

the South Sydney Herald

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Missy in action

STORY - PAGE 6



Rosebery residents challenge mega-church



Kristina Keneally meets Rosebery residents Photo: Ali Blogg

Nicholas McCallum

On Friday January 11, around 50 Rosebery residents gathered outside the office of State Labor Member for Heffron, Kristina Keneally. The MP was presented with a petition of over 800 signatures in protest over the proposed Hillsong mega-church to be built on the old RTA site on Rothschild Avenue.

Although those concerned were not opposed to Hillsong Church constructing a facility within South Sydney, the Rosebery Residents Action Group is against the construction of an entertainment-centre-sized building in their "backyard".

The suggested site is situated in the

middle of a residential area, with all points of access being via two lane streets. The RRAG argues that the church will be too large for the suburb to handle.

The proposed place of worship will be in operation seven days a week, and open between the hours 7am to 10pm. As well as Sunday services, there will be additional Bible studies, corporate events and other functions. As a result, residents claim that they will not only lose access to their town on weekends, but also throughout the week.

The Development Application is for a regional-sized structure, able to hold up to 2700 patrons, reduced from 3300, plus staff, with up to 680 car spaces.

Spokesman for the RRAG, Graeme Grace, said that the size of the facility

would lead to a massive increase in the amount of traffic in the area. "The public transport along Botany Road and Rothschild Avenue is inadequate currently," Mr. Grace said. "It cannot accommodate the extra trips and this will encourage commuters to use cars."

Grace also remarked that the amount of cars using the facility would lead to an overflow into surrounding residential streets. The proposed amount of car spaces has been reduced, to ease the amount of traffic flowing into the centre.

Mr Grace and protest organiser, Wayne Moody, chose to give the petition to the local State Member, Ms Keneally, in the hope that it would lead to a majority vote in the Central

Sydney Planning Committee, in favour of the RRAG. Unfortunately for the Rosebery residents, the seven-member CSPPC contains only two State Members. The other five seats are made up of two non-government, State-appointed representatives and three Sydney City Council members, including the Chairperson Lord Mayor Clover Moore.

Lord Mayor Clover Moore has said she would raise the concerns of the Rosebery residents with the City of Sydney Planner responsible for the DA, Philip Jamieson. Ms Moore also expressed concerns over the residents' loss of amenity and the negative effects on the heritage characteristics of Rosebery.

The Hillsong Church has taken notice of the residents' concerns and

has already made several changes to the original plans. As well as the reductions in seating and parking, the public park was offered as a sweetener to the deal. The parkland was not donated to Council and remained in the hands of the Church. The park had originally been designed to lead up to the doors of the centre, but the two have now been divided by a road and landscaping.

The Hillsong Church has not, as yet, considered any alternative locations for the Centre, as there are no other sites adequate in size to accommodate the proposed facility. It is its belief that that the centre will enhance the community "feel" of Rosebery, with the addition of the park, child-care facilities and a café.

South Sydney Herald

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News



The demolition of units in Walker Street Photo: Ben Falkenmire

Not happy, Morris! Labor members oppose privatisation

Ben Walker

Local Australian Labor Party branch members are up in arms about the proposed sell-off of the State's electricity supply.

Trevor Davies from the Darlington Branch said: "People join their local branch with the expectation that they will have a say in policy formation. If the State Government goes ahead and privatises without the support of the State Conference, then Sussex Street will have to pay people to hand out pamphlets for them at the next State election. As far as the future of the branches go - perhaps it is over?"

Jo Holder from the Kings Cross Branch said the privatisation move is opposed to the post-Stern-Report world, which states that the environment is necessary for the economy. "It is not environment versus the economy any more and it is time for Costa and Iemma to catch up," Ms Holder said. The timing of the legislation is also suspect, she added. "It is highly contentious introducing this legislation on Christmas Eve."

Ross Smith from the Redfern Branch described the situation as "sale by stealth". He said: "There was no con-

sultation with the ALP membership, public or parliament."

Smith also discussed the failure of the Government to accept the Public Interest Advocacy Centre (PIAC) commissioned report by the Institute for Sustainable Futures at UTS. "The PIAC Report challenges the basic premises of the Owen Report which the sell off rests on," Mr Smith said.

Robyn Fortescue from the Darlington Branch said: "There is no mandate for State Labor to privatise power. I don't accept Costa's argument that borrowing money would affect the government's credit rating. Whoever buys will borrow anyway and the government can borrow at a lower rate." Fortescue also noted that the experience in other places where privatisation has occurred is that prices have risen.

Inner-city ALP branch members are organising a rally and forum to oppose the government's plans to privatise electricity. The ALP State President Bernie Riordan will chair the rally which includes Senator-elect Doug Cameron and Professor Sharon Beder on the speakers list. SSH

Venue: Unions NSW Auditorium

Date: February 16, 2008

Time: 10.30am

Walker Street housing project underway

Ben Falkenmire

The State Government's housing strategy for the Redfern-Waterloo has seen its first bit of action, with the construction of a new \$28 million public housing project in Walker Street, Redfern, beginning last month.

While the new public housing stock is not technically part of Stage 2 of Redfern-Waterloo Authority's Built Environment Plan, it is considered to be a bellwether for future developments.

"How the Department [of Housing] handles this development will have implications for Stage 2," REDWatch's Geoff Turnbull said.

The 88 public housing units on the former swamp site will be demolished in the next four months, with 106 new dwellings taking their place.

A spokesperson for the NSW Housing said "These units, built in the 1950s, are no longer suitable for our tenants and are also very expensive to maintain."

Minister Kristina Keneally, the local member for Heffron, said the new housing will appeal to the frail-aged, people with disabilities and smaller families. "There will be 66 homes

for elderly tenants and 40 terrace houses with backyards for families," she said.

According to local housing activist Ross Smith, the government has placed existing tenants in suitable housing. "The DoH has been very good in their attitude towards the [existing] tenants. We hope that would carry on with any future redevelopment in the Redfern-Waterloo area," he said.

Mr Smith said the RWA will unveil plans for the Redfern-Waterloo public housing estate in March, but he has concerns about the RWA's approach. "There has been no genuine consultation with tenants or tenant body. The RWA has gone on record to say that they are not following the Bonny Rigg model. We are saying this model should be followed."

Bonny Rigg was the model the DoH employed following the inflammatory outcomes at the Minto, Claymore and Airds estates.

Mr Turnbull said until plans are exhibited, which could see a two-thirds-private, one-third-public mix, it's difficult to evaluate. "The question is how they do it. Whether they opt for a master plan or whether the Government takes planning control to be able to put in the densities they want to put in," the REDWatch member said. SSH

Battle lines drawn in back lane dispute

Carissa Simons

Nichols Laneway in Surry Hills has long been a battleground between residents and developers. Now one of those residents, Peter Maddison, has been taken to the Supreme Court by the current proprietor, Pacific Counties Corporation Pty Ltd.

The owner of 19-21 Nichols Street, also owns Nichols Laneway, which is used by other residents to gain access to the back of their properties. The current owner, Charles Mellick Pacific Counties, intends to build coach houses on the southern and northern ends of Nichols Laneway, which would maximise the value of its investment. It is currently

unable to do so due to the Supreme Court right-of-way orders held by three tenants.

One of these residents, Peter Maddison, says that the company originally tried to have the residents sign waivers that would have rescinded their unlimited access rights under the 1974 court order, which he describes as "underhanded". Maddison, who purchased his property in 2000, says one of the major assets of the property was the unlimited access to the back of the property. "Being a Supreme Court order, I thought it was nice and safe, but apparently that's not necessarily the case," he says. The development would not only be detrimental to Maddison's property value, but would impact on his

privacy, and prevent him from bringing in a furniture removal truck or vehicle with a boat.

Fellow resident, Ben Nursoo, who owns the property at the southern end of Nichols Laneway, says his main concern is privacy and vehicle access. He says, according to the current proposal, the coach house balconies at the back are actually set quite far back and would overlook other residents' backyards. "I don't think it's in anyone's interest to have those terraces built at all. The current proposal is harsh and unfair to residents."

The Nichols Street Community Group, which has previously fought off proposed developments from TAMBA in 1998 and a Seventh Day Adventist

Church developer in 2005, is also campaigning against Pacific Counties' plans. It argues that the coach houses would reduce residents' privacy, obstruct solar access on some properties, have a negative effect on residential amenity and enjoyment of properties and cause an overflow into the already limited parking available in the area. It is also concerned about the over-development of the northern end of the laneway, and the impact on the heritage value of the 1840s Georgian terraces.

The community group is campaigning for the City of Sydney Council to re-classify the laneway to protect the community from what it argues is open space grabbing and over-development. SSH

News

City of Sydney supports public tenants

Samantha Van

City of Sydney Public Housing Liaison Officer, Dominic Grenot, is developing a public housing plan. Mr Grenot told *The South Sydney Herald* that he will soon create opportunities for the public to meet and comment on the plan.

"Using some of the processes and ideas from my time with the Northcott community in Surry Hills, I hope to play my part in public housing tenants and communities adding to the richness and diversity of inner-city life," Mr Grenot said.

The position of Public Housing Liaison Officer was created in early 2007. Mr Grenot began in this role in July.

It is a completely new position. "I am not aware of any similar position like this one in Local Government," he said.

"The position came out of the City's Safety Strategy and acknowledges the amount of State Government-managed public housing dwellings within the City's LGA (Local Government Area). "There are nearly 10,000 public housing

dwellings in this area - arguably the most for any LGA in Australia."

Mr Grenot said most public housing within the City's LGA is in concentrations, where there are complex problems and needs, as well as a range of issues around safety and crime. "The significant estates/communities are in Millers Point, Woolloomooloo, Glebe, Redfern, Waterloo, Surry Hills and Erskineville but there are dwellings in just about every suburb within the LGA.

"Having spent the past decade with the NSW Department of Housing, all in the inner city, in a variety of support, problem-solving and capacity-building roles, and the previous 25 years working with communities and individuals, I believe this new role is not only needed but has the potential to create strong and sustainable interventions with all stakeholders," he said.

Mr Grenot sees the roles as essentially about two things: managing risks and potential risks, as well as supporting and empowering communities including individuals and groups.



Dominic Grenot and Woolloomooloo residents Photo: Ali Blogg

He said the first aspect is about helping address safety and crime concerns, listening to tenants and community concerns and needs in addition to partnering and acting with all who work closely in public housing communities.

The second aspect is about

creating and supporting community development opportunities as well as building individual and collective skills and capacity. Mr Grenot went on to say there is much planned for Woolloomooloo in the years ahead. "The Woolloomooloo improvement plan

will address a number of public domain, safety, and amenity issues as well as looking at the human capital and needs."

Dominic Grenot can be contacted on 9265 9954 or dgrenot@cityofsydney.nsw.gov.au.





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News



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

Everyone wants to read! Schools assisted by NGOs

Reading is important. The Exodus Foundation is in Alexandria and now the Smith Family's reading program, Learning for Life is operating in the same suburb. The Smith Family will run the "Student to Student" reading program over terms 2 and 3 in 2008, with the help of mentor students from local schools. The students will ring their reading buddies three times a week and the mentor students will read to them for about 20 minutes. This program has been running for eight years and is expanding next year at record numbers. To support the student mentors, the Smith Family requires capable and caring community members to volunteer as mentor supervisors. The mentor supervisors encourage and support the mentor students, by phoning them every week or fortnight and "catching-up", and also by helping with any problems. If you are interested in helping, ring the Smith Family on 9699 9820 or drop in to their office at Alexandria Park Community Centre. It's good to see NGOs working hard encouraging reading among the young people in the inner city community.

Hillsong on the move

Leigh Coleman, who for years has, among other things, run Hillsong's welfare services, is moving on from Hillsong. Now it seems that Hillsong will vacate the old Good Government Building in Little Eveleigh Street.

A glimmer of hope on Redfern Street

This column has long been concerned about the St Vincent's Presbytery on Redfern Street that's been in a state of decay for years. Now there seems to be a ray of hope as a prominent business person has made an offer to the Catholic Archdiocese for the old building and, we understand, the sheltered workshop that is next door to the old courthouse. Something has to happen to the old Presbytery building - hopefully soon.

Redfern artist makes it worthwhile going to Balmain

Redfern artist, Pamela Neville, will be represented in an exhibition at the Balmain Watch House in February. Pamela has been painting full time for the past five years and produces mainly small expressive works in oils and mixed media - personal responses to the land and its colour. Her works have been hung in numerous exhibitions, including the Camden Art Prize, Fishers Ghost Art Prize and the Surry Hills Festival. She has recently completed two years at the Sydney Gallery School Meadowbank TAFE where her works were highly regarded. She is represented in numerous private collections, both here and interstate. Some of her recent works are by invitation of the Balmain Peninsula Park Painters. This group has been meeting regularly for a number of years in the open spaces of Balmain. A special focus of this year's exhibition will include the working tugs moored in front of the Colgate buildings on Mort Bay. The group will hold its 4th Annual Exhibition for one weekend only at the Balmain Watch House, 179 Darling Street Balmain at 10-4pm on Saturday February 23 and Sunday February 24. The opening will be from 6-8pm on Friday February 22.

The Festival makes a motza for Surry Hills Neighbourhood Centre

The Surry Hills Neighbourhood Centre, now homeless since it had to move out of the Surry Hills Library building in Crown Street, is being redeveloped. Its child-care service is operating over in Pine Street, Chippendale, and its administration is at the rear of the Bourke Street Public School. They have had a tough year but the Festival in 2007 was a great success if the amount raised is anything to go by. Linda Scott, the Chairperson, told this column that they raised \$75,000. If you're interested in having a say in the future of the Centre, why not join them at their Planning Day? It will be held on Saturday March 15. Ring the Centre on 9310 2888 for more details.

Marching on Canberra to turn back racism

On Tuesday February 12, a busload of people from the Redfern Aboriginal community is off to Canberra to take part in a rally at Parliament House. The group says it wants to mobilise people for the re-instatement of the Racial Discrimination Act, demand an immediate review of the Northern Territory intervention, end welfare quarantines, compulsory land acquisition and "mission manager" powers. It is also calling for the implementation of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. We will have a report for you on their protest next month.

For more information ring Shane Phillips 0414 077 631.

Another pub goes for extended hours

The Beresford Hotel in Bourke Street, Surry Hills, currently has approval for hours of operation from 10am to 1am the following day, Monday to Sunday. The management wants to extend these hours to 3am. Imagine living next door to a pub that is open to 3am! If you live near the Beresford in Bourke Street, why not email and tell us what you think? If you live next door to any pub that opens to 3am and it doesn't bother you, we would love to hear from you. Email me trevrssh@bigpond.net.au



Buddhist temple and accommodation at risk Photo: Ali Blogg

Yiu Ming Temple in jeopardy

Trevor Davies

The Hudson Community Association, which represents the residents in the Hudson Apartments on Botany Road Alexandria, has for some time been concerned about the future of the nearby Yiu Ming Buddhist Temple.

In a letter to Lord Mayor Clover Moore and the State Member for Heffron Kristina Keneally, it argues that the dangerous subsidence around the area of the temple on Botany Road, Wyndham Street, and McEvoy Street has two possible causes. The group claims that the development at 64-68 McEvoy Street, right next door to the temple, through its major excavation, is endangering their buildings, and also that heavy vehicles on surrounding roads might have caused increased levels of vibration on Wyndham Street.

Whatever the cause or causes, the heritage-listed Yiu Ming Temple complex with its accommodation for elderly Chinese residents is now at risk, with parts of its residential buildings already too dangerous for occupation.

The caretaker, Fu Xiang Huang, speaking through an interpreter, told *The South Sydney Herald* that the 70 elderly residents have been forced to move out from their terraces and move into the demountables which must be almost intolerable in the heat of summer. Fu Xiang Huang was anxious to have things fixed by the Chinese New Year celebrations which always bring hundreds of visitors.

At the time of writing the SSH has received a response from the City Council which reads: "The City has imposed strict conditions of consent on the development requiring the developer to submit a Geotechnical Report (Conditions

10 and 11), Demolition, Excavation and Construction Management Statements (Condition 16), Soil and Water Management Plan (Condition 17) - all to be submitted for the approval of the Principal Certifying Authority (as per State Government legislation). Condition 20 also requires that the structural integrity of the adjoining heritage structures is not to be compromised."

A resident of the Hudson group commented: "It is reassuring that the City has imposed strict conditions on the developer, but has it been vigilant in making sure that the developer has complied with these 'strict conditions'? Anyone passing along Wyndham Street can see, at a glance, a whole section of the main residential building beside the temple already detached from the main wall having fallen about a foot and standing perilously on the edge of the massive excavation directly beside it." SSH

Incinerator makes way for civic centre



The old incinerator at Green Square Photo: Ali Blogg

Sarah Malik

Demolition work has begun on the disused Waterloo incinerator at Zetland, Green Square - a building that has been at the heart of over 30 years of public planning controversy.

The demolition, which is expected to take up to six months, brings to an end debates over how the controversial site could be used.

According to *The Sydney Morning Herald*, the demolition is part of a \$1.7 billion development which

will replace the industrial buildings and car yards around Green Square station to create a civic centre as big as Martin Place, with apartments, supermarkets and shops.

The incinerator, formerly a waste plant, was closed down in 1996 after 30 years of community campaigning. Since its closure, it had become the subject of intense real-estate haggling as developers, councils and residents debated over how the vacant inner-city property could be used.

Colin James, a Sydney University lecturer and architect, who has long campaigned against the demolition, is disappointed at the loss of the building. "It's a great tragedy. It's one of the best things that Green Square has going for it," he said.

Mr James has long argued that the incinerator could be used to provide cheap accommodation for artists and students in a city with sky-rocketing rents. "I would still argue that it could have been used for accommodation. Buildings should be recycled not destroyed. What a shame!" he said.

In 2002 the owners of the building, Waverley and Woollahra Council, had allowed a development application for use of the site by CRASH - the Construction Industry's relief and assistance fund for Sydney's homeless.

The move was initially welcomed by the then Mayor of Waverley,

Paul Pierce, who was quoted as advocating short-term squatting on unused properties, given the "obvious homelessness problems in the inner city". He later recanted, arguing that the CRASH application had no merit as the "applicant wasn't the owner" and the building had no "architectural merit".

The CRASH application was also met with censure from the Mayor of Woollahra at the time, Andrew Petrie, who argued it was capricious for the councils to retain a disused incinerator which adversely affected the value of their land.

Residents' concerns have also been cited as having an impact. Local resident, Col Charlton, a Waterloo businessman, who campaigned for the incinerator's 1996 closure is pleased to see the building demolished.

"I'm glad to see it go," he said. "It's an ugly thing anyhow. It should have never been there in the first place - certainly it should not have been in the middle of the city."

As for the building's accommodation potential, Charlton is ambivalent. "I think there would be some residual stuff. When it was running it was giving out poisonous gases," he said. "It wasn't designed as a building for accommodation. It doesn't sound good for accommodation in my view." SSH

News

Human Rights Award for Redfern Legal Centre

Reem Al-Gharabally

The Redfern Legal Centre has won the 2007 Human Rights Award, presented by the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission.

Established in 1977, the Redfern Legal Centre is a non-profit community centre in Redfern that provides free legal advice and service to disadvantaged people and the groups that advocate for them. Operating on a very limited budget, the centre relies heavily on volunteer labour and pro-bono assistance from legal professionals.

"Winning the award is nice but really we would do the work anyway. The award is more about raising the profile of the centre in the community more generally and validating the work we've done," says Elizabeth Morley, Redfern Legal Centre's principal solicitor.

Much of the centre's activities are concerned with domestic violence, disability discrimination, racial discrimination and Indigenous issues.

The centre co-ordinates the Redfern Women's Violence Court Assistance Scheme which has been recognised as an innovative and successful program to help women seeking a restraining order to have access to legal and support services.

"Our clients are wonderful. In the face of great disadvantage and great trauma they find time to smile, they have time to laugh and they are resilient," Ms Morley says.

In February this year, in participation with Mudgin-gal Aboriginal Women's Corporation, the centre will run an information session on the Queensland Redress Scheme which provides compensation to people who experienced abuse and neglect as children in

Queensland institutions.

Ms Morley emphasises the centre's aim is to help people help themselves: "We can continue placing Band-Aids on individuals but that doesn't do anything to prevent people needing Band-Aids. We always try and balance our resources, firstly by not duplicating mainstream services but applying some Band-Aids, providing some information to the community so that they can avoid needing the Band-Aids and changing the system in order to prevent the injuries that will need the Band-Aids.

"What we would like to do ultimately is to work ourselves out of a job, to have a well-functioning legal system to which all members of the community have access, and a fair and just society that will make us completely unnecessary. That is probably a long way off and we will continue working in the meantime," Ms Morley says.

SSH



Vicki Ashton and Dennis Weatherall Photo: Ali Blogg

Legacy of a "cruel and heartless" government

Carissa Simons

The STEP ERS program, administered by the Redfern Aboriginal Corporation, has been introduced to replace the successful Community Development Employment Program, which was axed by the Howard Government in mid-2006.

The differences between the two programs are stark. CDEP paid Indigenous people for approximately 15 hours work a week in areas such as screen-printing, catering, rubbish and furniture removal, and lawn mowing. These businesses were administered by the Redfern Aboriginal Corporation. Many of the participants were unable to find other employment, due to their age, criminal convictions or addiction. They gave up welfare payments in

return for the opportunities given to them by the CDEP program. According to Redfern Aboriginal Corporation CEO Dennis Weatherall, the program fostered a work ethic amongst its participants, many of whom had a welfare mentality, and gave people a sense of community and stability. He says that the previous Government was a "cruel and heartless" one, which let down the people who had long relied on the Redfern CDEP.

The STEP ERS, or Structured Training and Employment Projects & Employment and Related Services system, focuses on training and development for participants and providing support for employers. The Redfern Aboriginal Corporation is responsible for helping people enrolled in the program to find suitable employers and providing them with adequate

training. Participants are expected to remain in these jobs for at least a 12-month period. At present, only two people from CDEP have enrolled in the STEP ERS program.

Those involved in CDEP, which gave participants structure, stability and support, are skeptical about the success that the mainstream STEP ERS program will have. "Until racism is stamped out, mainstream approaches aren't going to work," says Vicki Ashton from the Redfern Aboriginal Corporation. "I feel like the Government wants them to do crime."

Weatherall and Ashton are hopeful that the new Labor Government will live up to its election promise to reinstate the CDEP program, although both expect that new restrictions will be placed upon it.

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Kristina Keneally MP

MEMBER
FOR HEFFRON

Energy Apprentices Guarantee

The "Energy Apprentices Guarantee" is part of the lemma Government's plan to secure the state's future power supplies.

I am pleased to advise that in the past week three electricity businesses in New South Wales have opened their doors to 285 new apprentices

The "Energy Apprentices Guarantee" is one of the keys to our long-term plan for the State's electricity needs.

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Apprentices are the key to maintaining our energy supplies and today's commitment will ensure we have the skilled workers we need to keep the lights on now and into the future.

The lemma Government wants to ensure that as older employees retire, NSW has all the people needed to be the linesmen, electricians and tradesmen of the future.

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The lemma Government is committed to apprentices and are also committed to guaranteeing the jobs, pay and conditions for all current public sector energy retail and generation workers as part of our plans to secure the state's future power supplies.

Company	Current Apprentice Numbers	New Apprentices in 2008
EnergyAustralia	600	175
Integral Energy	188	62
Country Energy	422	48
Total	1,210	285

Kristina Keneally MP
Member for Heffron

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News



Missy Higgins at the Aboriginal Medical Service Photos: Ben Falkenmire

Missy in action on behalf of the AMS

Ben Falkenmire

Pop singer and Aussie icon Missy Higgins took time out from her busy schedule to lend support to the Aboriginal Medical Service in Redfern.

The Melbournian was in town to perform at the Kev Carmody tribute, 'Cannot Buy My Soul'. Keeping with the Indigenous theme, she dropped in to see Naomi Myers and her hard-

working faithful as part of Close the Gap, a campaign seeking to reduce the 17-year difference between non-Indigenous and Indigenous life expectancy.

When asked by the SSH, Why Redfern? Ms Higgins said, "I really wanted to come and look at the positive things that are happening in Aboriginal health service. A lot of the time you only hear the negatives in newspapers."

The singer-songwriter is aware her

support may have flow-on effects. "I want to help encourage the Government to put money in the right areas. I love this clinic. It's culturally sensitive and caters to the needs of the community. It's actually run by the community. It's really great to see," the 23-year-old said.

Redfern's Aboriginal Medical Service was established in the 1970s, pioneering standards of Aboriginal health care.

SSH



John MacGowan Photo: Ali Blogg

What future for the Liberal Party?

Ben Walker

Since the Federal Liberal Party's defeat in November last year, there have been various headlines trumpeting 'The death of the Liberal Party', 'The Liberal Party in turmoil', and so on. Ben Walker asked three local Liberal members for their views on the future of the party.

Edward Mandla, who ran for the State seat of Sydney last year, used a sporting analogy to describe the changing process. "When a sports team suffers a heavy loss, changes need to be made. We need to bring new people through for rejuvenation within the party. Since the election defeat we've had a large influx of new members joining branches."

Mandla explains the Liberal election defeat in terms of psychologist Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of human needs. "Once people have sufficient income, then they want more out of life and the Liberal Party was not sufficiently in touch with those greater needs. The inner city had more of a sense of those needs though, and defied the 6% national swing."

Liberal City of Sydney Councillor Shayne Mallard similarly discusses a process of re-emergence. "Any political party that suffers a defeat

needs to reassess its policies. We were in government for 12 years though, which is a remarkable period. Talk of party extinction is just hype - we will re-emerge as a redefined party with changing issues and new candidates. The party process of review and reform will take time, but I'm excited about the changes. For example, Shadow Minister for the Environment Greg Hunt has been aggressive on the issue of whaling."

John MacGowan, media adviser for Port Stephens Craig Baumann, who lives in Chippendale, says that the Liberal Party has a strong future. "Parties do lose elections. We had a great run for 12 years, but defeat is a fact of life in a democracy. The Liberal Party will go in a different direction with different people now."

MacGowan said it is difficult to assess the new-look Liberal Party at this point in time. "Parliament hasn't sat yet and the Rudd Government is still in a period of a strong honeymoon. When cracks start to appear they have to be capitalised on. When Labor was in opposition, the Government was given some free kicks, because the attention was on Labor navel-gazing rather than the Government. Therefore, we have to accept we are in opposition and make sure to be effective."

SSH



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Yabun Festival 2008

Kutcher Edwards at Yabun Photo: Andrew Collis

BEN FALKENMIRE

Yabun Festival on Australia Day (aka Invasion/Survival Day) not only hosted the best black music in the country and a sea of communities from down the road or down the highway, it featured the makings of the world's largest poem.

Artists Miles Merrill and Sydney's poetry patriarch Tug Dumbly coined the idea when they were thinking of ways to plug the Nightwords Festival in March.

"We thought it would be great to do something creative or artistic in terms of a Guinness World Record," Tug said.

No record stands for them to beat making the task easy, but that is not preventing the guys from pitching for size. To be erected outside the Opera House, the poem will be at least 4.8 metres high by 3.28 metres wide. People from around Sydney have taken up the pen and written a line each on the wall.

"We really wanted to get the community involved," Miles said. "We've been out among the community in Parramatta, Sutherland and at Customs House." Should make for a good read and a good stage piece when it hangs from the ceiling at the Nightwords Festival.

.....
Get down to the Opera House on March 6, 7 and 8. Tickets are from \$20.

Inaugural Yabun Awards

Established by Gadigal Information Service, the home of Koori Radio, the **Yabun Awards** recognise valuable contributions made by Indigenous people in the previous 12 months. Winners are drawn from within the Koori Radio 93.7FM footprint, which spans Greater Sydney, the Central Coast, the Blue Mountains and Wollongong regions.

Winners in 2008 are:

Elder of the year: Lorraine McGee-Sippel for her commitment to Reconciliation, particularly in the Lane Cove municipal area.

Youth of the Year: Daniel Conifer for displaying significant leadership skills in his schooling and sporting achievements.

Person of the Year: Ray Minniecon for his extensive work in the Church and on community boards assisting young people.

Artist of the Year: Adam Hill in recognition of being a prolific visual artist and work within Western Sydney.

Koori Radio Volunteer Broadcaster of the Year: Percy Bishop for his years of service producing and co-presenting the Tangata Whenua Show.



John Pilger with Tug Dumbly at Yabun Photo: Ben Falkenmire



Clowning around at the Block Christmas party Photo: David Paul Beckett

Hot pix for Mardi Gras

JANE BARTON

The Mardi Gras Film Festival kicks off on February 14 at the Angel Place Recital Hall with My Queer Career, a bunch of shorts drawn from MG competition finalists.

Nine films have been selected from a total of 48 submissions. According to Lex Lindsay, festival director, the calibre of judges this year has resulted in high quality films. Judges included Margaret Pomeranz, Anton Enus, Scott Meek (FFC) and Ana Kokinos (director of *Head On*). Those that didn't make the cut can be seen at the Celluloid Salon (February 24 at Palace Academy).

There are some 138 films showing including 50 feature films. The content and themes of this year's

festival selection are "less coming out, and more [about] sexuality informing responses to situations that characters find themselves in," Lex Lindsay said.

"We received about 300 unsolicited submissions this year. This has ensured rich pickings."

With eight French features showing, this year is definitely for Francophiles. *The Man of My Life* and *Times Have Been Better* are just two hot tips from the French selection.

Also not to be missed is *Clapham Junction*, a BBC commission which explores homophobia and its impact on eight men. *Spider Lilies* (Taiwan) is a sweet film about two women, whilst *Vivere* (Germany) and *Dolls* (Czech Rep) are also hot tips for girls.

Book online for blocks of five or 10 tickets. Single tickets can be bought at the cinemas.

Film & upbeat fiestas at festival

REEM AL-GHARABALLY

The 3rd Sydney Latin American Film Festival opens on March 6 at the Chauvel Cinema and for two weeks will give Sydney audiences a chance to sample a wide array of the latest films coming out of Latin America.

The Australian premiere of the Colombian film *Looking for Miguel* (*Buscando Miguel*) will open the festival followed by the launch party featuring a live performance by energetic Latin band Descarga and food provided by the fashionable Latin restaurant/bar El Barrio.

The Festival is a Redfern-based non-profit organisation. Money raised is donated to community development organisations in Latin America and Australia involved in

land care, housing infrastructure and community welfare. The festival has been growing each year and last year raised over \$10,000 for Latin American charities.

"The Sydney Latin American Film Festival is a unique festival in that it is run by a dedicated group of volunteers who work collectively to not only showcase some of the best contemporary cinema coming out of Latin America but also less commercial productions highlighting social and economic issues prevalent in Latin America today. In addition it raises much-needed funds for small under-funded charities working at a grass roots level in Latin America," says Christopher Johns, a member of the organising committee.

The Chauvel Cinema (Paddington) and Club Marconi (Bossley Park) will feature a

selection of features, shorts and documentaries including local Latin films. The Microcinema at the Eastside Arts Centre will highlight political, social and environmental documentaries followed by discussion panels. There will be 12 visiting filmmakers from Latin America this year who will be available for Q&A presentations.

The Festival is renowned for its upbeat fiestas, music and performances as well as its Audience Award prize that offers two tickets to Latin America. This year's mid-festival fiesta will feature one of Sydney's most exciting Latin fusion bands, Watussi.

**Chauvel Cinema (March 6-10)
Eastside Arts (March 11-12)
Club Marconi (March 14-16)
Tickets www.moshtix.com.au**

HELLO AGAIN

HELLO AGAIN is a musical adaptation of LA Times best-selling author Arthur Schettler's LA 80000. The story follows a man who returns to his hometown after 20 years and discovers that his former lover is now a successful businesswoman.

"HELLO AGAIN SCORES!"
- New York Broadway

Jan 20 - Feb 23, 2008. Tues - Sat. Box Office: 12 Greenway Avenue, Potts Point. Tickets \$35. Concession \$30. Bookings: www.ouringtheatre.com or 02 9236 9961.

Directed and Choreographed by Stephen Fisher

Starring: Iwan Collins, Melissa Carter, Zack Corran, Emma Fletcher, Kate-Maria MacLellan, Vincent Rongari, Sarah Keegan, Salina Zebalik, Ella Tiller, Matt Young

Music and Lyrics by Michael John LaChiusa & Booked inspired by Arthur Schettler's LA 80000

"... BEST ORIGINAL MUSICAL OF THE SEASON" - THE NEW YORK TIMES

SAISY THEATRE SX LOTL



Sydney Festival Opening Night, Angel Place Photo: Jack Carnegie

Sydney Festival highlight – Ngapartji Ngapartji

BEN FALKENMIRE

The lead performer of Ngapartji Ngapartji (I give you something, you give me something), Trevor Jameison, chants a phrase throughout his century-long narrative: "Something is going on here." And the something isn't just a captivating theatre production.

The adroit Jameison from Pitjantjatjara – one of the oldest tribes in the world – was stinging to tell his brother's tale, watching him go to gaol just as his grandfather had done decades earlier.

He recorded footage in the lead-up to his brother's conviction, but he couldn't piece enough of a narrative to make it work. His heart-felt desire to get the word out about his people, their trials in

history, and their humanity – often overlooked in the magnifying glass of time – still burned. Enter writer and director Scott Rankin.

Rankin saw the broader impact of the Jamieson family's tale in the scope of white and black relations. He chiselled it down to one of the most influential (and often underrated) of human activities: language. A national Aboriginal language, or a regional language that is easily recognisable to national ears, is lacking in this country.

Rankin and producer big hART are conscious of this, and have identified a role they can play "to generate a national and international groundswell of support" for the languages that remain alive and those on the brink of extermination. Within minutes, Jamieson, his family choir, actors and ethereal singer Saira

Luther are teaching the audience "heads, shoulders, knees and toes" in the Pitjantjatjara language.

Speaking in two languages – English to ensure the audience keeps pace – Jamieson is a notable keeper of the story. His accomplices are numbered wearily and in perfect proportion to emotion (the looks on the faces of choir members when he tells of family deaths because of nuclear bombs is sad beyond tears) and functionality.

The performance leaves the audience to consider Jamieson's story as if it were a rubble mound squatting in Spinifex country, revered by passers-by who are fortunate enough to absorb its spirituality first-hand. A thought-changing experience.

Ngapartji Ngapartji is on at the Belvoir until February 10. Tickets from \$33.

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Image #9, 3 Ponds Oberon, Series C, 2007

Marking time and place

Artist Profile: Michelle Frances Collocott

ANDREW COLLIS

Michelle Collocott's residential studio is located at 314 Abercrombie Street, Darlington. An artist of some renown, nationally and internationally, her work (spanning 50 years) incorporates painting, photography, collage, and, of late, horticulture, to express intimate concern for urban and rural environments. Collocott has worked and exhibited in London, Chicago, Los Angeles, Sydney, Melbourne, Wollongong and Bathurst.

"I'm interested in relationships between the city and the bush," she says. "I'm interested in climate, the shapes and shadows of the land, animals, fence-lines, textures, oscillations of colour. My works are like musical compositions, like jazz. I see various elements as musical instruments, each with a significant part to play."

Collocott has spent much of the past 10 years exploring the qualities of land and light at her six-acre property near Oberon in western NSW.

3 Ponds Oberon is a multifaceted project

comprising three series of different but related images. Series A (topographical) and B (meteorological) were exhibited at Bryanhooper Gallery in 2003. Series C (cerebral) will be exhibited over two shows, the first in October of this year at Wilson Street Gallery in Newtown, the second (works in progress) in 2009.

Collocott maintains meticulous documentation of her work, archiving aerial photographs, news clippings, postage stamps, journal notes and sketches, dried leaves in plastic sleeves – all manner of marks, traces of time and place.

In collaboration with Liz Buchmann at Newtown Fine Art Traders Collocott is currently building a website to showcase her rich and varied work. The website will be launched later this month.

What impresses, overall, is a sense of commitment to the image-making process, to creativity as both gift and task. Collocott's work has a power to awaken senses and to inspire engagement with one's own environment.

www.michellecollocott.com



Angels over Australia by John Douglas

January 28 to February 25

From a series depicting Charlie's Angels coming to Australia and saving the world from an evil radioactive Hector Crawford

clone and his control of world toilet paper supplies. City East Neighbourhood Service Centre 50-52 Darlinghurst Road, Kings Cross Tel: (02) 9246 4680

Happy meals!

SCOTT WINTER

"Food glorious food, cold jelly and custard!" little orphans sing in the classic musical Oliver! But look at more than 60 kids' menus at most of Sydney's casual and fine dining establishments and it's more like "Fries, glorious fries, thawed nuggets 'n spag bol!"

Dining out with our little gems should be a calming, healthy, family-bonding experience, dependent on mood and choice of restaurant or cafe. However, eight out of 10 families with children between the ages of two and nine years of age, said in a local independent survey that dining out with their kids can be a frustrating and unsatisfying experience. A lack of healthy options, an unfriendly atmosphere for children, and no high chairs or half portions are to blame.

So here are our Top Ten choices (with "teddy bear" scores) to make your meal out with the little ones a happy one:

Taronga Zoo, Mosman



After the wee ones have feasted on the vast variety of animals to see, a quieter dining option is needed. Away from the madness of the fast-food market kiosks there is Treetops Cafe. The children's menu is fresh with an Asian/Mediterranean influence and stunning North Shore views. The Satay Chicken is yummy and the gelato is low fat. (Just be mindful that the little boys and girls rooms are over a 100 metres walk away).

Luna Park, North Sydney



The heritage-listed super playground has upped its fun factor with the addition of a glass-fronted, bridge-facing bar/restaurant called The Deck. Choose from a wide range of fresh Mediterranean style cuisine. Go the family-size seafood paella. It rocks as much as the ghost train shocks. Best you eat after the rides!

Doyle's, Watson's Bay 11



Most kids love fish and chips. So if you are going for the deep-fried plunge, then catch of the day has to be Sydney's finest Doyle's Restaurant. Dine alfresco, on a wide selection of grilled or fried seafood and fish, with the city skyline in full view from every table.

China Doll Shop, Woolloomooloo



In full view of the marina, with the CBD arching as a backdrop, evenings here are a must. Teach the young ones the ancient Chinese fairy tale depicted on the blue and white pattern that covers the plates and wall. After dinner kids can play safely along the boardwalk.

Bel Mondo, The Rocks



Kids sit well with Italian food and this award-winning "fine dining" establishment makes you realise exactly what a critically-acclaimed restaurant is all about (the corridor of accolades doesn't lie!). Aside from their usual corporate clientele, it's a safe place for the family (and tourists alike) offering Opera House views, a large bar and dining area, and superb modern Italian.

Sydney Wildlife Centre/Aquarium, Darling Harbour



If you have to opt for a Spaghetti Bolognese then, surprisingly, you can get a good one here. The kid's menu has a lot of pint-size salad options and everything is fresh, not thawed as might be expected. Reasonably priced, you can overcome your fears of high cholesterol, snakes and sharks in the same afternoon.

Pavarotti Pizzas, Waterloo



Pavarotti pizzas are great and the kids can eat and watch the skateboarders and graffiti artists roll by while you taste the gourmet freshness on the Red Star Pizza.

The Russian Coachmen, Surry Hills



Come marvel at the eerie collection of Russian dolls, the incongruous sculptures that once towered over old city banks, the mix-match of Russian artifacts and the old fireplaces. The kids will love it. The staff have a blunt yet pleasing "Basil Faulty" air about them and the meals are fresh, simple and true to traditional Russian style. Lots of poaching, pot roasting and pickled comfort food.

The Bavarian Bier Cafe 212 Bent Street, Moore Park



Situated in the heart of the Entertainment Quarter this one tops the list of most children-friendly restaurants in Sydney. While you sit and sample a collection of European tastes from the Bavarian-style menu, (dad, go easy on the range of beer they have on offer!) you can watch the kids running freely around the garden. Inflatable castles, slides, carousels are all there for kids' enjoyment. Fox Studios has always been a thumbs up for the kids, but now with the addition of this great eatery it's fun and games all round.

Note: all restaurants average at \$20 a head and excel in freshness, friendliness and efficiency of service.



Q: Are we not men? A: We are balloons by Claudia M Leigh (of Surry Hills).

The Reviews

Theatre Review by Jane Barton

James and the Giant Peach
by Roald Dahl
New Theatre, Newtown

There is much rollicking, good-natured fun in *James and the Giant Peach*. James, an orphan, has a number of terrible events to overcome including losing his parents and enduring nasty aunts who keep him in social isolation – before being liberated.

James is freed magically by a menagerie of creatures including a philosophical earth worm, a kind-hearted spider, a ditzzy lady bird and an endearing if somewhat dense centipede. Roald Dahl's utopian *Giant Peach*, where they all finish up living together, remains a robust classic and perfect fare for school-holiday entertainment, especially if you are under eight years.

The New Theatre is something of a workhorse. Its 75-year history is a proud reminder of continuous service to the Inner West in presenting theatre. *James and the Giant Peach* has much the same feeling. The performers are engaging without being inspiring, the sets similarly so. A chaotic opening designed to let harried parents arrive late, engenders a lack-lustre beginning. Fortunately, a clean sharp lighting cue indicates to big and small audience members that the show is starting. Sharper directing might have raised this show

to another level. As it is, it does enough to convince the smallest members of the audience to suspend their disbelief but a moderately sharp nine-year-old will be seriously skeptical.

Theatre review by Jane Barton

China by William Yang
Griffin Theatre, Darlinghurst

For the uninitiated William Yang is a photographer and story-teller who has, for over 15 years, used photography to make compelling performance and video pieces. A second-generation Chinese migrant, Yang is a cultural commentator with an eye for both the discordant and beautiful. His singular aesthetic is underpinned by a sardonic yet sensitive wit that pierces pretensions, his own and others.

China sees the 64-year-old Yang at his most sublime. *China* is the culmination of three trips to an unfamiliar country. Despite Chinese blood running through his veins, Yang's first language is English. His mellifluous voice is meditative, accompanied by Nicholas Ng's evocative live score, as he tours us through Beijing and the provinces, and we accompany him on his spiritual pilgrimage to climb China's nine most sacred Daoist and Buddhist peaks.

This is a highly sophisticated journey of reflection. Yang has perfected the

technical aspects of his live performance and in *China* he goes further, offering himself as a canvas for the audiences emotional projections as he traverses states of endearing vulnerability in his attempt to connect the audience with the deeper meaning of his photographs. William Yang, as part of this year's Festival of Sydney, was simply breathtaking.

Book review by Ben Walker

The Mindful Way through Depression
By Mark Williams, John Teasdale, Zindel Segal and Jon Kabat-Zinn.
leebooks \$31.95

The Mindful Way through Depression presents some of the latest research in overcoming depression by respected psychological researchers Mark Williams, John Teasdale, Zindel Segal and Jon Kabat-Zinn. Many people who are depressed believe they are helping themselves by examining "Why do I feel so bad?" However, psychology research shows that by dissecting and analysing moods a person can actually increase the severity and duration of their depression.

The result of latest research is a technique called mindfulness. Williams and colleagues says that "mindfulness is the awareness that emerges through

paying attention on purpose, in the present moment, and non-judgmentally to things as they are". It is like relaxing into "being mode" rather than the "doing mode" of the mind. Mindfulness has some similarities to the experience of meditation, which can bring an awareness to breath, the body, and sensate experience which stills and calms the mind.

The book is also accompanied by a guided meditation CD by Jon Kabat-Zinn who leads the person into the experience of mindfulness that is scientifically validated and does not have any of the supernatural or new age connotations that some meditation experts also include.

Overall, *The Mindful Way through Depression* is an excellent resource in scientifically validated ways of reducing depression without anti-depressants. While it is written by researchers who have the ability to write in academic-speak, this book is a very readable and user-friendly way of accessing this radical new research.

Book review by Ben Walker

The Stuff of Thought
Steven Pinker
Gleebooks \$35

Best-selling author Steven Pinker has elucidated the world of linguistics to

show their social function as well as their communicative function in *The Stuff of Thought*. Many people speak in terms of "mere semantics", but semantics matters. Financially, the insurance payout for the World Trade Centre was going to be \$3.5 billion more if the two plane crashes were considered as two separate "events" rather than one "event".

In an episode of *Seinfeld*, George Costanza says no to his date's offer of coffee; only to realise later that "coffee" in fact was a socially prudent way of offering "sex".

There is also an element of power relations in the way language is used, because a lower status person is mindful of not sounding too demanding. For example, instead of saying "pass the salt" the person may say "if you could pass the salt, that would be great".

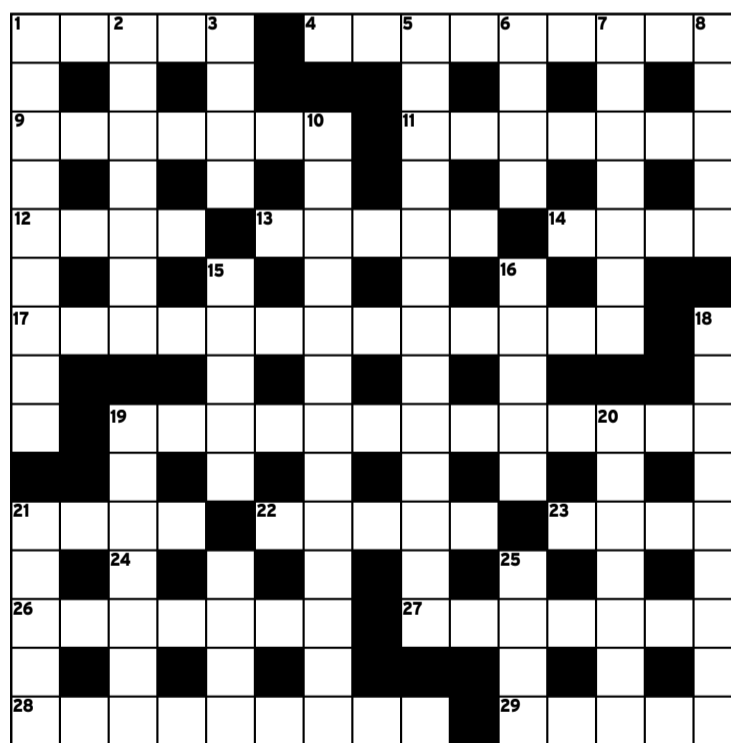
One of the most interesting chapters is 'The Seven Words You Can't Say on Television'. Pinker examines the social and communicative function that certain words play and why sexual and bodily words have become taboo in some contexts.

The book is engaging and enjoyable, but as expected for a linguist, he uses a lot of words that even I as an avid reader still had to look up, therefore it may be too dense for some readers. However, for those interested in the area of language and how the brain processes information *The Stuff of Thought* is a book to get you thinking.



Surry Hills Markets Photo: Bob de Freitas

South Sydney Crossword



ACROSS

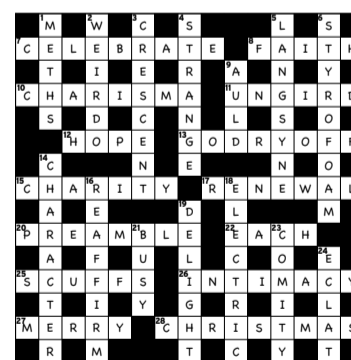
- 1 Ritzy as a slice of the air. (5)
- 4 Smok'um pipe and cease hostilities. (4,5)
- 9 Indian hashish pipe. (7)
- 11 A not so heavy Zippo. (7)
- 12 Extraterrestrial swallows cricket team! Way out. (4)
- 13 The King lives evidently. (4)
- 14 Dinky-di cooler. (4)
- 17 The drink between New York and London. (8,5)
- 19 Messages heard perhaps at Central Station. (13)
- 21 Viciously attack a shopping precinct? (4)
- 22 Halts turning spots. (5)
- 23 Cluey, as was Solomon. (4)
- 26 Either way it goes round. (7)
- 27 Overlook a scam perpetrated. (7)
- 28 Drunk halo colic. (9)
- 29 Conspicuous jewellery clads blatant posing. (5)

DOWN

- 1 Scary tree upset administrative. (9)
- 2 I nail it becoming first. (7)
- 3,15 Balloonist's nightmare is a golfer's dream. (4,2,3)
- 5 Like a disco cop providing a fascinating visual display. (13)
- 6 Summon the attendant. (4)
- 7 Craftsman in a rats tangle. (7)
- 8 The bird that gets the worm. (5)
- 10 Ultimately difficult head and tail in mural representing ethnic diversity. (13)
- 16 "See me" sounding sordid. (5)
- 18 Gets eager anticipating the bunny's delivery. (6,3)
- 19 Ultimo's new centre is of water. (7)
- 20 Recent equatorial hot spot. (7)
- 21 "I just met a girl named ___?" (5)
- 24 Hanker for a scratch. (4)
- 25 Brush off dropped buns. (4)

Crossword by D.P.

Last month's solution



News cont'd



Andorra's Joel Beasant Photo: Supplied

Sympathy for the Devil

Ben Walker

Joel Beasant, lead singer of the punk band Andorra, has united some of Sydney's best punk bands to collaboratively record two cover songs to raise funds and awareness for the Tasmanian Devil in the 'Punk for the Devil' project.

The two songs are Band Aid's 'Do They Know It's Christmas' and Michael Jackson's 'We are the World' - both classics from the 1980s. These songs were chosen because they express good will and hope for a better world. As expected, the bands put their own arrangements on the songs, with faster tempo, punk-style singing, and guitar, bass and drums instrumentation.

"I'm a passionate environmentalist,"

Beasant says, "and see the preservation and revival of the Tassie Devil as the most important ecological concern facing Australia at present. We want to do something to continue to raise awareness and support for the organisations out there treating the animals and researching ways to save them."

The idea for the project was posted on Triple J's 'Unearthed' website, and within a day, over 20 bands responded. The 12 bands enabled to participate were Andorra, A Lazy Punch, Crapulous Gee Gaw, Department of Correction, Even People Know, Frog Grenade, Love and War, Normal Day, The Bleed, Hellsong Church and Upapipopapo.

"Punk music has always had an anti-establishment stance," Beasant says. "There is social and political

commentary filtered through punk songs. This environmental project is continuing the punk ethics of DIY, independence, self-assertion and doing something positive for the Tassie Devil."

True to the DIY ethic, the bands arranged and recorded the songs all within a four-day period. The media response has been far-reaching and the Department of Primary Industries in Tasmania wants the bands to perform a concert in Tasmania with five Tasmanian punk bands. SSH

The Punk for the Devil songs 'We are the world' and 'Do they know it's Christmas' can be purchased via the link at www.tassiedevil.com.au with proceeds going to the Save the Tasmanian Devil program.



Mr Bamboo at the Highandry festival Photo: Moz (www.moz.net.nz)

Organised anarchy?

norrie mAy-welby

Within two hours of the Peat's Ridge 2008 New Year festival being cancelled, the anarchists of Figureight were organised enough to put together an alternative festival - in time to announce it with the news of the Peat's Ridge cancellation. The crew at Figureight, an inner-city collective of creative artists/ musicians, hooked up with many of the other carnies and performers and sound system magicians who had been planning on Peat's Ridge, and activated their networks of voluntary energy and experience in putting on underground parties to put on Highandry, "the festival that had to happen".

Most of Newtown's under-30 population joined the inner-city arty and feral types who poured out to a green valley 18km from Wiseman's Ferry. The land was actually used as a retreat by Aboriginal people, and it was thanks to their generosity we were welcomed onto their land by their caretaker Dave.

It is at this point that I encounter the difficulty of whether I should be identified as one of the participants,

spectators, performers, one of the organisers or one of the organised. (Such distinctions are only ever arbitrary, but are even more fluid and organic in collective efforts like this festival.) I'll identify as an active supporter of whatever lovely and creative people do, and it was on this basis I tagged along and painted a couple of signs and did a spot in the stand-up comedy tent.

There were a handful of different sound stages, including a Dub stage by the beach, the famous Jollywood stage managed by warehouse party legend Barry, the psychedelic solar-powered Dome, the Death's Head Pantomime space of some crazy kids from Newcastle, and the chilled-out Gingerbread House where a therapeutic dose of the Mighty Boosh was administered to those recovering at the end of New Year's Day.

Over 1500 people enjoyed this three-day festival in the bush, and I want to thank everyone, from those visitors who gave no more than a smile, to the core crew who happily swarmed together to produce great joy for others. It is really life affirming to be amongst those for whom it is not about the money, but about the Love. SSH

Erskineville stories for the big screen

SSH

Erskineville Stories is a film made by local artist, Annie Kennedy. It tells the stories of 10 residents who have lived in Erskineville since the 1920s.

The project began in 2006 when Annie noticed an absence in her life, after the death of two elderly neighbours whom she used to see on an almost daily basis. After they died, she heard snippets of details about their histories and regretted not having spoken to them more fully about their lives and their recollections of growing up and living in the area. The sense that Erskineville was losing its memories and these valuable sources of oral history, inspired Annie to capture some of the remaining long-term residents on film.

The stories in the film glimpse a rich history of tough times and show changes in the social fabric of a suburb transformed from gutter brawls to gentrification. They tell of how the Rabbits got their name, how a local boxer made it into the Guinness Book of Records, the sadness of living in an orphanage in the Depression, dancing with a fisherman and falling in love with his secret letters. Annie says that *Erskineville Stories* shows local residents as charming characters and

highlights their amazing resilience over time.

Such a huge project was far too big for one individual to produce alone. Annie formed the Erskineville Historical Association with some local friends and applied for funding. The project is now supported with a Cultural Grant from the City of Sydney Council. Ray White Real Estate, Newtown, has also been extremely generous as a major sponsor in the screening of the film. In fact, the first resident interviewed for the film came directly through one of the agents from Ray White. She was selling an estate. Annie and Prue had a lengthy discussion about how many older residents had recently died and their homes, now sold, were being renovated. There was such a strong sense of permanent change taking place. It was the urgency of that house going on the market and yet another long-term resident leaving the area that prompted Annie to start filming. It was one of those ludicrous situations. Annie bought a camera and took a leap of faith in the project. It was one of those ideas that took a deep hold on her imagination and just "had to be done".

The local Erskineville community has also rallied behind the project with residents making donations to help with the costs of producing the film. Residents were asked to pay

\$5 to become associate members of the Historical Society. This created a data-base of supporters. At one point when funds were needed to pay for professional editing these supporters donated items for sale and a big garage sale was held at a local park which raised enough money to ensure the project could continue. Some residents have been extraordinarily generous. One such resident donated \$500 saying how important he thought it was to respect our elderly residents and how important their stories are to the community as a whole.

The generosity of the local community has been very heartening. In the film, many residents speak about the kindness of others during the depression and how people were good to each other. Annie's experience is that Erskineville is still a place where kindness and generosity is shown and where the sense of local pride remains alive and well. Thanks to the major sponsors, the Erskineville community can continue to enjoy a sense of generosity with the screening being free for everyone to attend. SSH

The film will be screened as a free Moonlight Cinema Event On Saturday March 8 from 6.30pm at Harry Noble Reserve on Swanson Street, Erskineville. Enquiries: erskinevillestories@gmail.com



Annie Kennedy focuses on Erskineville Photo: Ali Blogg

News

Questions for Redfern Police

Joseph Correy

The relationship between some of the Aboriginal community and Redfern Police has become so dysfunctional that complaints against officers are rarely made despite claims of rampant harassment circulating Redfern and Waterloo.

Aboriginal activist Lyall Munro said the police practice of constantly strip-searching Aboriginals, and rarely making arrests, had a devastating effect on the Indigenous community.

"Every day police pull our young people up on the street and strip search them, there are white police men searching young black women," he said. "It's inhuman. How many arrests come from the strip searches? The police won't answer that because the answer is hardly any."

Mr Munro said police had a free reign to harass Aboriginal people because of a flawed complaints process whereby police investigate allegations made against other police officers even if they're made to the Ombudsman.

"Aboriginal people can't get redress through this system no matter how many times we make complaints against police," he said. "I've been involved in major complaints that have been made to the Ombudsman and they go nowhere, so what hope does a black teenager have?"

"It devastates the community when Aboriginal people can't get redress. Young people don't forget how they've been treated and parents feel disempowered because they can't do anything about police intimidating their children."

Redfern Police local area commander, superintendent Mark Walton, said the relationship between police

and the Aboriginal community had improved and complaints about police conduct were rare.

"Reasonable grounds to search somebody is established in the mind of an officer before they activate those powers," he said. "They may have made observations in regard to a person or that person might have a history [that makes his/her actions suspicious]."

"The police's job is a very difficult one. Are we going to get it right all the time? Probably not. Is every contact with police going to be a positive one? Probably not. But we do aim to train police so they properly apply their powers."

Superintendent Walton said he was confident that complaints against police officers were thoroughly investigated. "If people are concerned about particular incidents and how they are treated by Redfern Police then I encourage them to discuss them with the duty officer at Redfern police station," he said. "The complaints are investigated and determined by the evidence, the same as any other allegation."

NSW Council of Civil Liberties vice president Pauline Wright said the lack of police accountability led to systematic harassment of communities. "The complaint process where police investigate police is far from ideal," she said. "In most cases the only evidence is the account of the police officer and account of the alleged victim."

"It's unrealistic to think that police will take the word of an Aboriginal person over the word of a fellow police officer whom they have a personal relationship with. Until the system changes I don't think we'll see the relationship between the police and Aboriginal communities improve." SSH

Police activities must be monitored

Joseph Correy

The relationship between the police and many Aboriginals in Redfern-Waterloo is pitiful. The Aboriginal community faces the humiliation of searches that rarely result in an arrest and have no effective means of redress. The process whereby police investigate complaints made against other police officers defies logic. It discourages people from reporting harassment.

This situation creates mistrust and suspicion towards the law, blurring the line between right and wrong in a community that is susceptible to crime. Furthermore, it drives a wedge between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people because the law is applied differently to different sections of the community.

Police deny that their relationship with the Indigenous community is damaged. But ask an Aboriginal

person about how officers behave on the beat and a different story is told. In December I stopped at the Block to say Merry Christmas to an Aboriginal woman I'd known since I was five years old. When I left, the police threw her into a paddy-wagon, searched her and accused her of selling drugs to white people.

A similar incident occurred a few days earlier when a white person visited a friend on the Block. Police searched him as he walked home and accused him of buying drugs. Is it inconceivable to police that people from different backgrounds in Redfern could have a relationship that doesn't involve the sale of narcotics?

Complaints weren't made about any of these occurrences because the complaints system is flawed. I experienced its failures when I lodged a complaint with the Ombudsman after a teenager was dragged out of my car near Leichhardt Pool. He was searched in front of his little brother

and the detective accused us - we were shirtless, dripping water and in board shorts - of acting suspiciously and told us to "stay in Redfern".

When I complained, the Ombudsman reported that the police officers involved had refuted my account and the car was pulled over because of a crooked P-Plate. Investigation closed.

Experiences like this stop people from reporting injustices. I've seen teenagers covered in bruises and scrapes after encounters with police but they think it futile to lodge a complaint. A man I know was capsicum-sprayed when he opened his door because he heard a noise outside his Surry Hills home. The police did not apologise. Rather they handcuffed him before letting him go without charge or explanation. Where is the accountability?

Incidents like these will continue to occur every day until fairness is restored to the justice system and the activities of police are monitored. SSH



Rachel Forster site in Pitt Street, Redfern Photo: Ali Blogg

Rachel Forster site sold to highest bidder

Candice Chung

The former Rachel Forster Hospital at Redfern has been sold at the end of last year, following Planning Minister Frank Sartor's approval of a concept plan for the \$70 million residential redevelopment.

The site, sold for \$8.5 million, will be home to 150 new private housing units, including a publicly accessible park outlined on the concept plan. The government has promised to ensure that the historical significance of the former hospital will be preserved.

"Important heritage items, such as the existing surgery building and colonnade structure, would be retained under the proposal and incorporated into the new development," Mr Sartor said in a statement.

Proceeds from the sale of the hospital site will fund the development

of a new community health centre at the former Redfern Courthouse and police station, which is expected to become operational in 2009.

Local community group REDWatch believes the sale of government land for private residential redevelopment may create a backlash in the long run.

"Right from the beginning we've taken the view that the government shouldn't permanently alienate publicly-owned land," REDWatch spokesperson Geoff Turnbull said. "When you're talking about increasing the population density in the area, you have to make sure that you set aside what's going to be needed for the public domain in the future."

Mr Turnbull said the sale of the Rachel Forster site demonstrates a lack of long term planning. "On the one hand, you've got the City of Sydney looking at what it needs to buy back to be able to increase the

amount of green space in the inner city as part of its 2030 Strategy. But on the other hand, you've now got currently-owned government land going into the private sector."

South Sydney Greens convener Irene Doutney said while the Greens are not opposed to urban consolidation and sustainable redevelopment, there are signs that local residents are experiencing a continual loss of social stability.

"We've lost schools, we've lost the court house, we've now lost a hospital - it's just a constant taking away of the community's resources," Ms Doutney said. "As a trend it could be bad for the public housing community. There's going to be an influx of people with a lot of different expectations to local residents. We would like to see a much bigger commitment to public housing in an area that needs affordable housing so badly." SSH



A rally against gay bashing around Oxford Street Darlinghurst gathered a crowd of nearly a thousand people in Harmony Park Surry Hills on Survival Day. The Reclaim the Right Vigil against homophobic violence was held behind Central Police Station, where police have been accused of inaction on recent anti-gay assaults. In response to some concerns of racism that preceded the event, some participants combined the pink Australian flag with the Aboriginal flag, in solidarity. **Photo by Jack Carnegie**

Comment & Opinion

EDITORIAL

SSH

The SSH Editorial Team brings New Year greetings to all our readers. May your year be creative, just and enjoyed in the spirit of South Sydney, among its great people.

We also take this opportunity to thank all those who give their time and talents voluntarily to our paper - the journalists and the distributors, people who agree to be interviewed and who pass on news stories to us. We could not sustain this paper without you. We are also grateful for those who advertise with us and help to make the production of the paper possible.

As we enter 2008, we will watch with interest the policies and actions of our new Federal Government. We hope that the much-vaunted Australian value of "a fair go" will be honoured and put into practice.

Last year, this paper and the Uniting Church parish from which it comes took part in the campaign to free David Hicks and restore human rights. Now that he has been released from prison, there are many calls for David to apologise to the Australian people.

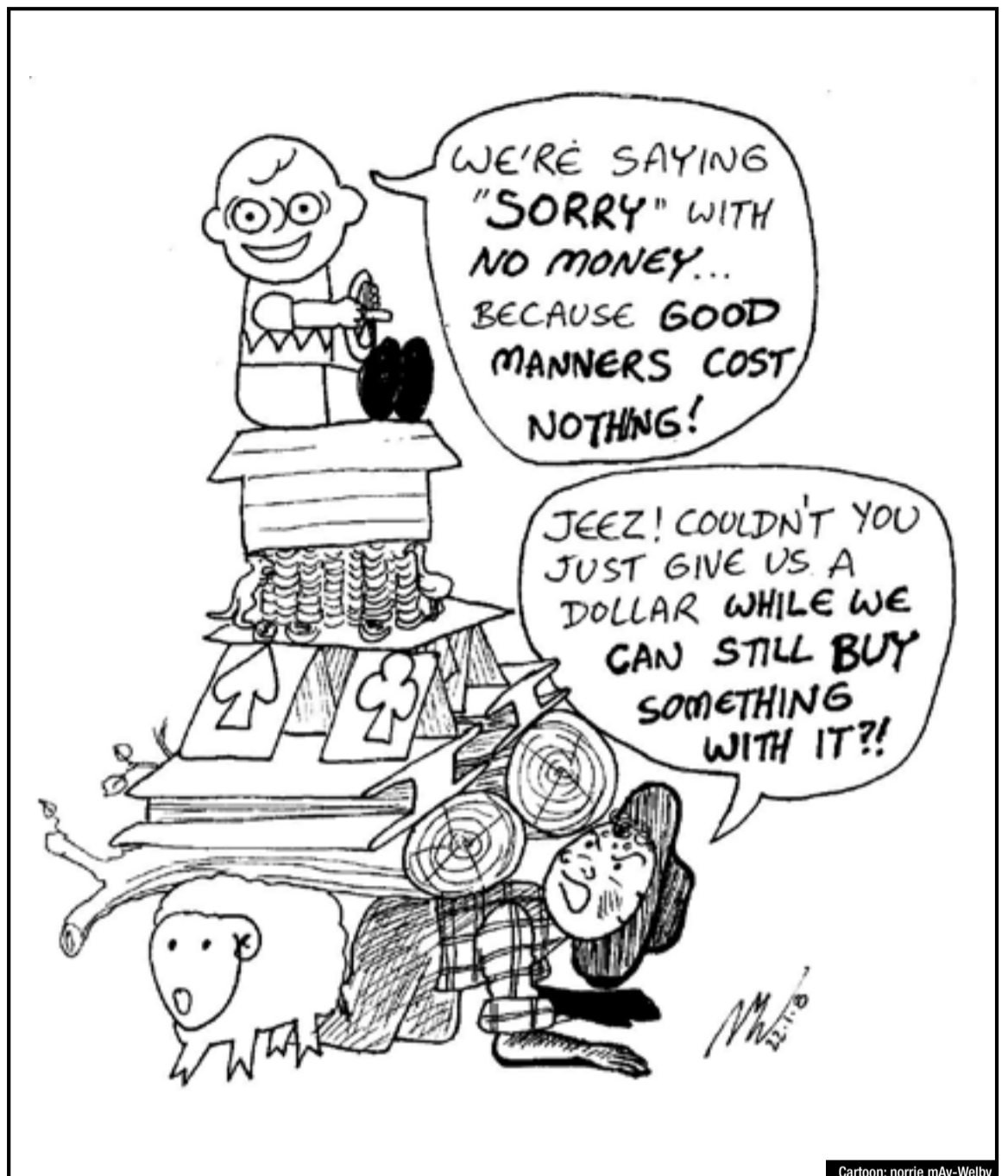
It is the view of this paper that, if there is to be any apology from David Hicks for activities and loyalties in his earlier life, then there should be an accompanying apology from those who led the Howard Government - both to David Hicks and to the Australian people.

That Government and the United States Government participated in a betrayal of the standards of human rights to which our countries claim to be committed.

Maybe, later, we will know more of the truth about the life and decisions of David Hicks. We cannot even pretend to know it all now because he was never given the context of a fair trial in which to bear witness to the truth. His guilty plea was made in circumstances which gave him choices which would undoubtedly have affected his judgement in bringing that plea.

What we do know for sure is that the prison in which he was held is off the shores of the United States precisely in order to avoid giving its inmates the level of justice, either in the prison context or in the courts of law, which would be required if it was on American or Australian soil. All the evidence so far points to prison conditions which would not meet the international standards of human rights to which our country is committed. Many lawyers, both here and in the US, agree that the level of justice administered by the military court involved did not meet the standards we expect.

As the saying goes "the price of freedom is eternal vigilance". Many people over the centuries have died to uphold that commitment. We lay it down at our own risk. Every time we settle for less than true human rights, we diminish our life and the life of the world.



Cartoon: norrie mAy-Welby

Erko Village Wish List 2008

The SSH sent reporters out into the community to ask people what they would wish for in 2008.

Ellice Mol canvassed Erskineville. (Next month: Kings Cross.)



Father Barry Brundell
St Mary's Parish Priest

If you had one wish for Australia in 2008, what would it be?

My greatest wish for Australia in 2008 is that we become the compassionate nation we once prided ourselves on being. I am not the only person to say that Australians have become less compassionate in recent years. We used to be very clear in our minds that we were for "a fair go for all". This was something to fight for - if we weren't ready to do so then, we could not claim to be a "dinkum Aussie". We would instinctively stick up for the weaker people, the vulnerable ... and that included people who were "different". We had an ingrained respect for the dignity of every single human being. Can we still say that about ourselves? My wish is that we will be able to say it again in 2008.

If you had one wish for Erskineville in 2008, what would it be?

My greatest wish for Erskineville in 2008 is that our wonderful neighbourhood spirit will increase and intensify until no-one is left isolated, lonely, unloved, uncared for (if care is what they need). I wish that we would all be on the lookout for people around us who are doing it hard and perhaps need some extra attention - even if it is no more than a greeting and a friendly smile. But maybe they will want something more, such as a listening ear! And then, who knows ...!

What would have to change to make your wishes come true?

For my wishes to come true we would have to discover or re-discover our true selves - our generous, compassionate, concerned selves. Social reform begins with me! Then we will need to have leaders who will appeal to the best in our Australian people and not the worst. I believe we could review the facilities that cater for people's needs from the point of view of their adequacy. I am impressed by the fine centres that cater for our wonderful elderly citizens. But the young people who wander our streets - are they bored, and if so is it entirely their fault, or do they just have nowhere to go and nothing to get involved in?



Scott Leach
Publican of The Rose of Australia,
Erskineville

If you had one wish for Australia in 2008, what would it be?

That police, emergency services and our hospitals receive more support from government and community. Recently our family suffered a loss, and we were very grateful to all who helped us during such a stressful time. But particular mention must go to Water Police at Balmain, Paramedics and fantastic staff at Royal North Shore who did all they could, and were so compassionate to us. Their task is thankless. They are often under resourced. I hope we can do more for them to relieve the enormous pressures they face.

If you had one wish for Erskineville in 2008, what would it be?

For our local village to remain the friendly and vibrant place it is. As the city expands, facing population pressure, traffic gridlocks, increasing rent and mortgage demands ... that our residents and friends smile and greet each other in the street. Our family has enjoyed this remarkable experience for 14 years. We love the village and the people and hope we can keep this special place alive amongst all the daily stress that we all can feel. Let's look at the glass being half full ... and enjoy life.

What would have to change to make your wishes come true?

We need to make leaders accountable, show compassion to those less fortunate and resource essential services to cope with increasing demands. Plus, the world truly is a better place when you have time to pop into your local pub for a "coldie". So wherever you are, take time out to meet your local publican ... they look forward to meeting you!

CORRECTION: Re: 'Policing the Cross' SSH Dec-Jan 08. We have been advised by the subject of the article of an inaccuracy. The fourth sentence in the article should read: "He passed through an intersection and later, having alighted his bicycle, noticed being yelled at from a police van."

Features



Tina Cheung Photo: Ben Falkenmire

Knowing Tina

Ben Falkenmire

Her home, a commissioned flat reeking of neutrality and uninspiring in presence, defies the monotony of the acrylic white walls and the standard neon light.

Parked canvases brimming with colour fill the vision. They sit on walls, on the couch, in number leaning against corners and a home entertainment system covered in cloth.

The paintings are the product of Tina Cheung's two years of drawing, something she has taken up to bide the time while receiving medical treatment that can last for up to four hours in one sitting.

There are landscapes with waterfalls and rose-red flowers, hinting of Tina's Vietnamese upbringing. An exotic dark female resplendent in Egyptian finery is dignified by the sheltering of breasts from the viewer's eye. A portrait of a young ash-grey girl's face is survived only by her crystal eyes that almost lift from the canvas and her crackling skin.

"I look at a picture. I copy some from there, and then add some from my own idea," Tina says of her approach.

In one of the larger pieces, a young ballerina elevates on her toes in front of drapes and a subverted young boy, who is almost bowing in front of the young girl, as if her radiance was a force that bent his physique to a position of reverence. Is it lust? Or even love?

Tina, approaching 50 but looking much younger, has known both. After fleeing to Australia to start her new life, one without her parents who were killed in the Vietnamese War, she found love with a Chinese man. Working in a biscuit factory, they married and she had two kids before the husband and the two boys left her. She married again, this time to an Indonesian man, and gave birth to a daughter, only for history to repeat itself.

"The first one, he okay," Tina says when asked about the two men. "The second one, very bad. Took away from my daughter for 10 years. Take my daughter away from me. No see my daughter. She is 16 now," the Ultimo resident said.

Her longing for her children peaked when crippling arthritis took a grip of Tina's body six years

ago, putting her in a wheelchair for months. Travelling to a Kings Cross clinic each week for treatment, Tina often sees other families comforting their loved ones.

"When I go to hospital, nobody come for me and sometime I cry. If I am at home, I'm okay."

She spoke to her sons, 17 and 18, at Christmas by phone. "I can call for free. I speak maybe 30, 40 minutes," she lights up, her creaking body finding life.

A picture of an African woman with a child on her back and no shoes struck a maternal chord for Tina, who chose to put it on canvas. "I miss my daughter. When I saw [the picture] I like it." Her painting sold in the first three days of her first exhibition late last year in Darlinghurst, backed by Mission Australia.

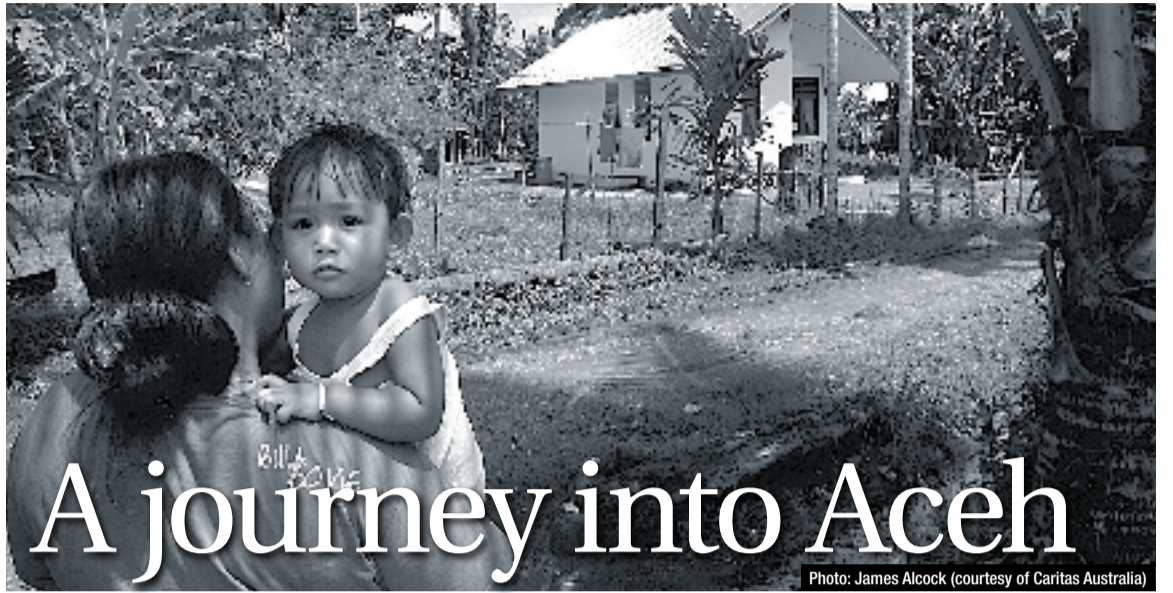
The 10 canvasses visible in her apartment are the keepers, where her craft has developed, and ones that are dear to the heart. "The African woman. I want to make another one for my home."

She shows another one of a baby in a bath tub, with a posture and an expression suggestive of later years - perhaps another channel for Tina's longing to see her children. Or for a childhood that was quickly lost. When her parents died when she was 12, she was left to mother her four young siblings. "I must work very hard. In my country you have to pay to go to school. I clean after school for three hour to pay for my sister to go to school. Then I ride my bike, one hour home."

Just as when she came to Australia, Tina has learned to adapt to her life without loved ones. "One time my life was terrible. I cry all the time. Not have my children. I can't change. I'll be okay now."

She speaks about painting as if it were a new friend, her arms become animated, her detail acute, her memory honing. "When you paint you cannot stop. I paint sometime very late. Until 12 or one o'clock at night. Sometime very tired, but mind says no sleep. I always want to do new one, a challenging one," she explains on the edge of laughter. SSH

Tina Cheung will co-exhibit in Newtown in March as part of Mission Australia's ongoing support for those enduring ill health.



Michele Freeman

Parts of this article reprinted with permission from Caritas Australia.

As I prepared to leave for Aceh recently, I found myself replaying scenes and images from there three years ago - water and waves traveling up to 300km an hour, buildings and houses completely flattened and destroyed, cars and boats resting on top of buildings or up trees, streets filled with debris. I remembered watching all this, along with the whole world, as the death toll kept rising, and rising.

In the lead-up to the 3rd-year anniversary of the tsunami, I had the opportunity to visit Aceh with my work for Caritas Australia, the Catholic Church's international aid and development agency.

Before the devastating tsunami even struck, Aceh was staggering through a violent war of independence. Social and economic conditions in the province were poor. And in the 1970s American oil and gas companies, in agreement with the Indonesian government, began exploiting Aceh's natural resources, with little compensation or distribution of profit to the people of Aceh.

Fighting between the Free Aceh Movement (GAM) and the Indonesian military (TNI) had long been raging, but in 2003, after a Cessation of Hostilities Agreement collapsed, martial law was imposed. Aceh was effectively closed to the outside world, a huge influx of Indonesian military occurred, international NGOs were barred and local media was tightly controlled.

This was the reality of people's lives in Aceh when the tsunami hit in 2004.

On the morning of December 26 when the earthquake struck, the epicentre was just 150km off the west coast of Aceh. The tsunamis that followed hit this "special territory" of Indonesia harder than any other.

A staggering 136,736 people were confirmed dead and a further 37,063 have never been found. The damage to infrastructure was massive and around 123,000 houses were destroyed, with some 514,150 people fleeing to refugee camps. Then, sprouting from this terrible death and destruction, was an outpouring of generosity from around the world on a scale never seen before (private charitable donations alone reached \$2.5billion).

From the capital of Sumatra we boarded a 12-seater plane for Meulaboh, a small coastal town in Aceh. As we flew into the little airport, the plane arced out over the

ocean and I was struck by the calm of the water and the sudden realisation that this is where it happened.

Once we landed, the next thing that struck me was the large presence of international NGOs - 4WDs branded with logos, office buildings and large storage depots. This little sea-side town, previously cut off from any foreign presence, was now well acquainted with *bule* (local slang for white people).

It also soon became obvious that in Aceh, this development community found itself faced with challenges on such a scale never seen before. I distinctly remember a colleague telling me that he had worked in development for over 20 years, in Afghanistan, the Balkans, Rwanda, and all over the world, but never had he worked anywhere as difficult as Aceh. The scale of the disaster, the scale of the response, and the complexities of the social and political environment were a massive challenge.

A large number of development organisations had become operational in Aceh in a short space of time, due to the previous ban as a result of martial law, creating massive problems with coordination and communications. Some NGOs had more funding than UN bodies or government donors, fuelled by extremely generous public giving.

On top of this, reconstruction projects were faced with land rights disputes - where would the new house be rebuilt if the land had been swallowed up by the sea? How could ownership of land be proved when documents were lost in the waves? And then there were also problems in working in the "most corrupt province in the most corrupt country", along with inflation and the difficulty of transporting much-needed materials when roads, bridges and ports were badly damaged.

The enormous influx of funds - and the huge pressure from generous donors to see their money getting results - created an urgency to spend money quickly and visibly. Some organisations were accused of "building back fast, not building back well".

This external pressure to get quick results raised all sorts of questions for me about the psychology of giving, and the meaning of "good" development. The need for scrutiny and accountability when such large sums of money had been donated is obvious. The pressing need for housing and shelter following a disaster like the tsunami is also clear. But, the concept of holistic and sustainable development, which many aid organisations promote, is built on fostering community ownership and development.

Development means more than just providing housing. Some of the most powerful aspects of development often don't have a tangible, material outcome. Fundamental building blocks of communities, like income generating activities, education and training are harder to take photographs of, and therefore harder to prove to external donors that they have occurred.

I was thankful to Caritas Australia for teaching me to have this wider view of development, and was proud to learn that the projects we support in Aceh had been largely successful in overcoming such challenges. I was particularly struck by this on our visit to Kuala Tripa, a village about 70km south of Meulaboh.

Here Caritas Australia supports housing and community development projects, provided by our partner organisation, Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS). In a reconstruction environment that has been defined by this pressure to spend money quickly and visibly, to get outside contractors in, and to get houses up fast, JRS has been strong willed in enforcing its approach to have beneficiaries carry out the work themselves, in consultation with expert tradespeople.

A lack of community consultation was identified as a major weakness in the overall international response to the tsunami (fuelled by the kind of pressures mentioned above) but by ensuring constant contact and participation with the beneficiaries, JRS succeeded in granting the community ownership over the projects. Community satisfaction with this rebuilding project was the highest in the country.

When we met with the JRS Project Director, Pudji Tursana, she explained that "we have been very careful not to promote dependency, as this will undermine the long-term sustainability of all the programs in Aceh. Our philosophy is to empower the people."

Pudji is a calm woman, wise and just 30 years old. I remember her sincere face as she went on to stress to me that along with empowerment and education, JRS work on advocating for change, because unless the root causes of conflict, poverty and disadvantage - along with attitudes to development and giving - are addressed, long-term development can never take place. SSH

Caritas Australia is the Catholic agency of international aid and development. Caritas Australia helps people to help themselves, regardless of race, political beliefs, gender or religion. To support the work of Caritas, or learn more about their projects visit www.cartias.org.au or call 1800 024 413.

Helping each other

Lois Dunchue

I belong to an organisation known as Rural Care Link Jindera, which was formed in the early 1990s by the four churches in our little town of Jindera, to help combat the effects of the then, yet again, drought - particularly in the area of rural suicides.

At the beginning of this year [2007], the committee decided that it would become involved again with the drought and we started delivering hampers, referring people to counselling, being a go-between the various government agencies involved in drought relief, organising meetings with the Department of Primary Industry and generally doing anything to help the rural community.

From a very small beginning in January we have grown enormously and now are helping 150 households and have delivered 636 gifts and hampers to the rural community covering an area out from Jindera for approximately 150km. Many farmers have become dependent on our hampers because they are using their social security drought money to pay off debts on the farms. We have contact people out in the various rural areas, most of them farmers who know their neighbours and they are the wonderful people who phone me and I organise the people with the packing of hampers. These contact people drive into town and pick up the hampers and sometimes travel hundreds of kilometres delivering them, listening to the stories, praying and dispensing hugs.

Back at Rural Care Link there are people packing hampers five days a week, at the moment in very cramped hot conditions, but soon we are to move into Bethlehem Lutheran Church Hall, which will be wonderful! In 12 months, we have supplied 2361 hampers to needy families, as well as school packs and many other forms of care. As we write, our area of care is spreading out to places like Coolomon and Holbrook. The need is expanding, not diminishing. So, think of us, your Australian mates in the bush as we enter another year of struggle. \$\$\$

The people of South Sydney may have more in common with our friends in the bush than we have imagined. Enquiries or donations to Lois Dunchue: P.O. Box 88, Jindera 2642.

Gear up Girl Challenge

Saturday March 8 2008

Gear up and take part in NSW's first all-women's cycling event. Saturday March 8 is International Women's Day and what better way to celebrate than to join with women of all ages and abilities and take part in a unique all women's cycle ride. Choose either the 15km route around Sydney Olympic Park or the 55km route from Cronulla to the finish line at Sydney Olympic Park.

www.gearupgirl.com.au

Free Chinese New Year Lunch

All welcome
Waterloo Neighbourhood Centre
Shop 5/95 Wellington St Waterloo
Fri Feb 15 4-6pm
Mabel Chang 9319 7786

The Settlement Community Centre

The Settlement wants to know about money troubles in the Redfern/Waterloo area.

Free financial counselling is being offered by a qualified financial counsellor to 40 people willing to take part in a quick private and confidential survey about their money troubles. The information given to The Settlement will be used to improve financial services in the area.

Contact:

The Settlement Neighbourhood Centre
17 Edward St, Darlington
Phone: Ellouise or Danielle:

9698 3087

Pepsee

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9310 4927

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

SINO-INDIAN SOIREE Lotus & Phoenix II

Nayika Indian Dance is again featuring the successful Lotus & Phoenix concert in the 2008 Chinese New Year festival of the City of Sydney.

It will play in the Music Workshop of the Sydney Conservatorium of Music on February 23, at 7.30pm. Cost: \$35.00 plus booking fee

Tickets from www.moshtix.com.au or 1300 GET TIX (438 849)

See flier with Chinese script at www.nayika.org/flierlotus2.jpg

The Streetbeat Bus Service

An opportunity to support your local community

We are a small transport and outreach service and we operate late at night in the South Sydney area. Streetbeat tries to minimise the harms that young people encounter on the streets late at night by picking them up and taking them home or to another safe place.

There is opportunity to engage with and offer ongoing assistance to those who call us. If you are interested you will accompany the driver/outreach worker between 10pm and 2am engaging and assisting the young people of our community.

Please contact Alex at the South Sydney Aboriginal Resource Centre on **9319 4195**

WITNESS - HIT'N'RUN

Would any person who witnessed an accident occurring between the hours of 10pm and 11pm on the 2nd of February 2007 on the laneway perpendicular to Lachlan St, Waterloo, approx 100 metres from the intersection of Lachlan St and the unnamed laneway where a pedestrian was hit by an unknown vehicle believed to be a ute, please contact Miss Eleni Sarian of Keddies Lawyers on (02) 9264 9722.

BECOME A TRAINER

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TAA 40104
Commencing Feb and April 2008
Redfern Area
ALIWELCH INSTITUTE
For more info contact: tjohnson@aliwelch.com
Tennille 02 9699 3499

CONFRONTING POWER AND SEX IN THE CHURCH

Spirituality in the Pub
Tuesday March 11 from 7.30-9pm
Carlisle Castle Hotel
19 Albemarle St Newtown

Bishop Geoffrey Robinson, author of *Confronting Power and Sex in the Catholic Church*, says the Pope has failed the church, and the church has failed its members. He criticises the church for "managing" rather than confronting the deep causes of the crisis.

Further information: Newtown SIP Chair Anna Beresford (9230 7631) or Newtown Parish Priest Father Peter Maher (9557 3157).

Uniting Churches



South Sydney Uniting Church
56a Raglan St Waterloo
Worship (Eucharist) 10am Sunday
Rev Andrew Collis 8399 3410
Welcoming people of all ages, cultural backgrounds, sexual preferences. Peace with justice, integrity of creation.

Tongan Uniting Church
(South Sydney)
Worship 1pm Sunday
Mid-week service Friday 7-8pm
Ps Sione Hau 0431 144 247

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

Paddington Uniting Church
Oxford St Paddington
Worship 10am & 7.30pm Sunday
Rev Warwick Cadenhead
9331 2646

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, Darlington, 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

Subscribe to my free weekly *Clover's eNews*, an email bulletin to inform the community about important issues, events and campaigns. Check my website for more information: www.clovermoore.com

Sport



Sydney to Hobart sailor Simon Williams with his dog Oscar Photo: Ali Blogg

South Sydney to Hobart

SSH

Simon Williams is a Redfern resident and business development officer for TAFE NSW. His job, he says, entails working hard to raise funds for an under-resourced and important educational organisation. Because he works hard he also needs to rest and have fun.

Simon's idea of fun is yachting. This summer marked his seventh Sydney to Hobart. Simon spent three days and 19 hours on board a yacht called Zen.

"Yachting is not just about being the fastest and racing for first place. If it were then it would just be a matter of putting your wallet on the bar and seeing whose is fattest," he says. "It's about mateship, endurance and a test of seamanship."

Simon also appreciates the support of the Berkley drinkers, Terry, Ginger and Jerry, and a few others, who over the years have made a habit of following via the web the yachts that Simon sails.

Anyone can take up yachting. Simon says that Pacific Sailing School, located at the Cruising Yacht Club of Australia, New

Beach Road, Rushcutters Bay, teaches yachting. "If you practice every weekend for two years,"

he says, "you might well find yourself on board a yacht and on your way to Hobart." **SSH**

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Rod Gorman CEO SSJRLFC and Kristina Keneally with players & officials of the Alexandria Rovers FC Photo: Perry Johnstone

Pre-season excitement for Rovers

Perry Johnstone

Towards the very end of 2007, Alexandria Rovers Junior Rugby League Football Club held its annual club presentation at Prince Alfred Park Swimming Pool.

Grey overcast skies threatened to wash the day out early in the morning but, as the youngsters arrived, the rain seemed to disappear and the day was able to proceed in warmish conditions.

Last year's event attracted two VIP attendees: Kristina Keneally MP, the State member for the seat of Heffron and Rod Gorman, Chief Executive Officer of the South Sydney JRLFC.

Having both of these attendees at the presentation was proof that the hard work off the field by the club committee is recognised and that the community looks at the club as an organisation with much integrity. Obviously it is seen as a club which is going forward and one with which these celebrities are proud to have their name associated.

After the barbecue lunch it was time to hand out the goodies. Christmas had come 11 months early as team by team, starting with the under 6s all the way up to the under 17s, received their gear.

Trophies, sports bags, hooded jumpers, beanies, socks and team photos, all with the Alexandria Rovers branding, were handed out individually to each player. Seeing the looks on the faces of the younger kids in particular as they received their first-ever trophies was priceless.

The major award winners for season 2007 are as follows:

Senior Player of the Year
Juwarn Cummings

Junior Player of the Year
Nathan Rokioa

Representative Player of the Year
Adam Reynolds

Clubman of the Year
Perry Johnstone

The club would like to thank all the sponsors for season 2007, without whose generous donations the club would struggle to maintain its high standards and reputation of looking after the teams.

Season 2008 promises to be even bigger as the club celebrates its 60th year with a giant reunion dinner. **SSH**

For all further information feel free to visit the club's official website: www.alexandriarovers.com.au.

Pre-season training starts in early February for all teams on Tuesday and Thursday nights from 4.30pm at Alexandria Park. All players, old and new, from under 6s to over 35s are welcome to come along and register. New officials are always welcomed to come along, and join the Alexandria Rovers friendly. For a more detailed timetable regarding training for the various aged teams, drop the club a line at alexandriarovers@hotmail.com. The club is proud to announce that there are no registration fees and that there are free jumpers, shorts and socks for all players in 2008. Exciting sponsorship and advertising packages are still available for season 2008.