ART & RIDES

November 1-30: Art and art rides across the city and inner west. Bicycles are expressions of fashion, convenience, economics, environmentalism, activism, subversion, health, tribalism, design and competition. Bike riders are painters, poets, animators, sculptors, designers, performers, street and multimedia artists. Road brings bikes and artists together in a cultural and artistic expression, and includes seven bike related art exhibitions and art rides every weekend in November. Gallery and route details online: www.bffsydney.org.

BIKES ON SHOW AT NEWTOWN FESTIVAL

Sunday November 9 @ Camperdown Park, Newtown. For the first time bicycles will play a feature role at the Newtown Festival with a range of bicycle-related events including: a social art ride touring local art galleries, and trick bike and unicycle riding demonstrations. Free information about riding in the inner west and city and free bike valet parking will also be available.

BIKE LOVE STREET PARADE

Thursday November 13 @ King Street, Newtown. The Bike Love Street Parade will be a visual spectacle and coming together of the cycling community in all its glory. Starting at 6.30pm, the parade will travel down King St, delivering the participants to the Bikes Rock party at Sydney Park.

BIKES ROCK

Thursday November 13, 7pm-10pm @ CARES Facility, Sydney Park, St Peters. The Bikes Rock party gathers the cycling tribes together under the stars at Sydney Park. Festivities include bike polo, film and still canopy projections, music by bling-a-ling DJs HOOPS and the judging of the best dressed bikes from the Bike Love Street Parade. Free - all welcome.

INTERNATIONAL BIKE FILM FESTIVAL

Friday & Saturday November 14 & 15 @ Dendy Cinemas, King Street, Newtown. The International Film Festival will have toured through 13 countries across the globe by the time it reaches Sydney’s

shores. Curated by Brendt Barbur, the Bicycle Film Festival showcases cycling across the world and includes shorts, documentaries and feature films. Free bicycle valet parking for all who ride.

BIKE SWAP MEET

Saturday November 15, 8am-12pm @ Deus Ex Machina, Parramatta Road, Camperdown. Bike Swap meets enjoy huge popularity in the US and Europe - this will be Sydney’s first. A unique opportunity to swap or sell your excess gear and get some great bargains.

WRAP PARTY PICNIC

Sunday November 16 @ Pyrmont Park, Pyrmont. Bring a picnic and wind down in the sun with the Cheeky Transport crew including the infamous bike blender cocktails, roller races and other bike fun.

For further information visit: www.bffsydney.org



Dead Letter Chorus Photo: Supplied

“All things in life are inspiring ...” Artist Profile: Dead Letter Chorus

EVE GIBSON

“Suppose it falls loosely into indie-folk category, but we’d also slot into some kind of orchestral-pop or even progressive-rock genre,” says Cameron from Dead Letter Chorus. The five-piece Sydney band is made up off Cameron Potts, Gabrielle Huber, Michael Faber, Lee Carey and Andrew Rose. The band has been playing for two years, and in 2007 released its debut EP, *Listen Carefully (We Shall Say This Only Once)*, which received a positive response through reviews and airplay.

The band decided to form following a road trip to Splendour in the Grass in 2006. After seeing the “amazing” bands on that year they were really charged with passion and inspiration, so the next day they headed into a rehearsal room to get to work.

I asked Cameron what inspires him and the band. “All things in life are inspiring. Sometimes it’s just harder to find the beauty in it. We read a lot and listen to lots of music as well as having a really keen interest in artworks of all ilks.”

Cameron also spoke about the way

Dead Letter Chorus writes its music, saying, “Gabrielle and myself share the songwriting, and then we either get into the rehearsal space or even at sound check when we’re touring, and work it through with the band, and anything we need to add comes out of a lot of dramatic discussion and just throwing ideas around.”

On October 18, Dead Letter Chorus released its debut album, *The August Magnificent*. The album has been a very personal record for band members because they didn’t spend a long time in preparation or recording.

The band had 22 other musicians play on the album, and Cameron says: “I really feel that each person that played on the record left a lasting impression of themselves on the disc. We really wanted to challenge ourselves to come up with something that is not only impacting but lasting in its composition.”

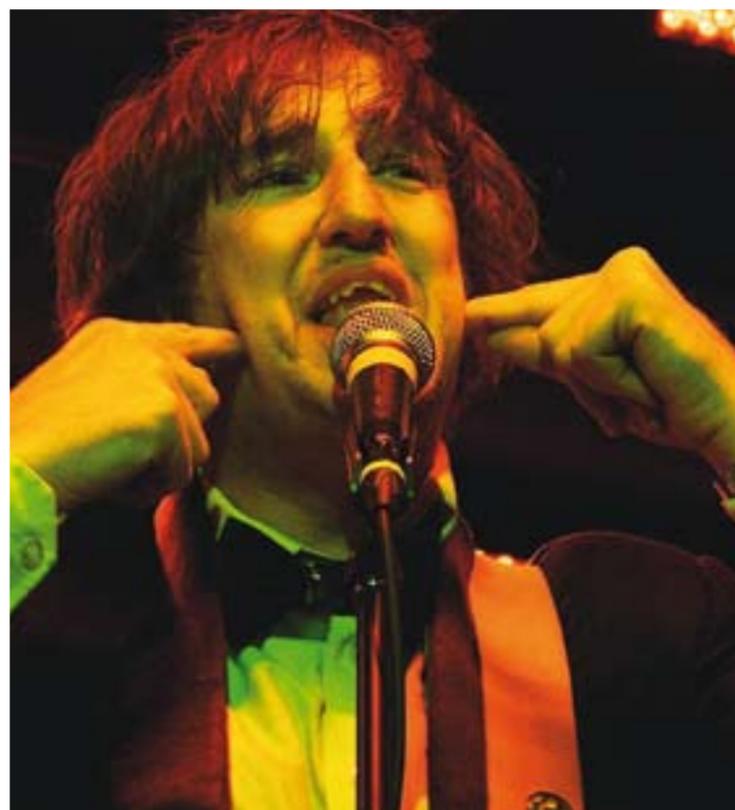
Dead Letter Chorus decided to record *The August Magnificent* in the basement of their manager’s house, which they converted into a studio, in the riverside suburb of Yowie Bay. “It was a great place to record and we spent a lot of time working on the sound and getting the atmosphere right for the recording,” Cameron says.

“We basically spent three weeks straight every day on recording this album. We started off recording the drums, bass, keys and guitars, and later layered on all other instruments. It was a really fun and challenging time as we really had to stay focussed and get the best out of what we had. We then recorded a bunch of songs completely live which lets those songs breathe so much.”

Even though the album was recorded in August this year, Cameron suggests that people can take whatever meaning reveals itself to them as they listen to the album. The album artwork was done by Jefferton James. Hand drawing everything, Jefferton connected with the organic approach of the band and really got inside the mysterious nature of the album.

Dead Letter Chorus keeps taking its listeners to new, beautiful and stimulating places with the album *The August Magnificent*. You can catch Dead Letter Chorus touring all around the country in November and December (including the Peats Ridge Festival).

For more information go to: www.deadletterchorus.com or www.theaugustmagnificent.com



Spod at Oxford Art Factory. Photo: Roanna Manlutac
www.spod.com.au

End of (high-and-mighty) fashion

ANDRE RANGIAH

Who decides that floral prints will be the season's big trend, or that winter will be all about crimson? Predicting fashion's next wave – despite what psychic Sue may have us believe – does not involve fabric connoisseurs and design bigwigs glaring into a crystal ball and chanting to the late Gabrielle Bonheur "Coco" Chanel.

The reality is a lot more complex. In the film *The Devil Wears Prada* (2006), editor Miranda Priestly arrogantly professes, "What you don't know is that the sweater is ... actually cerulean. You're also blithely unaware that Oscar de la Renta did a collection of cerulean gowns ... [the colour] then filtered to department stores, then trickled down to some tragic Casual Corner where you no doubt fished it out."

New York's Future Laboratory is a million dollar enterprise that looks at

international runways and retail hot spots to guess fashion's next trend. They also examine pop culture, and pay people to check out what the cool kids on the street are doing. After hours of analysis they tell their clients what will be hot and not, two years in advance. What makes this process so enthralling is the dialogue it has concretised between high-end fashion and street culture.

Where the art establishment has preserved the elitist distinction between high art and popular art, fashion has futilely held onto the threads that divide luxury and street culture. The decline of the "Dress Designer as Artist", with the ascendancy of the "mass clothing industry", has, according to many, brought about the end of "true" fashion.

This high-and-mighty attitude is based on outdated theory that has, strangely, survived almost two centuries. In the Victorian period the bourgeoisie used fashion to

establish status. Once a garment percolated down to the middle ranks and became common, it was no longer considered fashionable.

With the rigid boundaries of feudal life dissolved, fashion not only trickles down the social ladder, but bubbles up from street culture. Fashion designers now look to meet the needs of many different types of consumer. Most no longer accept the limiting binary of exclusivity versus mass production.

Diffusion lines are affordable collections from high-end designers that are directed at more mainstream markets.

Australia has seen a number of designers riding this wave. Colette Dinnigan released her lingerie line into Target last year with astounding success. The collection sustained the brands slinky and feminine aesthetic, but used cheaper fabrics and detailing to ensure each garment remained reasonably priced. International designer, Karen Walker, released her diffusion line "Hi There" into Myer

stores this year, while Sportsgirl currently stocks an inexpensive line from Cohen et Sabine.

Australian label, Kookai, combines aspects from both high-end and diffusion lines. Its Spring/Summer 2008 collection, *Between Night and Day*, wields the lavishness of luxury houses, but retains the accessibility and affordability of mainstream retailers. After travelling to the fashion capitals of the world – Paris, Hong Kong, Milan and London – the fabrication and concept of the line was born, which was specifically designed for all Australian women.

"We are not really trend driven. We design based on our signature aesthetic – fresh, feminine, pretty, mixed back with Parisian chic," said Gabrielle Stephens, Head Designer at Kookai.

"The Australian woman is always looking to dress for the climate and to create a unique and fashion forward sense of style. As Kookai draws much from its Parisian heritage, the collection always

reflects a sense of European chic, mixed back with Australian flair."

The collection was inspired by the transformation of the original 90s Supermodel. Women like French beauty, Laetitia Casta, and the chameleonic Helena Christensen, spurred the designers at Kookai to create theatrical and glamorous pieces. The high waisted Adelina Pastels skirt, with French seams and dilapidated floral print is a great variation on the trend that has grown tired on global runways.

Fashion is a way of life. It reflects the attitudes of the time in which it is made. In Hitler's Germany, fashion was repressed and strictly monitored to exemplify themes of obedience and conventionalism. The overwhelming availability of fashion today reflects the open and embracing society we live in. We are moving toward the end of class-based fashion, and class-based mentality. Sooner, rather than later, not only will the devil be wearing Prada ... but the rest of us too.

Just another evening at Toko



SCOTT WINTER

Situated at 490 Crown Street, Surry Hills,

the contemporary Japanese kitchen, sushi bar, and robata grill is by far the busiest establishment along the strip of fine dining restaurants and bistros. If you have ever visited Nobu in London or New York, you will recognise that owner Matthew Yazbek has successfully achieved Sydney's own.

On arrival, staff impress in terms of care and professional urgency. An earthy style, chic, exceedingly good taste and attention to detail also strike you. If you can get through the door, that is. Toko is busy every night of the week, except Sundays, so expect to be patient for a seating space.

Teak ceiling and wall finishings warm you as you enter, and an eye-catching, intricately-carved wooden wall lamp lights up the happy, socially-lubricated faces of chattering patrons within. Chunky clay pots and heavy, blackened oak fruit bowls filled with exotic fruit decorate the entrance, and big slabs of ice invite you to one of the best, if not the best, cocktail bar in the inner city.

Solid oak communal tables and stools host a shoulder-to-shoulder tapestry of fine diners

– everyone from locals and tourists of all ages, to TV presenters, soap/pop stars and footballers. All merrily mingle together and make up what is known to be Sydney's glitterati. Just another evening at Toko.

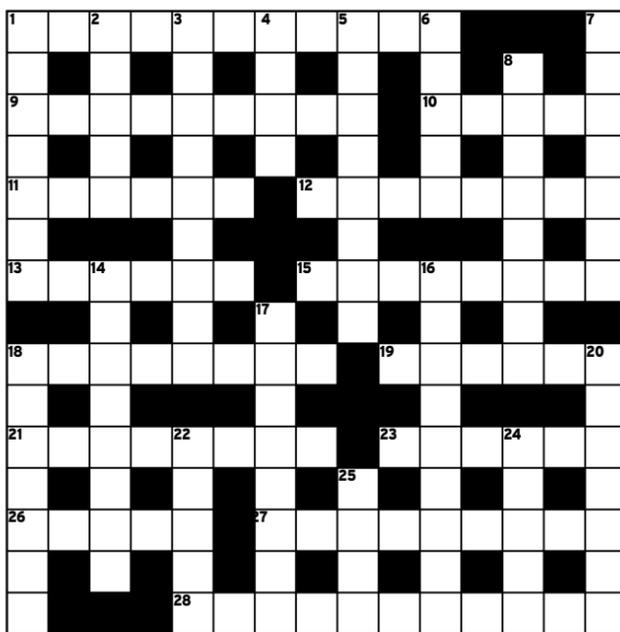
We were seated right in front of the open-plan kitchen, and an ashy charcoal robata grill warmed our faces and crisped freshly-skewered Terriaki tuna and salmon steaks. We kicked off with a choice of small plates. Superior Tempura Soft-Shell Crab with Wasabi Mayonnaise, Seared Tuna with Apple Mustard Dressing and extremely delicate and impressively displayed Sashimi.

The odd amounts per plate left my dinner guest and I politely arguing over the remaining slices. Maybe that was the chef's intention. Mains were an applauded Miso Marinated Deep Sea Pearch, followed by Duck Breast with Sansho Pepper and Marinated Nashi Pear. Be mindful to eat the duck and the pear at the same time – the flavours melt in the mouth.

As tempting as the Wagu Beef Striploin with Horseradish Ginger Soy, Herb Salt and Ponzu looked, we saved a little room for a warm Chocolate Fondant and Miso Vanilla Ice Cream ... "Two spoons please waiter!"

Note: Each Plate Averages at \$20.

South Sydney Crossword



Last month's solution



First correct entry received by November 30 will win a mystery prize. Send completed puzzle to: South Sydney Crossword PO Box 2360 Strawberry Hills NSW 2012.

ACROSS

- 1 Flawed logic are symbolic after all (11)
- 9 Tear about contained by remedies for critters (9)
- 10 Dreamtime creation spirit spelled out in Redfern Park (5)
- 11 Bingo caller's legs blocking exit (6)
- 12 Crypt cryptically gives kitty a groom (8)
- 13 Characteristics portrayed by artist (6)
- 15 Night light appears oddly nigh between cattle calls (8)
- 18 It rarely comprises of the written word (8)
- 19 Dirty looks like diminutive Scottish 16 down birds of prey (6)
- 21 Botched goal ahead of prized china in the 28 across (8)
- 23 Anaesthetic quantity (6)
- 26 The backdrop to 15 across (5)
- 27 Big bang said to be allowed and annoys without a beginning (4,5)
- 28 Troubled lad fighting the onset of 26 across (6,5)

DOWN

- 1,18 Time-honoured tales of old feet? (7,7)
- 2 Feudal bond of the Middle Ages preceded by falsehood (5)
- 3 Fetch punter to improve (3,6)
- 4 Extraordinary rear (4)
- 5 Commanding Officer's total mess is expensive (4,4)
- 6 Librarian begins to show a sign of balance (5)
- 7,20 Multicoloured band present alternative Dreamtime spirit (7,7)
- 8 Ecclesiastic decree sounding more like gunboat diplomacy (5,3)
- 14 Despite the fact all thought is curtailed (8)
- 16 Happening at 26 across (9)
- 17 As safe as a knight in shining armour (8)
- 18 See 1 down
- 20 See 7 down
- 22 Import tariff regularly lacking a theme (5)
- 24 Existing binge regulation (5)
- 25 Yearn to incinerate (4)

Congregation of fine food and culture

SCOTT WINTER

Food brings people together and teaches us about different lifestyles, cultures, even historical backgrounds. And if you were one of the 20,000 hungry, hot-but-happy, Sunday-morning wanderers who took to Danks Street on Sunday October 26 for the Danks Street Festival, you would have noticed what a wonderfully proud, colourful and cultural community we are becoming,

People of all ages, from near and far, basked in the glory of the sun, and many local-based gourmet food and fresh produce market-style stalls. Each stall was an authentic representation of a gastronomic serving from a specific part of the world, and a local business (most of which have been reviewed in my monthly restaurant/cafe review column).

Mayan Coffee, situated at the top of Danks Street, Waterloo, offered

free samples of their cinnamon and chili-flavoured coffee and chocolate from Guatemala. Lorenzo's Mussels had passers-by queuing, and in awe of the huge Spanish paellas being cooked.

Steven Ryan, 30, a local resident and food lover, said: "What a fabulously flamboyant day! It's great that this happens. A lot of people don't get to travel overseas. Or get to eat at all these great local restaurants, so a congregation of

fine food and culture like this gives people a taste of what they haven't tried and what they are missing out on. It should happen more often."

With an expanded artist market, live music, DJs and a children's craft area, there was plenty to do as well as eat. Performances from Sydney singer Tracy Redhead, Redfern-based bands, the Resurrectors and the Donovans, and popular funk group, Boom Band Krewe, along with a speech

from Lord Mayor Clover Moore, kept the afternoon moving along.

Maybe events organisers at the City of Sydney should consider a Danks Street Festival on a larger scale and introduce something similar – like the Nottinghill Carnival in London: a grand, colourful carnival in the centre of Sydney, an Olympics of fine food and music to demonstrate and celebrate the wonderful cultures around us.

News cont'd



Kristina Keneally MP

MEMBER
FOR HEFFRON

ADVERTISEMENT

I regularly use public transport routes between my home at the south-eastern end of the Heffron electorate and the CBD – particularly the 310/391/392 bus services, or the 400 bus to Mascot Station to connect with the Airport Rail Link. This gives me the opportunity to be a 'mystery shopper' on local bus and train services, seeing first hand whether buses and trains are running on time, whether people can get a seat, and generally what's working well, and what isn't.

At recent mobile offices, where I go to various parts of my electorate to speak to local residents near their own homes, I've had several people raise concerns with me about transport services in the Tempe area. Others have written to me regarding services in Eastlakes and Kingsford.

In addition to taking these matters up with the Minister for Transport, I also intend to extend my 'mystery shopper' observations to these services. That's why I'm encouraging residents to bring to my attention, transport services that need improvement, so that I can use a service, at the time nominated, to see the problem directly. If need be, I can then lobby for improvements and report back to the electorate.

Better public transport is a key platform of the Rees' Government's plans to upgrade public services in NSW. As a part of the NSW Government's commitment to improve local bus services, new 'Metro' buses – distinctively coloured bright red – are now running regular services from the Kingsford to Leichhardt via the City.

These Metrobuses, similar to those used in Europe and the US, will connect Sydney's east and inner west with fast, efficient services.

The \$12 million, 12-month trial of the Metrobuses will travel between Leichhardt, the City and Kingsford every 10 minutes in peak hour and every 15 minutes during off-peak times. The route will be known as Route 10.

The buses will travel along the Parramatta Road and Anzac Parade corridors, via the new Mid-City Transport Interchange precinct in Park Street. It will put many popular destinations within easy reach – including Norton Street cafes, Broadway Shopping Centre, Chinatown, Town Hall Station, University of Sydney, University of NSW, Moore Park, Kensington, Kingsford and many more.

The key components of the Metrobuses are:

- High capacity buses
- PrePay ticketing – no cash on buses ensuring faster boarding times
- A greener way to travel with each bus featuring low emission technology to reduce harmful gasses
- High frequency travel, so no need for timetables
- Maximum passenger comfort, safety and security
- Simple route structure and bus stop numbering

For more information on the new Metrobuses, you can contact Sydney buses on

131 500 or visit <http://www.sydneybuses.info>.

Kristina Keneally MP
Member for Heffron

Shop 117, 747 Botany Road, Rosebery NSW 2018

Phone: (02) 9699 8166 Fax: (02) 9699 8222

Email: kristina.keneally@parliament.nsw.gov.au



Myrtle Street residents tending their gardens Photo: Ali Blogg

Chippendale's food for the future

Flint Duxfield

Chippendale residents treated Sydney-siders to a rare delight this month when they transformed their streets into a community food fair.

The Food for the Future sustainable food fair took place on Saturday October 11, and saw over 6,000 people turn out to buy fresh produce and plant fruit and vegetables in community gardens.

Event organiser, Tina Kao, said the fair aimed to encourage people to think more about where their food comes from. "The idea of the fair is to teach people how they can shop and eat more sustainably and bypass supermarkets by buying direct and supporting local

farmers," she said.

Over the past six months Chippendalians have been working with the City of Sydney Council to convert their curbs and footpaths into community fruit and vegetable gardens. Visitors on the day were able to help plant, irrigate and mulch plants in the curbside gardens, and learn how to create their own community gardens.

They were also offered the chance to take part in a scheme that delivers weekly boxes of locally grown fruit and vegetables to Chippendale residents.

Ms Kao said it was hoped that residents in nearby suburbs would be inspired by the fair to set up their own community gardens and veggie box system.

Lisa Robinson, 35, of Ultimo who attended the fair with her children, Sam and Anita, said she was impressed by how resourceful the Chippendalians had been. "It's amazing to see people literally making gardens in the street and then actually being able to eat the food they grow."

"I wish we could set up gardens like this in my street," she said.

Those attending the fair also had a chance to tour the home of Michael Mobbs, a sustainability expert who has converted his terrace to run on rainwater, solar electricity and a recycled water system.

Ms Kao said event organisers hoped the fair would become an annual event.



Mick Mundine and Frank Sartor back in 2002 Photo: Bill Sheridan

Pride in Pemulwuy Project

Lisa Moon

The Aboriginal Housing Company (AHC) is hopeful its housing project will finally get off the ground, pending the outcome of a public exhibition showing nine years of hard work.

The Pemulwuy Project, a mixed-use development that includes an affordable housing plan for Aboriginal families in Redfern, has been on exhibition as a requirement of the Department of Planning (DoP) approval process.

The development application for Pemulwuy, lodged with the DoP, has been made public throughout October, both in Redfern and at the DoP. Residents were encouraged to visit and make submissions on the displays.

Recent financial support from the Redfern-Waterloo Authority and strong community interest in the exhibitions has given the AHC a new confidence that the project will finally be a success.

"In my opinion, [the DoP] will come to the obvious conclusion that the only real solution to the problems of Redfern is the Pemulwuy Project and they will fast-track the rest of the planning process to allow us to deliver the project in a

timely manner," said Peter Valilis, Project Director at the AHC.

But despite widespread community and growing political support for the project, some residents are still apprehensive about the finer points of the plan.

Adam Combe has been living in Redfern for a year, and although he is not opposed to the Pemulwuy Project, he expressed concerns about the location of the development possibly pushing illegal activities into other areas. "I'm concerned about Caroline Lane turning into a shooting gallery again... It's quite an infamous place," said Mr Combe.

The AHC has tried to ease tension with residents by holding meetings, but the company is frustrated by criticism of the Pemulwuy plans, including complaints about the lack of underground parking which may lead to less street parking for existing residents.

"I would say, What's the alternative? We can't just leave things as they are. We are proud of our work on Pemulwuy. We have done what even the NSW Government has not been able to do," Mr Valilis said when asked how he feels about such criticism.

"The Pemulwuy Project is a well-

researched, award-winning project that has been heavily influenced by a social planning agenda, not just a financial or political one," Mr Valilis added.

The Pemulwuy Project has won a national award for its innovative social plan and an international award for its crime prevention strategies through environmental design.

In spite of this, Mr Combe, among others who wished not to be named, has said he found it difficult to find information on the plans.

"I hoped they could do a bit more advertising of the consultation process," said Mr Combe. "I was disappointed that it took community action to get a meeting with Peter on the subject. However, once the meeting was arranged he was informative and helpful," he added.

But Peter Valilis believes the AHC has done all it can in terms of consultation. "Unlike the way the NSW Government or private developers deliver projects of state significance, the AHC has been highly consultative and inclusive in its approach to planning and research. In nine years, I have never refused to meet with anyone," he said.

The AHC expects a response from the DoP in the coming weeks.

City News October

CITY OF SYDNEY


Inner Sydney Cycle Network

Sustainable Sydney 2030 proposes a liveable green network to provide safe, quality, continuous routes for pedestrians and cyclists.

Separated cycleways have been introduced in many cities around the world, including London, New York, Amsterdam and Melbourne. The City of Sydney has allocated \$77 million dollars over the next four years to build a cycle network across the Local Government Area, with construction underway on the King Street cycleway in the CBD.

If cycling is to be a real alternative, we need to link with surrounding areas to provide a comprehensive network. With 15 inner city councils and NSW DECC, we have identified a potential network of 245 kilometres of additional bike lanes within existing road corridors. This includes 160 kilometres of separated bicycle roads and 70 kilometres of upgraded shared paths.

We are seeking Federal Government investment in this project to achieve national goals of reducing road congestion, reducing emissions and improving public health.



**Clover Moore MP
Lord Mayor**



City Election Results Announced

Town Crier Graham Keating heralded a new term of City of Sydney Council on 23 September, declaring Clover Moore MP Lord Mayor and naming the newly elected councillors.

Congratulations to Marcelle Hoff who was unanimously elected Deputy Lord Mayor. Pictured above are Councillors (l - r) Robert Kok, Phillip Black, Marcelle Hoff (Dep. Lord Mayor), John McInerney, Clover Moore MP Lord Mayor, Shayne Mallard, Di Tornai, Meredith Burgmann, Irene Doutney and Chris Harris.

Green Square - Information update

The largest urban renewal project in Australia, Green Square is breathing new life into Sydney's oldest industrial area. Come along to an information update on **Monday 10 November** from **6.00pm to 7.30pm** at the Green Square Community Facility, 3 Joynton Avenue, Zetland.



Olympic Team homecomings

The City paid tribute to the 2008 Australian Olympic and Paralympic Teams, honouring them with a civic ceremony and presenting them with Keys to the City. On **15 September** Sydney hosted the first Beijing Olympic Team Homecoming Parade to congratulate our athletes. Lord Mayor Clover Moore presented the Keys to the City, while NSW Premier Nathan Rees presented a plaque. On **30 September** Sydney celebrated the victorious 2008 Australian Paralympic Team at a civic ceremony.

City Swap Party

Zero Waste is the City's campaign to reduce waste sent to landfill. We are encouraging residents to avoid unnecessary waste, reuse items, recycle and dispose of non-recyclable materials properly. To further encourage recycling, the City and Planet Ark will be holding a Swap Party on **10 November** in Martin Place from **12.30pm**. The event will officially launch National Recycling Week and offer residents and workers tips on how to 'Recycle Right', trade in unwanted items, and correctly dispose of their used goods at collection stations. For information visit zerowaste.org.au

City warns bill poster offenders

Companies illegally using bill posters to advertise on Sydney streets are on notice to stop their environmentally damaging practices or face fines of more than \$1,500 per poster. The City has written to known offenders warning them to stop polluting or face the consequences. Last financial year the City removed more than 340,000 bill posters, equivalent to 60 trees or about five tonnes of paper. The City has installed eight poster pillars as part of a 12-month trial to provide a legitimate location for notices and posters.



Ride to Work Day

Sydney cyclists made a large-scale human bicycle in Hyde Park as part of Ride to Work Day on 15 October. The City of Sydney and Bicycle NSW event also included a free breakfast, newspapers, magazines and stalls with information about cycling. The cities of Copenhagen and Bangkok also held Ride to Work Day events following an invite from the Lord Mayor. The City is committed to promoting cycling as a viable, sustainable and cheap form of transport. Visit www.ride2work.com.au for information.



Charles Kernan Reserve - Community consultation

The City will be improving this important park for the community. The renewal will include improved access from Abercrombie Street, new trees and park furniture and new playground equipment. You are invited to have your say about the renewal on **Saturday 15 November**, from **10.30am to 12.30pm** at Charles Kernan Reserve, corner of Abercrombie and Shepherd Streets, Darlington.

cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au

General enquiries and after hours assistance ☎ 9265 9333 TTY 9265 9276 ■ council@cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au
You can subscribe to a number of the City's online publications at cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au/subscribe

city of villages

Comment & Opinion



Public housing tenants deserve better

Earlier this year the former Housing Minister issued a media release announcing \$1.6 billion for repairs and upgrades for public housing.

Ross Smith (housing activist) comments: "I found a press release from April 27, 2005, issued by the then Minister for Housing, Joe Tripodi. The heading was '\$2.7 billion investment in new and upgraded homes'. It announced the Government's \$30 billion infrastructure plan, how the \$2.7 billion for the public housing component was to be raised, and set out the 10-year timeframe for implementation."

The reason cited for the plan was to raise \$640 million from public housing tenants through the imposition of water charges, plus a 20 per cent minimum rise in the base rent to finance elimination of the maintenance backlog as identified by the Auditor General. The second item showed that this plan followed on from a previous one whereby the base rent was raised by one per cent per annum over a five-year period, once again to finance elimination of the maintenance backlog. A pattern is noticeable, with three constants - the never decreased maintenance backlog, the ever-increasing rent to eliminate the backlog, and the overall failure to control, much

less reduce, the maintenance backlog. The "new" scheme announced this year is in its second reincarnation. What the media release did not tell the public is that the only maintenance work to be done over the next two years is that of an Occupational Health & Safety nature. There is to be a two-year lead-in time whilst all work is identified, scoped and mapped. This translates to a minimum two-year holiday on all non-OH&S-related maintenance. Public housing has been run down over the last 10 years. If recent bi-election swings against the Government aren't to be repeated, the Government and the Department will need to do much better.

St Clare of Assisi and climate change

Miriam Pepper

Clare of Assisi was born into a noble family in the Italian town of Assisi in the late 12th century. As a very young woman, against the wishes of her family, she renounced her wealth. And through the influence and guidance of Francis of Assisi, she entered into the life of a religious contemplative.

Clare is remembered today for many things. For her love of animals and nature (it is said that she had such a rapport with her cat that it used to bring things to her that she needed when she was ill in bed).

She is remembered for her austerity. Her order practised strict poverty, and did not own anything - not even common property. Clare and her sisters dressed like peasants, ate no meat, and they fasted regularly.

Clare is also remembered for her influence. Many other women followed her into the convent - including her sister, her mother, and also Agnes of Prague - now St Agnes - who may otherwise have become the Empress of the Holy Roman Empire.

And Clare is remembered for her miracles. She is credited with twice saving Assisi from military attack, and it is said that she once witnessed a mass at which she was not physically present.

Clare's is an amazing story. But what can we take from it today? What I would really like to reflect on is Clare's choice for material poverty. What does her example have to say to us in a world of climate change, of social inequality, and most recently, of massive financial bailouts and feared recession?

I don't want to make light of the notion of a global recession, but the paradox is that it would probably be good for the environment. Reducing GDP would also reduce greenhouse gas pollution - not surprisingly in a fossil-fuelled economy. This association between ecological footprint and economic activity is also true on a micro level. Survey work suggests that the biggest predictor of the size of individuals' ecological footprints in industrialised countries is not how concerned we are about environmental issues - it's actually about how much money we have.

And yet, to suggest that we should plan to try to produce or consume not just differently but actually less in the face of environmental limits seems to be a political impossibility. Imagine trying to "sell" Clare's lifestyle!

The world of climate politics is an interesting one. The achievements of the international agreement on

climate change - the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and its Kyoto Protocol - have been ambiguous. The UNFCCC has not delivered global emissions cuts. What it has done is to reduce fossil fuel extraction, industrial production, forestry, and their complex human and ecological systems to the common currency of carbon - tradable in the carbon market. What it has done is to set up emission reduction projects in developing countries with questionable social justice impacts, while greenhouse pollution in the industrialised world continues unabated.

The solutions to climate change are seen to be held by those with wealth and power. According to this view, what we need to do is to use our wealth to harness clean technologies, and to assist developing countries to leap frog onto the path of clean industrialisation. We need to help them to fulfil their development aspirations, we need to "Make Poverty History".

But what if the people with the solutions to climate change are not so much our political or business leaders? What if the real leaders on climate change are the communities across the globe which are mobilising to defend their lands against fossil fuel extraction, and work for sustainable local energy, water and food provision? "The kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people that produces the fruits of the kingdom" (Mt 21:43), says Matthew's Jesus to the Jewish leadership of the day. Perhaps our hope for a solution to climate change should look more to the grass roots - grass roots communities here, and also poor peasant communities abroad. Perhaps they are the ones with whom the hope of God's kingdom of justice, peace, and integrity of creation rests. Perhaps well-off middle class people like me should strive to join them in solidarity. Perhaps we should also be taking steps to give up our material wealth and to move towards their way of living, growing some of our food, making our own clothes, producing our own energy.

In a paper called 'The Poverty of Morality', anthropologist Daniel Miller criticises those in developed countries who moralise about reducing how much we consume, as being unwilling to make the dramatic changes to their own lifestyles that they advocate more broadly.

But Francis, Clare, and their companions did make these lifestyle changes. And it is not as if choosing to be downwardly mobile was a normal thing to do in their society. But their poverty was not self-denial for no reward, or a denial

SOUTH SYDNEY ENVIRONMENT

Play it safe - prepare the soil for vegies



Anna Christie

Growing our own food in the city and inner suburbs has so many advantages: it enriches our garden and landscapes, provides us with freshly picked produce and promotes a holistic view of our environment.

However, in the wake of the recent Chippendale Food for the Future fair, I am concerned that no advice was given to the public about preparing soils before planting edible crops. We have witnessed decades of increasing awareness of the dangers of industrial pollutants, which culminated in the removal of lead from petrol some years ago, and the elimination of asbestos products from the market. Even so, historical pollution still remains in many of our soils.

You never know who scraped lead-based paint or whose grandfather smelted his lead weights for fishing, under previous occupancy of your home. And soils near busy roads are sure to be a risk.

Once soil has become contaminated with lead, which is not biodegradable, it remains a long-term source of lead exposure. It can be inhaled, ingested or absorbed through the skin. How can any informed person think of planting vegetables where there is a high risk of soil contamination, without serious thought to soil

preparation?

When there is no cost-effective way of proving whether your soil is contaminated beyond safe limits or not, and you live in the City of Sydney, play it safe.

That's what I did when I started preparing my Redfern garden to plant herbs, many years ago. I dug up all the beds likely to be used for herbs or vegetables and placed that soil around ornamental plants and under the tree. I bought bags of soil, and supplemented them with the proceeds of a full-on composting campaign. Only then could I be sure I would not accidentally feed to my family and friends salads laced with toxic levels of lead, or any other heavy metal.

According to Sustainable Gardening Australia, an award-winning educational resource centre, leafy and root vegetables have the highest uptake of lead: that's your lettuce, spinach, carrot, endive and silverbeet. Fruit trees have the lowest uptake, so street gardens should focus on trees, not vegetables.

And it's not just lead that concerns me. Not too long ago, in an inner-south-west suburb just outside of the SSH circulation, an acquaintance was telling me about how he and a hired hand bashed out some fibro panels dating back to the 1960s, when it was still all the rage. I asked him if he wore protective clothing. No. I asked him what he did about the residues.

No problems, he laughed, "the fibres all blew away". You've got to be kidding, I told him. He had gone and distributed asbestos fibres throughout the backyard of this "investment property". "It's only fibro," he said. He and his ignorant pal took none of the measures recommended for the safe removal of asbestos products, and created risks for the future occupants of the house. Even though the future occupants happen to be his grandchildren, the most he could say to me was "don't tell [my wife]".

So if you are about to plant a vegetable patch, assume the worst, think of the contamination risks, and quarantine any suspect soil. Spend a little more time, and money, and prepare the soil. Wear gloves, and don't stick your face in the soil - there's legionella there too.

If you were planning to run out and plant a street vegie patch, I don't want to appear to be throwing cold water on your plans. All I am saying is, take some precautions and play it safe.

For further helpful information check out: www.sgaonline.org.au

If you would like to suggest environmental issues in South Sydney that need investigation, please contact Anna Christie by email: anna.christie@optusnet.com.au

READERS' LETTERS

Suggestions for police commander

As a local resident, I am very pleased to see that the new Redfern Police Commander, Luke Freudenstein, has said that he will try to ensure the police officers under his command will do their job properly and obey the

law ('Policing in Redfern', SSH October 2008). Here are three suggestions for Commander Freudenstein:

1. Tell his officers not to cycle, illegally, down footpaths. Apart from alarming local pedestrians with large men driving towards them at great speed, it sets a poor example for others.

2. Make sure his officers wear identification badges as police regulations require. Even officers at the reception area of Redfern police station sometimes don't wear badges.

3. Tell police officers to mind their manners. Nothing outrages ordinary people more than a rude and surly police officer, on a taxpayer-funded salary, being rude to members of the public simply because the individual police officer involved knows that he or she can get away with it. Let's see if things change.

Dale Mills
Waterloo

Email letters to: editor@ssh.com.au

of the importance of the material world. It was about a different way of living in the material world that drew them closer to God. They sought to imitate Jesus Christ in the way that they lived, and in doing so to commune with him.

Many centuries on, the story of Clare has passed into the realm of legend. We can be in danger either of viewing her as a

hero who achieved super-human feats, or of romanticising her life and making light of her struggles and frailty. Either way we deny her humanity and her story loses its capacity to motivate us. And if we distance ourselves from Clare, perhaps we also distance ourselves from the humanity of Jesus Christ that she so affirmed. For those of us for whom material wealth is

abundant, what does or would it mean to say along with Clare and with the apostle Paul that "Christ is my only wealth"?

An edited version of a homily given at a Thanksgiving for Creation service to mark St Francis and St Clare of Assisi Day at South Sydney Uniting Church on October 5.

Features



Raglan Street gardens Photo: Ali Blogg

From little cuttings, big plants grow

Streetscape community garden in Waterloo

Linda Daniele

It all started with some cuttings and a green thumb. Now, a streetscape garden in Waterloo is giving millionaires' rows in Surry Hills and Woollahra a run for their money.

"It's looking wonderful at the moment," says Murray Gillett of the community garden he maintains with fellow residents of nine terraces in Raglan Street.

Combining nine large flowerboxes and four street gardens, Murray is adamant the whole thing originated from cuttings and says it's certainly possible to build up a great garden this way.

"We don't have bucket loads of money to be spending on plants. It's all done on a shoestring budget. I have

an established garden at the back, so I started with cuttings of geraniums and bromeliads from there," he says.

Deciding seven years ago to create a front garden to help buffer and add interest to the 1890s bald-faced terraces – entered directly from the footpath – neighbours appreciated Murray's efforts, and the whole thing literally grew from there.

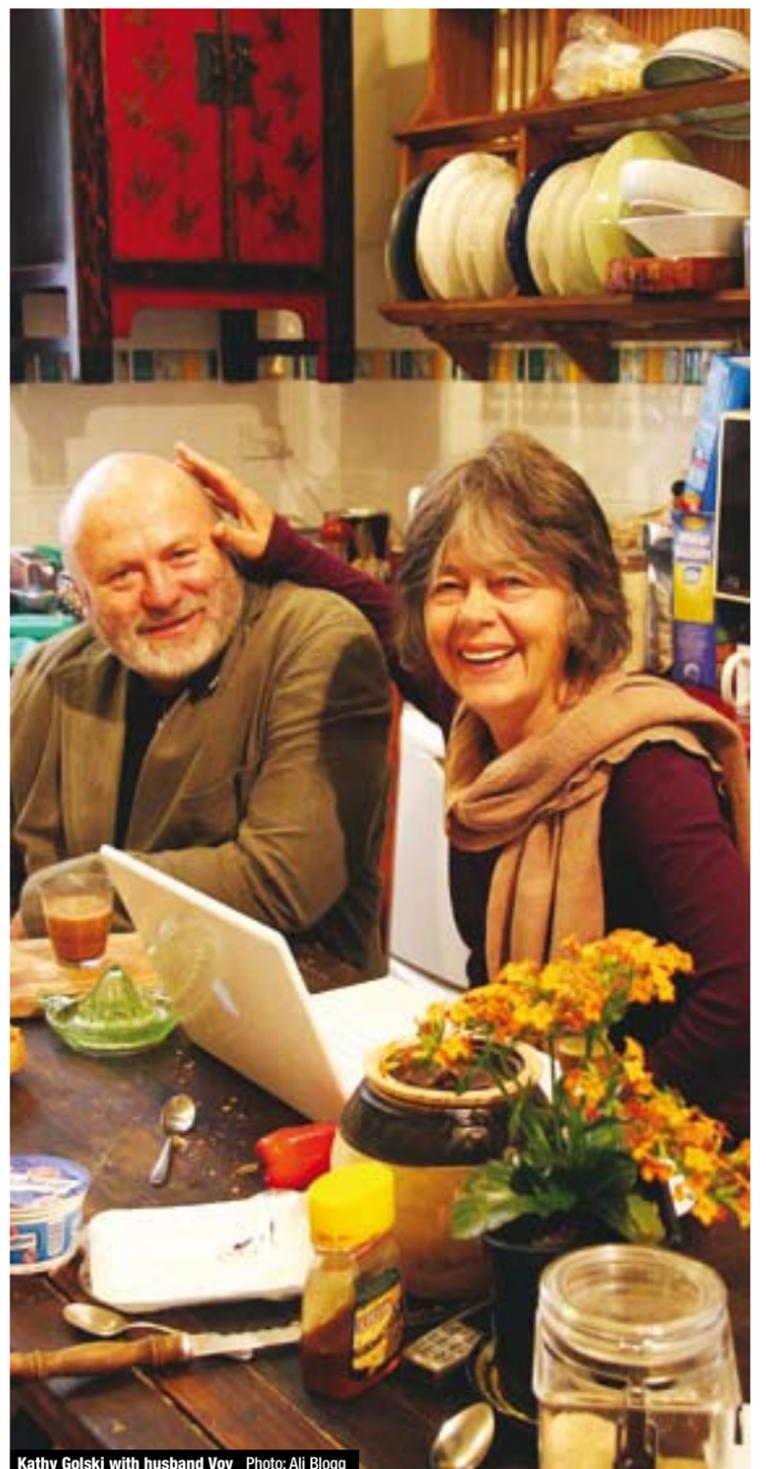
"There are a few people who aren't interested, but that's ok. It takes only a couple of hours a week to maintain, and other residents are free to get involved as much as they like," he says.

Murray says that many residents in the area have been inspired since the City of Sydney Council started planting trees and agapanthus in the streets. The plantings helped people to develop pride in the area and their homes, he says.

Residents of the Raglan Street terraces certainly deserve to be proud of their greening efforts. For five years running now the community garden has been a finalist in the Council's gardening competition in the category of best streetscape frontage.

"We might never beat the winner where people have million-dollar houses and lots of money to spend, but it's a real achievement for a row of government [Department of Housing] houses to be acknowledged for our garden here too," Murray says.

Keen to get some gardening tips, Murray shares the following when asked: "It's a good time for gardenia cuttings now. Put ten cuttings in a glass and forget them, but just keep the water up. You'll get a good strike rate from that. Then plant them out, and there you go – new gardenia plants!"



Kathy Golski with husband Voy Photo: Ali Blogg

Love times two

Local author's enchanting memoir

Amanda Robb

In the late 1960s, Kathy, a young woman living and working in suburban Sydney, met a Polish medical student and fell in love. In *My Two Husbands* Kathy Golski, recounts her time with her first husband, Olek, which was tragically cut short, and how she found love again with another Polish man, Voy. *My Two Husbands* chronicles a tale of survival and hope through laughter and tears.

Kathy fell in love with the Polish culture. In her latest work, she recounts Olek's tales of growing up in the holocaust, and how through his childhood memoirs, which she narrates with such effervescent imagery, she came to understand his destiny was foretold by a gypsy.

Kathy's life with Olek saw her and their three children travel the world following his career as a doctor. Life for Kathy was full of chaos, motherhood, celebration and happiness as she lived poles apart between two cultures. Adapting to the "Polish ways" were challenging, especially dealing with her mother-in-law, Olek's mother, Mamushka. However, her big-hearted-

ness overrode the challenges and she not only fell in love with her first husband, but also the history and culture of Poland.

Life stopped abruptly for Kathy when Olek was tragically killed in an accident, leaving their three young children fatherless and Kathy heartbroken. It is this next stage of her life where Kathy finds love again with Voy, another Polish man. Voy gently filled a familiar role through his similar Polish traits and patient nature aiding towards her healing process and providing her another chance of happiness.

On a new journey now, Kathy reflects through *My Two Husbands* how the spirit and guidance of Olek was, and still is a constant companion for her and their children, Nadya, Jan and Mishka. Having walked a new path with Voy, which welcomed a fourth child, Rafal, Kathy sees Olek's unfinished stories now being lived through her children, who all live passionate and eclectic lives.

Painter and writer, Kathy now resides in Redfern with her husband Voy, filling her home with vibrant grandchildren, her canvases and heart-filled memories.

My Two Husbands is an enchanting memoir.

Community Notices & Advertising

SSH advertising works: "Since our ad has been in the SSH, it's been phenomenal. It has really raised our profile in the community. Interest has increased ten-fold from the old way of letterbox dropping." Wayne Blindeman, Food Distribution Network, Waterloo

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FREE shuttle bus services now run from Redfern to Broadway shops via the RPA Hospital; and from Woolloomooloo to Redfern via Paddy's Market and St Vincent's.

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BABANA

Aboriginal Men's Group
New members welcome!

BABANA was formed by local Aboriginal men in early 2006 to provide Aboriginal men with opportunities to network, discuss issues affecting local men, meet other Aboriginal men's groups and do projects which benefit the Redfern-Waterloo community.

Please phone Mark Spinks if you would like to volunteer with us.

Community members are helping to develop a Babana website:
www.treocom.net/babana

Contact: Mark Spinks
 9243 3546

Uniting Churches



South Sydney Uniting Church
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Rev Andrew Collis 8399 3410
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Tongan Uniting Church
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 Ps Sione Hau 0431 144 247

Glebe Cafe Church
 Cnr St Johns & Cambourne Sts Glebe
 Gathering Sunday 7pm
 Free For All/Eight O'Clock Sharp
 Music nights Thu 8pm
 Steph Gesling 9518 9413

Newtown Mission
 280 King St Newtown
 Worship 9.30am & 6pm Sunday
 Rev Ps Doug Clements 9519 9000

Paddington Uniting Church
 Oxford St Paddington
 Worship 10am (1st Sunday of the month) & 7.30pm Sunday
 Church Office 9331 2646

Pitt Street Uniting Church
 264 Pitt St, Sydney
 Worship 10 am Sunday
 & 6 pm (2nd and 4th Sundays)
 Rev Ian Pearson 9267 3614

Wayside Chapel
 29 Hughes St Potts Point
 Worship 10am,
 Bible Study 5pm Sunday
 Ps Graham Long 9358 6996

Tanya Plibersek MP

FEDERAL MEMBER FOR SYDNEY



I am your Federal Labour Member of Parliament for Sydney, which includes Alexandria, Beaconsfield, Chippendale, Darlinghurst, Erskineville, Newtown, Redfern, Surry Hills, Waterloo and Zetland. Please contact my office for assistance with any Federal government matters - such as Centrelink, immigration and medicare. I can also provide a voice for your community organisation and make representations to Government.

Please don't hesitate to contact my office: tel: 02 9357 6366 fax: 02 9357 6466
 422 Crown St, Surry Hills NSW 2010 Office Hours: 9am -12:30pm & 1:30 -5pm weekdays



Clover Moore MP State Member for Sydney

I represent the residents of the Sydney electorate in the NSW Parliament which covers Surry Hills, Centennial Park, Chippendale, Ultimo, Pyrmont, Miller's Point, The Rocks/Dawes Point, The CBD, East Sydney, Darlinghurst, Woolloomooloo, Kings Cross, Potts Point, Elizabeth Bay, Rushcutters Bay, Paddington, small parts of Woollahra and Edgecliffe west of Ocean Street and a small part of Kensington bounded by Anzac Parade and Abbotford Street.

I work with my constituents to make government and bureaucracies accountable, empower the community, ensure social justice for individuals, and protect the urban and natural environments.

Contact my office to talk about your ideas or concerns or if you need help with NSW Government matters. Tel 9360 3053, drop in to 58 Oxford Street, Paddington, fax 9331 6963, or email sydney@parliament.nsw.gov.au

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Sport

Breakfast with the Stars

Elite sportswomen urge teen girls to stay involved in sport



Elka Whalen (nee Graham), dual Olympian, swimmer and silver medalist, enjoys breakfast with the 'Jump Rope For Heart' team from Bangwahl Public School Photo: Joan MacDonald

SSH

Over 750 high school girls attended the eleventh Sydney Schoolgirls' Breakfast with the Stars at Sydney Olympic Park Sports Centre.

The breakfast enlists elite female sports stars to inspire teenage girls to remain physically active and continue participation in organised sports at a time when many drop out.

Sports stars, including Kerri Pottharst (beach volleyball), Elka Graham (swimming), Amy Winters (paralympic athletics) and Bronwyn Watson (rowing), exchanged tips on maintaining a healthy lifestyle and positive body image through sports involvement.

"We aim to inspire more girls to stay involved by sharing the fun and sense of personal achievement we have gained

from our sports," said Kerri Pottharst, former Olympian and Womensport NSW Ambassador.

"It's really great to see so many girls here embracing physical activity as a lifelong principle for a healthy and happy life."

Research shows only 53 per cent of 14-year-old girls participate in organised sport. Increased study, increased costs, part time jobs and an expanding social life often mean organised sport is squeezed out of active girls' lifestyles at this age.

Poor body image, lack of confidence and low fitness levels also contribute to non-participation.

Girls from over 48 Sydney high schools shared breakfast and chatted with elite athletes in between presentations and active sports demonstrations. Dance by McDonald College, Jump Rope for Heart by the Bungwahl Public School and aerobics were all on show.

SSH



Alex Rovers Under 14s Photo: Darlene Hines

Victorious Rovers Under 14s

Perry Johnstone

On a cold wet and miserable Sunday morning at Coogee Oval, the Alexandria Rovers took the field in the grand final of the Under 14s competition against the Mascot club.

The team had finished the regular season in fourth spot and played a knock out semi-final against Bondi. This team seems to take the hard option instead of the easy option, and were down 10 nil against Bondi, but ran out winners 44-22.

The next knock-out semi-final was against the Newtown club and again the team decided to take the hard

option, and before we knew it, were down 16 nil. But like all good teams, they rallied and won the semi-final 22-20, booking their grand final berth.

The grand final against the reigning premiers and current minor premiers, Mascot, was the mirror of the other two games, and the boys trailed 10-nil at half time. These boys have got plenty of ticker and they fought back to take an 18-10 lead with five minutes to play.

Against the run of play Mascot scored two tries in three minutes to take a 22-18 lead and it all looked lost and hopeless.

With just forty seconds left on the clock, the Rovers scored a great

try which locked the scores up 22 all. After the siren the stand-out player on the field, Lawrence Lucas, calmly slotted over the conversion from wide out to win the grand final for the mighty Rovers.

Coogee Oval was a scene of cerise and blue as players and fans celebrated as one on the ground and everyone sang the club's song whilst waiting for the official presentation. The Man of the Match was won by Lawrence Lucas who was a stand-out all season for this team.

As our club celebrates its 60th season, this premiership victory was premiership number 68 for our mighty club.

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