

ALMOST ALL CONTRIBUTORS TO "ROOMERS" ARE RESIDENTS OR FORMER RESIDENTS OF ROOMING HOUSES, PRIVATE HOTELS OR SPECIAL ACCOMMODATION IN PORT PHILLIP

# ROOMERS

BY RESIDENTS FOR RESIDENTS

Issue 40 : 2009 **FREE**



**MISSING**

## What is Roomers?

Almost all contributors to Roomers are local residents or former residents of rooming houses, private hotels or supported residential services in St.Kilda, South and Port Melbourne and Elwood.

The Roomers Project recruits local writers, artists, photographers, journalists and cartoonists to work as volunteer mentors with contributors.

Mentors meet with resident contributors to assist them with their creative material. Roomers is distributed free to residents of rooming houses, private hotels and supported accommodation across the City of Port Phillip.

If you would like to become a contributor or mentor please contact Esther on 0413 024 528 or leave a message on 9531 1954 or write to: PO Box 57 Elwood 3184 or send us an email:  
roomersmag@yahoo.com.au

Roomers Networker: Esther Singer  
Production Coordinator: Bill Poon

Project Steering Group:  
Anne Laffan, St Kilda Community Housing; Kate Daddo, Port Phillip Community Group; Valerie Wilson, Sacred Heart Mission and Deb Casey, ESNLC.

Credits:  
Design + Layout: Bill Poon  
Front Cover: Bill Poon  
Back Cover: Marion Lee  
Photography: Marion Lee  
Artwork: Dale Bridge, Dave Faulkner, Marcus, Maree and Mary Grace.

Contributors:  
Paul Harper, George Hall, Wendy Butler, Simon Sewell, Jo Hennessy, Jack Chadwick, Janet de Longville, De, Matthew Armstrong, Eddie Ink, Egons, Peter Hodge, Jimmy Vost, Brad Swan, Darren J. McPharlin, Mary Grace, Jenny Ling, Vicky, Lindsay Learhinan and Debrah Slater.

Mentors: Cath Dyson, Alix Phelan and Paul Isbel.

Roomers is published under the auspice of the Elwood/ St.Kilda Neighbourhood Learning Centre Inc.

The articles and artwork presented in this magazine do not necessarily represent the views of the Project Steering Group or the auspicing organisation.

No responsibility or liability will be accepted for any loss or damage which may result from inaccuracy or omission with respect to any of the material contained herein.

## Many thanks

### to our generous friends of Roomers:

Kerrie Webster  
Deb Watson  
Joan Dwyer  
Bruce Fisher  
Andy Jackson  
Reid's Guest House  
Lindy Gilham  
Susan Collett  
New Farm Neighbourhood Centre  
SVDP Glenroy

### our lovely and talented mentors:

Alix Phelan  
Cath Dyson  
Paul Isbel

### and our supporters:

Everyone at The Beach House for sharing stories at our outreach workshops.  
Ian Potter Foundation  
City of Yarra  
St Kilda Library staff  
Peter Davis and everyone at 3CR  
Marion Lee  
Eddie Ink for typing  
Kate Daddo



**There's no way we could do it without you.**

## HOW TO GET INVOLVED WITH ROOMERS

**Roomers writing workshops** happen every Monday afternoon at the St Kilda Library.

1:30pm - 3:30pm

You can just drop in, or call Esther to find out more on 9531 1954 or 0413 024 528.

Sorry - we don't have workshops in January!

# Alone or together?

Esther, Roomers Worker

I've been thinking a lot lately about what it means to be alone. For most of us, it's important to have some time alone. And if you live in a busy rooming house it might be quite hard to get some peace and quiet alone.

On the other hand, it's not great to be too isolated. It can leave you feeling vulnerable and down. But then, you can be surrounded by other people and still feel isolated and lonely.

Sometimes it's hard to figure out exactly what helps me feel less alone – sometimes it's not just being with people, but finding something to really connect about. Even if you like a lot of time on your own, do you find there are places or people you go to when you need to connect with someone else?

Part of what's great about the Roomers writing workshops is that people can come along and be with other people, but there's no pressure to talk or do anything. For most people writing is a solitary act – you, your pen, your paper. But if you come along to Roomers workshops, you get to write on your own and be with other people!

Lately, as we've been working on the radio play script, I've been wondering about collaboration and writing. It's pretty hard work getting a dozen people to agree on what should happen in the play. And sometimes we get frustrated and feel like giving up. But somehow, having that many opinions in one room has led to some great ideas being developed. If you're writing on your own you just can't think of all the angles. So for me, the process of collaboration has meant we are all stronger writers. Isn't that some cheesy slogan – together we are stronger?

I can't help feeling that working on the radio play has also brought us all together as a group in a new way. You know that feeling when you're all working towards the one goal? It's a pretty good feeling. It might happen when you pitch in to get the garden looking better, or it might be something you've felt at a job or on a sports team. Come along to the Roomers writing workshops if you feel that you might like to connect with other rooming house writers and artists. Or if not, I hope over this summer you get the chance to connect with some of the people around you, doing something that is meaningful for you.



Some of the Roomers gang in at 3CR radio station recording our new radio play.

# Happy Surviving

by Egons

**Egons says he has had a good life, he's got good memories. Here are some of them:**

Back in the 70's St Kilda was a good place. When I settled I was living with my Mother in Acland St. There were all night cafes, sly grog and prostitution. Why is St Kilda known as Sin City?

My mother used to go to the candlelight restaurant. She had an Austrian boyfriend. We could go to the all night cafes, get hamburgers, listen to German and Austrian music and it was great.

I spent 21 years at Kraft Foods. I worked on the Vegemite line. People came from outside. They said "Can you speed up the line?" I said, "What do you think I am, jet propelled?" A machine can be sped up, but we are humans. It was a good time, but working in a factory will surely send you round the bend. Because of the shift hours.

In 2006 I was made redundant. They said, "Oh we've got robots, we've got machines." I said, "Give me the money, I'll get out of here."

In my early days moving here to Grey St from South Melbourne, I didn't like moving from one rooming house to the next as the rooming houses were shutting down. They tried to evict us without notice. They try to pull the wool over your eyes- they think I was born yesterday.

I was in a rooming house on Canterbury Rd for 2 months. I was in this little bungalow, it was like a sauna in there. The real estate agent came in and said "This place is getting sold," and they put on a BBQ. Everyone went to the BBQ, there was maybe \$60 worth of beer. The residents said "You're evicting us, we're not paying rent."

Then I went to Elenara to fill out the application and get moved in here. I settled in here. I got to meet people but I didn't like people knocking on my door. You're going to meet people, get to know people and they're going to say, can I have a couple of bucks for the washing machine or can I have a smoke.

But I've got some good memories, I've got to meet some good people. Where the hell would I be without you people? My friends. You wouldn't stay in a place if you didn't have good people. St Kilda – we got the crisis centre and material aid. And I like this chat and chew we have here at the house. You can't go wrong.

**Advice for new people in rooming houses  
From Egons and others at the Beach House**

- Don't make much noise.
- Be considerate of others.
- Respect each others privacy, keep out of peoples business - everyone has their own problems.
- If you don't respect people, get out of the neighbourhood.



artwork by Dave Faulkner

# Peter's Story

by Peter Hodge

I first left home when I was five years old, and for good at seventeen. I was on and off the street most of my life; I didn't like being indoors and I was very active. Things have changed on the street a lot, we used to fight one-on-one, not all these stabbings and ten guys on one.

I've been around Australia five times. My lifestyle was drink, drugs, smoking and partying. But I've had a lot of different jobs too.

One time I was working on a scallop dredge out in Bass Strait. I did that for five months. First time I'd ever been on a boat the captain said "You're in the wheelhouse. There's the sonar, watch for a lighthouse at southport." I brought it all the way in from the ocean, then I woke him up. He was amazed "How'd you do that?" We used to have bags and bags of scallops, sell them at the pub.

I also worked in the building game for twenty years. I can learn anything you put in front of me. I've been a wardman in a hospital; I had to take a pacemaker out of a dead woman.

I been a lollipop man, cleaner and security guard.

A few months ago I started getting pain in my leg, so I took a caravan at Echuca. After two months the pain was unbearable and the only bulk-billing doctor was away on leave. So I came down to Melbourne and I got put up for a week at the Gatwick. The environment at the Gatwick is not that good for your health. Rose told me I could get a meal from the Mission so I went up there. I soon connected with the nurse, Lucy. Lucy rang an ambulance and I was taken to the Alfred where they diagnosed blood clotting and took me up to the ward.

Now I'm at the Beach House. It's a bit better than the Gatwick but the showers are timed and by the time you get the temperature right the shower stops and you still have shampoo in your hair. So I have a shower at the Mission. Now I take fourteen pills a day. I want to stay on in St Kilda, so I'm close to the services. I'm looking for a place where I can cook my own meals, and with my own shower and toilet.

# The Essence of St Kilda

by Jimmy Vost

Now that I am in my 64th year of living, I have a lot of happy memories of St Kilda and its foreshore and the surrounding area. I can remember when my mother brought my younger sister Beverly and I to the St Kilda beach in the 1950's. On a couple of occasions we had fairy floss at Luna Park and a couple of rides. Later on in my teens I took up ice skating in St Kilda at an ice skating rink called 'St Moritz', it was the place to be, it has now been replaced by the stylish Hotel Novotel, on the Upper Esplanade.

Over the years I have lived in several boarding houses in the area and have come to the conclusion that the personalities of St Kilda are the essence of St Kilda. St Kilda thrives as no other suburb does. Recognising each other's rights is one of the pleasing aspects of the St Kilda population. People smile, and say hello and allow the other person their space. I have boarded in Barkly Street, Alma Road, Robe Street and Dalgety Street. There now seems to be endless backpackers' accommodation opening up in St Kilda, while boarding houses and private hotels are closing down leaving many people homeless on the street. Cheap accommodation is needed to house the many, many homeless in Port Phillip.

My mother lived in Park Street and later on she moved to Jackson Street and I often visited her at both locations between 1967 until 1987. Fitzroy Street was then known as the Red Light district. How things have changed since the introduction of legalised brothels, although a lot of boys and girls still work from the streets of St Kilda. Local identities such as authors Leigh Redhead (Rub Down) and Kate Holden (In My Skin) describe prostitution around St Kilda in a way I can't as an observer. Seedy as this may

seem it has been this way since the English ships sailed to Australia.

Post-war Australia is a far cry from what my parents, uncles and aunties knew, as they came out of the depression era. Fitzroy Street from St Kilda Junction is quite a scenic walk or tram ride. In the parkland stands a huge 400 year old gum tree named 'The Corroboree Tree'. Hundreds of years ago Aboriginal people used to meet up around this magnificent tree. They would have huge corroborees. It is a very spiritual and significant area to all who visit here. It has the power to give one a sense of their own spirituality.

So again I write, the people of St Kilda are the fundamental nature of the City of Port Phillip. Without the personalities of the population the City would die. Short, fat, tall and lean, bald, blonde, brunette, with a cap or hat, sunglasses or wearing prescription glasses, the men, women and children are the most colourful for many kilometres around. Mums in floral dresses pushing the stroller to and from pre-school. School children in school uniforms carrying school books, pencils, pens, rulers and huge back-packs bending and breaking their backs.

All the locals sit down at the street cafes for a coffee, croissant and a quick peruse of the morning newspaper before going to work on a tram, train, bus or perhaps a taxi or private car. The older people of St Kilda are young-at-heart.

The vision I have for the future of the City of St Kilda is a rosy one, though I will leave that to the imagination of the reader.

# Missing from Home

by Wendy Butler

The girl falls in love with a married man whose wife won't divorce him - or perhaps he doesn't want a divorce. Whatever, it's a scandal in the small country town where she lives. The minister sermonises on adultery, the congregation ostracises her, the neighbours cut her in the street.

"Come with me to the city," says her young married man, a city boy himself. "Forget all these narrow-minded busybodies with no lives of their own, I'll show you how to live."

Her father rants and rages "You've disgraced the family - we'll never be able to hold our heads up in this town again. Go and don't ever come back again." The mother keeps her silence. Pictures the handsome young city slicker with his Errol Flynn smile and bedroom eyes and thinks that given the chance she'd leave with him!

In the city they hole up in cheap hotels and they drink and smoke and party. At first she's very happy, but soon she begins to miss her family and the small town she grew up in. She loses weight, becomes morose, pines for the country. Her man becomes bored and one day he walks out and doesn't come back again.

Back in the country the mother worries about her daughter and wishes that she'd told her that she'd always be welcome, but her husband's a hard man and she can't go against him. He removes her picture from the mantelpiece and the family photo albums and her name is never mentioned in his presence.

The girl thinks about home but is too proud to admit that she's been dumped and too scared that she'll be rejected. Too proud to seek help she sleeps out for two nights until she finds a bed in a rooming house.

The seasons pass, the father dies of a heart attack and little sister's husband takes over the farm. The photos re-appear on the mantelpiece and in the album. "Who's that?" asks the husband. "It's my big sister, she eloped with a married man and we never saw her again."

The girl grows old in the rooming house, drinking from a brown paper bottle and dreaming of the green paddocks and the farm. The town changes. The green paddocks vanish as suburbia encroaches. The farm is sold, but the family live on in the old house. The grandchildren ask about the woman in the photo and the old story is told, and in the rooming house the old woman reminisces about the home she can never return to.

The mother lives to a ripe old age. On her one hundredth birthday she is interviewed by the local paper. "I've lived a grand life," she says, "my only regret is that I didn't make my daughter understand that she'd always be welcome."

The old lady dies in the rooming house, and amongst her belongings is found a picture of a pretty girl and a handsome young man with an Errol Flynn smile and bedroom eyes. There's an address on the back. At last she is going home.

## out west

by Paul Harper

a shared farm holiday  
hills  
rocks  
motorcycles  
mud  
twice daily rattle of machinery  
*from the side*  
milk through funny sucker things and hoses  
the smell immense raw animal itself



# MissingMissingMissing

When I was a boy, about seven or eight, my family moved interstate. Being in a new neighborhood, I would walk the streets in search of a companion. The first friend I made was a little sausage type dog who lived across the street.

Each morning when I walked outside, my new found friend would trot his little legs across the road and greet me, gaily wagging his tail and ready to go with me where ever our journey would take us. He would come with me through the streets, to the park and when we made our way home, we would both go home for dinner.

One day I had found a twenty cent coin and that night I decided I would go to the store and purchase myself a milko bar. Upon leaving the house my little pal noticed me and scurried across to accompany me to the shops. Just before the shopping plaza was a very busy street. I told my friend to wait for me, and then sprinted across the road. The next thing I heard was a loud thump, followed by a skid.

As I turned I saw my friend rumble and tumble underneath the carriage of a car. The owner of the car stopped and got out. He asked me if it was my dog, and

then picked him up in his arms and took him away. This was the saddest moment of my life. I was shattered, unable to eat, I went home and cried.

The next days and weeks followed very slowly, I couldn't believe I had killed my only friend. The lady across the street accused me of murdering her dog and I couldn't conjure the courage to tell her what had happened. I felt fully responsible.

He must have been missing for three weeks before I decided I would go and tell her my mistake and what had happened to her dog. That morning when I opened the front door, the sun was shining off the bright green lawns and as I crossed the street I saw him. He was all bandaged up from neck to tail, and he still recognized me. I walked over to him and he hobbled towards me as I knelt down to pat him. He was still the same, his bandaged tail was still wagging, (although slightly) and we were still friends. He forgave me.

My family only stayed at that address a few more weeks and I decided to keep my secret, but still to this day, if he had not made it home I know he would have left a huge hole in my heart and I would forever miss him.

by Brad Swan

I had known the girl, a year or so before, and ran into her again recently, in Frankston, at the railway station. She had a prominent protruding belly, and I enquired politely, when was it due. I was informed, somewhat acidly, she in fact was not pregnant.

The train arrived, we boarded, and I suffered my embarrassment for the next hour to Melbourne.

Things are not always as they seem, the child was surely missing, chiefly because it had never been there!

by Simon Sewell

Missing ... missing ... lost  
Missing ... missing ... found  
Missing ... missing ... gone!

by Janet de Longville

artwork by Dale Bridge



# I am Not This Body

by Eddie Ink

This body is not mine, it was given to me at birth with the proviso of looking after it until I die. I've given it lots of things during the last sixty-two years: alcohol, drugs, nicotine; although these things were for me, not my body. My doctor has given me many prescription drugs that are for my body. In fact, I now have to take so many prescription drugs, I no longer have to eat any food.

I am not this body (I wouldn't have chosen this model if I were and certainly would not have picked ginger hair, which has got me into many 'blues', especially when I was younger). When you look at this body you do not see me, I just use it to get around.

Sometimes the body stops functioning and you get carted off to the repair shop. The repair shop is a place I've been to many times recently. So much so, I could probably get a part-time job at The Alfred as a consultant in the following fields: macular degeneration, gallstones, Hiatus Hernia, liver disease, lung collapse, pancreatic cysts, enlarged spleen, Crohn's Disease, curvature of the spine, fractured vertebrae, osteoporosis, depression and migraine.

I am not this body, I reside deep inside looking out through dimming portals, making judgments on other people (and their bodies). We all do that, making a judgment with a three second look. How wrong we are, as we find out when we get to know the person

inside. But of course we always seem to remain at a distance and only really know those who are close to us, and even then you can be wrong.

The best you can hope for is to nurture your own spirit, it's your spirit that will see you through. Look for the spirit in other people, it will help you find your own. Life is an attitude. If you can't do good, don't do any harm.

But then, what the fuck would I know?

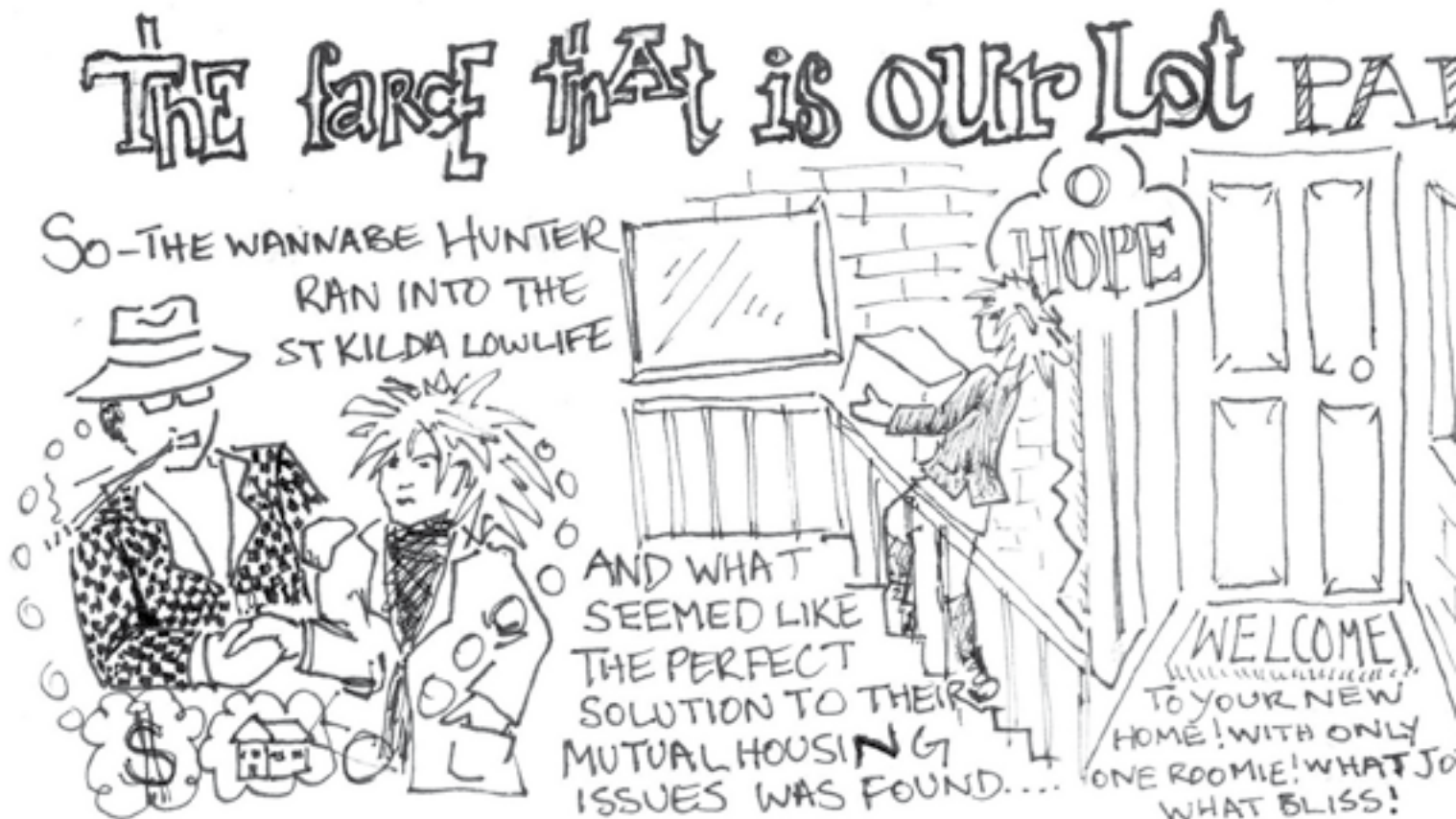
## Advance Australia Where?

by Matthew Armstrong

Australians there is nothing to rejoice,  
For we're still a colony.  
With Britain's Queen and Britain's flag,  
This land is far from free.

Our national pride revolves around sport,  
And we're a puppet of the United States.  
With housing inequality,  
And indigenous poverty,  
This is not a land of mates.

So don't lie to me,  
About this country.  
Advance Australia where?





# Observations No. 8

by Jack Chadwick

He wears a Cardinals softball shirt,  
With crisp white knickerbockers  
Cleats dug firmly in the grass  
Right behind home plate.

The umpire leans over Dad and yells "Ball 3."  
"Come on Lindsay" my Dad, the catcher, screams.  
"Just 3 strikes mate!"  
Lindsay stares past the batter and notices Dads  
sign for a curved drop ball.

"Strrrr-ike!" the umpire yells into Dads' ear.  
"Give me some bloody room, Ump!" Dad  
mutters under his breath.  
The umpire in breathing down his neck and I  
know that Dad has issues with men who stand  
too close to him.  
I have a chuckle about this 'cause Dad can't do  
anything about it.

It's O K and within the rules of the game.  
I scout for more large and small empty bottles to  
get some money for bubblegum and Coke.

"Strike 3! You're OUT !!"  
I look up in time to see Dad and Lindsay grinning  
at each other.  
The sporty slap on the bum and a hair ruffle is  
obligatory.  
Dad's team gets off the field and gets ready to  
bat.  
The whole team is grinning from ear to ear.  
Their spirits soar as they barrack for the next  
batter.  
"Batter up - play ball!" The umpire screams  
behind the new catcher.  
Dads grin widens.

## PEACE WITH MY PIECES

by Jo Hennessy

I'm missing pieces of my life, pieces of my day, pieces of my hour, pieces of my mind.  
Where did the missing pieces go?  
My pieces have gone missing.  
There's no pieces in my piece.  
But I'm at peace with the missing pieces.



artwork by Dale Bridge

# What's Missing?

by DH

Common sense is actually educated good sense, and is wise sometimes to the point of naiveté. Or with child-like simplicity. It seems that the Industrial Revolution was **missing** a sense of global environmental consciousness right from the start.

Environment is everything between people and everything inside people. The interface is called skin. It's the body's largest organ. **What's missing here?** New technology is advertised as essential. Consciousness of **significance** is missing.

It is said that no matter who you vote for at elections you always elect a politician. Nearly always. A summary of the **missing conservation sense** is that politicians nearly always prioritize keeping business happy and generate an image where they look good statewide, nationally, or internationally.

# Alphabet Humour

by Michael Wilson

There is a Pommey, **B**  
Who lives near the **C**  
Who met a New Zealander who said:  
Good **A** mate.  
He asked,  
How can I find a cheap **F** tonight?  
**G** mate, I can't help you there.  
I'll ask my brother **J**  
If he knows anything.  
Sorry he's not here at present,  
He's just gone for a **P**.  
**E** will be back shortly.  
**E** will no doubt O U an explanation.  
**C U** later.  
Thank **U** for your help.  
That's **OK**, my pleasure.



artwork by Dale Bridge

# A Friend In Time

by Darren J. McPharlin

A moth robbing our time and peace?  
You might think so.  
An unwelcomed visitor?  
Perhaps.  
Showing up unannounced as a distraction or attraction?  
To your mind.

As if he's cut through time  
And space to get somewhere fast,  
As if to pass on a message.

Does he have any plans  
or is he just looking for  
time with a friend?

Like a human coming into an inn,  
For a rest or possibly a chat.  
He is a friend in time.

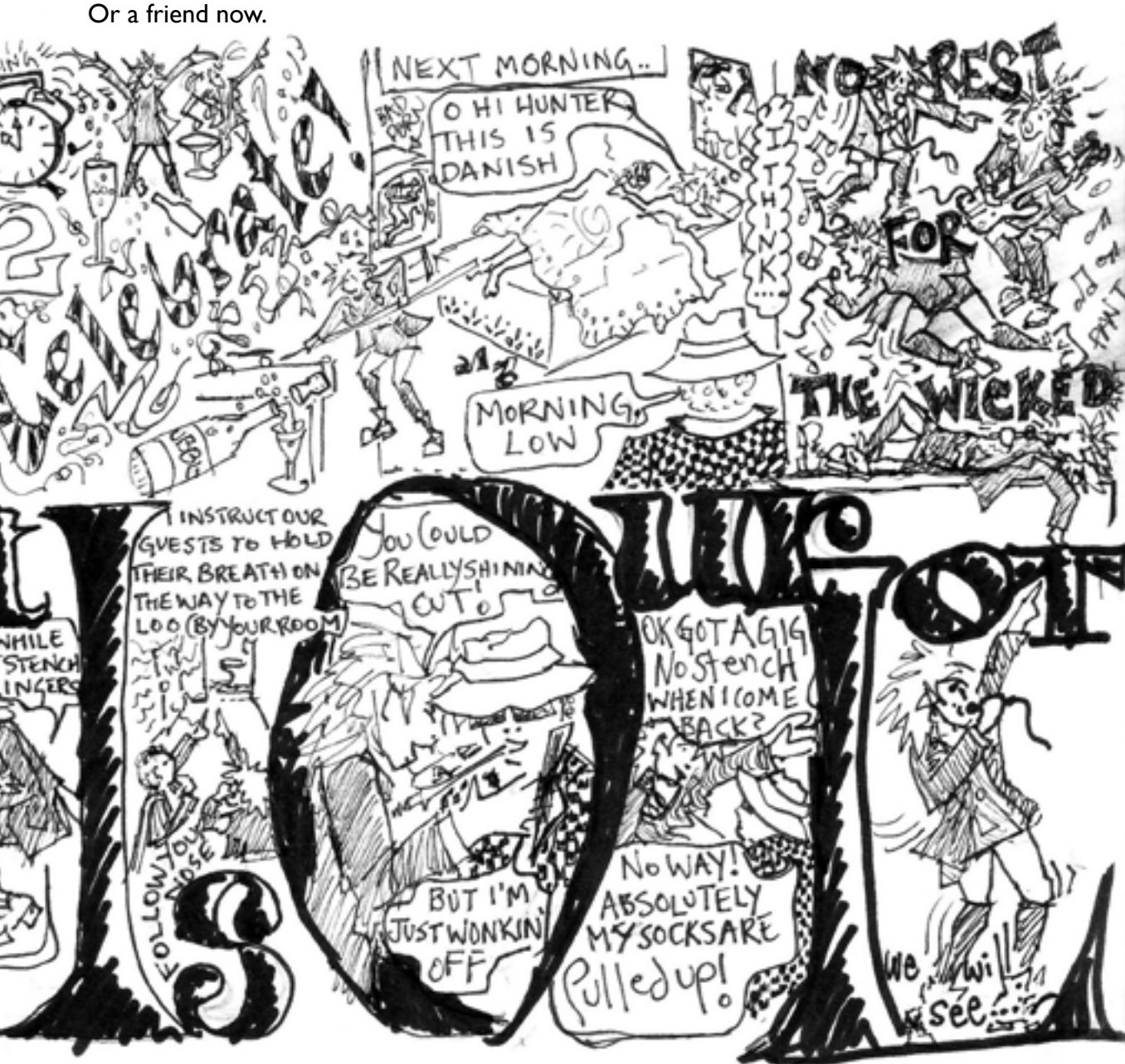
.... And so is God. A friend.  
If you're lonely, find God.  
Or a friend now.

# A Banal Poem

by Paul Harper

About an uncle  
Who died in a nursing home  
What  
Ten years ago

Childless marriage  
A little tin roofed house  
Plants on every surface  
A weedless vegetable garden  
Sloping down toward a river  
& always bursting with something good





artwork by Marcus

## To The Street

by George Hall

When the daylight dims in the busy town, and the sky looms overhead  
One will turn his damp bed down on the cold hard ground instead.  
God help him and I hope someday, he'll find what he desires  
I listen to him and he says to me, whatever my heart requires.

Now I think to myself if my chances were slim, if ever a speck of grey  
Takes me back I'd be just like him, with not a great deal to say.  
Because what's the point when you already know, the price that you have paid  
Life can be dull and awfully slow, when we lie in the bed we have made.

And if anyone matters I humbly regard, that fate is a player indeed  
People are strange and life is hard, for those who don't succeed.  
God help them and I wish them all the best, this Christmas I repeat  
When the daylight dims and the sun's in the west, my prayers go out to the street.

## Cooking Me

by De

- 1 Cup From two damaged gene pools
- 1 Cup Malicious words
- 1 Cup Hate filled fights
- 1 Cup Of being ignored
- 1 Tbsp Of caring
- 1 Tbsp Of love
- 2 Tbsp Of intelligence

Mix cup measures together until blended.  
Slowly add tablespoon ingredients and mix thoroughly.

Pour into moulds.

Oven on high for first 5 mins. Turn down to 250 degrees.

Cook until each cake is firm to touch.

Let cool in hostile environment.

Tip out by banging on wooden tray. Eat.

Can be iced if desirable.



artwork by Dave Faulkner

# Grandma's Song

by Mary Grace

Look through your window  
What do you see?  
"Black, cold, empty sorrow."  
Child listen to me.  
A hundred years from now  
Will you still think of your lost love  
A hundred years from now?

Wipe your tear stained windows  
Still, you do not perceive  
Bees buzzing from flower to flower  
Gay birds chirping in the trees  
When a hundred years are here dear  
Will you still think of your lost love  
When a hundred years are here?

Force open the window  
The sky is blue; the grass is green  
Let nature's aromas inwards flow  
And children's laughter shine within  
In a hundred years when ALL is gone  
Will you still think of your lost love  
In a hundred years when ALL is gone.



## Hanging Onto Values

We hang on to the values that we think are important  
Like "Do unto others as you would have them do to you"  
We hang on to happy memories ... like love  
Like never forgetting where you came from: foundations  
of who you are.

Our sense of humour

It helps us forget about worry  
It helps us forget about fear  
But they can all be there at the same time  
Humour can mask my emptiness and despair

Some said that smiling itself can be good  
It can help you release your endorphins, and make you feel  
better.

It lifts the spirits, and makes you feel better.  
Maybe it's true, that  
Laughter is the best medicine.

My sense of humour is a tool to 'come out of the sadness'.  
I'm able to laugh at myself.  
It reminds me that "I'm only human".  
It reminds me not to take things so seriously,  
because that can stress you out.

Sometimes, humour is fake: a lot of it when you are  
drinking and drugging.  
Drinking and drugging creates a false sense of humour  
People laugh mainly when someone does something  
stupid.

My greatest fear is that  
I would lose my sense of humour if I stopped drinking  
In fact I have never laughed so much...  
sometimes I have shitted myself laughing.

## Words from Galiamble

*These songs and poems were written by the men at Galiamble, a residential rehab for Koori men. Welcome to Roomer fellas!*

### I could be like that

I might return to drinking  
What will happen if I use?  
Doing things "I would not do"  
And I know what that involves.

I might make bad decisions  
Lose the support I'm getting now  
Where will I live, if that happens?  
I might be locked away

I see people on the street.  
They seem to walk without hope  
like lost souls, or walking zombies.

It can be scary to listen to some people,  
through the windows,  
talking at night  
on Grey Street.

These things brings me to reality  
That the road could take me there  
I could be like that.

# Woodstock

by Jenny Ling

You entered my life  
I liberated you  
Our lives were interwoven  
Our bond was true.

Freedom was mine  
Which I thank you for  
The journeys we shared  
I could not have asked for more.

The shared vices bought much pleasure  
VB, wine and an occasional joint  
Traveling on trams, our friendship grew  
Attending stencil art classes, I freaked out you know who.

Most people you met loved you  
Even Kate who was not sure  
You ended up on her shoulder, tail curled along her chin  
Did Kate grin? I'm not sure  
Occasionally, I would clean my room and upset your stashes  
In retaliation the electrical cords, my shirts and pants  
With razor precision you slashed them to pieces.

Our journey has ended for now  
The last image you saw was me lying peacefully  
I clutched the coin for the ferryman  
My passage paid in full  
Reaching the other side is my destiny  
For you know when I do  
I will become free.

*For Sheldon, in memory of Woodstock Nov 08*

## Tranquil Planet

by Vicky

*inspired by Darren and Markus*

Tranquil planet, peaceful place  
Is just a dream that has been laced  
In human hands this world we tore  
Fear of differences caused this war  
With all the destruction and the sin  
Is there anything left to believe in ?  
Words of love and faith are never said  
Prayers now float in a sea of red  
Heaven looks down with such sadness  
Hell is basking in all the madness  
Tranquil planet, peaceful place  
Higher powers put it aside just in case  
Human hands build this world they saw  
Where love of differences end the war.

## The Astor Theatre

*cnr Chapel St and Dandenong Rd, Prahran*

My God! How long has this been going on?  
What a fantastic place. I only discovered this gem when I moved to the Alma Rd rooming house. It has been a tremendous source of pleasure ever since. You have to check it out. I've never been one to attend theatres before - a business to run, mortgages to pay, employing people etc etc. I've seen more films in the last eight months than I've seen in my life. Is this what ordinary people do?

I vaguely remember seeing South Pacific there forty-seven years ago. It's an old-world theatre. The only thing missing is the guy walking around selling dandies. In a world of fast-foods, automation, helter-skelter this place is truly an oasis from the real world.

A few weeks ago I watched Hamlet for three hours and was mesmerised the whole time. This was followed by Jimi Hendrix live at Woodstock. Unreal! All this for \$12. A must do!

by Lindsay Learhinar

artwork by Maree



## Community Info

gathered by Debrah Slater

### No Interest Loans Scheme (NILS)

The Port Phillip Community Group runs a No Interest Loans Scheme. They lend you money and your repayments are used to make loans to other people. So it's essentially a recycling scheme. No money is used for administration or any other purpose.

#### What do we lend money for?

Essential household goods. In some circumstances we may also lend money for other things such as televisions, furniture, asthma pumps etc.

#### What don't we lend money for?

- General living expenses
- Repaying other debts, fines or bills
- Second-hand goods, unless they have a warranty
- Things that you can get other assistance for

#### Who do we lend money to?

You must:

- Live in St Kilda, Balaclava, Ripponlea, Elwood, Prahran, Middle Park, Albert Park, Windsor, South Melbourne or Port Melbourne.
- Have been at your current address for at least six months.
- Be on a Centrelink payment, have a health care card or have a low-level of disposable income.

- Be able to pay the loan back without the repayments causing financial problems for you.

We cannot lend you money if you have an outstanding loan with Centrelink

The length of time for repayment of the loan is negotiable but is generally less than eighteen months.

To find out more about getting a loan contact the Port Phillip Community Group:

161 Chapel St, St Kilda

ph: 9534 0777

222 Bank St, South Melbourne

ph: 9209 6360

164 Liardet St, Port Melbourne

ph: 9209 6350



## Stay cool and survive the heat!

It's heatwave season. We all know that being too hot is really annoying, but sometimes we forget that it can get more serious than that. Extremely high temperatures over prolonged periods are a major hazard, particularly for elderly and young people. Health authorities believe our record-breaking heatwave last summer might have contributed to the deaths of about 374 people.

So make sure you stay cool, and check on elderly friends and neighbours to see how they're managing in the heat.

- Help keep heat out of your room by closing curtains or blinds.
- Stay inside, out of the heat. If you need to leave your home, do so in the early morning and or late afternoon.
- If you don't have air conditioning, use a fan and damp towel on the body to stay cool.

- Stay hydrated by drinking between two to three litres of water. Avoid alcoholic, caffeinated or carbonated drinks as they can speed dehydration.
- If you are feeling unwell, seek medical attention. Dial 1300 606 024 to reach the Nurse on Call (available 24 hours), contact your GP or dial 000 for an ambulance.



And remember, Roomers magazine makes a handy fan.

ROOMERS

MAGAZINE

3 CR

AND  
RADIO ROOMINATIONS  
PRESENT

# DREDGEWATER DRAZE

6 AIR RADIO PLAY  
6 EPISODES OF RADIO MAYHEM  
WRITTEN AND RECORDED BY  
ROOMING HOUSE RESIDENTS  
FOR YOUR LISTENING PLEASURE

PROUDLY SUPPORTED  
BY

THE  
CITY OF  
YARRA



BROADCAST ON 3CR 855 AM  
OR AVAILABLE FOR DOWNLOAD

FOR MORE INFO. CONTACT ROOMERS: 0413024528

roomersmag@yahoo.com.au