

Note to Self

1st October 2011

Dear Owners and Investors,

Welcome to the new people that have joined the email list. Remember at any time if you wish to stop getting my emails, please just let me know.

I am sure the tenants have a sixth sense and they somehow know that we are going away on holidays. As the weeks come closer I cringe every time the tenant ring goes off, hoping it isn't someone giving notice. This time I thought for sure we were going to see something that I couldn't fill. We had three changes at Spence Street, one at Joan Street, one at City Park, a house a Kewarra, a house at Redlynch, a bedsit and even one at Viewmont.

It has been a very weird time in the rental market and like I said last email I had no trouble letting the house at \$460 per week, but yet didn't receive a single phone call for the \$145 per week fully furnished unit on Saturday or Sunday. I actually had to check on Monday when I went in to make sure the advert made it into the paper - sure enough there it was!

We have had a run on properties, and the last one to go has been the one bedroom at Viewmont. I am pretty sure that too is gone - so stick on the music and let's start the dance of no vacancies!!! I have to tell you that of the ones listed above - two of them have gone to people moving up here that have taken them sight unseen, money paid - deal done!!! Tonight I had a couple of Korean lads that had seen Joan Street a day ago, begging me for a place as they have nowhere. Let me tell you it has been a long time since that has happened!! This is a great sign, and hopefully next year we will be able to start increasing rents finally.

There have been quite a few late nights in the past two weeks trying to get everything ready and done - did I mention that we are going on a cruise? There I was at the office Friday night doing paperwork after 9pm - oh gone are the days of Friday night - party night! For just a few minutes I think this is rubbish, but then I realise exactly what we have achieved in just over ten years and although it has been hard work and a lot of sacrifice it really has paid off.

This week I have been working with a family that is relocating here to Cairns from Melbourne. The houses I have seen that are for sale, are fantastic properties for an incredible price. I have to say that I love this buying work, it is so good to find someone exactly what they are looking for.

Normally we deal with investments so it is pretty cut and dry - the numbers stack or they don't - but with a home it is so much more difficult. I can see how it would be easy to come here from a capital city and get taken for a ride, you are trained to expect to pay a certain amount of money for a certain style of home - but this is Cairns and you get so much more for your money.

Working with other agents has also highlighted to me that there are some much better than others out there. I called to arrange an inspection for a property that this client was interested in. Essentially the rule is that if the agent has already made contact with the client for that particular property, then I won't get a conjunction with them. In this case she had made contact - back in July and not since. The property has been up for sale since July this year and started off in the \$600's. It is still for sale, and reduced again down to offer in the \$500's. Instead of saying, well a sale is better for the client than no sale, so I would be happy to conjunct with you - the answer was no!

I found this unit that has been listed. I will call this my "Come in Spinner" investment. I am not sure exactly where it is, but if they can manage to get \$400 per week for a two bedroom unit, I must be doing something wrong! I wouldn't want to be that investor when they realise that there is no way on earth they are going to get that sort of rent when this tenant leaves.

<http://www.realestate.com.au/property-unit-qld-cairns-108104596?rsf=emailalert-propdetails>

I have just found this by the same agency

<http://www.realestate.com.au/property-house-qld-cairns-107404518>

There is no way a three bedroom house - even with furniture, is going to rent for \$650 per week after this tenant leaves. I hope any potential buyer does his home work before taking this on. Another reason why it is so important to really do your home work before you invest in a property.

Now I have to leave you with a tenant story. The other night I was showing a unit at Viewmont. I drove the prospective tenant from one unit I was showing to Viewmont just in case I could get her to rent this as I had two others interested in Joan Street. It is now close to 6pm and as we pulled in, the couple that live in one of the units had just pulled in. They have been with me for a very long time and are a lovely couple. We had a quick chat as we all walked up the stairs. They continued up, and I went on to try to show the unit about to come vacant. I had the keys, but either I had the wrong set or I was being very blonde (or the tenant has changed the lock and not told me) and I couldn't unlock the door - another reason why I just love the new master key system!

I really wanted her to see the property, so I called my couple that we had just chatted to in the car park and asked very nicely if they would mind if we popped up and if she could look through their unit as it is identical. I did insist that they could say no and I wouldn't be offended as I really didn't have any right to barge in. We were invited in and then they took over - they showed the lass through and urged her to go out onto the balcony and see the mountain view, talked about having morning coffee out on their balcony and how they loved living there.

She ended up choosing the other unit, but it is so nice that I have great tenants. Their place was cleaner than mine and that was with about two minutes warning. I am very lucky with the great majority of our tenants that they are just like this. Countless times they have shown prospective tenants through and sold them on the complex - and coming from a fellow tenant that is living there it is taken with so much more value than me telling them that.

Although not technically a tenant story, the other day I was doing a home open at Gordonvale which is on the outskirts of Cairns City. It is in suburbia, but the back of the house is a reserve and is bush. The house is located on top of a benched block with fantastic views of Gordonvale and the surrounding areas.

I had the front door and security door open and was sitting in my deck chair playing with the ipad (love that gadget) when I heard the sound of a dog chasing something. I looked up to spot the small terrier dog chasing a lace monitor and they were headed straight for me. In a split second I thought oh no what on earth am I going to do if that runs inside and at me? The dog I can deal with, but a lace monitor about 2 metres long I am not so sure about - for those of you that don't know what a lace monitor is - think komodo dragon.

Fortunately it didn't come inside, instead scrambling up the side of the house via the security screen windows. For the next hour it stayed on the outside of the window! Ah life in the tropics - got to love it.

This will probably be the last email for a few weeks as we fly out on Tuesday to Sydney - did I mention we are going on a cruise on Wednesday? If you want to have a sticky beak you can click onto the web cam from the bridge to see what tropical paradise we will be in http://www.princess.com/bridgecams/dp/dawn_bridgecam.html

I have a fantastic team here that will be looking after all of your investments, and I will be in contact via email just in case. I am very fortunate to have such a great team that looks after our investments and know that our little flock of tenants will be well looked after. I will admit that I do need the break and am looking forward to turning off the phone, turning off the brain as it goes continually, reading a book, walking around the deck (or up seven flights of stairs to go to the restaurant), getting dollied up - wigs pack, bling packed, dresses pack, spending time doing absolutely nothing and not feeling guilty, but most importantly recharging the soul so when we come back I can continue to look after your investments and try to motivate you to invest for your future.

I have attached the third part of my sailing diary and a picture of the front of Peros de Mer - look closely at the lovely orange sailing dinghy as that was probably the last picture of her. We got caught in Cyclone Rhonda and the trampolines broke, the dinghy went through and smashed the underside of the boat as she went through the middle. I still remember laying out on the back in the cockpit with my feet up against the winches watching as the boat climbed up the waves. We were close to 12 metres long and we were still climbing the waves - gives you an idea of how big the sea was.

I hope you are all happy and well in your world.

Linda

PS Three more sleeps to go!!!

TUCK MAIL 3 and PHOTO