



2009

Special points of interest:

- * Human Rights for the Homeless
- * More to Unity Housing Company Ltd than Housing!
- * Homelessness in Regional South Australia
- * Poem by the best poet ever: Michael Leske!

Human Rights for the Homeless (by Bill Manallack)

In December last year the Federal Government announced the Australian Human Rights Consultation. The Consultation was intended to gauge the national appetite for human rights and broad questions about existing and possible future human rights protections in Australia. Over the last six months the Homeless Persons' Legal Services in four states, including the Housing Legal Clinic in SA, have worked together to prepare a report for the Consultation. Consultations with people experiencing

homelessness have been held and a written submission that incorporates the views and ideas of those consulted has been prepared.

In brief, the position is that people experiencing homelessness are subject to systematic and repeated breaches of their human rights on a daily basis, including in respect of the right to housing, the right to health, the right to freedom from discrimination, the right to privacy, and the right to participate. We

strongly support the introduction of a Human Rights Act for Australia. This Act is necessary in order for people experiencing homelessness to seek redress and vindication when their rights are violated.

More detailed information is available from the Human Rights Law Resource Centre website www.hrlrc.org.au

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Legal Clinic Looking North and South (by Bill Manallack)

The Housing Legal Clinic (HLC) has been given the opportunity to expand into the northern and southern outer suburbs of Adelaide thanks to a grant from the Law Foundation of South Australia. Since the establishment of the HLC in July 2006, legal clinics have been operating at inner city agencies – The Magdalene Centre, Byron Place Community Centre, Hutt

Street Centre and Catherine House – and at the UnitingCare Wesley Family Centre in Port Adelaide. The purpose of the grant is to explore opportunities for new legal clinics in Salisbury/Elizabeth in the north and Noarlunga/Christies Beach in the south. The key to the HLC model is that with volunteer lawyers we conduct two-hour legal clinics at the premises of host

organisations and in partnership with them. We work closely with a wide range of other services – legal and community – to assist clients and to avoid duplication. With the support of local communities new legal clinics will follow this model.

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The annual Homelessness SA Memorial Service for those who have died while homeless will be held in St Stephen's Lutheran Church, 152 Wakefield St, Adelaide 6pm on Friday, 19th of June, 2009

Contact: Cate Jones on 8221 6488 if you would like more information

The first regional Memorial Service for those who have died while homeless will also be held on the 19th of June, in Pt Augusta, Railway Roundhouse at the east end. Service to start at 6pm

Contact David Wright on 0428 265 543 if you would like more information .

If you would like to donate food, clothing, tents/tarpaulins please contact Pt Augusta City Council Mackay St, Port Augusta or telephone: 8641 9100

Pt Augusta will also be holding a Memorial Service for those who have died while homeless on the 19th of June at the Railway Roundhouse

Homelessness in Regional SA (by David Wright)

"Dave, have you seen Bob?".... its an innocuous phrase like this that has often chilled my soul – especially if the answer is "No" and especially if the answer is "No" and relates to a friend who is living "rough". On too many occasions this question has caused me to wrack my brain as to the last time that I saw "Bob", where and with whom. Unable to locate the missing friend causes phantom sightings, (seeing a person who looks like the friend but who isn't the one), continual repeating of the "have you seen?" question to all those who share the friendship. Each "No" adding to the pain and anxiety. Most times the friend is found 'well' and alive, but then there are the times when they are not. Sometimes the news is that the one who was missing has passed. Oh! the sadness in that news with pain being added to pain in the circumstances and place of the passing. Tragic.

On the occasions that my soul has been chilled the homeless person has been truly without shelter. On each occasion they had passed through the other forms of homelessness – 'camping' with family, housing trust accommodation, emergency shelter, agencies, hospital wards, staying with friends intermittently and finally finishing on the street. Some had mental illness or degeneration, others incredible emotional strain. All loved a chat, all had a great laugh all were true

friends. Their passing has caused holes in families and friends, un-relinquishing grief and often depression. To die is human – to die alone is more than one should have to bear.

"Blessed are the poor, for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven." (Jesus of Nazareth)

Regional perspective: My home of Port Augusta and other rural and remote towns that I visit in the north of South Australia are not immune from one of the products of a competitive, capitalist, modern society – homelessness. They also are not immune from the misconceptions about those who become homeless, whether or not this is because of an ignorance of the defining characteristics of homelessness, I don't know. Homelessness is not confined to old men – in the instance of the areas that I visit, old Aboriginal men and/ or young runaways. It is a condition that can visit anyone and visit very quickly.

Its remedy is not easy, but in order to quickly arrest the downward slope of homelessness, action needs to be taken quickly.

Sadly those effected are often unable to emotionally cope with the processes that quick action demands. Then, even more sadly, the epidemic type instances of homelessness push the capabilities of the agencies and care givers to the limit with some homeless unable

to attain the assistance required and others having used their allocations forced to move on and out – out to the streets.

This group are amongst the most vulnerable of our community. Upon this group all of the maladies of our society are visited with the final most decimating malady being death – death in the street.

Such a death causes much pain, anguish, guilt and a sense of hopelessness to all who are connected with the victim of such a terrible and tragic event. It beholds us all as a community to stop and reflect on the loss that we share at this time.

The day for this memorial service has been chosen for its closeness to the winter solstice, the darkest and often the coldest, bleakest day of the year. On this day let us remember those for whom a winter solstice is their constant condition.

"Blessed are the Poor for theirs is the Kingdom of God" (Jesus of Nazareth)



More to Unity Housing Company Ltd than Housing

Many people will be aware that the Unity Housing Company was established on 1 July 2008 as a result of the merger of MACHA, Housing Spectrum Housing Association and Quantum Housing Association and following a takeover of Homelife Housing Association 9 months earlier.

Unity Housing is now the largest community housing provider in South Australia. It has approximately 800 properties and 160 boarding house beds with regional offices in the city, southern suburbs and northern suburbs.

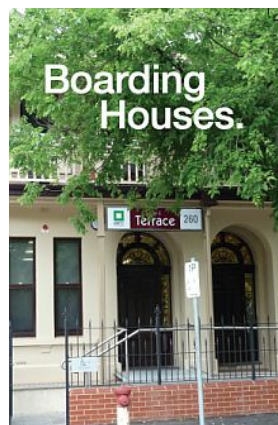
In addition to its range of housing services, Unity also offers support services for eligible people in the community. Services include the:

Home Support Program is a HACC funded service assisting newly housed people to sustain their tenancies in the city and inner Adelaide metropolitan region. Services available through this program include case management, social support, domestic assistance, transport and counselling, advocacy and information provision.

Boarding House Outreach Support Program is funded by the Department of Families and Communities to support tenants living in boarding houses in the Eastern Metropolitan region including Adelaide city. Services available include assistance with securing long term accommodation and practical assistance with transport, accessing services (health, financial assistance, employment) and social support.

We have a team of workers with skill and experience in a wide range of areas such as drug and alcohol issues, chronic health issues, psychiatric disability, disability, and complex needs.

If you'd like to find out more about our services, please contact the Manager Support Services at Unity on 8237 8779, or email j.wrigley@unityhousing.org.au



Homeless Idol (Poem by Michael Leske)

Why oh why must we justify
 Ourselves to you just coz we don't look or smell as good as you
 No it don't make you better
 It just makes anotha soldier down for this desert weather
 Say what you like, think what u want
 I chose my path tha life to be livin' it up
 But down unda it aint easy
 Been writin rhymes for years an still don't have a cd
 Heard Shannon Noll an' Paulini
 getting seen on TV clearly
 people losin' soul rhythm an taste
 how bout homeless idol
 its me Michael rappin' wit all my mates
 ones that know ya stuff be grateful
 don't bitch backstab or be hateful
 coz you never know could meet my eight ball
 in a sock one hit over ya head ya drop
 hear about it in tha news, he had only one option
 cause by electricity stuffin wit tha wrong fuse
 no time, time ta think this aint blues clues
 these are true blues wit true crews
 jump ya far 15cents hop to tha next spot quicker than
 kangaroos
 do this can confuse you if you aint real talking crap by what you
 do
 you're a punk, our style is hypnotic like voodoo
 destroy you or help you through
 days you wish ya never had
 broke depressed or just smoking a bag
 wish you had more, wish you had a dad
 try livin normal get out tha life of livin bad
 at least we'd have nothing ta say
 nothing out of tha ordinary here were only Adelaide
 at least have no home and away
 hate hearin some punk gettin involved
 wen its nothing to do wit them
 so they call a crew an you do for tha trend
 next thing there's 40 of you when will it end
 sooner rather than later I hope
 coz if it doesn't might as well hand each other that rope
 make sure its tight, get a good glimpse of what you've done,
 not many get tha chance to make things right
 while I'm here won't be standin,
 be chasin' tha prize that I have in sight
 you can come too, I promise that I won't bite
 while here stand, shine brighter than a 4000 watt light
 take off like an eagle takes off into flight
 I'ma soar doin it so freely makes you come back for more
 build a family make a better me
 that'll tell tha tale of poetical artist a better g
 that rolled up an punched on by grade 3
 no ones played its tha streets that made me
 getting cash punks getting tha monster mash daily
By the Best Poet Ever: Michael Leske



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2009 Activities and Events

April 1st

Youth Homelessness Matters:
It's No Joke

19th June

Memorial Service for those
who have died while homeless

5th August

Free public forum

17th November

AGM and free public forum

Homelessness SA aims to eliminate homelessness by:

- Advocating for the rights of people who are homeless
- Identifying and striving to address the conditions that create homelessness and inequality
- Encouraging active participation, co-operation and innovation
- Promoting a society where all people are valued and included

You can help eliminate homelessness by joining us, and get informed about the issues surrounding homelessness. Ask for a membership brochure today!

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP FEE

Organisation: Annual Budget of \$100,001 or more	\$100
Organisation: Annual Budget of \$100,000 or less	\$30
Individual: waged	\$15
Individual: unwaged	\$2

To be a member of Homelessness SA, you must be:

- An individual or,
- A non-government organisation or,
- A Government agency whose purpose is direct service delivery, and:
- Pay the applicable membership fee.
- Agree to the objects of Homelessness SA .
- Have your membership approved by the Board of Homelessness SA.