



THE BEAST'S MONTHLY MAILBAG...

Sent in by *The people of the Eastern Suburbs*

BONDI GREED ENOUGH TO TURN TOWARDS COMMUNISM

Hi James,

It is a worldwide thing, greed. In Scotland, rich foreign investors are buying castles and it is all about making money. There is no love for the place; they just see it as dollars, or in their case, British pounds. It makes my blood boil.

Those who are buying up all the real estate in Bondi need to be stopped. Bondi will only be for the rich and it will lose its charm. The people who do this sort of thing are the ones who will ruin this planet. They don't give a shit and care nothing about the environment or the world.

Well one day, they will be faced with their own greed in the form of desolation. No one will afford their prices. The world will become a wasteland. You think I am extreme: no! There are theories and books on the subject of the 'greed heads'. They move in and start changing the rules to suit themselves (note: the long saga of the Bronte yuppies). It's enough to turn me into a communist! But even then that ideal doesn't work in practice. As my gran said: "You're only a commie until you have money."

Here is my prediction: we are building a society that is becoming more and more techno-based. There will be less work for folk and at the same time, there is a rising population worldwide. More people plus less work equals mass unemployment. That equals anarchy. I have seen firsthand in the Brixton riots in London what this can do. Beware the Jabberwock!

Lyn, Bondi

BEWARE LETTING YOUR HOUSE OUT

I recently let my house out for three weeks while on a short holiday in Europe. This was arranged through a local agent specialising in short-term holiday accommodation and, despite some minor inconveniences, was a great way of covering some of the travel costs. I do, however, have some advice for anyone contemplating this.

Firstly, get everything written down in black and white. I was advised that I would receive a specified amount 'in the hand', but when I received the invoice I was billed \$80 for 'bed-making'. Had I known about this charge I would have happily made the beds for the incoming tenants myself!

Secondly, make sure that the bond has not been released until you have returned and inspected the house. I discovered that the bathroom vanity had sustained water damaged in my absence. The agent refused to contact the tenants saying that the vanity was 'very old' in the first place. This was not the case, but I had no comeback and now have to replace the vanity. Certainly let out your house, but beware!

Robert Sharpe, Bronte

WHERE HAS LISA GONE?

Dear Beasties,

I have noticed in recent issues that the long-term 'Bits and Pieces from Around the Beaches' wordsmith Lisa Anderson has gone missing. Her many fans are wondering if she is okay and hope that her return is imminent.

Richard Halliday, Bronte

GRAFFITI VANDALS BEWARE OF KARMA

The sudden appearance of fluorescent pink in Bondi is usually a cause for celebration, thanks to the amazing awareness raising efforts of the #onewaveisallittakes crew. Not today. Some plonker/s saw fit to graffiti the headland at Tamarama with spray paint. Sculptured to a random perfection by thousands of years of wind and water, these sandstone formations have inspired and amazed millions from time immemorial. If there is such a thing as desecration of a white fella sacred site, then surely this is it. If you are reading away, sniggering, thinking how awesome it is that your 'work' has hit the media, be warned, karma has a long arm... and if you know who did this, please contact Waverley Police on 9369 9899.

Andrew Worssam, Bondi

RESIDENTS SIMPLY WANT A LOCAL RSL

I'm writing in response to Simon Paterson's letter last month. It is unclear if the whole letter was written by him. About halfway through, it says: "The newly elected president... wrote the following letter". However, I will assume it was.

Firstly, Mr Paterson has not been constitutionally elected as a new director of the RSL club board and therefore cannot be its president. It is incorrect to say "a new club board was elected at the meeting over the watch of an administrator working within the constitution and bylaws". As the only lawyer present at the extraordinary general meeting on June 11, I was consulting closely with the administrator and I can assure you she was not happy with how the meeting proceeded. I can say that Mr Paterson was certainly not elected in accordance within the club's constitution.

Secondly, Mr Paterson claims "there has been a lot of misinformed (sic) information out there in the public". I would argue that this misinformation is coming from Mr Paterson and the Bronte sub-branch. As a Bronte RSL Club member of several years' standing, I would like to present the facts as I see them. At the extraordinary meeting, Mr Paterson basically staged a coup d'état by trying to illegally fill up board vacancies. These vacancies were left by the properly appointed board members, who resigned en

masse at the beginning of the meeting thinking the company was to be wound up. They no longer felt it was possible to continue to operate the club and comply with the cost of the corporate obligations required by all companies.

The thinking of the last board was that as no development application had been approved for the site after nearly two years, they did not want to keep running down the remaining assets of the club. Consequently, they thought it best to wind up the club and sell the assets (the poker machines being worth about \$90,000), pay off its creditors, finalise accounts and donate the remainder (estimated to be about \$60,000) to the Bronte Surf Club, as allowed under the constitution.

As many people know, the club was forced to close its doors in October 2012. The sub-branch, which owns the site, refused to assist with essential repairs. As far as I'm aware, since then there has been no AGM (due by May 31 each year), nor filing of audited accounts for the club since that time. Mr Paterson is being somewhat disingenuous saying that there are currently over 2,500 members. It would be interesting to see the membership register. I understand from the administrator that several relatives of members contacted her upon receipt of the notice of the extraordinary general meeting to say the member had passed away, in some cases years ago.

Whatever the number of members actually is, only about 40 people turned up on the night, most being the old board or those opposing the wind-up. It was not at all clear if all those attending the meeting were members. Of course it is to be expected that Mr Paterson needed supporters for his proposal to keep the club going, so there was a good old meeting stacking.

In his letter to *The Beast*, Mr Paterson says: "the club will stay dormant until the DA is approved, then work with the sub-branch regarding expressions of interest from surrounding and other larger clubs to support an ongoing RSL". Unfortunately the club can't just stay dormant – it must have meetings, file accounts, etc. There is also no DA for the site. This was rejected last July by the JRPP with the support of Waverley Council and

a large portion of the local Bronte community, who actually live in the neighbourhood.

The developer is now working its government contacts at the Department of Planning and Environment to try and get a spot rezoning for the site, which would enable the design proposed in the DA to be approved. This system of backdoor approvals flies in the face of the state government's stated policy that local planning is to be left to local councils and communities. In any event, an approved DA is years away unless a compliant DA is lodged.

As noted above, Mr Paterson wants to get a bigger club interested in a concession at the site. This gives away the true reason behind keeping the RSL club open – to provide a marketing tool for getting some other club in the door. This is despite the fact the community do not want any other club on the site other than a local RSL. It seems that Mr Paterson's plans are very much at odds with the NSW RSL. Don Rowe, the NSW RSL President, commented last year: "Our business is a not-for-profit charity looking after the welfare of veterans and ensuring they are properly cared for. These [RSL] clubs are gaming institutions and they are exploiting our name." Reading between the lines, the NSW RSL's preference is to sell off assets. Sub-branches that own the land on which some clubs sit are supposed to give the money from the sale of land to the state branch and then use income generated to support veterans through Defence-Care and ANZAC services, etc.

Ironically, if the Bronte RSL sub-branch and the developer were prepared to comply with planning laws like everyone else has to, there would by now be a new building (with new club rooms located preferably on the ground floor for the convenience of the local RSL club members). Instead they have delayed the process immeasurably by trying to push through a massively non-compliant apartment building with an inappropriately large supermarket on the ground floor and a Clayton's RSL club on the first floor. Maybe Mr Paterson is envisaging a club featuring lingerie waitresses, similar to those serving at the Town Tavern – a pub he owns in Blacktown.

I look forward to receiving my notice of the long past due AGM(s) so I and other club members have the opportunity to constitutionally elect a board that will really have the interests of the local community at heart. Otherwise, I'm off to Clovelly or Bronte Bowlo for my community get-togethers.

Christine Newman, Bronte

HAVE A GOOD LOOK AT THE BRONTE RSL FACTS

Simon Paterson, Secretary of the Bronte RSL Sub-Branch, asks the Bronte community to "have a good look" at what is proposed by his sub-branch and its developer partner, WLB. Our community has already had "a good look". We've been looking for two years now and we don't like what we've seen. What we've seen is a proposal for a building described by the planners at Waverley Council as being of "excessive bulk and scale", as "monolithic" and as being "simply too big in this setting". As noted in the Council DA assessment report, the building is twice as big as is allowed on the site (by floor space ratio) and is up to 100 percent above the height limit. Mr Paterson knows all of this.

The fact is that our community has overwhelmingly rejected what is proposed by the RSL sub-branch. Our elected council and our local MP Bruce Notley-Smith have also rejected it. On top of this, the planning controls don't allow it and Council has rightly refused to change the controls for the developer. Now the developer has requested the unelected Department of Planning change the rules itself in order to force the building upon us. If the department does change the rules, it would be acting against state government policy, which is to allow communities through their local councils to set the rules for development in their local area. What is happening here is just not right and is unacceptable in a democracy.

Mr Paterson talks a lot about the community support for Anzac Day and invokes the 'Diggers' in an attempt to gain support for the sub-branch's proposed redevelopment. Unfortunately for him, his spin has been exposed by the immediate past president of the Bronte RSL Club, who was recently quoted as saying that the sub-branch was using the RSL club simply as "a marketing tool to get their plans approved".

Mr Paterson should "have a good look" at the actions of his sub-branch because, sadly, despite the community indeed showing a great deal of respect for the national RSL organisation, the Bronte RSL Sub-Branch has shown our community nothing but contempt. The only thing that will restore the battered good name of the RSL in Bronte is for the sub-branch to listen to our community, withdraw its plans for the proposed overdevelopment and submit a complying development application to Waverley Council.

Stephen Lightfoot,
Save Bronte spokesperson

SOME MUTUAL RESPECT PLEASE, SIMON

Simon Paterson's letter to The Beast has to be one of the more bizarre letters that I have read in recent times. While I recognise that he was responding to letters previously sent (by James and Dan as I recall), not only is the letter full of all sorts of half-truths and jibber-jabber, it also appears to be Simon Paterson writing as a third person about Simon Paterson the Bronte RSL Club President, and includes a letter from Simon Paterson (the Bronte RSL Club President) to support the third person part of the letter.

1. Simon – in his supporting letter (stay with me) – seems to be arguing that the people of Bronte and neighbouring suburbs should have a good look at what is proposed for the Bronte RSL site and the benefits it will bring to "our" community. Well Simon, we've looked at the plans and while none of us in "our" community have a problem with the site being redeveloped, we do have a problem with the magnitude of the proposed redevelopment and the very real negative impacts that it will have.

2. What is perhaps more interesting is that Simon Paterson, while purportedly representing "our" community, is also representing the Phoenix Hotel Group and VIP Gaming Rooms. Further, Simon doesn't even live in "our" community, inevitably leading one to question what exactly is in it for Simon? Whatever his motives are, the thing that those living in the Bronte community (and I would think any other community) resent most of all about the farce that's been created around this proposed redevelop-

ment, is people from outside "our" community believing that they have a right to determine or tell us how we in "our" community should live.

3. It's all about mutual respect Simon... rather than tell us what's good for us, perhaps what the Bronte RSL Sub-Branch could do is reciprocate the respect the Bronte community shows to the RSL organisation.

Simon Lewis, Bronte

TELL US THE BRONTE RSL TRUTH

Dear James and Dan,

As a long-time member of the Bronte RSL Club and a Bronte resident for almost 20 years, I read with amusement the recent letter from Simon Paterson, the Bronte RSL Club Limited President.

Mr Paterson stated: "We have full faith state planning, the local council, Bronte RSL Sub-Branch and the developer will work through any issues, and the final result will be a great development for the site, residents and the club limited members." Where has Mr Paterson been living for the last year or more? Our local council has been overridden in regards to this development. "The issues" have not been worked through; they have been dismissed!

He writes that Bronte RSL "has and will continue to support the Bronte Community". Well, it sure doesn't look like they are supporting our community at this point. Instead, they have sold us out in pursuit of the almighty dollar with no regard to the game-changing effect this will have on the local residents.

Also, this is the first mention of merging the Bronte RSL with another larger club. What sort of club? A nightclub perhaps? Why does WLB want the 'RSL only' clause removed from the DA? Is Bronte going to suffer the same problems Double Bay is now experiencing since the alcohol lockout laws have been put in place?

I can't help but feel the RSL is not telling the community the whole truth; they have been very quiet on their intentions for this space.

Louise O'Rourke, Bronte

BRONTE PRESIDENTIAL CATFIGHT

Dear James and Dan,

Simon Paterson's letter in the August edition of The Beast is so full of mistakes and misrepresentations that I will leave others to respond to

them in detail. But there is one big error I will point out: where Simon calls himself 'club president'. Sorry Simon, you are no more president of the RSL club than my cat is. Among other things, you need to be validly appointed as a director first, and that certainly didn't happen at that chaotic club meeting on June 11. By all means express your views on the proposed development, but you should do so on your own behalf and maybe also on behalf of your developer mates?

David Brewster, Bronte

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Circulation

61,000 copies of The Beast are distributed every month. 55,500 are placed in mailboxes and 5,500 are displayed in local shopfronts.

PEFC Certified

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Letters To The Editor

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