

Note to Self

13th August 2011

Dear Owners and Investors,

It has been a relatively normal week in the world of property management, well I guess normal in my world. Let's see, we had the call from the Rocky Horror tenant to say that his lock was damaged and if I could get someone to have a look at it. A normal property manager would have sent over the handy man and charged the owner, I told him we would have a look at it on the way home. This has happened a few times before, and it is in the useless information part of my head for future reference.

The front door is a push button locking style. What happens is that when people push the button in to lock, they twist at the same time. Generally people "lock" the door in the same way, so it may only be a fraction of a twist each time. When you unlock the door from the front, the button is supposed to pop out. This way the handle can be turned open from both sides of the door. After some time, the button twists to a certain point and although you unlock the door, the button remains pushed in. This means if they go outside and the door slams shut, the door is locked on the outside. It is really simple to fix - all you do is push the button and twist it in the other direction and then twist the rear handle - that is unless you have long red fake finger nails - then it isn't so easy. Door unlocked, tenant happy, owner happy as there was no charge.

I got a call from a tenant that has just recently had a baby. Her husband is away and she couldn't get to the bank and was asking if it would be alright to pay the money on Monday when he gets back. I love it when they call about not paying the rent - these are the ones you don't have to worry about, it is the ones that don't call! I am prattling on, and then before you know it she has burst into tears. I spent the next ten minutes talking to her about babies, hormones and stuff I have absolutely no idea about. Remember I was born with the Mummy gene missing and replaced with the Aunty gene. I have called her every day to check in on her just to be sure she is alright. Not sure where this part is in the property manager bible, but again happy tenant means happy owner.

Most tenants have a mobile phone as their only form of communication. We have had the same telephone number, well since mobile phones came in a brick form and you carried them in a huge bag with a handle. I can't count how many tenants lose their phone and then change their number.

A few weeks ago, Cheryl, my angel book keeper, got a call at the office from one of the tenants. He rang to give notice on the unit which I put in my diary. I let the owner know, I have advertised the unit and have about six people wanting to get into the unit to have a look and take it. This is a young man, and, well, housekeeping skills are not his strong point. He looks after the place, but when a potential tenant is looking at the place they need to see it spotless.

I have been trying the mobile number that he gave me less than a month ago but it kept going straight to voice mail. I hadn't heard from him, so I thought I better go over and see what was happening as it was the day he was leaving. Armed with the keys Ramon and I drive over, after seeing Rocky Horror, and I see lights on. Great sign, he must be in there doing the final clean. I knock on the door and he answers with a games controller in hand and the TV on - no sign of vacating.

He now tells me that he only rang the office to tell me he was thinking of leaving, and after dealing with all the other property managers in Cairns he decided he would rather stay in his

small unit than leave us!!! If he left the rent would drop by \$5 per week, so end result is happy tenant, happy owner with \$5 per week extra in his pocket.

I have to tell you that my one down fall is my fear of confrontation. Ten years ago, I would deal with the tenants up to a certain point and then let Ramon do the bad cop part. I believed every excuse there was for late rent and I let the tenants walk over me. Those days are long gone - I am a tough but fair, tell it as it is property manager now. We have had an issue with a tenant in a complex and they think it is too far to walk around the outside of the building so instead they and all their friends now jump the 1.8 metre fence. Great if you are young and fit, but when you aren't and have a drink or ten it probably isn't the safest thing to do.

I was in one of the ground floor units and noticed from the corner of my eye someone go past the front door. From that direction it isn't possible unless you have jumped over the fence. I was like my dog Tucker and out the front door barking at them in seconds. I bailed them up and told them that it isn't acceptable and that I will be calling their property manager straight away. I surprise myself at the change that has happened in ten years. I have to say though, this fear of confrontation has only been concurred in the property management side of my life - if you don't believe me, ask my 10 year old niece what a push over I am.

I will go onto something totally not related to property. I am a self confessed 80's tragic. I loved the big hair - the bigger the better. I loved the shoulder pads - the bigger the better. When we go on our cruises, I have the full wardrobe, wigs, make up and if I could put on false eyelashes without poking my eyes out with my fake finger nails I would have them as well. My sister teases me and says that I must have been a drag queen in a previous life.

Well, last night it was a pretty late one. It may have been Friday night in the real world, but I didn't make it home from the office until nearly 9pm. By the time we ate dinner, then answered the million emails and even spoke to an owner from overseas at 11.15pm about which tenant to put in to their property it was now gone midnight. I sat there with my glass of red wine and watch my favourite show (after Coronation Street and East Enders) Intervention.

It was now 1am when the phone rang - not the tenant ring but a mobile I didn't know. I answered and a male voice spoke "I am calling about the ad", I was a bit dazed so instead of going off on a rant about the time for some reason I said "Which advert" think he would say the one bedroom for \$145 per week..... his reply.....

"It's the ad about the transvestite" I think by the lack of response he figured he it wasn't the right person and hung up. Great now I have to start reading the personal columns to see where I am advertising my wares.

I have attached a copy of an advert that was run in the Cairns Realtor last weekend. If we were going to be selling anything and not want to be directly involved, Shane Trimby is the person we would use. Cairns is in a very tough place right now, and so many agents just don't understand that real estate isn't a Monday to Friday, 9 to 5 job. I know he got a lot of stick about this advert. I hope you enjoy it.

Hope all is well in your world.

Linda

PUT IN SHANES ADVERT