

Art centre will do us all the power of good

SOME people would say Liverpool is the last place on earth which could have an art-led revival.

I don't know who these people are, but after being given a tour of the work at Casula Powerhouse earlier this month, let me tell you that the news is even better than that.

With the work not due to be completed until early next year, I admit that what I saw was only part of how much art bang we will get for \$14 million.

That's right, nearly \$14 million is being spent on our art centre, and from what I saw, it will be worth every cent of taxpayers' and ratepayers' money.

Our art centre in the old powerhouse is not only going to be a



EDITOR'S CORNER

by Eric Kontos

beauty in a great location – the Georges River runs alongside just metres away from its eastern wall – but it will be bigger and better than most art galleries/art centres around. As a bare minimum, it will certainly be the arts jewel in the south-west of Sydney.

When it's finished the powerhouse will contain a number of galleries which will accommodate some of the best art exhibitions on offer, meaning that Liverpool will have a huge tourist attraction on its hands.

With a theatre and space for two or three artists in residence, our arts centre will be the envy of western Sydney, so let me say it right here: it has changed my original view that Casula Powerhouse would be a white elephant even after completion.

Part of the works includes road access and parking at the rear of the powerhouse, plus, of course, a railway station right in front of the centre.

So I am more than happy to publicly eat humble pie on this, and, anyway, who cares when Liverpool is the winner.

Until my recent tour I hadn't been to the powerhouse for many years; in fact my last visit was for a similar

mission. It had been also organised by Liverpool Council, some of whose members believed the decommissioned powerhouse would make for a great art gallery.

And they went ahead with it and turned it into an art gallery. But its true potential has not been realised – until now. The place needed a decent injection of money to make it a compelling art gallery/centre for art lovers anywhere.

I was so impressed with the place that, honestly, I just can't wait till it's open for business around February 2008.

You be the judge, but I bet you are going to be proud of it when you see it for yourselves early in the new year.

LIVERPOOL CONFIDENTIAL

■ WHILE it was difficult to get him to divulge the details of his shock resignation as a trainer for horse-owner and "chicken king" Bob Ingham, John Hawkes was more than happy to talk last Friday about the facilities at Warwick Farm race track.

"It's a lovely place," Mr Hawkes said. "But unless they spend money out here . . ."

He has headed Ingham's Crown Lodge at the track since 1993. He admitted the past 15 years had been frustrating at times, with the track and its facilities going without needed upgrades.

■ The controversial Orange Grove issue may be about to come back into the limelight, one of our spies has told us. That's all we can reveal at present, so stand by for developments.

■ Residents walking past the electorate office of our member for Liverpool, Paul Lynch, would have noticed the cardboard decorating the front window. Being a nosy lot, we couldn't resist dropping in last week to ask a staffer what the story was. He told us that the glass had been broken and the cardboard was up until they got a replacement sign delivered. Thank goodness; we thought the cardboard may have been a security measure in these "be alert but not alarmed" days.

■ The new operator of popular Liverpool CBD eatery Cucina105, Angelo Cucchiaro, has had to tell a few people that he's actually of Italian heritage, and not Greek, as so many people think. Angelo said the reason he speaks fluent Greek is because his business partner has spoken to him in Greek over the years so he has picked up the lingo.

In the swim of things with community



Justin Rothwell: swimming coach.

MY JOB

Name: Justin Rothwell.

Job: Swimming coach/business owner.

How did you end up in your current job?

This is a part-time job while I complete my university degree in accounting that I have taken on because I am a former national medal-winning swimmer.

Best part about your job: I have a lot of job satisfaction because I enjoy working with people.

Worst part about your job: Waking up at 4.30am.

What extra talent do you wish you had? I wish I could play the guitar.

What would you never do again? Nothing.

What do you like about the area? I like the facilities available for swim-

mers and other people.

What don't you like about the area? Traffic.

How do you unwind? Read a good book.

What's your greatest extravagance? EH Holden.

What would you never give up? Supporting the Parramatta Eels.

What's your favourite thing to do on the weekend? Watching Parramatta play and spending time with my family.

What's your favourite local haunt? Rashay's Cafe.

Describe Liverpool in one word: Awesome.

If you could be granted three wishes? Parramatta to win the grand final, Liverpool swim club to dominate the Olympics and to be able to talk my wife into having four children.

BLAST FROM THE PAST

WEDNESDAY August 7, 2002:

This week's *Champion* reported on the death of a teacher at Casula High School after a sudden onslaught of the meningococcal disease.

Sarita Yakub, 45, of St Clair had died over the preceding weekend and four other teachers from the school were then placed on antibiotics, as a precautionary measure, to halt the further spreading of the disease. Mrs Yakub died at Blacktown hospital, less than 24 hours after feeling ill.

A newsletter sent home to parents reported a "deep sadness" at the news and described Mrs Yakub as a "valued member of the staff . . . a highly respected and talented teacher who would be missed by all the members of the school community". She was the 14th person to die of meningococcal in NSW in 2002.

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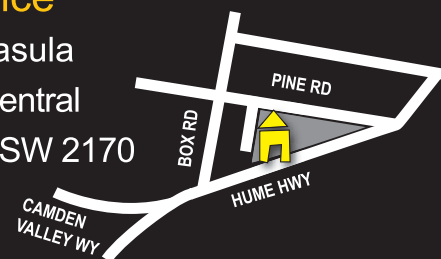
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