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the South Sydney Herald

NUMBER EIGHTY-NINE DECEMBER '10 CIRCULATION 22,000 ALEXANDRIA BEACONSFIELD CHIPPENDALE DARLINGTON ERSKINEVILLE EVELEIGH GLEBE KINGS CROSS NEWTOWN REDFERN SURRY HILLS WATERLOO WOOLLOOMOOLOO ZETLAND



The Black Turtles perform at Redfern's Family Day Photo: Jonathan Bogais (See story pg 12)

Waste workers angry over Council mess

REBECCA LE MAY

Waste workers and residents rallied outside Clover Moore's cocktail party at Parliament House last month to protest against pay cuts and the poor quality of service they have received since the council switched its waste management contract from Veolia to URM earlier this year. A number of activists also bought tickets to the function, but were ejected when they tried to raise their issue over the microphone.

Workers are still suffering the consequences of the City of Sydney's decision because URM has refused to negotiate with the union over the \$200 per week

pay cut they received when the contract changed hands. "Supporting a family in Sydney, one of the world's most expensive cities, these workers cannot afford to lose \$200," said TWU State Secretary, Wayne Forno.

According to Michael Aired, senior TWU industrial officer, "The council has met neither its ethical and moral obligations, nor its legal obligations in regard to the local government regulations which require council to consider the pay and conditions of workers before issuing a new tender. They really need to step in and clean up their mess," he said.

A spokesperson for the City of Sydney said that although City staff had met with URM and asked it to enter into negotiations with the

continued on page 2

Fixing the juvenile justice system

KATE WILLIAMSON

On November 23, NSW Attorney General, John Hatzistergos, told Parliament that the controversial changes to the NSW Bail Act would not go forward prior to the election.

Greens MP, David Shoebridge, said that he was pleased to see the changes shelved but called for much needed reforms. "The draft Bill had no friends in the legal, community or social justice sectors of NSW. It failed to address rising juvenile detention rates. It also side-stepped the major public interest debate this State needs to have on s22A of the current Act that prevents more than one bail application by most accused," he said.

Mr Shoebridge believes that the outcome is a

testimony to the work completed by groups, which include the Youth Justice Coalition and UnitingCare Burnside. In 2009, UnitingCare Burnside published the *Restrictions on Children Granted Bail* report, bringing together a coalition of services providers concerned with the increasing number of young people held in remand. The report argues for amendments required to the Bail Act allowing greater capacity for children to reapply for bail should the original application be refused. The report also looks at bail conditions restricting young people to a point that contravention and detention are likely to happen.

According to the 2010 *Bail Me Out* report prepared by the Youth Justice Commission, youth workers and solicitors are reporting higher incidence of police monitoring and reported

continued on page 2

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Have You Heard?

THE FAST NEWS

WITH TREVOR DAVIES

Joe exits

In the run-up to the state election there have been quite a few members, both backbench and frontbench of the Government, who are jumping ship. One of them was Joe Tripodi, and, within hours, lots of members paid glowing tribute to his ability. Even the Liberal Party and the Premier joined in. One of Joe's portfolios was Housing, and in relation to that, I've asked local Waterloo public housing activist, Ross Smith, to do Joe's political obituary. Ross Smith writes: "On Tuesday February 1, 2004, whilst speaking at a public housing estate in the Sydney suburb of Riverwood, Mr Carr, the NSW Premier, announced the appointment of Mr Joseph Guerino Tripodi as NSW Housing Minister. He said he wanted Tripodi to be a warrior for public housing tenants. On April 25, 2005, Tripodi announced that Housing NSW was abandoning its 47-year-long role of supplying affordable rental housing. Its new role was to become a supplier of last resort fixed-term housing. Tripodi's policy was called Future Directions Social Housing. This move marked the start of the destruction of the Housing NSW tenant community. It also marked the beginning of the creation of ghettos of absolute unresolved need, occupied solely by Housing NSW tenants. It marked the start of the sell-off of public housing properties and the beginning of large-scale privatisation. In another role he was 'one of the architects' of the NSW Government's energy reform strategy. This strategy resulted in the ever increasing electricity bills people are receiving." Fast News wishes Joe well.

Corrective Services staying put on King Street

A few Darlington residents were campaigning last month to try to stop the Department of Corrective Services relocating its office from King Street Newtown to Cleveland Street Darlington after what was an effective scare campaign. At the public meeting called last month, it seemed clear that the Probation and Parole people who were supposed to inform others weren't informed themselves. Now a Local Member has emailed everyone who attended the meeting and informed them that the plans have been canned. Probation and Parole are staying in Newtown. Some of us remember the fuss at the time when Probation and Parole first announced they were going to open on King Street.

The importance of toilets

World Toilet Day, November 19, came to Wynyard last November. If you were around Wynyard, you would have seen a group of people sitting on toilets taking part in the "Big Squat". The UK's *Guardian* newspaper, reporting on World Toilet Day, said that more than a third of the world's population lacks access to adequate sanitation, according to a survey by the British charity WaterAid. In a report marking World Toilet Day that day, the organisation had compiled an international "bogroll of dishonour" designed to shame countries into improving facilities. Among those listed as having more than 10 million people deprived of the use of hygienic toilets are such unexpected entrants as Romania (a candidate for EU entry in 2007), Russia, Turkey, Mexico, Brazil, Egypt and Morocco. Public toilets across the City. With World Toilet Day being celebrated last month, it's worthwhile looking at the situation in the City. There is a National Public Toilet Day

website which gives a suburb by suburb location of where you can find them. Do a Google - it's fascinating. I couldn't help noticing that Alexandria has five while poor old Darlington and Chippendale have none. I suppose you could always find them somewhere in Sydney Uni.

Millers Point is heating up

The ongoing battle there seems to be heating up the Lord Mayor. According to reports: "The Government has already sold 20 properties, two more will be auctioned on 14 December and a further 14 are slated for sale on long-term leases." Fast News understands that the residents of Millers Point are prepared for a fight. We will keep you informed. I wonder what the Coalition will do?

Fitzroy Gardens gives the City a headache - and who is Charles Kernan?

Peter Whitehead reports on the backlash against the City's plans for Fitzroy Gardens. There seems to be a bit of a back-down, but on the other hand, the residents of Darlington seem to be very happy with Charles Kernan Reserve since the Lord Mayor's opening in late October. The barbecues and the basketball hoop seem to be getting lots of use. However a sign that told us the Charles Kernan story, not just his name, has disappeared. The sign said that he worked for the City of Sydney and South Sydney and was Secretary of Darlington ALP. Does anyone know anything about Charles Kernan? If you do, can you email me on trevrssh@bigpond.net.au. I should disclose that I have worked for the City of Sydney and am currently the Secretary of the Darlington Branch of the ALP!

Aboriginal Catholic Mission in Alexandria

On Tuesday November 16, all staff from the ACM Alexandria and all staff from the AWHH were summoned to the offices of the Sydney Archdiocese at the Polding Centre (133 Liverpool Street) and informed by the Chancellor that the Business Manager, Brenda McDonnell, and all the staff, were terminated. Since that happened Fast News has been told that Graeme Mundine has been appointed Executive Officer of ACM and will work from Alexandria House. Elsie Heiss has been appointed the other member of the ACM Executive. seems that, despite concerns, "Aboriginal" will stay in the title of the organisation and Aboriginal people will continue to be involved if not in control. We will be following this issue over the holidays and have more info next year.

Good-bye 2010! Come join us on our Harbour Cruise!

Friends, it's been a difficult year and an interesting year. Hope you have a peaceful and relaxed break. On Survival Day, sometimes known as Australia Day, why not come and join us on our Harbour Cruise aboard one of the boats owned by Redfern's own Tribal Warrior Association. There'll be good food, great company and a cultural commentary. This is one of our fundraisers for the year. Help keep independent media alive in the City!

Waste workers angry over Council mess

continued from page 1 TWU, the council does not have legal power to compel URM to negotiate a separate enterprise agreement.

But according to the union, Canterbury Council insisted their contractor negotiate when it changed hands, so City of Sydney should do the same. "They are a principal contractor, they created this mess and they should take responsibility," said Mr Aird.

Residents are also unhappy. Cr Meredith Bergmann said City of Sydney had received a number of complaints about waste management, particularly from the Kings Cross area.

Kings Cross resident, Ms Jo Holder said: "Services have been very irregular with the bins left everywhere. I've seen them empty both the recycling bins and the general waste into the same truck. Many other people have seen that too. At first I thought they might have had two separate compartments in the truck but when you look closely it all just goes into the one bin," she said.

But the City says it has investigated the problem and found the claims to be untrue. "The City of Sydney provides high quality and reliable waste collection services. The City receives

around 20 complaints per week about garbage collection, to which we respond promptly," said a City spokesperson.

Warringah Council, which also switched to URM, has received similar complaints about quality of service and cuts to workers' pay. URM recently received orders from Fair Work Australia to negotiate in good faith with workers at Warringah after the TWU made an appeal to the commission.

Greens Councillor Irene Doughty and ALP Councillor Meredith Bergmann have both expressed their support for City of Sydney waste workers to maintain the same pay and conditions and had tried to pass motions to force URM negotiate in good faith. So far a resolution has not been reached.

Cr Bergmann also said she hoped the Fair Work decision at Warringah will have an effect on what the waste disposal workers are being paid at the City of Sydney. "It is outrageous that they are still cleaning up our streets, yet one day they went out and cleaned them up for a certain wage, and the next day they cleaned them up for \$200 a week less ... so the activity in the industrial commission is really welcome," she said. **SSH**

Fixing the juvenile justice system

continued from page 1 breaches by young people of bail conditions that are trivial, with no evidence of likely harm to the young person or the community. These conditions seem unnecessary given that the statistics outlined in the Burnside report indicate that only one in seven children will end up with a custodial order.

President of the Children's Court of NSW, Judge Mark Marien SC, wrote in the *Sydney Morning Herald* recently, hoping for greater support for the recommendations outlined in the independent *Strategic Review of the NSW Juvenile Justice System*, commissioned in 2009 by the former Minister for Juvenile Justice, Graham West MP. He commented that the "reforms proposed by the strategic review report are sensible and deserve to be given serious consideration by government".

In addition to spelling out some of the smarter options for early intervention through effective programs that are evidence-based, the report also presents a business case for allocating public money in "justice reinvestment". Re-channeling some of the funds spent in building and running new detention centres into effective programs addressing the underlying causes of crime in local communities is a better long-term strategy.

This model has already received much support around the world. The report outlines research conducted in the UK stating that for every £1 investment in early intervention and prevention services society benefits by £7.60 to £9.20. Similarly in the US, Washington State confirmed savings of approximately \$2 billion through implementing evidence-based options for adult corrections programs and juvenile corrections programs.

The report also acknowledges the need for a bipartisan approach to juvenile justice to avoid the "law and order" debate excluding the special interests of children. At a presentation given at the Australian Institute of Criminology on August 19, Peter Murphy, who led the review said: "In NSW, kids are being mistaken for little adults. Kids are becoming collateral damage in the law and order debate." Murphy suggests that NSW can learn from Victoria where he sees a bipartisan approach being the key driver to the state's successful outcomes in the juvenile justice area.

The South Sydney Herald will hold a forum on Saturday, February 19, from 2pm at the South Sydney Uniting Church to facilitate a community consensus on this issue to drive the agenda forward. **SSH**

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THE YOUTH OF TODAY

Survive Past Five at Dulwich High

Students challenge a political leader

DOROTHY MCRAE-MCMAHON

A few weeks ago, Local Member and Federal Minister, Anthony Albanese, visited Dulwich High School of Visual Arts and Design. Led by its student Social Justice Group, which was initiated by teacher Carl Noonan, the school wanted to present him with a fifth birthday card from every student.

The whole school was gathered in the Assembly Hall. Irena Ward from Year 8 chaired the occasion and began by reflecting that it is all too easy to forget those children around the world who never reach their fifth birthday.

Lucy Williams recalled her own fifth birthday, held 11 years before. The theme was green and she remembered that she had a shortlist for what made a good birthday. It had to include close friends, five candles on a themed cake, one Barbie doll, a game to win and lolly bags. She invited everyone there to remember their own fifth birthdays.

Owen Lawson shared that he was grateful to reach the age of five and gave significant facts and figures about children

who did not survive five years of life around the world, and impressed all gathered with the seriousness of the situations. He invited a sense of responsibility and a commitment to establish justice.

We all laughed as Anthony Albanese participated in a challenge against the school Principal, Ron Miles, to pin a candle on a cupcake blindfolded. Albanese won! He then addressed the school. He had been thinking about the night of Halloween when children here felt free to knock on neighbours doors and people were generous to each other, and how there were so many children who could never do that. He believed that we could make a difference to the lives of others without even noticing. He was impressed that the Social Justice Group from the school had come to Canberra to talk with him about justice and how that gave him hope for the future.

The Principal then thanked the Social Justice Group for decorating the hall, making more than 600 cupcakes to be handed out to everyone as we left the Assembly Hall, and preparing the speeches.

We ended the morning with a birthday cake being lit, while those gathered thought about children whose



Jesse Adams, Chloe Redding with Anthony Albanese
Photo: Ali Blogg

YOUTH OF TODAY IS A REGULAR ARTICLE ON LOCAL YOUTH AND RELATED ISSUES KINDLY SPONSORED BY: APPETITE CAFE, 82 REGENT ST, REDFERN, TEL 9699 4069



lives would never reach five years.

This was an exemplary event, inspired by ideas from the Micah Challenge. It creatively combined fun with truly serious issues for the world and held the attention

of all. The young people concerned are looking at the world around them with a commitment to justice which is a credit to them and their teachers. Let us listen to the voices of the youth of today!



It's summer in the city and once again the University is playing a major role as a leadership partner and official inner-west hub of the 2011 Sydney Festival.

Next January's program is packed with exhilarating theatre, film, art, music and debate at our venues – the Seymour Centre, the Great Hall, the Quadrangle and the Nicholson Museum. Take your pick of these highlights:

The World Festival Café, Jan 14 in the Great Hall: join us for a glass of wine, a bite to eat and an animated discussion about truth and story telling.

Sydney Stories, Jan 18-22 at the Seymour Centre: Fascinating pre-theatre talks about key people and places of Sydney.

A Night at the Quad, Music & Movies, Jan 18-23. Hear some of Australia's best musicians play the music before you lie back on the lawns to watch the movies.

Photography and the Classical Nude. Exposed at the Nicholson Museum, Jan 4- March 11. A celebration of the significant role photography has played in capturing the classical nude. Works by Max Dupain, Robert Doisneau, Leni Riefenstahl, Henri Cartier-Bresson and others.

For full details of these events and many others see our website:
http://sydney.edu.au/sydney_festival/

Do come and join us.

Michael Spence
Vice-Chancellor

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The State elections will be held on Saturday March 26, 2011. The Government, led by Premier Kristina Keneally, will be challenged by the Liberal National Coalition Opposition led by Barry O'Farrell. The SSH covers four electorates. Of those, the seats of Marrickville and Balmain are widely tipped to be lost to the Greens.

Heffron, held by the Premier Kristina Keneally, is seen as very safe, as is the State seat of Sydney held by Clover Moore, and also the seat of Vaucluse.

In coming issues, we will bring you profiles of as many candidates as possible.

Greens' De Brierley Newton seeking Clover's seat



De Brierley Newton Photo: Supplied

SSH

There is, of course, a Federal seat of Sydney and, at the last State election, just to confuse us all, the old State seat of Bligh became the seat of Sydney. Clover Moore held her large margin of votes, in spite of the change. With the State election early next year, the Greens candidate has started her

campaign already. De Brierley Newton tells her story:

"I live in Glebe and work in Sydney. Sydney is my city. I was born here, got married here and had two children here. I grew up in the south, have lived in the north, in the east and for over 10 years have called the inner west home.

"I have been the creative director of advertising agencies in Australia and New Zealand; Head of School of the Billy Blue School of Graphic Design; part of a community group that saved Hunters Hill High School, and policy and media advisor to the Deputy Lord Mayor of Sydney, Greens Councillor Chris Harris.

"For 10 years I have worked as a communications and advertising consultant and am currently working as a consultant for Music & Opera Singers Trust, a not-for-profit organisation that supports music, the arts, education and community.

"It was while living in Spain, writing for an English language newspaper, that I witnessed the power of the Greens and

first joined the party as they worked together to save a watercourse that provided over 20 villages and even more farmers with clean water from a development.

"When I returned to Sydney I joined the Greens and have been a member since 2001, where I also witnessed the power of the Greens in Sydney. I was involved with a community group working to save Hunters Hill High School. The Greens were instrumental in helping us set up an Upper House Enquiry that found in favour of the school remaining open as a comprehensive public high school.

"Sydney is a great city. However, successive governments, especially our existing State Labor government, have consistently put corporations ahead of community interests. I'm talking about oversized, over-height, over-the-top developments like Barangaroo; developer donation paybacks; more coal mines; less public funding and paving over the farmland that supplies our city with food.

"The Greens have a set of principles and clearly defined policies so you know exactly what they stand for. "So how do I feel about the coming election? Privileged to represent the Greens and be part of a party that has a candidate running in every seat in the State, with growing representation in the Upper House. Aware of the hard work ahead. Excited about the result because you just don't know where voters will park their votes. Optimistic because I believe that people are beginning to realise that this election is not about a person but a group, who together have already proved to the Australian people that they can achieve real change.

"The Greens are already making a difference at all levels of government. Just imagine if Sydney became a part of that difference. Sydney needs its Greens!"

SSH



The Greek Orthodox Church on King Street Photo: Ali Blogg

An icon on King Street

DOROTHY MCRAE-MCMAHON

NEWTOWN: As you walk into this quintessential Orthodox Church on King Street (near the Newtown School of Performing Arts), you would never know that it was, until 1968, the Newtown Congregational Church which opened in 1856 and was built on land donated by Hon. J. Fairfax, founder of the *Sydney Morning Herald*. By tradition, Congregational Churches were very plain buildings, far removed from what you see as you enter the church today. Much of the transformation occurred in the time of present Greek Orthodox priest, the Rev. Fr Nektarios Zorbalas, who arrived as an immigrant from the Greek Islands 20 years ago. Of course, at the point when the church was first established, there was a very high percentage of Greek migrants living in Newtown, probably about 60 per cent of the population.

Fr Zorbalas led the congregation in repairing and developing the church into what it is today – a very beautiful example of a traditional Greek Orthodox Church, with magnificent icons. It was named the St Helen and St Constantine Church. St Helen was the mother of the Roman Emperor Constantine and she searched for the cross of Jesus. Both saints were later canonised.

The beautiful icons which you find in Orthodox churches were once controversial – said to be idolatrous. However, the church argued that, if Jesus was truly human, like his mother and others around him, there was no reason why he couldn't be portrayed in religious art. They said that, when you look at an icon, you are remembering and respecting the one depicted, not the wood that it is painted on. They made a distinction between adoration and veneration, which is deep respect.

Orthodox worship is strongly focussed on the Liturgy, a Eucharistic sacrament beautifully inclusive of the senses – smell, taste, touch, sound and sight. It is, of its

essence, a community of faith event. People come and go as they need, assured that they are part of the gathering of the whole. The church is open on most days and it is well worth a visit.

On every weekday, at least 100 people are served a free lunch by people connected with the St Helen and St Constantine Church. The food is provided by Orthodox people, often beyond Newtown, who make donations of all sorts. The food is cooked, arranged and served by people who regularly volunteer to do that.

Those who share in the meal are people who find life a struggle in various ways. If they have problems beyond needing some help with a meal, they are sometimes referred for counselling to the Greek Welfare Centre located above the church hall where the lunch is served.

Dimitra Micos, a volunteer for 25 years, told the SSH of both the generosity of many people in making the meal possible and the satisfaction gained from doing that. It was easy to see why people would be attracted to coming there for lunch, as the enthusiasm and spirit of energy and friendliness made the whole event seem like a celebration, quite apart from the good food!

SSH

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Tanya Plibersek MP
Member for Sydney

Community Consultation on Same Sex Marriage

The festive season is of ten a time to stop and reflect on the importance of family. As the parliamentary sitting year drew to a close in 2010 the debate also revolved around family: how do we properly recognise a diversity of loving relationships and family structures?

The Government passed a motion on 18 November asking representatives to go back to their communities and gauge local opinions on same sex marriage.

Over the parliamentary break I will be seeking input from residents in the Sydney electorate on this issue.

I am proud of Sydney's diversity and its strong ties with the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender community. People in our local community are passionate about social justice issues and I look forward to hearing your opinion in the months ahead.

After the consultation closes I will present the results to you and to the federal Parliament.

Please participate via my website:
www.tanyaplibersek.com.

Alternatively, write to me by email or mail with your views on same sex marriage (don't forget to include a residential address to ensure that your feedback as a constituent is included).

Please encourage your family, friends and neighbours to participate in this consultation by 5.00pm on January 21, 2011.



Authorised by Tanya Plibersek MP, Labor Member for Sydney
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University on Abercrombie Street Image: Supplied

University plans make neighbours nervous

SSH

DARLINGTON: There was a turnout of 40 local residents at the consultation evening hosted by the University of Sydney for its Abercrombie Precinct Project Upgrade on November 16 at the new Campus Infrastructure & Services (CIS) offices.

"We are really pleased with the response from our neighbours," said Colin Rockliff, Director of CIS. "People were able to speak their mind and made a lot of very valid and useful comments about the plans we have in place so far." Those attending also heard an overview of plans for campus development, as well as an update on the University's bid for the North Eveleigh site.

This was the first in an ongoing series of discussions with local residents and businesses about the development of a world-class Business School on the site between Abercrombie Street and Darlington Lane. This project will bring together scattered facilities and create a unique opportunity for an outstanding sustainable building precinct. With architects Woods Bagot, the University is investigating the concept design and plans to lodge a Development Application with the Department of Planning at the end of November.

The SSH asked local resident, Tim Brunero, to comment.

Mr Brunero said: "Sydney Uni is annexing a huge slice of Darlington. Its planned re-development is so huge it will write two streets off the map forever and convert three city blocks into a huge

business faculty mega-campus. It will, in effect, convert a large part of Darlington into Sydney University.

"It's fair to say its recent community consultation meeting was heated. Suspicious residents, so used to being ignored, clearly thought the whole spectacle was simply a way for the Uni to tick the 'community consultation' box in its DA. The fact the meeting was held in a foyer certainly didn't make residents feel welcome – not when the institution has a plethora of lecture theatres in which it could have entertained its neighbours.

"The development is modern but imposing. Business students will peer down on the terrace dwellers of Abercrombie Street and the children of Darlington Public from four levels up – on the lawns which will cover much of the top of the massive network of buildings. It will bring thousands of students into the parts of the suburb not already dominated by the campus.

"Already during semester it's impossible to find a park near campus for all the cashed-up business students and their fancy European cars. But the Uni refuses to use any of the \$300 million the development will cost to supply extra parking. Why would they when their parking centre on Shepherd Street is often empty? Students simply refuse to pay the exorbitant entry fee. Instead, they fight with locals for scant parking as parking inspectors look on, rubbing their hands. Of course, the University would never think to forgo the fee so as to lighten its footprint. In fact, it even claims this abdication is pro-active – supposedly the failure to provide parking

encourages the rich student population to catch public transport. As if.

"But one thing that made Darlington residents laugh as one was the University's claims that it 'actively encourages sustainable transport options'. How exactly? Surely they don't mean by refusing to provide more parking and jacking up the price of parks on campus to ridiculous levels. Good work with the stick – ever thought of a carrot?

"If they were serious they would be taking a titch of the hundreds of millions they're spending on new law and business faculties and building a state-of-the-art pavilion in the middle of campus with showers, bike storage and other amenities. Or liaising with State Rail to offer an alternative exit to Redfern Station so students weren't all funnelled down Lawson and Abercrombie streets.

"Sydney University needs to actually design its re-developments with its neighbours as legitimate stakeholders, not simply patronise them with a Power-Point presentation and a few bagels when the architects have knocked off."

The University told the SSH it is keen to hear more from local residents about the Abercrombie Precinct Project Upgrade. There is a display in the CIS lobby at 22 Codrington Street, Darlington. If you have any queries or comments, you can contact University staff at the details below. SSH

Enquiries: 02 9114 0523
Email: local.community@sydney.edu.au
Web: sydney.edu.au/local_community
Security and after-hours complaints: 1800 063 487

Schools failing young gay people

CHARLES TAPERELL

Our schools are failing to protect young same-sex attracted people against homophobic abuse, according to a new study published last month. The study suggests that homophobic abuse in schools is on the rise, resulting in self-harm, drug abuse, impaired schooling and other negative effects.

Writing Themselves in Three (WTi3): The third national report of the sexuality, health and well-being of same-sex attracted & gender questioning young people in Australia is the largest study of its kind, questioning 3,134 young people about their experiences.

The study found the incidence of reported homophobic abuse to be higher than the previous two incarnations of the same study conducted in 1998 and 2004. This time around 61 per cent of participants claimed to have experienced verbal abuse, 18 per cent physical assault and 69 per cent "other" forms of homophobia. 80 per cent of reported abuse occurred in schools.

Greens MLC, Cate Faerhmann, who convened a special parliamentary forum on the topic last month, believes that something needs to be done. "That there are such extreme levels of bullying and violence going on at schools is so totally unacceptable," she said.

The report included harrowing accounts of abuse by school peers, family members and complete strangers. One particularly disturbing example reads: "Had 'fag' cut into my back in three places then 'fuck

here' with an arrow pointing to arsehole across my butt, then held and repeatedly abused with sticks (Stuart, 21 years)."

Author Lynne Hillier of La Trobe University believes the most significant outcome of the study is the correlation it establishes between homophobic abuse and negative effects for victims. "In relation to the homophobic violence the most shocking part is its close links to self-harm, suicide attempts, feeling unsafe and excessive drug use."

Thirty-eight per cent of those who had experienced physical assault had attempted suicide, compared with 16 per cent and 8 per cent of those who had experienced merely verbal abuse or no abuse respectively. A similar trend was found in the incidence of suicidal thoughts, self-harm and drug use. 17 per cent of all those questioned had attempted suicide.

The report asserts that school policy can directly influence the phenomenon. "Students who are in a school where there is a policy to protect them or a school which they regard as supportive are less likely to be abused," claims Hillier. Instances were documented of schools successfully intervening to prevent homophobic abuse.

Another encouraging sign is that young people are more likely to engage in activism for their rights and safety. Seventeen-year-old Katherine Hudson of Marrickville started her own advocacy organisation and awareness event called Wear It Purple. "I think it's up to everyone to stop this problem. I think that it's not the politicians' responsibility and it's not just the public's responsibility, it's everyone's responsibility." SSH

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Housing Minister, Frank Terenzini, addresses local residents Photo: Ali Blogg

Minister opens \$28m Redfern Social Housing Project

SSH

Housing Minister, Frank Terenzini, officially opened the \$28 million Elizabeth Street Redfern Project – the first major public housing redevelopment in the inner city of Sydney for over 20 years.

Welcoming tenants to their new homes, Mr Terenzini said this mixture of small, multi-storey buildings of modern seniors' living units, and terrace houses with backyards for families, is in stark contrast to the buildings they replaced.

"The old three-storey walk-up apartments and row houses that once existed here were constructed in the 1950s and '60s and, while appropriate at the time, had become unsuited to modern living and the demands of seniors and people with disabilities.

"The revitalised precinct now has a better mix of accommodation that meets current demand for inner-city housing, and provides a balanced community where tenants will be able to socialise and support each other."

The 106 home project is comprised of: 66 Seniors Living apartments: 44 one-bedroom & 22 two-bedroom (eight of which are adaptable for the

elderly and disabled); 40 townhouses: 13 two-bedroom, 23 three-bedroom & four four-bedroom (10 of which are adaptable); two residents' community rooms.

The project has been awarded a 5 Star Greenstar rating by the Green Building Council of Australia and each unit is designed to be environmentally sustainable including such features as: Grey water irrigation of landscaping; Rainwater re-use for washing machines and toilets; Use of photovoltaic cells to provide common area power to the apartments; Gas-boosted solar hot water for the apartments which provides energy efficient, instantaneous hot water; Natural cross-ventilation in the townhouses; Consideration of appropriate solar access; Use of low energy embodied materials where possible; Recycling of demolition material; Use of native landscaping.

Residents enjoyed a morning tea with the Minister, meeting their new neighbours, who in many cases are old friends.

Minister Terenzini said many of the tenants moving in are long-term and even original tenants of Redfern. "The feedback I've received from them is that they are really pleased with their new

homes and that they have been able to stay within their community".

Mr Terenzini said 80-year-old tenant, Rita, has moved from nearby Walker Street into a Seniors' Living unit in the new redevelopment. A Redfern tenant of 21 years, Rita loves her new home and describes it as heaven. "It's absolutely marvellous. It's like being in a house, it's so big. I couldn't be happier. There's quite a few friends from our building that have moved in here. I didn't want to move out of the area because I love this area – it's handy to everything."

Redfern resident of 18 years, Hilda, had until now been living in a two-bedroom high-rise apartment, raising her granddaughter, Kahurangi, aged 5, and grandson, Miharo, aged 9, whilst increasingly requiring care herself. She has accepted a modified four-bedroom townhouse which means she can accommodate a live-in carer as well as giving her grandchildren more space.

She says: "It's a dream come true. Absolutely beautiful! It's lovely, I'll tell you. It's a wonderful time I'm having here. I'm very happy, the kids are as happy as Larry. The kids still go to the same school, and we're working on the backyard, getting some pot plants. Things are looking good."

SSH

Facilitating maintenance in public housing

DALE MILLS

Tenants with Housing NSW are having problems getting their maintenance work done. This follows the introduction of a new "centralised" maintenance system. Tenants could once report maintenance problems to their local office, and they would arrange for the contractors to come out and fix the leak, replace the lock, or do whatever needed to be done. This has been replaced by a centralised system where Housing NSW tenants are asked to ring a single number (1300 468 746) and report their problem. A simple matter – such as getting a lock replaced or the stove fixed – is usually done quickly (within 24 hours). The real problem is where there is an unusual problem, requiring more than one visit

by a contractor.

One Waterloo resident, who does not wish to be named, has taken Housing NSW to the Tenancy Tribunal to get an order for the repair of a bathroom ceiling leak. The leak has made the bathroom ceiling rotten. As it requires a roofer and a plumber, Housing NSW seems unable to coordinate the contractors, and the problem remains unfixed a year after it was first reported. The tenant says he has rung dozens of times.

All tenants have the legal right to have their maintenance issues fixed. With people who have a private landlord, there might be the fear that the private landlord can take retribution, ultimately ending the lease and evicting the tenants. However, there are safeguards against this, and it might be good to get some expert advice before doing this (see below).

Housing NSW (which used to be called the Housing Commission) tenants having nothing to fear. You can't be evicted or given a bad name by taking Housing NSW to the Tribunal. In fact, there are large penalties for landlords taking actions against their tenants in retribution.

Hopefully, a tenancy adviser can give you enough information to resolve the matter with the landlord. However, if a few phone calls to the maintenance line doesn't end up with the problem being fixed, taking the matter to the Tribunal may be your only hope.

The full name of the Tenancy Tribunal is the Consumer, Trader and Tenancy Tribunal. Making an application involves filling in a simple form and the cost is \$5 (if you are on benefits). There is no need to bring any proof or witnesses the first time you attend the Tribunal.

Flowers for the PM

SSH

Indigenous floristry graduates presented Prime Minister Julia Gillard with a spiritual gift in recognition of her leadership. On Thursday November 4, Indigenous trainees, Natasha Drew, Loretta Cooper and their passionate trainer, Mercedes Sarmini, presented the Hon. Julia Gillard with an artistic arrangement of flowers

native to Australia. Local member, Tanya Plibersek, Minister for Human Services, Minister for Social Inclusion, and Member for Sydney, attended the intimate ceremony and met with the local Redfern women.

Natasha Drew and Loretta Cooper graduated from Flowers by Mercedes Aboriginal Floristry Training Course October this year. Both women have

completed the 12-week job ready floristry program.

Mercedes is passionate about the job ready program she runs and has plans in place to extend the program in 2011. "I am hoping to establish a relationship with DEEWR and hopefully they can see the demand for job ready training with employment outcomes in the Indigenous community," she said.

"I am very fortunate and extremely grateful to have established a relationship with GenerationOne, who have helped shine a light on this successful job ready

floristry program," Mercedes added.

GenerationOne, now with an office atop the old Redfern Post office, is a non-government organisation financially supported by a number of business leaders such as Andrew and Nicola Forrest, James Packer and Kerry Stokes, with further backing from the Fox and Lowy Families and Harold Mitchell. To increase Indigenous employment, GenerationOne has partnered with the Australian Employment Covenant (AEC), a national industry-led initiative, aimed at securing the commitment of

50,000 sustainable jobs for Indigenous Australians. The goal of the AEC is to create the demand for 50,000 sustainable jobs to be filled by Indigenous Australians as and when those companies need employees. The AEC is assisting employers and employment providers who facilitate the placement into these roles. This represents a major commitment to providing the majority of Indigenous Australians, with a real opportunity to achieve their full potential as productive members of Australian society.

SSH

The happy, healthy vegetarian

By Angelique Watkins

If you want to be happy and healthy, there is no better way than a vegetarian/vegan lifestyle. This lifestyle includes regular movement and exercise, of course! Lazy, overweight vegetarians/vegans not only do themselves a disservice, but the whole vegetarian and vegan community!

Exercising regularly will make your muscles strong and in good working order. Flexibility exercises such as yoga and pilates will assist in fine tuning, good flexibility and therefore assisting in the prevention of injury. Exercise doesn't have to be a chore, it can be as simple as going for a walk through the park, using your lunch break to get in a 30-minute workout and doing some stretches in front of the television while you relax at night. Try going for a hike, taking a backpack with food, a tent and plenty of water. The additional weight provides some strength training as well as a chance to enjoy the fresh air and beautiful scenery. Take a camera and a tripod, taking

the focus of a walk or a hike from exercise and make it into a field trip.

However, exercising alone will not give you the long-term health benefits if you are not eating healthy, nutritious food. A vegan lifestyle offers a naturally low calorie and healthy diet. By eliminating animal products from your diet, you will automatically lower your cholesterol and therefore your blood pressure, greatly reducing associated risks such as heart attack and blocked arteries which inhibit circulation.

Vegetarians and vegans eating a well-balanced diet will have more energy, better skin and better overall health, and yes, all essential vitamins and minerals can be found in plant-based foods. In this age of the Internet it is simple to find a guide as to which plant foods contain which vitamins and minerals. Rest assured, if you eat a variety of fresh fruit, vegetables, grains and legumes, and exercise regularly, you will be a happy, healthy human! You will also know you are maintaining good health, with minimum harm to our fellow creatures.

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The Housing NSW maintenance hotline is 1300 468 746. For background reading, you might want to visit the Tenants Union (www.tenants.org.au). Where Housing NSW doesn't fix the problem, ring the Inner City Tenants Service on 9698 5975. They have experienced advisers who deal with Housing NSW all the time and give you important feedback about the best way to get your problem attended to. SSH

The Aboriginal Tenancy Advice Service does the same thing and its number is 9569 0222.

The Consumer, Trader and Tenancy Tribunal website is at www.cttt.nsw.gov.au
Dale Mills is a Waterloo-based lawyer. This article is for information only and should not be taken as legal advice.

Pathway to peace

BRENDAN WONG

ERSKINEVILLE: City of Sydney Council has requested that users of Burren Street adhere to road rules following a number of incidents of cyclists colliding with pedestrians.

A spokesperson for the Council said behaviour had improved following the installation of signage on the shared path reminding cyclists to give way to pedestrians.

"Riding a bike is an increasingly popular way to get around. It is important that people choosing to ride be courteous and considerate when riding on shared paths, always giving way, and ringing their bell to give plenty of advance warning of their approach so they do not startle people walking."

Resident, Mary White [not her real name], said it was an ongoing situation for both the elderly and middle-aged residents. "It happened to one person I know. When the cyclist went by, he asked him to please slow down and the guy abused him. It's not everybody, but we're trying to work with Council to find a solution."

Ms White has praised the efforts of Council staff who recently spent time on Burren Street, educating riders and affixing bells onto bikes that did not have one.

She says residents only want



Burren Street bikeway Photo: Ali Blogg

a peaceful outcome for everyone involved. "We don't want it to be a war on cyclists because that's not what it's about. I'm a cyclist myself and it's a great way to travel. But it's just that

some of them go so fast and they're rude, just like motorists."

Ms White hopes the Council will consider a solution for a wider path with more defined markings. **SSW**

We work in Bourke Street and we support the bikeway

DOUGLAS DINGWELL

SURRY HILLS: Bourke Street's cycleway will make its shops and cafés more attractive for customers, according to local business owners. Parts of the three-kilometre Bourke Street cycleway are open and in use, and several other sections of the path were opened last month.

Jeremy Havlin, owner of Remy and Lee's café on Bourke Street, said the cycleway will benefit his business when it's built. "During construction it's definitely been a hindrance on business," he said. "For us there's a light at the end of the tunnel, and we can foresee the future being a bit brighter with the cycleway out there."

Café and shop owners throughout

the City have complained that newly built cycle paths have damaged their businesses by reducing car spaces previously used by their customers. Mr Havlin's business has lost 40 per cent of its turnover since the bikeway's construction began.

"Jack-hammering a metre from the front door did not help business," he said. Customers have been repelled by fencing installed in front of his café as the cycleway was constructed near it, he added.

Malek Moussa, owner of Bourke Street's Deli A'more, said his business has lost customers because the cycleway prevents motorists from stopping next to his café. "We used to have more space [for cars], we used to have people pop in quickly. But now that's all gone. Because they're squeezing the road ... and there's

not much space for the car," he said.

But Mr Havlin said the cycleway will benefit his café by creating a sense of community on Bourke Street. He hopes to install bike storage for cyclists at the front of his business.

Jill Saxon, owner of TAC Boutiques, also expects the cycleway will attract more customers to her shop. "I think that'll boost business. It's bringing another type of group in apart from [motorists]," she said.

The cycleway has made Bourke Street more attractive, she said. She considers that, "What [Council has] done at the bottom looks great. We've got beautiful trees, and the bike track will be an added benefit."

Ms Saxon said it could take six months after the Bourke Street cycleway is built for business to recover completely. **SSW**

Roamin' reflections

DOROTHY MCRAE-MCMAHON

REDFERN: Shireen Malamoo was one of the four Indigenous people selected to go to Rome for the canonisation of Saint Mary MacKillop. Three of them – Shireen, Linda Kemp and Ralph Townsend – are from the Redfern area, and Margaret Farrell is from Picton. Their going had been celebrated by the people of St Vincent's Catholic Church in Redfern a few weeks before.

Talking with Shireen about her experience, it was obvious that Rome itself had a great impact on her. She felt she was "aware of another civilisation", one in which there was a grandeur of minds. She was amazed by the "spiritual strength" which it must have taken to create its ancient buildings, without the resources which we have today in modern equipment,



Linda Kemp, Ralph Townsend and Shireen Malamoo Photo: Ali Blogg

and the monumental talent which created the art. For her, all of this gave another huge dimension to the whole topic of religion.

As Shireen watched the various ceremonies around the canonisation, she was acutely aware of the dominance of male leaders in this religious life. She felt that not to let women in was a sign of the frailty of the men concerned and that it diminished their efforts to help create a better world. She contrasted this with the impressive Scottish-

Australian strength of Mary MacKillop herself, something which she saw in depictions of her face, as well as the history of her work and faith.

Shireen reflected on whether there is an importance in creating saints and felt that there were inspirations to be found there. She believes that, if we are to end religious warfare which has been there over the centuries and now, we must learn that it's not about domination and enclaves of power and money, but about sacrificial and humble faithfulness as revealed in some saints.

She also felt that, if you take a child, a person like Mary MacKillop can help them grow up and see who they might be.

Shireen was interested to know that Mary MacKillop's brother, Donald, was a Jesuit priest who worked in the Daly River area with Aboriginal people.

It was obvious that the trip to Rome was very significant for Shireen and her companions. They rejoiced that the gathered Australians had the cheek to make some celebratory noise when St Mary MacKillop was canonised! **SSW**

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Kristina Keneally MP
MEMBER FOR HEFFRON

I am proud of the many achievements that we have secured as a community in 2010.

Some of the achievements include:

- Over \$800,000 in Community Building Partnership Grants being shared among local community groups to build or repair key facilities
- Opening of the new Redfern Health Centre
- Opening of the National Centre of Indigenous Excellence
- Expansion of the Metrobus network
- Doubling funding for the seven Community Language Schools in the Heffron electorate, with the schools to share in \$42,600 in new annual funding.
- Opening of JJ Cahill Memorial High School Gymnasium
- Announcement of Waterloo Green Neighbour Project – a concierge service for high-rise Housing NSW tenants in Waterloo.

I am also proud of the achievements of my Government over the past twelve months, including:

- Introducing Sweeping Finance Reform Laws
- Constitutional Recognition of Aboriginal People in NSW
- Boosting funding for health, education and infrastructure
- Payroll tax cuts and putting the NSW budget back in surplus
- Delivering new buses and trains for Sydney's public transport network
- Launching Hassle Free Nights – the Government's late night safety campaign
- The introduction of MyZone fares

My family; Ben, Daniel, Brendan and I wish you and your family Peace and Happiness for Christmas and the New Year.

Kristina Keneally MP
Member for Heffron

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Locals still not happy with Fitzroy Gardens plan

PETER WHITEHEAD

KINGS CROSS: On the Saturday of that wet first week of November, the clouds cleared and the sun beamed on an unlikely coalition of Kings Cross identities protesting City Council plans to dig up Fitzroy Gardens. A City of Sydney stall - with liveried staffers spruiking \$20 million plans for the upgrade - was a surprise addition to the regular Saturday market basking in sunshine as hundreds massed in and above the Rex Centre colonnade to hear diverse speakers introduced by Jo Holder, co-convenor of Darlinghurst Residents Action Group.

Former Deputy Lord Mayor, Dixie Coulton, expressed her disillusionment with Clover's Independents. The protracted cementing of Rushcutters Bay Park, the interminable earthworks at Prince Alfred Park and the devastation of Bourke Street with an inappropriate Separated Bi-Directional Cycleway have

not raised ratepayers' hopes of Council satisfactorily upgrading Fitzroy Gardens and the Lawrence Hargrave Reserve.

Playwright Louis Nowra lampooned Council's artist's impressions of cashed-up yuppies scuttling past Gaudiesque ceramic seats while making deals on their mobiles.

Malcolm Turnbull lent his gravitas to the occasion, lamenting City Hall's heavy-handedness and recalling his father Bruce's wise advice that "there's a difference between scratching your ear and ripping it off".

Councillor John McInerney looked uncomfortable standing in for Lord Mayor Moore. (Clover damaged an ankle falling from her bike on Ride to Work Day and was not able to attend this particular event). Once the booring subsided, he distanced himself from the consultants' plans, which, he demurred, were merely being considered prior to further community consultation.

McInerney successfully took the fruits of his ordeal back to Clover's next

Council meeting. A November 15th minute by the Lord Mayor concluded Council would: "(A) continue to publicly exhibit and seek community input on the draft concept plan for Fitzroy Gardens and the initial concept design for Lawrence Hargrave Reserve until at least 31 January 2011; (B) review the timing and phasing of work on Fitzroy Gardens and Lawrence Hargrave Reserve to integrate the projects and ensure a coordinated outcome; and (C) report back on a revised approach for public exhibition, incorporating additional community feedback and the further heritage and sustainability assessment currently underway."

In 2002 South Sydney Council considered plans for these Kings Cross parks. CoS's 2006 "community consultation" discovered dissatisfaction with inadequate paving. Now we are told that in 2011 there may be some action towards finalisation of plans for work that was slated for completion by this Christmas. SSH



The proposed site for a community oven Photo: Ali Blogg

Community oven too hot to handle?

PATRICIA TELLIS

The Redfern-Waterloo neighbourhood is struggling to revive a sense of community. Initiatives like the Redfern Community Centre and REDWatch (Redfern, Eveleigh, Darlington, Waterloo) have helped create and strengthen social ties through cultural and recreational pursuits, but it's still not enough. Residents like Guido, who proudly call the area home, say: "We need more! More parks, more playgrounds, more community centres. Our children are growing up in concrete jungles."

Living in the City has meant Guido and his family have had to compromise on space. This, compounded by a dearth of "open" space, has a majority of residents thinking of alternative ideas. In the past few meetings of REDWatch, a few of the residents have broached the idea of building a community garden and oven on the old Waterloo Pumping Station site located on the corner of McEvoy and Bourke streets.

According to Guido, the Pumping Station has been lying vacant and unused for the past several years. "It's such a shame. Even squatters are not interested in living on this land. If we convert this lot into one big community garden with allotments, the residents will be able to grow their own food. Children will not only learn to grow their own food but understand the concept of food, where it

comes from and how it's grown."

The benefits of a community garden are numerous; its nurturing environment will allow children and adults to practise their social skills of engaging with their neighbours. People can chill out, or talk to each other and bond. Regular bumping into each other at the community garden and community oven will enable residents to build social networks and overcome isolation.

"Regular meeting dates, e.g., baking days at the community oven, will enable residents to come together, cook and share meals together. This is just a step towards forging new ties," stresses Guido.

Irene Doutney, Greens Councillor, City of Sydney, and member of the REDWatch Committee, is supportive of ideas to build stronger communities. Emphasising the detailed process in developing a community garden/urban forest she highlights two big concerns the City of Sydney has regarding this property - namely, the Waterloo Pumping Station was a listed heritage site and the fact that the site was once an industrial area and hence may be susceptible to contamination.

Encouraging community initiative, Cr Doutney says: "This does not mean we cannot have a community garden or an urban forest on this land. It is important that these issues are properly investigated jointly by Sydney Water and the Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water before making a decision."

When contacted, a Sydney Water spokesperson said: "The Waterloo site at the corner of McEvoy and Bourke streets is contaminated and is not suitable for growing vegetables. The site is also unsafe for public access and has been secured to prevent that access. Both the Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water and Sydney Water have taken action in relation to the contamination."

According to Sydney Water, a neighbour has appealed the Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water's action and those proceedings are currently before the Land and Environment Court. SSH

History of the Waterloo pumping station

The Waterloo Pumping Station was constructed in 1923 to take some pressure off the Crown Street Pumping Station that had reached full capacity. It subsequently became the fourth major pumping station in Sydney. As a significant installation for water supply, the government took several measures to protect the site during the Second World War. A bomb shelter was constructed then, which is still supposed to exist. Today the land lies vacant but is listed by Sydney Water as a heritage asset.

90 years old and still up for a fight

NICHOLAS MCCALLUM

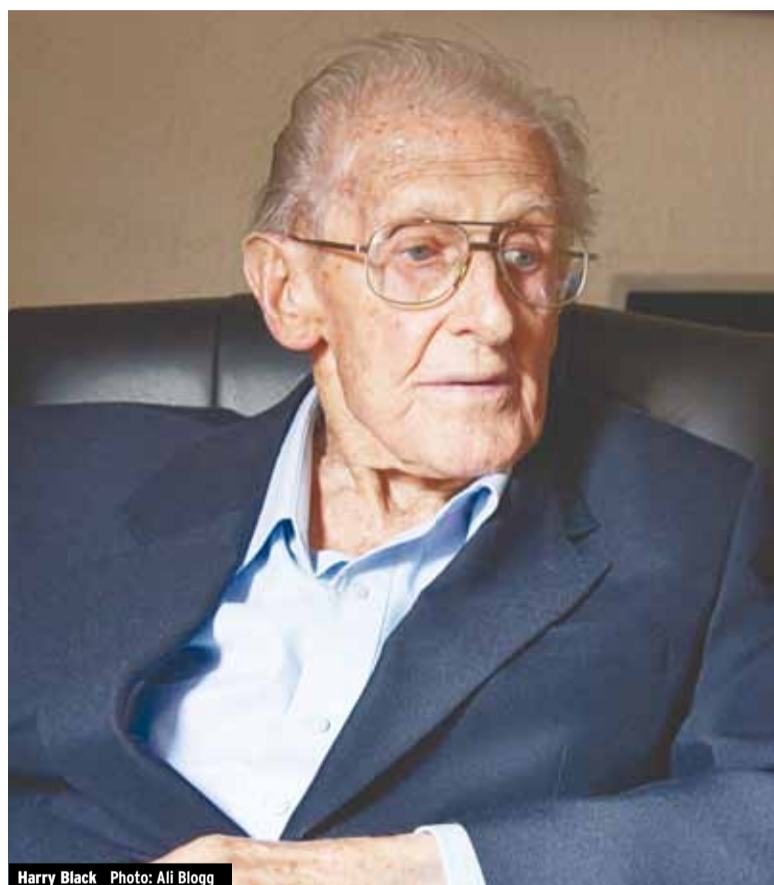
It survived the Cold War that effectively saw its members as the ideological allies to the Free World's enemies. It came out on top of the 1953 referendum that would have seen it outlawed. It was even disbanded in 1991, renamed, and then refashioned in 1996 under its original title, but the Communist Party of Australia is this year celebrating its 90th birthday.

Its numbers might be down from its heyday in the first half of the twentieth century, but according to party elder, Harry Black, anyone who thinks the Communists went the way of the dodo and the Soviets had better think again.

A recent battle that Harry took part in was the 1998 square-off between the Howard Government and the Australian Maritime Workers Union, of which Harry is a member. A last hoorah, Harry spent much of his time in the picket lines on the Hungry Mile.

"I took full part in it", Harry said with pride. "All the members of the Communist Party on the waterfront participated and they won a convincing victory over the government because [Howard] said that all the members of the Union that worked for Patrick's were sacked and that they would never get back through the gate again", which, Harry pointed out, was not the case at all.

"Instead of weakening the Union it strengthened the Union. We had to go through a very dire battle, a political battle, a social battle, and we came out



Harry Black Photo: Ali Blogg

of it with all guns blazing," he said. "We went into battle and anyone that goes into battle against the odds and comes out winning, they come out bigger and better."

Harry is an old hand with the party

and the protests, having joined in 1953 around the same time that the Menzies Government held a referendum to have the party outlawed in Australia.

"When that was taking place I was very active in the [MWU]", the wharfie said,

and that it was the Australian Communists who were being vilified at the time. "What they were doing in a constructive sense and giving was very good leadership to the Union, defending the Union strongly," he said, also reflecting upon the party's global circumstances that have changed in his time, especially for the unions, since the end of the Cold War.

"It has dissipated", he said, of the once confrontational nature of politics and protest.

"In the 50s it was very significant in the history of the Union because Menzies said that no Communist could ever hold a position and that included some Labor members as well." But some of the hardest hits came in the last two decades.

One of the most crucial changes to the nation's third oldest party has been the end of the Soviet Union, which was viewed as a totalitarian regime by most in the West, something Harry has mixed emotions about. "In our history we made some mistakes, as all organisations do, but we done a lot of very good things."

Although membership is down, Harry believes, that in light of recent and unfolding economic catastrophes around the globe, there will be a return to some of the ideals that the party represents. His hope is that young people will reignite a dwindling red flame.

"We need a strong Communist Party and they will come to the Communist Party and they will strengthen the party and the party will be better served by young people", he said, though he knows they do not share the original vision of the workers' paradise.

"I think that's a good slogan, 'Workers of the world unite - you have nothing to lose but your chains and a world to win'. I don't think they're seeing it like that. I wish a lot more of them would. However, when you're a Communist one of the important things to be is an optimist at the same time and I'm always an optimist."

Some of Harry's optimism, unfortunately for his party, grows from the recent and continuing successes of the Greens, a party which many of the old Reds have joined.

"I think the Greens are playing a big role," Harry said. "A number of [Greens] were members of the Communist Party", vindicating the view of some that the Greens are "watermelons", Green on the outside, Red to the core. Though for Harry, it's all part of the ebb and flow of political change.

"We are a progressive organisation that is moving forward, not nearly fast enough. We're crawling forward, I'd say", he said, in the confidence that his party will again find the strength to take on the major parties.

"As they say, the difference between Labor and the Liberal Party is the difference between Tweedledee and Tweedledum. They're going through a change because the Greens are worrying the hell out of them."

It was a comforting thought for the sagacious stevedore, showing more than another 90 years worth of fight within him. Let us hope, for Harry Black's sake, that the Communist Party of Australia does too. SSH

The South Sydney Herald

One of the few remaining independent newspapers in greater Sydney



Volunteers and friends aboard the Deerubbun at the SSH fundraiser on Survival Day 2010 Photo: Hayley Megan French

SSH

The South Sydney Herald (SSH) mission statement reads: "Celebrating the lives of the diverse people of South Sydney, inviting discussion on issues of concern and interest, adding encouragement to possibilities for community."

Behind this statement is the conviction that one of the paper's objectives is to rectify the jaded view of mainstream media when it comes to the Redfern-Waterloo area, which rarely invite open and reflective discussion of important issues, focusing instead on sensationalism and adverse stories. The SSH's aim is to tell the truth, showing what really happens in the community, without bias.

The production of the SSH is unique. None of its editorial team gets any income working for the paper. Writers are all volunteers, many of them young people hoping to become professional journalists one day. It is distributed by volunteers, several of whom are contributors to the paper such as regular cartoonist, norrie mAy-welby, members of the South Sydney Uniting Church, or friends.

Without those people, the paper could not continue. According to the editorial team, volunteers contribute at least 470 hours of work each month to the paper. The designer and printer are professional.

A force behind the paper is Trevor Davies whose relationship with the area dates back to 1978. Little happening in Redfern escapes Trevor and few are those who have not seen him wandering around gathering news, telling stories,

"Community is about engagement and the paper is a vehicle for engagement and debate in the area"

distributing the paper and helping others. A dedicated Labor Party member, Trevor became the Branch Secretary in Darlington in 1983. However, trying to rectify the injustices around him was not enough for him so he started the *Chippo Newsletter*. What followed for Trevor were years running to the printers every month and back to his mum's house to fold the 2,000 copies; and then walking around the suburbs for a week, personally delivering newsletters to hungry letterboxes. The popularity of the *Chippo Newsletter* grew.

In 2000, with the support of Revs Vladimir Korotkov and Dorothy McRae-McMahon from South Sydney Uniting Church, together with photographer Ali Blogg, the newsletter changed its name to become the *South Sydney Herald*, expanding to 15,000 and later 22,000 copies. It became a 16-page tabloid printed in colour, starting to attract

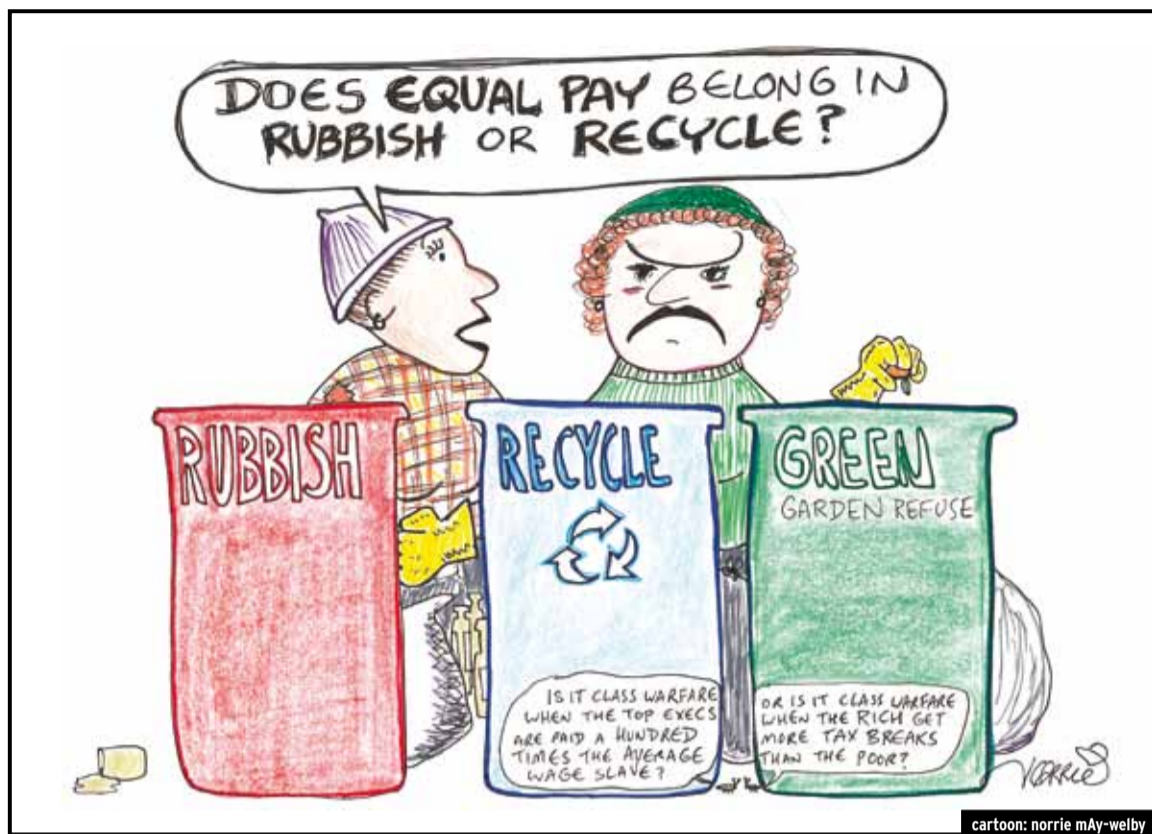
advertising to cover some of the costs. Its distribution increased, stretching around the old South Sydney Council area. A new managing editor, Rev. Andrew Collis, was appointed to replace Vladimir Korotkov who had moved from the area. This marked a period of expansion with new members joining, including design graduate Esther Turnbull (Assistant Editor), journalist Jonathan Bogais (News Consultant) and many others. John Lanzky took over the advertising and his efforts contributed to the viability of the paper.

In some ways, however, little had changed. Trevor Davies still walks the streets hailed by many people who have learned to trust and respect him over the years. They tell him what's happening and what concerns them. Even politicians from all sides take the paper seriously,

applauding it - or challenging it. That's what it's all about! Community is about engagement and the paper is a vehicle for engagement and debate in the area.

Producing the South Sydney Herald is a bit like walking on water each month, deeply satisfying though it is. We hope that you will support our work by joining with us and the folks of the Tribal Warrior Association on board the Deerubbun for a special Harbour Cruise on Survival Day (Wednesday, January 26, 2011). SSH

Cost: \$70/\$60 (includes BBQ and soft drinks). We'll meet at Sydney Fish Markets at 4.30pm for a cruise from 5 to 9pm. For bookings contact Trevor Davies (0400 008 338; trevrssh@bigpond.net.au) or pay by Electronic Funds Transfer to BSB 062 231 / Acc. No. 1021 8391 (please include "Harbour Cruise" when making payment). Thanks for supporting independent media!



cartoon: norrie may-welby

EDITORIAL

SSH

Students and staff at St Mary's School in Erskineville are collecting items of non-perishable food to be used in making up Christmas hampers for distribution by the St Vincent de Paul Society to assist families in need. Members and friends of South Sydney Uniting Church are

also collecting items over the first couple of weeks in December. Your contributions are most welcome, and may be dropped in to the Tripod Cafe on Abercrombie Street, Darlington. Some items that may be donated include Tinned Ham, Assorted Biscuits, Boxed Christmas Cake, Nuts, Tinned Vegetables, Bottles of Soft Drink, Tinned Fruit, Cordial, Christmas Decorations.

You may also like to help with packing the hampers. Contact Michael McIntyre, President of the Sydney Regional Council of the St Vincent de Paul Society, on 0414 853 650. If you or someone you know would appreciate a hamper this Christmas please contact Trevor Davies on 0400 008 338. The SSH wishes you every blessing for a safe, joyful and peaceful holiday.

COMMENT

Redfern & Waterloo public housing – many plans & questions

GEOFF TURNBULL

In August 2010, REDWatch produced the discussion paper, *Planning for the Redevelopment of Redfern & Waterloo Public Housing*. REDWatch has also been adding background material about relevant issues to its website under the Public Housing tab. All this is in preparation for the expected consultations about the future shape of the Redfern & Waterloo public housing estates. REDWatch's spokesperson, Geoff Turnbull, explores some of the issues.

Leaked cabinet documents in 2004 foreshadowed the NSW Government's interest in redeveloping the area's public housing estates. In 2006 the RWA announced that planning for this would be done as part of its Built Environment Plan 2 (BEP2). In the same year Sydney Council developed and exhibited its own draft planning controls, now awaiting exhibition as part of Council's new Local Environment Plan (LEP). Meanwhile the RWA awaits cabinet approval of its rival BEP2 which will then be shown to the RWA's Ministerial Advisory Committee and exhibited for public comment. On a third front, the land owner, Housing NSW (HNSW), has obtained Federal funding to develop its own Preliminary Master Plan by mid 2012 for the housing estates and adjoining area. HNSW is waiting for BEP2 to be exhibited before proceeding.

A Council report about the LEP said: "After additional consultation with Housing NSW it has been clarified and accepted that Waterloo Redfern Urban Design Study has offered reasonable and appropriate LEP recommendations. Redfern Waterloo Authority Built Environment Plan – Stage 2, as advised

by the Authority, will not be dissimilar to Council's recommendations and strategy for this area." If this is so then why do we need the BEP2 to propose alternative controls and why do we need both the BEP2 and the HNSW Master Plan to provide the finer grain for the plan? It is not plain what is wrong with Council's LEP or why three different overlapping plans are necessary.

What is clear is that the NSW Government wants to redevelop the Redfern Waterloo housing estates. The model being considered is to decrease the concentration of public housing residents in the area by significantly increasing the number of private residents living in the area. The proposed increase is not yet public but based on the 2004 cabinet papers and HNSW's usual mix, it is expected that there will be about two new residents in the estate area for every existing public tenant.

Central to the shape of the redevelopment is which buildings get redeveloped. Around half of the area's public tenants live in the high rises. HNSW considers the high rises will not need replacing for quite some time. The question here is what work can be done to improve these buildings. Will they remain just for public tenants, or will some buildings become all private housing or possibly mixes of public and private tenants?

If the high rises remain, the main redevelopment will be focussed on the low rise walk-ups where the other half of public tenants live and where any increase in population would need to be housed. The REDWatch paper outlines a worst case scenario in which the high rises all stay public housing and the government redevelops the walk ups resulting in four out of five of the new homes going to the private market.

The cash strapped NSW Government receives a windfall profit, a statistical dilution of the social problems, and is able to shelve the challenge of dealing with half the public housing stock for a future government.

But the issue is not just about renewing buildings. It is also about what Government terms "social mix". The gentrification of surrounding private properties has coincided with Government changes to eligibility for public housing resulting in estates with concentrated disadvantage in what is becoming housing of last resort. The area has become more polarised. Governments want to break up the concentration they have created and spread the problems more evenly through the community. The "social mix" argument is that it is better for the disadvantaged to mix with the "better off", but the research on the subject is not clear-cut. A downside is that it may lead to less access to services and greater social isolation as the opportunity to mix does not address the issues that are increasingly the prerequisite to gain entry into public housing.

Complex multiple needs require integrated human service delivery and as people with higher needs have been concentrated in public housing the required human services and the integration between them has lagged. Tenants regularly complain about disruptive tenants and want them removed. Often the disruption stems from inadequately addressed psychiatric, drug and alcohol or other issues of the disruptive tenant.

REDWatch has argued strongly for many years that without significant improvement in integrated human service delivery there may be increased, not decreased, tensions post

FAITH

Let us make room at the inn

DOROTHY MCRAE-MCMAHON

Nearly 40 years ago, I was in Palestine/Israel looking at various refugee and development projects on behalf of the Australian Churches. It was near to Christmas and, as I heard the children in the refugee camp singing a prayer to their God, in which they cried out for a home, I thought of the child for which there was no room in the inn.

I was being accompanied by a Christian Palestinian who suggested that I might like to visit the Cathedral in Bethlehem. I remember bowing my head to enter the deliberately made small door into the Cathedral and wondering if I would find the strongest presence of the Christchild in that place. I found myself unsure about that. I suspected that the Christchild might rather be found among the children suffering fear and deprivation in the little tents in the refugee camp.

Then my Palestinian guide took me to a place on a hillside where he said that some Christians believed the shepherds heard the angels sing. I stood on the quiet slopes and looked and listened. The love and trust was coming from the vulnerable one beside me. I could indeed imagine that, high above us, there was a singing of hope and joy. This ordinary man and myself, as an ordinary woman, were those whom God would call to bring the Good News into a struggling, needy and longing world. This perfect God did not arrive among the powerful but deliberately chose very ordinary stumbling

and vulnerable human beings.

Could this God be one who believes that it is love and grace in the end which is the transforming gift for all people? It could even be that many members of the community engage in their own ways with Christmas because they feel good about a little Child in a manger and the gentleness that surrounds the story – quite apart from food and presents.

We cannot really live without love. Love is what gives us life. When you add to that love with gifts of grace from each other and from our God, then it is indeed, as the Hebrew prophet Jeremiah said, like becoming a watered garden. The love keeps the garden alive and growing. The grace brings it into flowerings of gratitude and expanding life which reaches to share the gifts with others. When we share the wonder of the gifts of grace which we receive, we encourage new life and hope in each other and in the world around us.

Maybe, if we found room in the "inn" of Australian life for those in despair from other countries, we might actually add to our own life because we would have opened the door to love and kindness. The coming of the Christchild is not simply about celebrating the romance of a child born in a manger with lovely animals and people around it. It is about the vulnerable arrival of love in any place, one which may disturb our complacencies and territorial assumptions and challenge many things about our life. The Christchild grew up and still looks us in the face if we close off the doors to justice and compassion. SSH

READERS' LETTERS

No faith in Sydney Uni

Imagine, if you will, living across the road from a large area that contains a multitude of different buildings of different heights, none of which exceed three storeys. These buildings contain a variety of businesses that operate in business hours. Now imagine that that same area is demolished and replaced with a six-storey glass-fronted Westfield complex over the entire

site, complete with bars and other amenities, opening for business until late in the night, so the traffic, light and noise go on until late in the evening and on weekends. Would you think it was appropriate or fair?

I have no faith in Sydney University to deal with the local community fairly and equitably because no matter what the senior University people say, the behaviour of the University in real life contradicts them.

Jenny Sams
Darlington

redevelopment. Private residents living in closer proximity to public tenants with multiple needs are unlikely to tolerate behaviour that HNSW currently expects its public tenants to tolerate. Improving human service delivery has to be a central element in addressing the future of public housing in the area.

Service delivery also has to cover how the housing and tenancies will be managed. HNSW currently has a policy of divesting its property to non-government housing providers, and this is likely in Redfern and Waterloo as part of the redevelopment. While there are issues with this divestment, the problem of management is not just about managing the buildings; it is most importantly about the people that live there. Do they feel safe in their building? If they report a problem will it be addressed? HNSW is spending a lot of money on a trial of a concierge program in Waterloo and such improved ways of managing property and high needs tenants need to be part of the redevelopment irrespective of the underlying property ownership.

The Government is saying all these problems are on the table and need to be addressed in its redevelopment plans. Tenants, however, argue that most of these problems already exist and question why they should believe

they will be addressed as part of the redevelopment given the Government's present inaction on the issues.

To address any of these problems requires money! Money to pay for proper human service support and accommodation for high needs tenants, money for property maintenance, money to make social mix more than a statistical dilution and money to properly manage the tenancies and the buildings. These are ongoing government costs for properly running high needs public housing. On top of this there is also the money needed to rebuild the community after the social dislocation from the redevelopment.

The proposed redevelopment of Redfern and Waterloo public housing dwarfs HNSW often mentioned Minto and Bonnyrigg projects. BEP2 and HNSW's Master Plan will have to deal with inner-city issues like open space, affordable housing and community facilities. It also needs to find solutions to problems stemming from years of underfunding of public housing and human services if the promise of a brighter future for the public tenants of the future and their neighbours is to be delivered. SSH

More information can be found at www.redwatch.org.au/issues/public-housing

Hicks, the pawn in a political game

NEIL WHITFIELD

A friend of mine was in Pakistan at the same time as David Hicks, and in many of the same places: Peshawar, Quetta, Pakistani Kashmir. There's even a photo of my friend in Pashtun costume holding an AK47. That was a joke photo taken in a Peshawar arms bazaar. My friend went east and met the Dalai Lama. David Hicks went west and met Osama Bin Laden. My friend came home much sooner.

When David Hicks memorably confronted John Howard on *Q&A* in October, he asked two questions: "Was I treated humanely?" and "Was the Military Commission process fair?" Howard answered neither question, applying the airbrush liberally to what really happened to Hicks between 2001 and 2008.

After distracting us with a motherhood statement about what a great country we have to allow Hicks to bail him up like this, Howard spun first into irrelevance: "Now, having said that, can I simply say that I defend what my government did in relation to Iraq, in relation to the military commissions ...?" How did Iraq get into this?

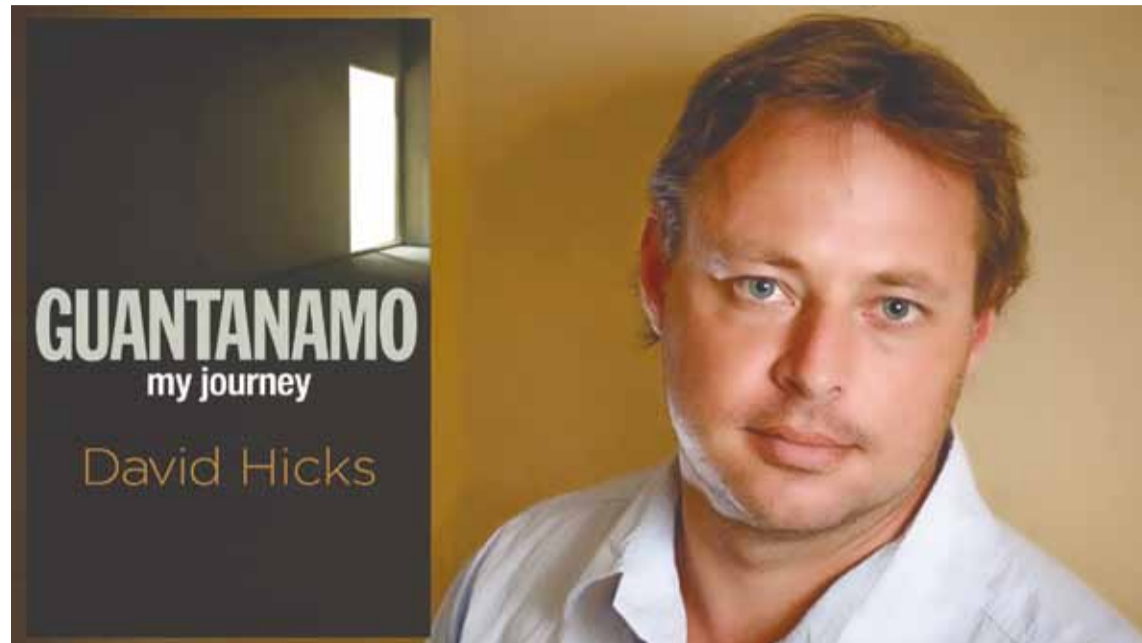
He went on: "We put a lot of pressure on the Americans to accelerate the charges being brought against David Hicks and I remind the people watching this program that David Hicks did plead guilty to a series of offences and they, of course, involved him in full knowledge of what had happened on September 11, attempting to return to Afghanistan and rejoin the people with whom he had trained. So let's understand the reality of what David Hicks pleaded guilty to."

TONY JONES: Mr Howard, on this question of him pleading guilty, Mr Hicks says in his own book that his military lawyer, David Mori, was told by your staff that Hicks wouldn't be released from Guantánamo Bay unless he pleaded guilty. Was that your position?

JOHN HOWARD: Well, I'm not aware of any such exchange but, look, I mean, there's been a lot of criticism of that book by sources quite unrelated to me and I've read some very, very severe criticisms of that book ...

Howard's late-blooming desire to see Hicks returned to Australia had everything to do with VP Cheney's visit to Australia in February 2007, when the deal that led to Hicks' "conviction" was stitched up, and behind that was the 2007 Election. Howard knew the issue was losing him votes.

Colonel Morris Davis, the prosecutor in the case, recalls that in January 2007 he received a call from his superior, Jim Haynes, asking him how quickly he could charge David Hicks. (Now an attorney for Chevron, Haynes had in 2005 told Davis: "Wait a minute, we can't have acquittals. We've been holding these guys for years. How are we going to explain that? We've got to have convictions.") David Hicks was eventually charged on February 2, 2007, even though the details about how



the commissions should be conducted weren't published until late April. (Interview Amy Goodman and Col. Morris Davis July 16, 2008.)

Davis resigned from the Military Commission after prosecuting David Hicks, stating that "What's taking place now, I would call neither military nor justice."

"Nearly 200 men remain imprisoned at Guantánamo"

Howard assured us that the US had a long tradition of military commissions. He failed to mention that this particular Commission had been struck down by the United States Supreme Court in the case of Hamden vs Rumsfeld in June 2006, so that what David Hicks was dealing with was a reinvented version, but as much a "kangaroo court", to quote a senior British judge, as the previous version.

More airbrushing. And there's more. David Hicks' guilty plea was an odd beast, an Alford Plea, something peculiar to US law. It is the plea of guilt you make when you don't believe you are guilty but do believe the court is likely to find in favour of the prosecution. I may also add that David Hicks was never at any stage charged with or found guilty of terrorism. Some of the charges in Guantánamo (also known as GITMO) seem to have been invented specifically to justify the imprisonment of people there. Mr Howard passes over such technicalities.

Colin Powell's former Chief of Staff, Colonel Lawrence Wilkerson, summed up his view of Guantánamo in an article published in November 2010.

"...[N]o intelligence of significance was gained from any of the detainees at Guantánamo Bay other than from the handful of undisputed ring leaders and their companions, clearly no more than a dozen or two of the detainees, and even their alleged contribution of hard, actionable intelligence is intensely disputed in the relevant communities such as intelligence and law enforcement. This is perhaps the most astounding truth of all, carefully

masked by men such as Donald Rumsfeld and Richard Cheney in their loud rhetoric – continuing even now in the case of Cheney – about future attacks thwarted, resurgent terrorists, the indisputable need for torture and harsh interrogation and for secret prisons and places such as GITMO."

Curiously, one item in Hicks' book

this matter views it from a political perspective, of course. General Al-Zahrani grieves for his son, but at the end of a lengthy interview he paused and his thoughts turned elsewhere. "The truth is what matters," he said. "They practiced every form of torture on my son and on many others as well. What was the result? What facts did they find? They found nothing. They learned nothing. They accomplished nothing."

I have been reading *Guantánamo: My Journey* (William Heinemann 2010) very carefully for around four weeks. I have also done a lot of fact checking. I especially recommend the report on David Hicks' trial by Lex Lasry QC, available on the Internet, which includes the texts of all the charges and the final plea bargain. Hicks had a choice: stay in GITMO or sign the admissions and go home. What would you do after more than five years? And no, Mr Howard, he was not treated humanely, and no, the system

"... it fails the commonsense test not only in the educated minds of the legal profession, but in the gut feelings of ordinary Australians who believe in a fair go..."

Nearly 200 men remain imprisoned at Guantánamo. In June 2009, six months after Barack Obama took office, one of them, a 31-year-old Yemeni named Muhammed Abdallah Salih, was found dead in his cell. The exact circumstances of his death, like those of the deaths of the three men from Alpha Block, remain uncertain.

"Those charged with accounting for what happened – the prison command, the civilian and military investigative agencies, the Justice Department, and ultimately the Attorney General himself – all face a choice between the rule of law and the expedience of political silence. Thus far, their choice has been unanimous.

"Not everyone who is involved in

was eminently unfair.

Former Minister for Veterans' Affairs, Danna Vale (Liberal, Hughes), got it right as far back as November 2005: "The longer Hicks is in Guantánamo Bay, his imprisonment without trial will begin to creep like an incongruent shadow, jarring the Australian consciousness.

"Let's get real. The case of David Hicks clearly fails the commonsense test. It fails the commonsense test not only in the educated minds of the legal profession, but in the gut feelings of ordinary Australians who believe in a fair go, and who believe that truth and justice and that old hand-me-down from the Magna Carta that says men are innocent until proven

guilty, still deserve some currency in our world. Just like you, just like me, as an Australian, he is entitled to a fair trial without further delay. And, after four years in Guantánamo Bay, if the Americans cannot deliver this to David Hicks, in all fairness, we must ask that he be sent home."

In one of the more considered reviews of *Guantánamo: My Journey*, Sally Neighbour claims that Hicks has airbrushed some parts of his story. At least she has read the book. I too find it difficult to believe he first heard of Al Qaeda after his capture, but endorse his recommendation of Jason Burke's *Al-Qaeda: The True Story of Radical Islam* as the best on the subject.

By contrast, look at Miranda Devine's recent review of Hicks' book, a sustained sledge against Dick Smith who assisted financially with David's defence. Beyond that she descends into emotive claptrap or sheer ignorance, the latter being her inability to believe Hicks became a Muslim by looking up a mosque in the yellow pages and then meeting an imam. She doesn't seem to have mastered Islam 101: one can become a Muslim simply by professing to a Muslim, "There is no God but Allah and Muhammad is his prophet". No course necessary. On this I absolutely believe Hicks, who, incidentally, no longer considers himself a Muslim.

One telling item for Hicks in the book is the famous picture of David with the rocket launcher. We all remember how this was used to demonise him and purported to show him in Afghanistan. It turns out to be cut from a photo taken in Albania of three friends playing around with empty weapons. Yes, he took part in the Kosovo war, but never saw action. Another photo shows him saluting the NATO flag, under which he was really serving then.

Guantamo: My Journey is a book we need to read. I am glad it has been published. Like Sally Neighbour, there are some things I would like clarified, but I now believe it to be mostly truthful. Hicks was a bit of a fool, you know, even if a desire to aid oppressed people is, in itself, quite commendable. He was, after all, a 20-something at the time, and "under-researched" as he now says. He hasn't killed anyone or engaged in any act of terrorism. Everyone admits that.

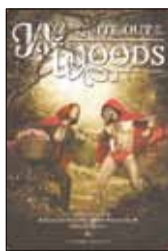
One of the most valuable features of *Guantánamo: My Journey* is the extensive footnotes, a marvellously detailed documentation of the material in the book. I wish they had been set in their places at the bottom of relevant pages rather than being gathered at the back. The book also needs a thorough index.

David was pretty much a pawn. Heroes? Well, I'd nominate David's father, and Major Michael Mori, his defending counsel, whose career has suffered as a consequence. (See *The Marine Corps News*, September 20, 2010.)

Guantánamo: My Journey
David Hicks
William Heinemann, 2010

The Reviews

Theatre review by Jane Barton



The 2010 Wharf Revue: Not Quite Out of the Woods Until Dec 19, STC
Created by: Jonathan Biggins, Drew Forsythe, Phil Scott
Featuring: Jonathan Biggins, Drew Forsythe, Phil Scott and Amanda Bishop

The circumstances under which satirists were forced to work this year were extreme, Jonathon Biggins lamented early in this review season. There was an absurd election campaign followed by a hung parliament and 17 days without a government. You can see his point. Satire likes edges, not mushy centre politics, and for Biggins et al., working to deadlines, it must have been a nightmare – for 17 days there wasn't actually a government to satirise. Maybe that's the reason, or maybe after 11 years of making fun of our dear leaders the review team are, quite literally, able to put something together to formula, no matter who is or isn't in government. This season's show feels dangerously comfortable, it's like a nana, a cardigan, a Bex and a good lie down all combined. As per usual, it lampoons everyone across the political spectrum – Gillard, Abbott, Bob Brown, Keneally – but ever so gently. I suppose they never know who exactly might be in the audience, contributing to the distinct feeling that prudence dictates the level of bite. The usual punters, STC stalwarts, emerged from the theatre proclaiming it the "best ever", but honestly, it was like the metaphorical Indian Railways curry Salman Rushdie uses to describe partition – no beef, so as not to offend Hindus, and no pork so as not to offend Muslims, leaving lamb as the bland alternative.

That said, the skill of the quartet is unquestionable. Standout moments included the stylish opening number as Biggins, aka Q&A host Tony Jones, fronts an ever-expanding panel of chattering experts (including Amanda Bishop channeling Annabel Crabb and Drew Forsythe wearing Michelle Grattan coke-bottle glasses). Tony Abbott/Abbott in 1D was a good opportunity to get Drew Forsythe into budgie smugglers and the Eurovision Sovereign Debt Contest a timely and sharp poke. Least effective was the Japanese

Whalers/Scientists interpretation of the Mikado, a piece which sought to have a bet each way, satirising not just "scientists" but the Sea Shepherd and conservationists as well. If ever there was a topic where the team could have unreservedly bitten the biting satire bullet, it's so-called "scientific whaling". Comedian, Peter Cook, once remarked on the overwhelming effectiveness of Berlin cabaret in the 1930s in stopping the rise of the Nazism ... i.e., it didn't, and no one is seriously threatened by the spectre of radical politics entering the theatre and felling a government – they are quite able to topple without help. The revue team will do it all again, blindfolded, backwards and on high heels next year, but if they could stop pulling their political punches quite so obviously, they might find a whole new audience.

» theatre@ssh.com.au

Book Reviews by Margaret Vazey



Solo
Vicki McCauley
Pan Macmillan Australia, 2010

Solo is an unusual love story. It is not often that a wife with a small child will say to her husband, "Go for it!" when he proposes an outrageous adventure. For me, it would be more like: "Do not do it, or if you do, and perish, I will kick your tombstone." But Vicki McAuley did not want to tame her husband. She understood his need to do something absolutely epic if he was to be at peace with himself for the rest of his life. Andrew McCauley loved a challenge. He loved climbing. In 1995 he made the first Australian ascent of Torre Centrale in Patagonia, and in 1998 returned to climb Dedos del Diablo (the Fingers of the Devil). He loved conquering mountains. *Australian Geographic* awarded him, and his fellow climbers, a Spirit of Adventure medal for the first ascent of Mount Jo in Pakistan.

Vicki loved the person Andrew was – on the one hand loving, caring, humble, and on the other, strong, clever, daring, adventurous, and determined to achieve something which no one had ever done before. After smashing his knee-cap in a climbing accident, he turned

to kayaking as his main source of challenging achievement.

We know from the first page that this is the story of an adventurer who did not make it.

After crossing the Tasman via the Southern Ocean, Andrew McAuley had intended to write a book about the challenge and problems of ultimate adventures: the reasons for testing one's endurance to the limit, the excitement of winning against the odds, of cheating death; and dealing with the guilt of inflicting worry on one's nearest and dearest. But it was not to be.

Instead, his heart-rending tale, and her journey through the difficult, dangerous terrain of grief, is carefully, tearfully, dramatically and passionately told.

Like the story of Burke and Wills, this is a thrilling, sobering, tragic story for us to ponder.



Hand Me Down World
Lloyd Jones
The Text Publishing Company, Melbourne, 2010

This is the story of an African woman, who, without power or privileges, or any valuable possessions, makes her way from Tunisia to Berlin, to correct a grave and personal injustice. With stoicism, bravery, kindness from strangers, and sheer good luck, she covers seemingly impossible distances.

Her story is told mainly through the testimonies of some of the people she encounters. Their characters, as well as hers, are illuminated by these stories. So are the environs of the countries, districts, towns, and, finally, the city of Berlin.

This book was very easy and pleasurable to read. The writing is deceptively, skilfully simple. In very plain language, the characters relate their concerns, and their experience of the heroine.

As readers, we learn of the suffering which may be experienced by boat people, the difficulties of being without any ID, of being hungry, of having to do unethical or unpleasant things in order to survive. Good can be found in all walks of life; generosity and kindness can come from unexpected sources. Similarly with evil. A traveller, in particular, has to be on guard, as this too can be unexpected.

To write this story, the author had to live in Berlin for a time.

He went there especially for this purpose, to get away from his homeland, (NZ), in order to experience the loneliness and problems of living

in a place where you do not speak the local language. This has resulted in a story that allows us to understand and perhaps leads us to forgiving, some human follies and actions.

This wise and gentle story perhaps even encourages us to forgive ourselves for being human rather than saints.

» books@ssh.com.au

Film Review by Lindsay Cohen



The Social Network
Director: David Fincher
Writer: Aaron Sorkin
Starring: Jesse Eisenberg, Andrew Garfield, Justin Timberlake
Genre: Spaceface for twits (Written in the style of anything by Aaron Sorkin)

The Social Network hits home within seconds of starting. Over drinks at University, Facebook inventor and world's youngest billionaire Mark

Zuckerberg and his girlfriend engage in typical Aaron Sorkin of West Wing fame scattergun conversation where punctuation and pauses for breath are as infrequent as the rate at which ideas about friendship love and life's priorities pile up and up and eventually explode in the failed romance that supposedly acts as the trigger for creating how we mis-communicate with our friends of friends of friends today.

The moral of the tale, of course, is that you don't need a social networking website to know who your real friends are especially after they've sued you for a lazy few hundred million dollars after your new supposed best friend dumped your original best friend because of a legal loophole. Still it all seems to work. On screen anyway. If you believe this is what really happened. Zuckerberg was never involved in the making of the film and why would he be, given he's essentially portrayed as your classic flawed genius? Somehow even the oddly cast Justin Timberlake does a great job as do all the other actors. So while the ideas may come flowing at a rate only slightly exceeded by that which Zuckerberg makes another million at the expense of your privacy ultimately this is a ripping yarn whether you look deeply into it or not.

Rating: Four-and-a-half frenemies

» film@ssh.com.au

Black Turtle Blues

JONATHAN BOGAIS

One of Sydney's inner suburbs' favourite bands, the Black Turtles, is celebrating 15 years making music and entertaining the community.

Founded by Indigenous artist, Walangari Kartawarra, and Koori filmmaker, Troy J. Russell, the Black Turtles fuses an urban contemporary sound with a traditional roots, reggae and rockabilly edge. Influences include John Fogerty, Ry Cooder and the Warumpi Band. During this time the band has performed at numerous community events, completed East Coast tours and played at popular live venues around Sydney. Performance highlights include the Dreaming Festival in Brisbane and Peats' Ridge Music Festival 2008.

Finding its beginnings at the Eora College of Performing Arts in Redfern, the Black Turtles have maintained a strong relationship with the college, starting with the name. Russell said: "Everybody wonders where the name Black Turtles comes from. We were students at the Eora College and we liked the logo at the time that represented a black turtle, so we adopted the name." He laughs. "It's that simple. When we joined and started making music, many of the teachers at the college were involved and some

still play with us 15 years later."

The Black Turtles is an organic band bringing a regular flow of musicians. "The band we have now is really good with professional musicians working well together. We're having fun making music and performing and that's what it's all about," Russell said. Walangari and Russell are the only two performers who have been with the band since its inception.

The band has released a second CD this year recorded at the Bondi Studio through Waverley Council. Russell said: "It was a six-piece band that worked really well. We called it: *Self-Titled*." All songs are original, written by Walangari. The band had released a first CD 10 years ago entitled, *GST Day*. CDs are available for sale at the gigs.

Current band members are Walangari Kartawarra, Troy J. Russell, Tim Gray, Phil Williams, Mert Balkanli and Matt Tarrant.

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Catch the Black Turtles at the Peats Ridge Sustainable Arts & Music Festival in Glenworth Valley, Dec 29-Jan. 1
www.peatsridgefestival.com.au

The band will also perform at Yabun 2011, in Victoria Park on January 26 (Front Cover photo, *The Black Turtles perform at Redfern's Family Day* by Jonathan Bogais)



SIMON CARTER
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James Rebbeck and Brad Jenkins of Tripod support the St Vinnies Christmas Appeal. Photo: Ali Blogg

How bright is your Christmas?

PATRICIA TELLIS

“This time last year, I was sleeping in my old car with the three kids. I had left my husband in early November after reaching breaking point. He hit me in front of the youngest and it was the final straw after many years of violence. I left in the middle of the night with just the clothes on our backs and \$100 in my purse with no idea of where to next. I was sick at the thought of Christmas approaching and making it special for the kids.

They had never really had one before as my husband didn't believe in the festive season and didn't like to waste money on toys or Christmas food. It was just another day. Luckily, I had a friend who let us sleep on her living room floor for the few days around Christmas. This made it for the children.

“It has been a hard year. We have slept in motels and hotels, on couches, in a caravan and in the car, but when we got to move to a Vinnies service a few months ago things finally began to look up. We will be here this Christmas. The kids will have a guaranteed roof over their head, we have been told we will be given a Christmas hamper to cook dinner and I have scraped together a few dollars to buy some small gifts, and Vinnies said they will help, too, so maybe

Santa can come. The service will be showing a Christmas movie, which we are looking forward to watching together. This will be the best year of the kid's lives because they won't be scared that their dad will get violent towards me. They can do what other kids do – relax, eat and have fun,” says Janet 38 (name changed).

Janet is just one of the 1.8 million people across the country struggling to feed, clothe and shelter their loved ones. A majority of these will consider it their good fortune if they can manage to get a decent meal on Christmas day.

Christmas is about hope. It's about a renewal of faith and giving generously. As 2010 winds down and families across Australia gear up for the big celebration, there are over 715,000 people in NSW and 1.8 million people across the country that will not have much to celebrate. Rising bank rates, unemployment, rent, steep increases in electricity bills and high cost of living has taken away the joy of giving.

Bringing some sunshine amidst the doom and gloom are 17,000 St Vincent de Paul (Vinnie's) NSW members. This year, they will conduct home visits and distribute Christmas hampers to people suffering from mental illness, social isolation and disabilities. A large proportion of these people are either unemployed or facing homelessness.

According to Michael McIntyre,

President, Sydney Regional, St Vincent de Paul Society: “Vinnie's fills in the gaps where the government does not. This year, the Society aims to distribute Christmas gift hampers which will include food, clothes, toys, sweets, Christmas delicacies and vouchers to pay electricity and water bills.

“During this season, the Society is able to put a human face of compassion and caring through home visits. We touch people's lives directly and often in the privileged environment of their own homes, where we consider ourselves as invited guests,” explains McIntyre.

The Society is hoping to raise \$3 million in NSW, but to do so needs the support of the people. The Society invites readers of the SSH to contribute to the Vinnie's Christmas Appeal. Donations can be dropped off at local Vinnie's shops and offices in your neighbourhood or at local Catholic Churches or by logging on to vinnies.org.au. A few corporates have volunteered to keep Vinnie's wheelie bins on their premises and local businesses like Tripod Café in Darlington are encouraging people to drop donations/contributions into Vinnie's charity bins provided.

This Christmas, help break the cycle of poverty and isolation, join the St Vincent de Paul Society to make a difference in your neighbourhood.

vinnies.org.au

Wayside Christmas Party

SSH

Wayside Chapel is gearing up to once again host its famous Christmas Day Street Party. Since its humble beginnings as a BBQ in a back lane, the event has had one main objective – to bring people in the community together.

These days thousands of people join in making this a very special day. In the lead-up to the event there is a flurry of activity, with food being sourced, presents being gifted, carving knives being sharpened, phones being answered, volunteers being trained, decorations being made, and so very much more.

Volunteering positions fill up quickly, but there are plenty of other ways to get involved. If you work for an organisation, why not hold a raffle

for Wayside, or perhaps you'd like to donate food or sponsor a porta-loo or a chair (only \$2). Wayside will acknowledge your support on its webpage, and can guarantee that by donating this Christmas, you'll be rewarded tenfold with the knowledge that your gift has contributed to creating a wonderful community event at a time of year when loneliness grips many of our neighbours.

“It's a great day, when people of all traditions, and at all ends of the social strata, sit together for good fellowship, food and fun. Each year we are blown away by the goodness of people and encouraged to participate in the joy that is unleashed when so many people join together in an act of service of others.”

**Rev. Graham Long,
Pastor of The Wayside Chapel**

≡ Poetry ≡

Stand up! Move! Prepare!
The bee's way of work and dance
brings more than honey.
– Heather Robinson

Cerulean pools,
viridian fronds and leaves,
dabs of Flake White snow.
– Yvonne Hocothee

Cockroach, sparrow, ant,
common, not ordinary.
Extraordinary!
– Heather Robinson

Seekers after truth,
midnight burrowing in tomes
while life passes by.
– Yvonne Hocothee

Golden apricots,
Amber spheres in my blue dish.
Yesterday's sunshine.
– Yvonne Hocothee

A Hubble image,
forty million light years –
It's my party hat!
– Yvonne Hocothee

Jagged, flying shape.
Heavenly visitation?
Don't know, let it go.
– Yvonne Hocothee

WORDPLAY - CREATIVE WRITING GROUP
Woolpack Hotel Redfern
229 Chalmers Street, Redfern
6-8pm Wed December 15
Phone Adrian on 9690 1427
All welcome

Saucepan

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Aboriginal Men's Group
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PCYC, Redfern
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Glebe Cafe Church
Cnr St Johns Rd & Colbourne Ave, Glebe
Worship Sun 7 for 7.15pm
'Colbourne Ave' Intimate Candlelit Concerts Thu 8pm
Steph Gesling 9518 9413

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

Paddington Uniting Church
395 Oxford St Paddington
Church Open 10am-2pm
1st and 3rd Saturdays
Worship Sunday 7.30pm
Office 9331 2646

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

Ultimo University Church
Cnr Bulwara Road and Quarry St, Ultimo
Worship 6.30pm Sunday
Rev. Dr John Hirt 0408 238 117

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

South Sydney Uniting Church
Xmas Day – 9.15am

Wayside Chapel
Xmas Day – 10am

SATURDAY ART CLASS

South Sydney Uniting Church
(56a Raglan St, Waterloo)
12-4pm Saturday December 11
More information phone 8399 3410.

All materials provided.
Previous & new participants welcome.
Gold coin donation.

Drawing: Charlotte Dibben

Survival Day on Sydney Harbour



Join the SSH & Tribal Warrior Assoc. on Jan. 26, 2011.
Cost: \$70/\$60.
For bookings contact Trevor on 0400 008 338
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(please include "Harbour Cruise" when making payment).

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What is happening in Redfern-Waterloo?

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Volunteers welcome (phone Naomi on 0407 576 098).

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Red and green with envy

MICHAEL PAGE

Supporters of the infamous Millwall FC in London have a song that goes, "No one likes us but we don't care". While Souths supporters may be a long way from resembling the skinheaded bovver boy supporters of Millwall, there is no escaping the fact that Souths may well be on the way to becoming one of those teams that no one likes.

Why? Well it's a reason that Souths supporters understand perhaps better than any. Envy. Souths now has a line-up that many other teams and their supporters can only dream about.

We now have a great team, on paper. On the back of Greg Inglis' signing, Souths odds plunged immediately to install them as unlikely second favourites for next year's title. Add Inglis to an already impressive list including Sammy Burgess, Issac Luke, Dave "The Beast" Taylor, as well as Asotasi, Crocker, Sutton, Merritt and Sandow. It does look like a formidable line-up. Many Souths supporters have been busy shaking their heads or pinching themselves. After all, Souths have not had a line-up as good as this since 1971.

And Souths supporters know only too well what envy feels like. We have watched while our team tried to mix

it with teams of superstars for many years. First it was Manly in the 1970s with Fulton, Randall, Eadie, Reilly and Souths' own John O'Neill in their ranks. And then there was the Parramatta team of the 1980s - Cronin, Sterling, Price, Kenny, *et al.* And finally Canberra in the 1990s with the superstar backline of Stuart, Daley, Meninga, Ferguson and the great "Badge" Belcher.

Now with Inglis on board we have a team that others would love to have and are ready to hate without much encouragement. Expectations will be high and any sign that we are not playing to potential will attract plenty of criticism from opposition fans and media alike.

However, as we drag our way though this long off season, there are still so many questions to be answered.

Is he the Messiah? Is he the one we've been waiting for? How big a concern is his behaviour in walking away from his Broncos contract? Will he be able to produce a committed and injury-free effort away from Melbourne and coach Bellamy? Will he play the same type of big games he tends to reserve for State of Origin or Australia when he is wearing the red and green? Will he know how to kiss the Rabbitoh emblem on his jersey when he scores?

Before we go too far down the highway of doubt, it has to be said there are some

good reasons to feel positive about Inglis' signing. The kid can play. A natural footballer. Big, strong and fast with the best fend since Bobby Fulton.

But Messiah is a big tag to carry. Souths Junior, Johnny Sutton, emerged in our darkest hour as a young and extremely gifted ballplayer, but he has at this stage failed to carry the weight of heavy expectations of long-suffering fans.

Issac Luke narrowly escaped the Messiah tag, yet expectations were still high, his Old Testament/New Testament name earned him the moniker "The Bible" instead.

So maybe the strategy for big "GI" is to let him be and not get carried away. In fact, given our new-found and totally foreign status of a team that others "envy", it may be best if all of Souths players and officials are kept away from microphones and cameras and the inevitable beat-up of expectations.

And the strategy for long-suffering supporters will be similar. Let's not get carried away by our dreams. Let's not think about making the eight. Nor the final four. And please let's not think about a grand final. Let's not think about our first premiership since 1971 nor a Redfern festooned in red and green streamers in early October 2011.

Welcome Greg and the boys and coach Lang, enjoy yourselves. No pressure at all!

SSH

In a New York groove

ZIMMY WATT

SSH Managing Editor, and Ravens road runner, Andrew Collis, has returned from New York, having completed the New York City Marathon for Covenant House, a service for young homeless people in the Americas. Andrew shared an email from a fellow Home Team (Covenant House) runner: "Whatever pain I may have to push past to run 15, 18, 20 and finally 26.2 miles, it can't compare to what so many kids on the street have had to overcome and the perseverance their lives have required."

The marathon, Andrew said, was a buzz. "The security and organisation on Staten Island were high standard - 44,829 runners in three corral groups and three time waves. At 10.10am I stripped off sweat pants and hoodie and made my way across the Verrazano-Narrows Bridge. There was a chilly wind in the harbour from the west and I couldn't feel my left leg at all!

"By the time I made it into Brooklyn, however, I was feeling strong," Andrew continued. "There were gospel choirs, rock bands and kids with outstretched hands lining the street. It was noisy, sunny and cool. We crossed the Queensboro Bridge and into Manhattan, then along First Avenue to the Bronx. The final five miles, as expected, was excruciating.



The New York City Marathon Photo: Brightroom Events

My knees and ankles were aching and I had just enough energy for one last surge through Central Park. Crossing the finish line, after three hours and 57 minutes, was an incredible relief!"

Andrew is very grateful for encouragement and support over the past few months.

Supporters raised more than \$3,000 for Covenant House. Further donations to local service for "street people", Cana Communities, may be made through the Redfern-Waterloo Lions Club. Please send cheques to PO Box 3250 Redfern 2016 (include "New York Marathon") or donate online: www.cana.org.au

RAVENS RUNNING GROUP

The Ravens meet each Saturday at 7am on the corner of Botany Road and Raglan Street in Waterloo. New members (and beginners) always welcome! Phone Adrian on 9690 1427.



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