

Note to Self

23rd July 2014

Dear Owners and Investors,

Today is a bit of a weird one, but bear with me as I build up the story - can't just straight to the point as that would take away something!

Ramon and I have been living in Far North Queensland now for 15 years. It is a totally different place to much of Australia for many reasons. As I sit here and type, I can look out of my window and see the rain forest, I can't see any neighbours as we are lucky enough to live on 5 acres. We are just a short drive away from the middle of the city. For much of this drive we can speed along through the cane fields at 100km per hour, with the mountains on both sides of us - not many places in Australia you can do this.

We have warm weather all year round, broken down into the wet and the dry. Each year is totally different, and when you are in the middle of an exceptionally long, humid and rainy wet season you begin to wonder why on earth you want to live in a place like this. Anything that you have that is leather will go a lovely shade of green mould, leave something on the bench and the ants come from miles around and don't even get me started on the bugs.

I am now used to and actually love to see a Golden Orb spider that can be the size of your hand. We have lace monitors in the garden - think komodo dragon, same family. The other night we actually saw an ant eater at the bottom of the drive way. It isn't easy in the wet season to dress like a Barbie Doll - as soon as you put on the make-up it starts to melt. You sweat constantly, and everyone gets cranky when it is so humid.

We get Tropical Cyclones to test us, rain of about 4 metres a year and economically is it so much tougher here than much of the rest of Australia. Ah but when the dry season comes along, you quickly forget all about the bad things. This morning I have woken up to bright blue skies and it is chilly. I know that many of you live in the southern part of Australia, so many of you won't get how "cold" it gets here in Far North Queensland.

During the day we can still get around in short sleeves and shorts, but boy when that sun goes down - does it get cold!

<http://www.cairnspost.com.au/lifestyle/cairns-faces-coldest-night-in-years-but-warmer-days-are-on-the-way/story-fnjpuwet-1226995676957>

This is an article from the Cairns Post saying we got down to single digits at night this week - to get under 10 degrees at night really does make headlines in North Queensland.

Oh you can laugh, but for us North Queenslanders that are more used to sweating, getting cold is something we just aren't used to. Ramon and I have a pole home on the side of a mountain. We have French doors that open on to the balcony, and this winter we faced a dilemma - do we close the doors at night time or do we put on ugg boots and the dressing gown? Actually this year has been colder at night than most - we have fluffy sheets and have even invested in an electric blanket!

Now the reality is that most nights it dips down to just under 20 degrees, and as the sun goes down you can hear the shiver go through us! This morning as I type it is currently 17 degrees, and boy is it cold! It has been so cold during the day that I have even worn a jacket at least four times this winter. I can hear some of you cussing as you read this!

By now, you are wondering where on earth I could possibly be going with this? Ramon and I have been doing this for 15 years, and even to this day we don't believe it as it doesn't happen every year. There is a phenomenon that happens during a cold snap. I know there will be at least two people reading this right now that will be nodding their heads as they know all about this. When we get a sudden drop in temperature, we can get tiles popping. I can't explain this, so instead I have attached a video that I took for you.

Why after 20 years this happens, why this unit and what makes this different to any of the other 42 other units that are in the complex with the exact same tiles - I don't have the answer to. Actually I am speechless - and that doesn't happen very often! I am just hoping that this is the only one!

I am pretty amazed at myself - I managed to upload it to You Tube, my first video ever loaded up.

<http://youtu.be/ccPHWh4MOes>

To finish off I will end with a tenant story. At the moment it seems we are having a flood of Indian brides coming over. No seriously, in the past six months I must have taken on 6 couples where the husband has been working here for a few years, and she is finally coming over to join him. They are normally not a bother when it comes to paying the rent, and they do tend to pay a month at a time.

I have a new couple that have been tenants of ours in the past. He tends to fall behind, I pick up the phone and remind him that he is behind and then he goes in to the bank pays the rent. A month later the cycle starts again.

This time he has been stretching it out and the arrears are getting bigger and bigger. I have yelled, I have screamed and finally I have threatened. I know that he will pay it, it is just him being lazy and not going to the bank. On Friday I had enough of it so I sent him a text to say that if the arrears weren't paid up I would be issuing a Notice to Leave. It must have gotten through as by 10am Monday morning I had received not just a text, but a picture message of the receipt showing the money had gone in. This wasn't enough to cover the arrears, so I took a photo of the arrears amount and sent that back. That should wind him up.

I was going to finish it there, but it is now 10.50pm at night and the phone has just rung. It is actually one of our personal tenants. She is sweet and harmless. They have lost half the power points in the house - which after going through all the basic things is beyond me. I have send a message to OSE (Old school electrician) and MDE (Modern Day electrician) to see if they can stop by on Thursday. If you are wondering the difference between the two - one knows what fuse wire is!

I didn't ask our tenant, because if she told me that she hasn't had any power for much of the day I would get cranky - but I will put money on this. Why wait until after 10pm at night to tell me is beyond me! Got to love our tenants.

Hope all is happy and well in your world.

Linda