

Note to Self

22nd September 2013

Dear Owners and Investors,

I have been meaning to write for a while now, but by the time I get home and get five minutes to think, I have had a glass of wine and am nearly asleep on the sofa! I have drawn the line at giving up my East Enders and Coronation Street nightly soapie addiction just so I can write the email! I am spending the day at home on Sunday as you really can't see the bottom of my desk for the piles of papers that I have to go through. I will find time to properly update you on what is happening here. It is happening fast here so I need to keep you informed.

There is just one link I am going to share tonight.

<http://cairnspost.newspaperdirect.com/epaper/viewer.aspx>

Yes, you are absolutely right - I am smiling as I type. To be honest apart from when tenants annoy me, I haven't stopped smiling since hearing about Aquis!!

Tonight is just for fun! I know that I am my own worst enemy, and day after day I prove it to myself yet again. Ramon has just about finished the upgrades on one of our units at Grafton Street, and as always we have the pressure on to get it finished. Our new tenant is so desperate to move in that as the boys are packing up - he is coming to do the cleaning so he can move in over the weekend!! Thursday and I Friday I allocated to work with Ramon - no lovely clothes, hair, make-up or Barbie Shoes in sight.

Thursday my job was to run around and organise the last minute things, buy them and pick them up. My main job was to find a 900mm vanity but it has to have a single tap hole and it has to be a china top. Why I hear you ask - this is the most tenant proof one we have found. The mixer taps seem to give us less problems than the normal tap handles with the washers and orings. The china top is the hardest wearing. The alternative is a Poly Marble - which looks the same but, well, it just isn't as tenant proof. I have seen cigarette burns on them - yes you put down your smoke on the vanity whilst washing your hands - don't ask me why they need to smoke in the bathroom. The other main issue is hair straighteners. When they fall to the side, they burn the top.

I went to Bunnings and did the rounds there - nothing. By this time of the day it was too late to go to Cairns Hardware - they shut right on 5pm. My next option is Masters. I haven't been in there for a while, and as we have a Bunnings Account this seems to be where we go the most.

It must have been my day - because there in the plumbing section they had just marked down taps. There were vanity sets, mixer taps, washing machine taps, tap handles on their own - oh so many taps. Nice, shiny, pretty taps! They were marked down to between \$10 - 20 a set.

Not wanting to make a decision on my own, I went back to get Ramon and dragged him back to Masters - yeah having to drag him into a hardware store is really difficult!!

We brought one of the trolleys with us, but it was quickly decided that we really needed another trolley. I mean at these prices - who can say no?? Soon with two full trolleys, we decided that a third trolley really was necessary as it just wasn't all going to fit on. It was then that we discovered that they didn't have a 900mm vanity, one hole with a china top - but who cares we have three trolleys full of taps. The lovely plumbing man helped us wheel our loot to the counter. It really must have been our day as the girl at the counter came up and told us that it was Masters 1st Anniversary and gave us a 10% discount coupon.

Now at home not only do we have about 60 fans we now have I don't know how many tap sets - looks like we are going to be renovating for a bit longer!!!

Friday comes around and Ramon and I have a list of things that need to be collected and taken to the units we are renovating. We have to pick up the trailer, deliver the robes, pick up the new beds for Grafton Street, load up the rubbish, do a dump run, go back to the store room, pick up more beds and then deliver these. It is now starting to warm up here, and let me tell you I was a bit of a cranky pants by the end of the day. We were running out of time and on the trailer we had a bed frame we were going to drop off to the charity store. Our office is on Aumuller Street which is a bit of a main thorough fare.

Lately when we have things that we are going to take to the charity store, if we are lazy we put it outside of the lock up garages with a card board box saying "Free - Please Take". I looked at Ramon and said why not just leave it here, someone will take it. Seriously we were putting it out and the young fellow from the flats across the road must have been watching - he got a fridge last time. Before I could drag out the "Free" box, he was across the road loading up.

It is now about 5pm and we are both shattered - it has been a full on day. We decide to call it a day - well that was the plan. We have just three stops to make - Holden Close to put a pop rivet in the window, visit Ron from Sheridan Street and then change a washer in Mount Sheridan. Should be home early for a change - oh how I delude myself some days.

We turn up to Holden Close and Ramon tries to sneak into the complex - he is armed with the pop rivet gun and pops. He just has to walk in, put a few pops into really secure the screen and walk out. The tenant spots him and before you know it he is changing the washers and who knows what else. I get to put the bins back, rake up leaves and look at the garden and all the work that needs to be done.

We then head over to visit Ron at the Nursing Home. For a man that we thought was going to see the Big Man in the Sky earlier in the year he is still going strong, well as strong as a man that has emphysema, end stage kidney disease and who knows what else can possibly be. I haven't actually seen him stand up since February this year. He never really socialised when at Sheridan Street, but now he goes and plays Bingo and wheel chair bowling. I know we don't have to but if we don't visit him - who else will?

We are allowed to take the dogs in to visit him and it is lovely to see what affect having Tucker on his lap can have on him. Now, there is to be no laughing at the next thing - as it isn't funny. As we were walking out the door, he says "Don't forget to play my Lotto coupons, it is the \$21 million draw this weekend". What on earth he would do if he won?

Great, two stops down one to go. It should be a simple walk in, change the washers and walk out - but no on a Friday night nothing is going to be this simple. The washing machine taps were leaking when under pressure, this was the easy one and did take a few minutes. They then tell us that the dishwasher is also leaking. There a few things that I really hate in rentals - dishwashers, split system air conditioners, garage remotes and motors.

Luckily I am in my work gear as I am now sitting in the kitchen floor being Ramon's assistant. It turns out there is a tiny hole in the hose. Finding the leak was the easy bit - now how do we get the hose off so we can find the correct new one? You have to take the side of the machine off - and I can't believe how many screws they put into all weird placed to hole it together.

By the time we got home it was pretty close to 8.30pm - so much for having an early night!! Today I was going to tackle the mountain of papers on my desk, but we went in to be sure that Grafton Street is all finished for the new tenant to move in. We didn't leave until after 6pm.

I think for a change we actually started to drive home whilst it was still daylight!! I thought we were going to have a quiet, peaceful night at home. We had just finished dinner and having a beer when it happens. It is the dreaded tenant ring. It is now 8pm and the tenant could be classed as one of my "I collect old people". She tells me that the kitchen tap is leaking underneath and she is really worried about it damaging the new kitchen we have just had installed. I ask if it is the hot or cold water - hoping secretly it is the hot water as I can isolate this from the comfort of my reclining chair - of course it is the cold water.

I then ask how badly it is leaking. I have learnt over the years you then have to quantify this question by giving them multiple choice answers - is it drip drip, is it drip drip drip or is it pouring out? Again you know the answer is going to be enough for me to roll my eyes and look at Ramon - after all I am good but my expertise finishes at fixing plumbing. I then ask when did it start - about 6pm. Yes if she had called when it first started we could have gone straight there and it would be fixed - leaving us to sit on the sofa and enjoy a normal Saturday night being a couch potato.

If it were any of my regular tenants they would have been yelled at for not ringing me as soon as they knew it was a problem, but how can you yell at one of my "I Collect Old People"? Decision is made and we are in the car and all the way back into the City. Fortunately it was a fairly simple fix - Ramon says that I shouldn't ever complain as he has taken me out for a lovely, romantic drive to watch the full moon! The owner owes us a bottle of Merlot!

To finish off it will be a tenant story or two. There are many of you that are new to the emails and may not know about Ms M the cleaner. So this is an explanation

We have a small house in Manunda that has just come up for rent. On Sunday I received a call from Miss M who has been a tenant of ours at two other properties. You will know that I am a bit blonde, and over the years have heard so many stories and many of them I have believed - can't tell you how many funerals some tenants have. The family pop off about the same time their rent is behind. When I first met Miss M, she applied for a one bedroom unit in Manoora. I had to go to her place of work where she was a cleaner, but they paid really well because it wasn't a job that many wanted to do. It was actually the legal brothel in the city. Now, I have never been in a brothel before so I didn't know what to expect! Yes, I truly believed she was a cleaner - I know how blonde can one be.

She left that property and then came back a few years later to a two bedroom unit we had. If she was "working", she never told me. Her references said she was waitressing and I had that confirmed. Towards the end she had a boyfriend and left to live happily ever after. A few months later there she was in the paper in a wedding dress - with a surprisingly larger top section than I remember!

On Sunday she called to ask if I remembered her? How can one ever forget the tenant that gets you to come pick up the bond and two weeks in advance and sign the papers from a brothel? She is now getting divorced and looking for a place. The plan was she was going to be sharing with another girl. All was going to plan until this morning when she called back. The friend (who was going to put up the bond) had backed out and now she was stuck. She really wanted the property but didn't have the bond. No wait, you will want to hear this... she said "I could always go back to my old profession and I should have the money by Monday!" What can I say?

Ms M did the wrong thing at the last property and left me in the lurch. I knew it would happen but the good natured side of me is far too soft and gave her a chance. She surfaced again this week - sending me a text to say she is really trying to get her life back together and has the extra money she owes us. She wants to be given another chance. I will wait until she pays back the money she owes and see what we have. You would think that I would be tougher by now - but really I am still a softie.

Our fantastic handyman Frenchman is living at Grafton Street. He has been having a fair few visitors of late and it really has turned into a bit of a party house. The noise has been upsetting the Koreans that are in the end two units. This has all settled down now and life has returned back to some normality. I was outside of Unit 1 which we are just finishing when the Korean lady came to see me - you just know that there is going to be something they want. In this case it is four new single beds.

She asked about who was going to be moving into Unit 1 - when I said another Frenchman she rolled her eyes back and pulled a face. I reassured her that this one is not a party person and will actually pull the others back into line as he won't tolerate the noise.

The Korean lady said (in broken English of course) "Before when someone says they are French I have no opinion, but now I no like French. People say Koreans are not nice, but now after French I try to be a better Korean". What can I say!!! There is one thing about doing what I do - it is never dull.

The other night in East Enders they were teasing Carla about how many shoes she has - 37 pairs. At this point in time Ramon looks at me and sneaks off to the room. He comes back and says that he stopped counting at 39 and that didn't count the flat shoes. OK so I may have a slight problem with Barbie High Heels - but I do love them. Here are the latest three to my addition!

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

Linda Tuck