

The daubing spat out the name of the gang-PSK, short for Park Side Killers. The initials were painted in black on

## news article archive



United approach . . . Pittwater plans to canvas SHOROC councils about the costly war against graffiti

# Call to scrub graffiti

PITTWATER Council wants the SHOROC councils to take a united approach in addressing the graffiti problem which is costing the Pittwater community alone an estimated \$200,000 a year.

Mayor Patricia Giles called for a working party of councillors and officers to be established to liaise with similar bodies within the SHOROC group of councils.

Mrs Giles said the cost of repairing damage caused by graffiti in the Pittwater area was estimated at \$50,000 a year for the council, \$50,000 a year for services such as transport, Sydney Water and Energy Australia and \$100,000 for the private sector.

She said some councils had introduced a \$1000 reward for information that led to the apprehension and successful prosecution of graffiti artists.

But councillors had different views about how the spraypainting problem should be tackled.

Councillor Robert Dunn thought the council should attack the problem without any fanfare, as he believed that public discussion and publicity often created an upsurge in graffiti.

Councillor Allan Porter said he would like to get feedback from the area's youth about the problem.

Deputy Mayor Julie Hegarty suggested the problem would be alleviated if young people were given a sense of ownership of community property and suggested the proposed skateboard bowl at Mona Vale could provide a positive "canvas" for their artwork.

Graffiti painting was about kids rebelling, she said. "We've got to stop saying 'no' and find constructive things for kids to do."

Councillor Lynne Czinner said she had heard the city of New York had now solved its graffiti problem, and it might be worth a call to the mayor of New York to find out how it had been done.

# graffiti gang





STREET ART 56  
email your fresh work to art@twisted-ink.com

07:03:05



Doer and Doze



doer



POLICE WARN PARENTS  
OVER GANG VANDALS

GRAFFITI CRIMES

All aboard the  
graffiti express



Commuters aboard a vandalised train at Central station today

Picture: UWE KUESSNER

## Vandalised trains forced into service

By KELVIN BISSETT and TIM HILFERTY

**GRAFFITI-RIDDEN** trains are being left in operation indefinitely as State Rail faces intense pressure to improve services for commuters, *The Daily Telegraph* has learned.

A senior State Rail manager has warned in an internal memo that an increasing graffiti problem, combined with a changed cleaning policy, could overwhelm the service with vandalised carriages.

The State Rail internal memo obtained by *The Daily Telegraph* reveals a "large increase in the incidents of external graffiti" in the past four months.

The memo, signed by passenger fleet maintenance general manager Ron Creighton, warns that trains are now not immediately being withdrawn for cleaning between peak periods.

Mr Creighton complains that the marked trains are being left indefinitely in service, threatening to

Continued Page 2

# AFTERNOON EDITION

TAB Form P51

Business: P31; Comics: P94; Crosswords: P92; Lottery (6379): P95; Television: P111; Weather: P93

TeleClassifieds 9288 2000

This newspaper participates in newspaper recycling



**Vandals paint wrong picture of the east...**

# Vandalism delays 3 trains a day

By KELVIN BISSETT

Political Reporter

**ALMOST** three trains every day are running late or cancelled across Sydney because of vandalism on State Rail, new figures show.

*The Daily Telegraph* has learned the figures, contained in a confidential report, reveal the number of trains delayed due to vandalism for 1996-97 rose by more than 30 per cent over the previous year.

The vandalism ranged from kicked-in windows and graffiti murals to jammed doors and damage caused by rocks. The damage caused by vandals on State Rail about \$25 million. Cavern security patrols had been organised to stop vandalism.

Mr Phillips said the increase could be a "spate of attacks by one or two gangs".

Mr Phillips called for more transit police and private security guard patrols.

The increase in vandalism follows several years of cuts for State Rail.

A State Rail spokesman acknowledged vandalism was a problem but said it was being tackled.

He said the surge in vandalism was linked to problems with the superceded timetable in place between November and June.

Mr Phillips said the situation had serious safety implications for CityRail passengers.

"These acts are deliberate acts of sabotage," Mr Phillips said.

"These acts are hindering the operations of the rail system and have serious safety implications."

Mr Phillips called for more transit police and private security guard patrols.

The increase in vandalism follows several years of cuts for State Rail.



## Graffiti gangs spray under court's nose



Vanity vandalism: inside a toilet at Bidura Children's Court

Picture: Graham Hely

YOUNG offenders are displaying their contempt for the law by defacing court buildings under the noses of sentencing magistrates.

This photograph shows how Bidura Children's Court officers are losing the battle against felt-tip pen and spray can-wielding juvenile offenders.

One court visitor revealed how he had seen a youth spray his "tag" in the toilets minutes after he appeared in a courtroom on a string of property offences.

A court officer told The Sunday Telegraph that youngsters routinely scrawled graffiti on the toilet roof,

walls, floor and ceiling, and stuffed toilets and sinks full of paper.

"Every now and then, we get a couple of young fellows in on CSOs (community service orders) to clean it all," he said.

"Within a month, it's back again, even with extra patrols by sheriffs.

"Unless you actually catch them at it, it's pretty hard to do anything."

The toilets are the only facilities available to offenders, members of the public and visiting legal officers. "All the legal staff, including visiting barristers, are required to use them, along with parents and children," the officer said.

— SARAH HARRIS

## Graffiti kids not as bad as they're painted

United approach . . . Pritwater plans to canvas SHOROC councils about the costly war against graffiti

## Call to scrub graffiti

PTTWAATER Council wants the SHOROC councils to take a united approach in addressing the graffiti problem which is costing the Pritwater community alone an estimated \$200,000 a year.

Mayor Patricia Giles called for a working party of councillors and officers to be established to liaise with similar bodies within the SHOROC group of councils. Mrs Giles said the cost of repairing damage caused by graffiti in the Pritwater area was estimated at \$50,000 a year for the council, \$50,000 a year for services such as fire, water, Sweeney, Water and Energy Australia and \$100,000 for the private sector.

She said some councils had introduced a \$1000 reward for information that led to the apprehension and successful prosecution of graffitiists.

But councillors had different views about how the spray-painting problem should be tackled.

The daubing spat out the name of the gang-PSK, short for Park Side Killers. The initials were daubed in black on



Councillor Robert Dunn thought the council should attack the problem without any fanfare, as he believed that public discussion and publicity often created an upsurge in graffiti.

Councillor Allan Porter said he would like to get feedback from the area's youth about the problem.

Deputy Mayor Julie Heagerty suggested the problem would be alleviated if young people were given a sense of ownership of community property. She suggested the proposed skateboard bowl at Mona Vale could provide a positive "canvas" for their artwork.

Graffiti painting was about kids rebelling, she said. "We've got to stop saying 'no' and find constructive things for kids to do."

Councillor Lynne Camner said she had heard the city of New York had now solved its graffiti problem, and it might be worth a call to the mayor of New York to find out how it had been done.

# graffiti gangs



Police Citizens Youth Club aerobics instructor Donna Stanton and graffiti artist Chris Bonham in front of some of the graffiti already on walls at the club.

## Taking graffiti off the streets

Legalised graffiti painting will take place at the Bathurst Police Citizens Youth Club (PCYC) during the school holidays.

PCYC president Bob Pullon said the classes will be conducted by local artist Heath Byler who contacted the club after he had seen

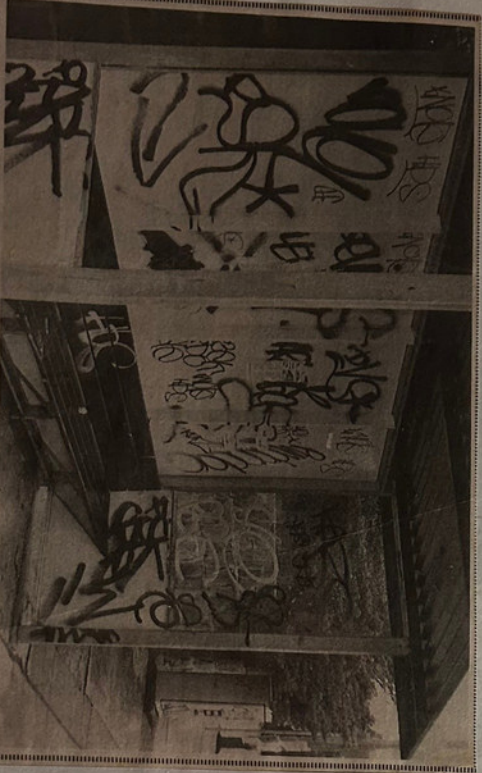
people are asked to contract the club as soon as possible.

Cost of the lessons, paints, boards and club membership will be included in the price.

For details ring the club.

the graffiti work at ready carried out at the club.

The classes will run from January 17 to 21, and interested



The bus shelter sited on the corner of Victoria and Old South Head Roads, Bellevue Hill is covered with graffiti to such an extent that there is no space left for any more tags.

BY KIM O'CONNOR

JOHN LEMMOX is a policeman with property. He, Channing Cross, is disturbed and angry about the amount of graffiti in our suburbs.

"I've had enough! It looks disgusting, it is purely destructive and shows how mindless people these young people are. I'm fed up with the mess and the mentality that goes with it," he told the Courier.

### Signature

His large property abuse directly onto the footpath and with its initials has attracted a number of graffiti tags.

"Walk around Waverley, Channing Cross and Bondi Junction and you can see the same signature tags on the walls.

Strictly the police can't entirely remove these tags and do something about stopping them."

Mr. Lemmox believes that if he tried hard enough he could track down the signature to the individual responsible for the spray can attack. "I really believe that the kids should be made responsible for their actions. They should clean up the damage they've done to the walls.

or their parents should be made to pay for a new paint job."

The graffiti he points out around the walls of the post office, the vacant milk depot, a fence and even the recently completed Mimmatura complex in Bromie Beach.

The tags include PDK (park side killers), JMC (junk mail killers), PDDO and Teaz. Staff at the post office say they're tired of scrubbing at the paintwork in an attempt to remove the daubings.

"After one Friday night I came in here to check the place and spent hours scrubbing the walls. I nearly broke my arm with the effort. Come to think of it, it would have been easier to paint it over."

"I think it's a territorial thing with rival gangs leaving messages with the signatures," said Brian at the post office.

The police have established a 12-man city-based graffiti task force to deal with the gangs and their handwork. Detective Senior Sergeant Armstrong said that they rely on the local police patrols

Gangs now produce their own newspapers which show photos of the best pieces and the best tags.

But the nature of graffiti is changing. Police said gangs used to draw tags used to draw cartoon designs around violence, murder and death, an officer said.

"The growth of color graffiti in Sydney is in the past the graffiti kids stuck to drawing but now we are witnessing the growth of adult crime growth of some of these kids have no other purpose in life but to fight."



John Lemmox with yet another unwanted autograph.

let them know what is happening in the suburbs. "In fact, the offender has to look at graffiti as just a very successful in part of the street scene and don't report it to police. If we do get reports then we can track down the offenders."

"We know most of the crews, who they are and what they do so through a process of elimination we can find out who is responsible and arrest them."

The graffiti sprayers do not need to be caught in the act for police to be able to take action, Detective Senior Sergeant Armstrong said. "In many cases the

**D**OZENS of shops in Belmore Road, Randwick, have been daubed with graffiti by a hoodlum street gang.

Police have intercepted the spray paint. Superintendent said he would move to clear out the gang's territory but at the same time view it as wanton vandalism.

**Struck**

The daubing splashed out the name of the gang, PSK, short for Park Side Killers.

The initials were painted in black on premises on both sides of Belmore Road.

The gang struck sometime during the night on March 21 and the graffiti were discovered by the residents when they returned their shops on Monday morning.

A final count revealed that 38 buildings had been "attacked" by the gang. The owners of some premises are still trying to clean the paint from their walls.

The worst hit was Randwick Village, where the graffiti were clearly visible on the walls of the complex.

**By RALPH SHARMAN**

The Cooks Plaza building also suffered defacing on its light coloured brickwork.

Sergeant Tony Kirwan, Randwick local police superintendent, said he would move to clear out the gang's territory but at the same time view it as wanton vandalism.

He said police were investigating the incident and inquiries so far had led them to theorise the graffiti were a "psychological" move by local gang members to mark out their territory.

"They mostly keep to their own territory but every now and again they move to another suburb and that's when trouble starts."

Sergeant Kirwan said the outbreak of graffiti in Randwick was believed to be a warning to other gangs to keep away. He said the local gang had taken its name from a man who was named for the suburb in the 1930s.



Sgt Tony Kirwan with the calling card of the Park Side Killers. PHOTO: Belinda Pratten

Said police had the names of a number of gangs including the BBs (Bont, Bont, Bont), the PTKS (Park Time Crooks) and the UBRTs (Urban Brothers) which operated around Maresfield.

One paintshop owner told police he had been asked to help with the graffiti. Kirwan said in some cases the spray painting was like an addiction and gang members were forced to commit other offences to obtain the money to buy the paint.

**Grffiti problems**

As you may have noticed in recent times, the graffiti along Belmore Road is beginning to spread to surrounding streets and suburbs.

Those responsible for these crimes are striking late at night or in the early hours of the morning.

The damage caused by these criminals amounts to thousands of dollars each week and these costs are being passed onto you the consumer.

Your assistance is required in passing on any information in regards to offenders, the 'Tags' used and who they belong to, and if the crime is in progress make a telephone call on 398-4611 to Randwick Police so that these criminals can be stopped.

# Deadly pastime

## Youth killed hanging out door

By NATALIE WILLIAMS

A 17-YEAR-OLD Gosford youth was killed yesterday when his head struck a fence as he hung out the doorway of an express train.

The accident was witnessed by schoolchildren on the train and waiting on the platform at Lisarow station on the central coast.

Duty officer Steve Lawley, of Brisbane Waters, said the youth was seen hanging from the doorway shortly before 3pm as the train travelled south to Gosford.

His head struck a fence at the end of the platform, knocking the youth to the gravel shoulder beside the track.

Unaware of what had happened, the train driver continued. He stopped the train a short time later after he was contacted by a station officer.

Children from Corpus Christi college, Tuggerah, who were on the train, saw the accident.

Students from Lisarow high waiting on the platform also saw the incident.

Within an hour of the accident, dozens of schoolchildren and young people, many of whom knew the dead youth, gathered at Gosford's Labyrinth Cafe.

The small cafe near Gosford station is a magnet for the district's youth, particularly those who follow Gothic fashion.



The spot where the youth died yesterday

Two counsellors, parents and teachers were at the cafe to comfort the teenagers.

Police had not released the youth's name last night.

State Rail ceased rail services between Lisarow and Gosford for nearly two hours as police and railway investigators inspected the scene.

Trauma counselling was immediately started by the Education Department for any students who knew the youth or witnessed the accident.

Many Lisarow high school students were taken back to their school to be spoken to by principal John Paine and counsellors.

Yesterday's accident is the third serious incident involving students and Sydney trains in just over a month.

On Sunday, a 19-year-old student was killed by an XPT at Werrington station. The teenager walked into the train's path while taking a shortcut between platforms.

On October 7, a 15-year-old girl from a Sydney private school was severely burnt after she touched an electrically conductor on the roof of a train as it approached Normanhurst station.

The drunken girl had climbed on to the roof of the train as a school holiday prank.



ing adopted by the coun- comly with the



## Graffiti crimes on the rise

### Zones on way for graffiti

PITTSWATER graffiti artist frustrated at the lack of a legal outlet for their work will soon have three new outdoor canvases.

The council has agreed to establish three graffiti zones at the Avallon Skate Park, Kitzbuck Park, Soccer Practice Wall and Bonpark house, thanks to the initiative of a local teenager.

Biggola Plateau resident Alan Miles approached the council with his idea to establish the graffiti art zones, with his involvement with the design of the Avallon Skate Park. He said the park, which is the soccer practice walls, were already heavily graffitied.

Mr Miles, 18, said young people on the peninsula starved of entertainment needed somewhere to develop and display their artistic talents. "It is a way for graffiti artists to have their work legitimised," he said.

Mr Miles said other popular graffiti sites suitable for art projects included the Mona Vale skatepark, the Avallon drains, the Avallon Sydney Electricity box, and the Avallon and Mona Vale scout halls. Councilor Julie Hegarty said although Pittswater was not a heavily graffitied area, teenagers expected the council to be vigilant in keeping it under control.

Ms Hegarty said reports had shown designated graffiti areas had helped to reduce graffiti. "Youth are going to do it, so let's let them do it somewhere where it's legal," she said.

"If we give them a site, their peers will respect their work. Graffiti is estimated to cost SHOROC councils more than \$120,000 per year.

The proposal for the three aerosol art zones will be placed on public exhibition until February 28.



Graffiti artists, not criminals... Alan Miles looks forward to creating artwork at Warriewood Square. PHOTO: Simon Cockledge



Tag wrestling: Callionian businessman Lester Winz with some of the graffiti damage at Double Bay.

# Time to fight plague

By KIM O'CONNOR

Sunday, November 15 will be Graffiti Clean-Up Day when residents in the East are being asked to wipe out as much graffiti as possible from their neighbourhood. The blitz has been organised by the State Member for Vaucluse, Peter Debnam, a leading campaigner against this type of vandalism. His message has been reinforced by an American visitor who contacted the Courier about the issue.

LESTER Winz loves Double Bay. He admires the shopping centre with its attractive cafes and boutiques, the proximity to the beach and the beauty of the sea — the plague of graffiti.

In the Californian businessman was so disturbed by the increase in the vandalism since his last visit that he contacted the Courier about it. He is a regular visitor (his daughter Jodi and son-in-law, Olympic swimming champion Murray Rose, live in the area) and he could not come to terms with the spread of "tags" and spray paint daubings over the past nine months.

"The thing I have noticed most on this trip is that Double Bay is losing the battle with graffiti," Mr Winz said. "I don't want to come across as the ugly American telling Austrians how to run the place, but I have that warm feelings for this because that we're looking at a plague. If it multiplies this fast in the past five years, On a walk around the commercial

## VIDEO VANDALS

ONE Bonoi Junction resident has come up with a novel way to trap graffiti vandals — he videotaped their exploits and handed a copy to Waverley police.

Terry Bonassi told the Courier he was fed up with the damage to the neighbourhood — usually linked to Friday and Saturday night teen gatherings and drinking sessions.

When he saw the spray cans come out during one of these events, he grabbed his video camera. They were spraying graffiti on everything in the vicinity of the park and streets. They did the same on playground equipment, the side of a house and even the traffic control box," Mr Bonassi said.

Waverley police happened by and questioned the teenagers — taking down names and details of those involved with the vandalism. Armed with his videotape, Mr Bonassi decided to take positive action, and since then police have identified and charged a number of people with graffiti offences.

center and its surrounding residential streets. Mr Winz pointed out graffiti on everything from the Guilfoyle Park fixtures to an electricity substation. "When I first came here five years ago there was no graffiti," he said. "Now we're looking at a plague. If it multiplied this fast in the past five years,

What will the place look like in 2003? You can't see the kids take over the community in this way. If I were in the park, I'd send everyone off in a car that is caught doing it to clean up the graffiti. I'd also send their parents along because they need to know what their children are doing."

Mr Winz said many States in the USA sentence the vandals to hours of community work. "The kids are forced to clean up the mess they've made," he said. "Then they realise what is involved and think twice about doing the damage again."

He believes the teenage gangs that carry out graffiti include involvement in crime action, drugs. "Where there is drugs and violence, there is graffiti in a place, you'll find gangs."

"I hope it doesn't happen here, but in some parts of the US there are ultra liberals who believe graffiti is a form of outdoor art. It's not — it's vandalism, pure and simple."

Mr Winz said Australians are very environmentally-conscious. "Far more so than his countrymen. I know residents here are complaining about the graffiti, but really, it's not just a nuisance, it's an environmental outrage," he said.

THE State Member for Vaucluse, Peter Debnam, has urged all residents to participate in the clean-up day next Sunday. "Graffiti can be easily removed by solvent or by painting," he said. "Community pride is an invaluable asset. We need to protect it. "Immediately removing graffiti is the most successful strategy in suppressing further attacks by vandals. For more details, call 9369 3017.

# Graffiti as art? What absolute rubbish

THE front page story on graffiti zones (MD, Nov 28) filled me with loathing - not only because Alan Miles, 18, self-styled graffiti artist, really believes graffiti is art, but more particularly because he whines that the youth of the peninsula is starved of entertainment as a justification for their vandalism.

Our peninsula is a paradise for people of all ages and has recreational facilities and, yes,

visual raw material for artists equal to anything you'll find in the world. In all weathers, the seascape alone would be inspirational for any serious painter.

Graffiti as art? Face up to it, Mr Miles - it's rubbish. Worse, it's derivative. One bit of graffiti looks exactly as repugnant as every other bit of graffiti. Aerosol vandals have failed to produce anything original or spiritually uplifting; their

work is repetitive, boring and, when defacing other people's property, illegal.

It's also dangerous because this visual pollution gives you the mistaken idea that adult acquiescence is an acknowledgement of an artistic talent you almost certainly do not possess. It's tolerated because it's regarded as a lesser evil measured against the excesses of what bored young men with

attitude, who whine about being starved of entertainment, are capable.

As for talent: If you're interested in abstract art, go to the library and study the work of this century's giants of abstract art. Look at what Mondrian and Jackson Pollock have created and see if you can come up with something as original.

In my opinion, perpetrators of graffiti haven't the guts to explore seriously any latent ability they might possess for fear of finding out the truth. I suspect you don't want to know, Mr Miles. You want to ego trip on the accolade of being called an artist merely because you know how to squirt paint from an aerosol can. Well, young man, art isn't that easy.

Bill Tibbals, Manly

**Crime on the rise**

## Writing not on wall for 'taggers'

SURELY it must be concluded that the Warringah graffiti project has been a success. The style and characters may not appeal to some, but at least it is a start to brightening shabby, run-down areas. From little acorns...

Congratulations must go to councillor and ex-Warringah Mayor Sam Danieli, who, with his council last year, initiated the graffiti policy. His successor, Mayor John Caputo, must also be

congratulated for continuing with the project.

It is interesting to note that 12 months ago, the most prolific of the area's 'taggers' were unemployed and in some cases drug addicts. Their art form is now on public view and through their recognition, their skills are in demand and their client base growing. More important, the old 'taggers' have been given direction, self-esteem and employment. The verbal barbs of

the critical must be laid to rest and it would be hoped that they, of all people, would now give positive support to graffiti project schemes.

It only remains for other SHOROC councils to follow Warringah's example and start adding some colour to many of the drab buildings on the northern beaches.

Don't tag, spray a mural instead!  
Roland Ellis, Cromer Heights

## Nazi graffiti attack claim

**Boy 'pushed door button'**

A YOUNG boy, who died while battling cancer, has pushed the emergency door release button on a train in Wyoming, died when he fell from the train as it sped through a tunnel on the central coast on Wednesday.

Yesterday friends visited the site, where flowers along the track and a necklace with a small cross was draped over the rails.

It is understood police are investigating claims the youth forced open a emergency door release button and manipulated the doors until they opened.



Public and private buildings continue to be defaced by graffiti.

## Graffiti under attack at public meeting

GRAFFITI in the municipality will be the topic of discussion at a one-hour public meeting to be held at Woolahra Council Chambers on December 8 at 7pm.

The prevalence of graffiti and what can be done about it will be tackled at the meeting which has been organised by Community Council, Woolahra Council, Woolahra Safety Council and Speakers' South Coast Forum.

Meeting chairperson Cr Melinda Blinnon, Ken Dray, Graffiti Project Co-ordinator with the Premier's Department, local businessman John Lyons and Russell King, of WAYS.

## Teenager burned in train blast

A TEENAGER suffered an electrical explosion on a train yesterday.

The girl, 15, was sitting in the lower level of the carriage when the incident happened about 3.55pm near Kildara in Sydney's north. She was taken by ambulance to Royal North Shore Hospital suffering from a fractured leg.

Mr Hall said the train terminated at North Sydney and an initial investigation had been started to determine if there had been an electrical fault in the wall cavity.

"We believe there was a short circuit in the wall cavity which caused an electrical flash which came through a rivet hole," he said.

The carriage has been taken out of service and will be subject to a detailed investigation.

Mr Hall said CityRail did not have any information but said there were no major delays to services yesterday.

The girl was held overnight in a stable condition.



**DOES anybody care that this man is vandalising this building? Does anybody care that residents have been threatened with physical abuse if they attempt to stop it or paint over it? Apparently not, although things may be changing.**

**Our special report on the fight to reclaim Little Oxford Street is on page 13.**

**Graffiti goes to the wall**

YOUNG graffiti artists have been invited to create one of the biggest aerosol murals in Sydney.

The Department of Housing has dedicated a legal wall at Seven Hills for the project, which is 11m long and 2.5m high.

The wall has been a target for graffiti since it was built a year ago.

By involving talented aerosol artists, we're hoping that the local community will end up with something more than just a wall of graffiti, says a housing department spokesman.

A workshop to discuss the details of the mural will be held at 47/57 First Ave, Seven Hills, at 1pm on Saturday of next week.

## One neighbourhood's war against graffiti

# Taggers paint a dark picture

BY CLAIRE WILLIAMS

GRAFFITI taggers have started war in Surry Hills, painting obscenities on the sides of houses and physically threatening residents who complain about their activities.

One spokesman said the war should be named for fear of retribution from gangs operating in the Little Oxford Street area.

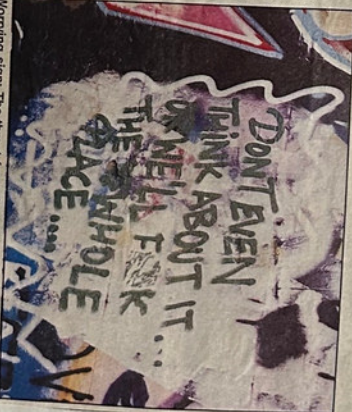
They said the youths, aged 15 to 20, threatened residents and spray-painted the windows, walks and driveways of homes.

Residents who had complained have had their windows smashed.

"I don't know what these 'youths' are doing," said a resident. "I've had my windows smashed, my doors and my driveway scratched. I've had my car scratched. I've had my car scratched. I've had my car scratched."

Residents claimed the graffiti was being painted on the footpath and almost weekly phoned the council to report the damage.

One woman said in 1976 she stepped outside her home. A beatman on Little Oxford Street told her she had a "graffiti wall" on her wall. "Don't even think about it or we will come up on the whole area. It was painted after residents attempted to repaint a graffiti-covered wall."



Worrying sign: The threat from the vandals.

This area is not unique," the mayor said. "However, Ms Moore said the council had a responsibility to the people who lived in the area, given it zoned the area residential."

An urban consolidation comes responsibility to look after the people you bring into the city.

The man, a spokesman for the Taylor Village action group, which was recently formed to tackle the problem, said residents were now under siege "too scared to leave their own homes and speak out."

"I've got 20 youths out here who have threatened I've got you wouldn't dare to talk to bash you," he said. "I've come to street and tried to punch me. They also put graffiti on our buildings as well."

He said the spokesman said residents determined to fight back.

On Monday morning, residents met with Surry Hills local area commander Superintendent Gary Hodson, South Sydney mayor Vic Smith and the State Member for Bligh, Claver Moore, and called for extra police control, a Mission-operated Centre of the Sydney City Mission, street-cleaning services.

However, Superintendent Hodson said some graffiti artists in the street may have been legally entitled to draw.

"It's my understanding that the general owners of the premises gave permission for this to occur," he said. "Now I am informed that has a regular basis, my police will be up here on a regular basis."

Police were also able to move people who were "harassing or intimidating or causing a nuisance," he said.

Councillor Smith said ordinance inspectors worked up to seven days a week, sometimes up to midnight, patrolling the area.

"If you had the same meeting in Redfern, you would have the same sort of problems."



David Purton-Campbell works on 'Thuy Van', dedicated to his girlfriend

# OK, spray that again

by MAUD BELLEISIS

THE theory that legally sanctioned aerosol art tends not to be tagged with graffiti in Warringham is being tested in a group of artists' studios, a group of artists has been applying their talent and vast amounts of spray paint to a wall at Dee Why Village Plaza shopping centre.

With the blessing of centre management, Warringham Council and police, they are working the wall out to cover the 20m by 3m expanse by this afternoon.

The work will be known as Plaza Piece, and is the start of a project that the council has sanctioned since its "prevention is better than cure" approach to battle graffiti.

The first was a 3sq m mural completed in August on the wall of a Warraneen amenities block.

Warringham Mayor John Caputo said old foes were now uniting to try to reduce the amount of tagging scattered on buildings.

The project brings together ex-taggers, police and artists to help create a project of young local artists under the notion of an experienced and internationally recognised professional aerosol artist, Matthew Pearl.

Mr Caputo said: "This mural will test the theory that legally sanctioned aerosol-style murals tend not to be tagged."

The amount of graffiti at the mural and at other sites would be monitored in a year-long project.

Mr Caputo said the decision to support the project was a pragmatic one for the owners of the Dee Why Village Plaza, who spent the last 18 months of 2005 trying to remove graffiti. "It's a project of evidence that once the taggers' energies are channelled into legitimate artworks or 'pieces', their involvement in illegal tagging ceases," he said.

Dee Why Chamber of Commerce and Industry president Karen Newman said the mural was a positive step in curbing graffiti vandalism if it was successful and fitted in with the area.

Acting area commander of the northern beaches police, Inspector Tony Wright, said while the local graffiti locations stipulate the activity of local artists and encourage them to display their talents instead of creating malicious damage on other public and private property.

## Vandals mar new murals

GRAFFITI vandals cut a swathe of destruction through Newport at the weekend targeting three murals that were nearing completion in Bert Payne Reserve.

Also defaced with black and silver spray-painted obscenities and "tags" were a wall at the Newport Beach Surf Life Saving Club and a shop wall opposite the beach reserve.

The disfigurement of the murals was particularly heart-breaking for artist Renee Monique, who has spent the past two months transforming the walls of three Sydney Water air vents with scenes representing the spirit of Newport.

Pittwater Council's landscape architect, Mark Eriksson, said yesterday Ms Monique had completed the artwork on the murals and had been about to apply a protective coating this week.

"Now she will have to spend the next fortnight or so stripping off the graffiti paint and repairing the artwork underneath," he said.

Mr Eriksson said the vandals had removed tarpaulins covering the air vents to get at the murals.

"At this stage we are inclined to think the vandals came from outside the area as some of the obscenities were not complimentary to Newport," he said.

"Naturally, everyone around here is disgusted with what has happened."



Wrecked ... Graffiti scrawled on the newly-painted murals in Newport's Bert Payne Reserve at the weekend

# Call for graffiti spy cameras

by PETER GLADWELL

A SPATE of graffiti has prompted Warringham Deputy Mayor Peter Moxham to call for surveillance cameras at a number of vandalism hot spots.

He raised the prospect during a council meeting, saying graffiti had to be fought head on. He said the effect of street cameras in areas such as Cabramatta and the city would be examined as part of an investigation to see if the surveillance system worked.

Target areas for a Warringham scheme would include the old Narrabeen Tramshed and vandalism-prone areas near commercial centres.

"Vandalism seems to be getting worse, not better, and I suspect it has got something to do with the lack of police resources - they're doing their best but they don't have the numbers to be there all the time," he said.

"We should be a bit proactive in trying to fight the problems we're facing - this would be a start at least."

Mr Moxham also said there would be a thorough cost-benefit analysis before the council decided whether to spend any money on the cameras.

Acting manager of community and cultural services Gary Thomson said a graffiti wall was being considered to give mural artists a place to paint.

"There is as much, if not more graffiti on private property as there is on public property and it is not just a council problem, but a community problem," Mr Thomson said.



Turning graffiti into art... Aerosol artist Matthew Peck in front of Warringham Council's new mural space

# Let us spray - and it's all legal

WARRINGHAM Council will encourage aerosol artists to display their work in designated public places as part of a graffiti prevention strategy unveiled yesterday.

The one-year trial project will also include a tough anti-graffiti measures such as a mobile unit and a rapid response team which will remove and repair graffiti that is offensive or highly visible.

Warringham Mayor Sam Daniels said the project which aimed to strike a balance between the punitive and preventative approaches to graffiti reduction, would redress the previously "ad hoc" approach taken by the council.

He said \$50,000 would be added to the \$35,000 spent by the council each year on graffiti removal and prevention, but costs would hopefully be reduced in the long term.

A committee would maintain records of graffiti sites and liaise with police to link "tags" to "taggers" - taking legal action where necessary.

The council's youth liaison officer, Paul Hoggan, wanted graffiti to give young people a chance to channel their talent, saying the "big stick" punitive approach had often failed.

By DANIELLE TEUSCH

He said rapid removal tactics had also failed in heavily graffitied areas because it meant "taggers" could provide with a continuous stream of graffiti because of the relatively small number of active graffitiists.

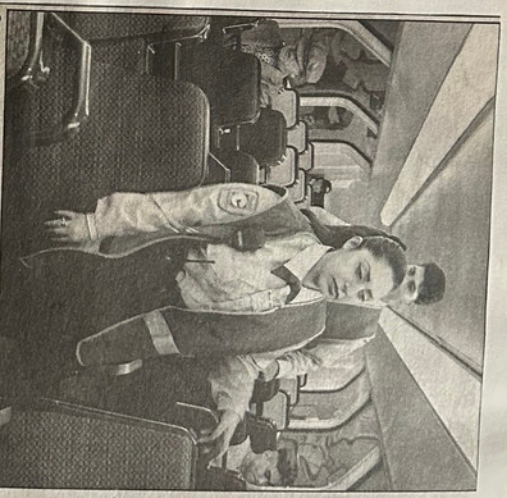
A wall of the bus shelter opposite Berry Park at Narberth is one area that has been set aside for graffiti murals.

During the trial, the site will be completed with those of other graffiti artists.

Aerosol artist Matthew Peck, who organised the mural for Warringham Council, said if young people had the chance to create murals legally, it would drastically reduce unsightly tagging.

"One hundred per cent of graffiti artists prefer to do murals over than tags," he said. "Young people have told me that if they had the chance they could put tagging to a rest."

Mr Peck said the punitive approach did not work because it bred a "rebellion mentality" among young people which only encouraged them to break the law more.



On patrol: security guards on a Sydney train. Picture: Michael Penn

# Hidden eye to trap thugs

By KETH GOSMAN

SPY cameras will be installed on Sydney's next-generation trains.

High-tech hidden cameras are part of the State Rail Authority's speedily implemented security plan, which is being built by Clyde Engineering.

"It's a very significant cost," Clyde group general manager John Hancock says.

Last month, Clyde was awarded the initial \$20 million contract to install the 10-year-old Tangara system.

With the spy-camera system, security guards will be able to monitor underfoot on portable monitors.

The move comes as the State Government reeks under the failure of its train-on-trains scheme.

More than 200 train-on-train collisions have been 50 attacks since the program began a month ago.

In many cases, guards have failed to spot the intruders.

Mr Hancock says the new system will be installed on the new 10-year-old Tangara trains, which will be equipped with hidden video proof glass offenders from electronic surveillance on city trains.

In May, the Government announced a \$50 million program to speed up the installation of the new and ten new stations in Sydney, Newcastle and Wollongong.

The new surveillance system could also provide the police with valuable intelligence about train crime.

Transport Minister Carr Security has said that the new system will be able to slip off trains undetected after committing assaults.

The latest initiative will benefit millions of commuters, with passenger journeys on CityRail trains having risen 24 per cent from 1988-89 to 1996-97.

A CityRail intention to increase more than 80 commuters per hour on Sydney trains and railway stations in the six-week period from April.

The figures also show 27 people were killed and 1,000 injured in 1996-97.

Incident reports show the Campbelltown, Bankstown and Sutherland lines experienced the most instances of violence.

Mr Hancock says the new trains will be equipped with video proof glass on upper and lower decks, he says.

John Hancock releases his \$20m challenge - Page 56

Wide variety of  
**FINANCIAL YEAR DIARIES AND STATIONERY**  
For all your accounting needs  
**HUMPHREYS NEWSAGENCY**  
60-62 THE CORSO, MANLY  
9977 1699  
OPEN ALL DAY 7 DAYS A WEEK

The  
**Manly Daily**

SERVING THE PENINSULA SINCE 1906

**DINE IN THE PALM TERRACE CHINESE RESTAURANT**  
on Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday or Sunday  
Spend \$25 or more on your meal and you will receive a  
**FREE bottle of Tyrrell's Club Label Wine**  
Link bottle as shown  
Manly-Warringah Rugby League Club  
563 Pittwater Road, Brookvale  
Ph 9939 6722  
FOR THE INFORMATION OF MEMBERS & THEIR GUESTS



# Bronx gangs show no fear



By RACHEL MORRIS  
Political Reporter

HOUSING Minister Craig Knowles decided to bulldoze the Villawood housing estate dubbed "The Bronx" after becoming the victim of the gang that terrorises the area.

Residents of the estate, once lauded as the future of public housing, were told yesterday they would be moved within two years after the State Government announced the demolition of 250 dwellings.

Violence flared again yesterday as gang members attacked TV camera crews filming the estate.

Police are understood to be "keeping a close watch" on the estate amid fears violence will escalate in the wake of the announcement.

On a recent tour of the estate Mr Knowles was confronted by the gang which had been terrorising the estate for more than three years — they

thought he was a police officer.

Shaken, Mr Knowles escaped the situation by "talking his way out of it" but resolved no one should be forced to live with that kind of intimidation; a week later he signed off on the demolition of the estate.

The Daily Telegraph revealed yesterday that Mr Knowles said the estate would be demolished in an attempt to clean up what began as an urban planning ideal but has degenerated into a "ghetto" because of high crime and vandalism.

"This estate is an accident waiting to happen. Gang activity has left residents fearing for their safety and for the safety of their families and property."

"The Government, as landlord, has a responsibility to provide decent living conditions for all tenants."

Security and repairs cost more than \$1.8 million a year. It is expected that rehousing the tenants will cost \$5 million.

At least six derelict houses have been demolished over the past two weeks.

Fairfield MP Joe Trippoli said people had "begged" to be moved.

"Residents are pleading to be moved from the estate. The only way to solve the existing problem is to start again," he said.

The Department of Housing has given residents alternatives including the Fairfield Local Government area, Bankstown, Liverpool, Campbelltown and Merrylands.

Tensions reached boiling point yesterday as gang members — most of whom come from outside the Villawood area — set on TV news crews.

One gang member, wearing a balaclava, attacked a Channel Nine crew member with a plank while others threw rocks and bottles.

The cameraman was struck on his legs and arms while his camera's lens hood was broken and the viewfinder damaged.

## Club bears the brunt of graffiti

by MAMANDA SHEPPARD

THE Baywatch debate turned ugly yesterday after graffiti artists attacked the Avalon Surf Life Saving Club.

And president Warren Young revealed the club had suffered breaks in and other vandalism since the controversy had spun "out of control" in the past month.

On Wednesday night, vandals splashed white paint and wrote "No Baywatch" on the mural at the front of the club. The words "Baywatch" were scrawled on the south side of the building.

The vandalism has shocked and angered club members and Pitwater Council and came just days after Baywatch producers lodged a filming application with the council.

Mayor Patricia Giles described the vandals as "mindless idiots".

She said some councillors had received anonymous threats about having a class action launched against them if they allowed Baywatch into Avalon.

"It is getting out of hand," she said.

Mrs Giles said people should wait until a public meeting on the Baywatch issue on February 22 to have their say.

"I want them to be fair and want," she said.

"This is really foolish. To start vandalising the surf club is hitting below the belt."

A spokesman for the community group opposed to Baywatch using Avalon Beach for filming, Alex McTaggart,

said he was saddened by the vandalism and did not suppose it.

But he said it did not surprise him — the threat of such an attack had been discussed at a meeting of concerned residents on Wednesday night.

He said a young person at the meeting reported that there had been talk about "fixing the club" with a graffiti attack.

McTaggart said these youngsters had been advised "We can't control everybody's notions," he said.

He said the identity of these people was unknown: "If we find out (who they are) we will take appropriate action and notify the authorities."

Mr Young said the Baywatch debate threatened to turn into a war.

In the past month the club had also been broken into twice, and the SLSC letters had been snipped off from the front of the club.

"It is just getting out of control," he said.

Mr Young said emotions were running high and clouding the facts about Baywatch's plea.

He said the hit US series wanted to film for only a maximum of two days a week at Avalon during the winter.

Mr Young said the graffiti attack was appalling, but it did not frighten the club away from supporting Baywatch's plan. "We're not backing

# Spray cans that stopped the trains



Police search the railway yards for the three men

## Police chase vandals on tracks

By MORGAN OGG  
Police Reporter

THREE graffiti vandals armed with a backpack full of spray cans shut down the eastern suburbs train line yesterday.

When they escaped, rail officials wanted for the vandals, transit police and CityRail staff chased the male teenagers through tunnels near Central.

But police are confident of catching the vandals who left a trail of spray cans and defaced carriages and a \$4000 bill to clean up the mess.

But police are confident of catching the vandals who left a trail of spray cans and defaced carriages and a \$4000 bill to clean up the mess.

Senior Constable Trevor Kimber of City Rail Transit Police said CityRail staff at Central Station were alerted to graffiti emerging from a nearby tunnel

about 1.30pm. Inside the tunnel, a train was stopped. When spotted by staff, the vandals fled south along the tracks and police were alerted.

Five trains on the line were stopped. The vandals, described as teenagers, were arrested over the weekend. The vandals had struck at the food, pursuit along above-ground tracks between Central and

the vandals were arrested over the weekend. The vandals had struck at the food, pursuit along above-ground tracks between Central and

The vandals were arrested over the weekend. The vandals had struck at the food, pursuit along above-ground tracks between Central and

The vandals were arrested over the weekend. The vandals had struck at the food, pursuit along above-ground tracks between Central and

- Possession of spray paint cans, large felt pens, colour pens, press clips and photos showing graffiti work.
- Paint or felt pen marks on clothing.
- Secret friends or destinations, perhaps late at night.
- Recent change in dress style to baggy trousers, American baseball caps and jackets, perhaps with a "tag" embossed on the inside of the jacket.



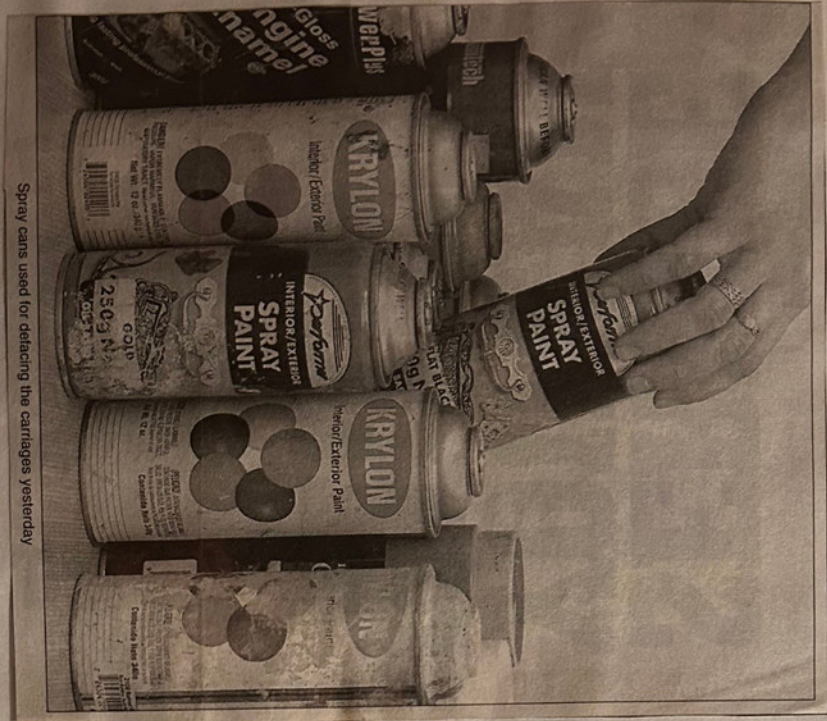
Anti-Boycott lobby... Avdon Surf Life Saving Club president Warren Young with the vandalized mural

... he said Pitwater save their emotions for the council officers would assist with the removal of the offensive graffiti. ● See Editorial Page 4.

... he said Pitwater save their emotions for the council officers would assist with the removal of the offensive graffiti. ● See Editorial Page 4.



# GRAFFITI SCARS SHOPS



Spray cans used for detaching the carriages yesterday

## Why it's murder being in a gang

LA warriors warn  
about drugs danger



## Qualified support for the cause

By WILL TEMPLE

BY HIS own reckoning, Steven Martinez was a late starter when he took up arms in a notorious Los Angeles gang at 15.

But within a year he was arrested for murder after organising one of the most brutal gang fights in the San Fernando Valley's history.

Fifteen years later Mr Martinez and 20 other reformed "gangsters" were yesterday walking the streets of Kings Cross, Redfern and Cabramatta counselling drug addicts before speaking at an anti-drug campaign in Port Macquarie on Sunday.

"We have all been there," he said. "My whole record is shootings and stabbings and violence. I always hated drug addicts. I thought they were weak."

Mr Martinez, 31, now takes a more understanding view of the addicts' plight and tries to help reform them as part of California's Victory Outreach program he joined after serving four years at Chino Youth Training

School. He plea-bargained his murder charge to manslaughter after being arrested when 30 members of his Pacoima Flats gang clashed with as many members of rival San Fer gang, shooting dead one and seriously injuring seven others.

Yesterday, Mr Martinez and his colleagues said they had found Australia's gang problem to be relatively minor compared to back home but heroin use on the streets was as bad as any ghetto they had seen.

"There is a tremendous need for addicts here to get assistance," said Art Gonzales, who has lived through bullets to his chest and side in gang warfare.

"When you live on the street you see death. You see people overdosing on drugs and robbing people. I have shot at people with a .357 Magnum."

Christian Larkins, a speed addict for years and reformed bikie drug dealer, said he was surprised at the freedom of drug use in suburbs such as Redfern.

**STEVEN MARTINEZ, 31 (left).**

Joined Pacoima Flats gang at 15. He served four years at Chino Youth Training School a year later for manslaughter for a gangland shooting murder after a plea bargain.

**ART GONZALES, 30 (back right).**

Joined West Side Sepuzeda gang at 14. He was shot in his chest and side in two separate shootings by age 20.

He served time in Tracey State prison in California after firing his .357 Magnum at rival gang members and selling narcotics.

**CHRISTIAN LARKINS, 31 (front centre).**

Sold drugs to biker gangs in Sacramento in California while addicted to crank—a form of speed. He was arrested for drug offences but did not serve time.

**DAVID MARTINEZ, 55 (front right).**

A 10-year member of the Pacoima Flats gang after starting smoking marijuana at 13. He served a year for narcotics sales in Los Angeles County jail in 1965.

**EDDIE RECLUSADO, 25 (back left).**

Associate of the San Fer gang while becoming known in the Valley for his "Kruace" graffiti tagline.

He was placed on probation for drug use and robbery while also addicted to crank.

"I would say it's almost worse on the streets over here," Mr Larkins said.

"There's not much gang activity here but in the US you can't see the needles and the spoons."

"When police see a place where people are shooting dope they just go and raid it."

The men will be speaking at Port Macquarie's anti-

drug week to show how even hardened criminals can be reformed once they kick the habit.

Organiser Margaret McKay, who became an anti-drug activist after losing her 23-year-old son David to an overdose last year, said the grass roots campaign was a result of government inaction.

Entertainer Normie Rowe and swimmer Suste Maroney have lent their support to the campaign which starts on Sunday, hoping to make Port Macquarie a blueprint for a drug-free town.

Among the rallies and presentations by medical experts and counsellors, thousands of parents will stage their own Operation Noah

and keep their own register of local drug dealers.

"The mood of the people out here is that they've had a gutful," Ms McKay said.

"Nothing is working with government policy. We are asking for zero-tolerance for drugs for our kids growing up here and we are going to make sure something is done."

Once he  
wrote on  
streets,  
now he's  
saved  
for  
Eternity



Jan Mitchell working on her sculpture of Arthur Slooe yesterday.

Picture: AFP/DAVID WAIN

**BY MARK SKEELSEY**

ARTHUR SLACE was famed for writing the word "Eternity" in his distinctive, ornate style many thousands of times on Sydney streets.

Now, Slace and five other "legends of Kings Cross" have been preserved for eternity, with their names immortalized by Premier Bob Carr at an apartment development.

Victorian artist Jan Mitchell created old vinyl signs and are 25 feet tall into the six well-known characters.

Artist Brett Whiteley and poet Henry Lawson are among the other performers immortalized by Carr.

Also featured are Ben Miles, an eccentric who retraced passages of Shakespeare on Sydney streets and cultured six pet bulldogs to his

musical accompaniment. The final sculpture is called "The Mysterious Lady of the Night" representing the street woman of Kings Cross.

The signs had to be hoisted by crane on to the fifth floor common area of the Eltham development, which is located above the Kings Cross hotel, and will only be seen by residents and guests of the building.

"All these people are still remembered in a very affectionate way," a lot of other people further up the social scale who have died have since been forgotten.

Slace had a turbulent childhood, before becoming a pimp.

After hearing a church minister's sermon about eternity he was converted. "Eternity" many thousands of times on Sydney streets in chalk from 1930.

He died in 1967, aged 82.



Arthur Slace

# GRAFFITI CRIMES ON THE RISE

## graffiti

# Getting paid to catch vandals

Council offers rewards for information

# GRAFFITI PRANKS: dicing with death

**H**eather Corvill, 19, was at home from work two years ago when she saw the night sky illuminated by the flashing lights of police cars and ambulances near the busy Richmond railway station.

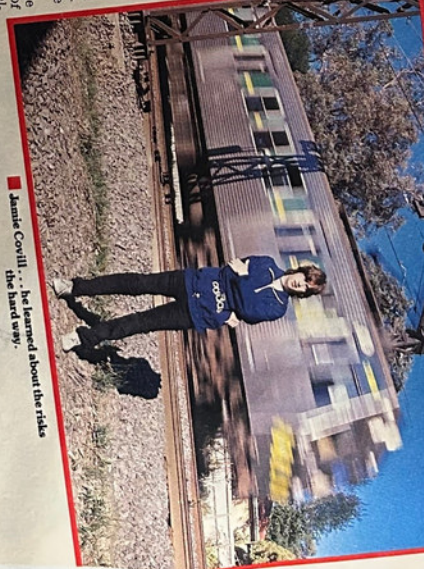
She thought little of it — another winter's night in Melbourne, another prank on the Melbourne train network and she belonged to a gang of graffiti artists on the Melbourne train network and had been in trouble before, so Heather's first reaction when she had witnessed two youths earlier hit her with an unbearable force, Jamie had played a prank that cost him both legs, and very nearly his life.

Then the 19-year-old of that she had witnessed two youths earlier hit her with an unbearable force, Jamie had played a prank that cost him both legs, and very nearly his life.

Heather and her husband John raced to the hospital, where surgeons broke the news that both legs had to be amputated below the knee.

We'd pleaded with Jamie for years to stop messing around on your kids and know what they're doing 24 hours a day.

"When they say they're going somewhere you trust them, but it turns out he'd had been doing his graffiti stunts for a long time. Jamie spent two months in hospital and a further four



Heather Corvill... she was hit by a train carriage when she was 19. She is now a quadriplegic.

months at a rehabilitation unit learning to walk again. "I don't remember anything about the accident," the 19-year-old says. "We were in the first carriage mucking around and hanging out the doors. I just fell. I wasn't doing graffiti or anything. I was just fooling around. I'd done it heaps of times before."

And while Jamie continues to ride the rails, he insists it is strictly as a passenger. "I don't know any more. I know the carriage. I tried to stop other kids doing it too but I've given up. They don't listen, so what more can I do? When I see them I move to the other end of the carriage."

But in March this year, he called "surprise". As he crossed up, he hit an overhead electric beam and crashed to his death. Heather says: "Toby knew what happened to Jamie but it didn't happen to me. I don't feel sorry for the kids who do these stupid things."

"I feel sorry for the parents, train drivers, police and ambulances who have to pick up the sick or the kids who just want to work. I don't think we'll ever stop them."

Jamie was part of a "crew" of about five youths. "We'd been doing it for a few years — every day except Sunday," he says. "I never doesn't seem to be enough for them. They have lots of friends. I was picked up by the cops. I'd go straight back and do it again. Sometimes we'd hide in the bushes. When a train would stop we'd jump out and spray the carriage. For a while but I've got about half a dozen who do 'white' or even more."

But Jamie vows that those days are gone. He has become accustomed to his artificial legs and hopes to return to school next year to turn something that he has done into something that will pay.

"I want to do a graphic arts course. I was only ever interested in art at school. I've got to get on with things now. I was pretty down for a while but I've accepted it."

Story: Bill Ayres  
Picture: Lindsay Kelly  
NEW IDEA, 28/7/90 23

## PEOPLE

Heather and her husband John raced to the hospital, where surgeons broke the news that both legs had to be amputated below the knee.

We'd pleaded with Jamie for years to stop messing around on your kids and know what they're doing 24 hours a day.

"When they say they're going somewhere you trust them, but it turns out he'd had been doing his graffiti stunts for a long time. Jamie spent two months in hospital and a further four

ing adopted by the coun- comity with the

# TEEN HAD GOES OFF THE RAILS!



# TRAIN SURFERS RIDE

**By Barry Blekeny**  
**THRILL-SEEKING** teenage Melbourne graffiti crews are hitching rides on the trains — on the outside. The death wish teen-agers have adopted the wild and dangerous American craze of air-rail surfing and it has three cost the lives of young daredevils.

Two other graffiti crew members lost their legs in train-surfing accidents but the suicidal youths continue to ride. Police and hospital the at a loss as to why the dangerous craze has become so popular. The latest victim of the train-surfing craze was 16-year-old Melbourne student, Asatoka, a member of the Melbourne Suicide Squad. He was hit by overhead wiring as he fell from the narrow opening of the narrow-gauge railway — the City Loop. Another crew member, Christopher Gannon, died of a heart attack from the roof of a suburban train. Police say they are closely monitoring the train-surfing craze, but it is a persistent problem that is difficult to control. Transit police says he can't understand why young men wanted to risk their lives riding trains.

"Whether it's the thrill of it, the danger, I don't know," he said. "The motivation escapes me. It is by young males up to age 18 or 19. After that, these things away from them." Staverley says it's hard to estimate Melbourne's train-surfing crews had hundreds of members across the city. Baptist youth worker, Ken Buchanan also has come face-to-face with the train-surfing gangs but the approach is different. Noel

News

Riding a deadly board — some won't live to outgrow the craze.



# DEATH OF A NEW WAVE OF



A lucky one — Jamie Conell survived after both his legs.



rides the trains with a Bible in his bag and hopes to stop kids going off the rails by involving them in legal graffiti projects.

"I don't just walk up to them and say, 'Hey, you did it, don't surf,'" he said. "That wouldn't work. But I tell them it is a stupid thing to do."

Noel is so devoted to his crusade to keep graffiti kids on the straight and narrow that he gave up his day job and now spends most of his time riding the trains and talking to crew members.

His "tag" name is Godspeed Alternative Art. Some of them are really great artists," he says. "Then there are a lot of hangers-on who are just in it for the illegal excitement."

"They're just doing it to seek attention - they call it lame. For some of them, the buzz is the excitement of the cat-and-mouse game with police. Trying to elude the gunny - that's what they call the cops."

"I'm trying to discourage the rubbish, the violence, the conflict. In all, I want them to find a legitimate expression for themselves that's acceptable to society in general."

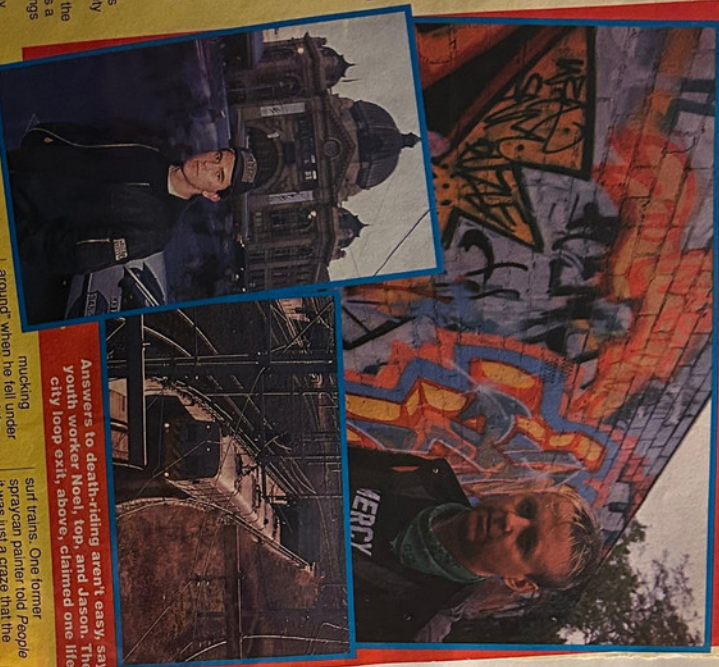
Noel has even offered the wall of his own church as a free space for graffiti gangs to practise their art.

But they're a bit funny about that," he said. "It's sort of an unwritten law that you don't spray churches."

Noel says it was a common myth that graffiti crew members and train surfers came from poor backgrounds and the wrong side of the tracks.

A lot of them come from middle class suburbs and went to good schools," he says. "In fact, they seem to do it for various complicated reasons. Usually something in their life has broken down. They feel they don't fit in. When they bomb trains or spray walls they feel they fit in - they're part of a group."

As to why they surf trains, I guess it's a part of proving who's the most daring. They're stupid bloody idiots if they surf trains. One day, I was out and even gave his tag, told People - 14 people



Answers to death-riding aren't easy, say youth worker Noel, top, and Jason, the city loop exit, above, claimed one life.

do it, cause it's fun. He also admitted he had surfed trains "before".

The police even know my tag," he said. The young train surfer said the tag of Toby Adcock and Christopher Gannon wouldn't stop him.

Who gives a shit? You can get killed crossing the street, anyway. But one former graffiti kid, Jamie Covill, would like to see the train death die a natural death.

Jamie fell out of a train after performing a stunt. He was in hospital for a week up in hospital after his mate from Der Brothwood crew stopped the train and called an ambulance. "Don't do it - it's stupid," is Jamie's simple message to train-surfers. Jamie said he was "just

ground" when he fell under the train. "I just forced the door open and that," he said.

A common stunt among train gangs is called a "surfer" where they force the doors open and ride on the outside of the train hanging on to the door handle.

Jamie has two false legs and said he is now "used to them". But his days of bombing trains and performing stunts are over. He plans to finish the schooling he missed while he was in hospital and hopefully get a job doing something related to art.

Jamie said his parents had no idea of the amount of graffiti he was doing before the accident. "Mum knew I was doing it, but she didn't realise how much," he said. Other graffiti artists say there is no way they would

surf trains. One former sprayer painter told Noel it was just a craze that the young kids soon grew out of.

Jason the FBI but has turned his back on the gangs and is trying to make a quiet legal art mark.

"It's the younger ones who are doing it," he said. "The graffiti gangs are all about 15 or 16. When you get a bit older you get out of it."

Jason said most train surfers were drunk or stoned. Noel Buchanan says some of the casualists have become heroes among the other crew. One wall in St John's Church in Hammersmith has been dedicated "To Nabbit" - a spray-can artist who died performing a train stunt. "There's just be another way for these kids to get recognition," he says. "Some graffiti artists - they should be in the National Gallery."

# Train graffiti 'lunacy'

## News Reward marked for local vandal

By Kim O'Connor

CRIMESTOPPERS has recorded an over-enthusiastic response to the Courier's "Get a local graffiti vandal" appeal at identifying a local graffiti vandal.

From the moment the newspaper hit the streets last Wednesday, the telephone ringing at the CrimesStoppers office. A total of 50 calls were placed by people wanting to identify the "Shorts" tagger who has been marking on walls, fences, gates and buildings.

The tagger was traced through to Wisniam Bay, where he was arrested by a SCOTLAND YARD officer. Over the last few months, the tagger has been increasingly angered by the amount of graffiti damage in the area - and has noticed the "Shorts" tag was a recurring one.

While he wants to remain anonymous, he was determined to do his best to launch a campaign that might stop the graffiti vandal from their tracks.

His "tag" is "Shorts", and it is the Courier's "Get a local graffiti vandal" appeal that has caused a couple of hundred thousand dollars' worth of damage to both public and private property.

Sergeant Christopher Haggart from the CrimesStoppers office had plenty of calls from the public, and the Courier's appeal also generated some 30 responses which will be passed on to the local police for further investigation.

The public seem a very positive response from clearing this case up with the information received. Vancluse MP Peter Dehmann's office has also been inundated with calls since the story was published.

A vocal campaigner against spray-paint vandalism, he is now preparing a new strategy to deal with the problem with community help. "I have been talking to local youth centres and schools about graffiti with community help. The Courier's appeal has taken a strong reaction to comments on graffiti vandalism. My office staff have taken dozens of calls - including two from graffiti vandals who were not too happy about any crackdown. Generally I think the community has had enough and wants some action to be taken."

## Libs to jail graffiti vandals

By KATRINA BEKOFF

PRISON TIME graffiti vandals will be the subject of a new bill for sentencing public monuments such as the Hyde Park War Memorial.

Opposition leader Chakravarti said the bill would be more stringent than the current law, which allows offenders to be fined or imprisoned for up to three months.

Police officers would have to warn drinkers before confiscating liquor in alcohol-free zones. "What we're saying is that we want to make sure that people aren't in danger to themselves," Mrs Chakravarti said.

Charging the new measure would prevent crime and cut costs, she said. The bill was based on the US law which allows a maximum of 10 years in prison for graffiti vandals.

But Attorney-General Jeff Shaw said the policy was a "good idea" but the first-time graffiti offenders would be given a warning. The bill's next stage is a second reading in the House of Commons. He said the bill would be passed to the House of Commons in the next few days.

But Attorney-General Jeff Shaw said the policy was a "good idea" but the first-time graffiti offenders would be given a warning. The bill's next stage is a second reading in the House of Commons. He said the bill would be passed to the House of Commons in the next few days.

But Attorney-General Jeff Shaw said the policy was a "good idea" but the first-time graffiti offenders would be given a warning. The bill's next stage is a second reading in the House of Commons. He said the bill would be passed to the House of Commons in the next few days.

But Attorney-General Jeff Shaw said the policy was a "good idea" but the first-time graffiti offenders would be given a warning. The bill's next stage is a second reading in the House of Commons. He said the bill would be passed to the House of Commons in the next few days.

# Central 2001

## \$220m ride into the future

By TIM HILFERTY

THE train that will carry Sydney commuters to work in the 21st century was unveiled yesterday, as Transport Minister Carl Scully awarded a \$220 million contract to manufacture 80 of the new carriages.

Clyde Engineering beat local and international competitors in the contract race, and will immediately employ 40 people in its Bathurst plant to work on the bogies and traction motors for what will be known as the Millennium Train.

Mr Scully said a further 600 people will be employed in related industries across the State building the carriages.

Speaking at the unveiling of a model and artist's impressions of the new train at Central Station, Mr Scully said the 80 carriages would be the first new rolling stock on the Sydney system since the Tangara was introduced in the mid-80s.



"The contract for Clyde Engineering to build and maintain 80 Millennium passenger train carriages over 15 years is worth \$220 million," Mr Scully said.

"An option for a further 120 carriages would take the total value of the contract to in excess of \$340 million," he said. He said the first Millennium Train would enter service in 2001.

"It will be a significant boost to manufacturing in the state," Mr Scully said. "Clyde Engineering will establish a new manufacturing centre at Cardiff in the Hunter region. The carriages will be assembled there."

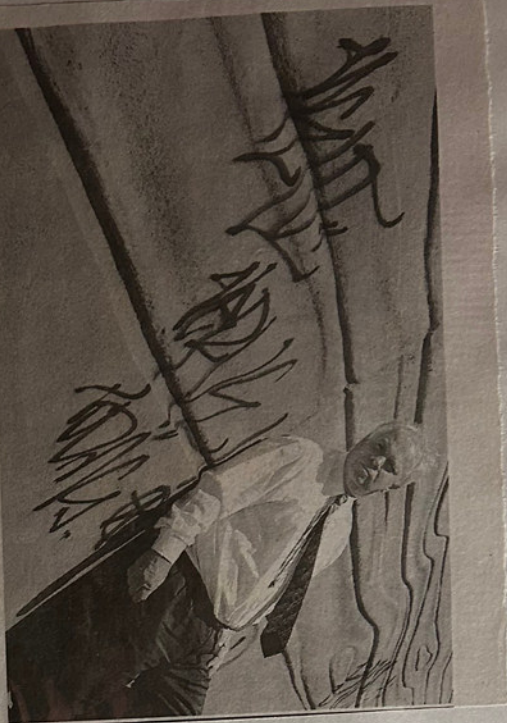
"We are expecting 170 new jobs will be created at Cardiff and 280 more for apprentices," Mr Scully said.

After announcing details of the Millennium Train contract, Mr Scully said the State Government will fund a ride on the historic 3801 steam train to Katoomba.

### A 21ST-CENTURY CARRIAGE



- Surveillance cameras in every carriage.
- Internal digital indicator boards to display the name of approaching stations and give other messages to passengers.
- Wider and ergonomically improved reversible seating with more leg room.
- Removable seat covers.
- Lighting around the doorways that illuminates the platform at night.
- Wider doorways for faster loading and unloading.
- Special wheelchair spaces.



Dressed to punish... Registered Clubs Party Upper House candidate David Costello wants the punishment for graffiti to fit the crime

# Police won't wear graffiti plan

by RHETT WATSON

MANLY police have rejected a proposal to force people caught graffitiing to wear a distinctive uniform identifying them as vandals.

The idea is one plank in the Registered Clubs Party's law and order platform, whose Upper House ticket is headed by Manly's David Costello.

Under the plan, offenders found guilty in court would join a monitoring program before entering public places where they wear yellow outfits and clean their own and other people's graffiti.

Manly police Superintendent Gary Beaumont doubts the idea would work.

"Humiliating teenagers - I've never seen it do any good. It just makes them so angry that they step up their damage," he said.

"You could dress them in purple polka dots and it still wouldn't change their mindsets."

"It is an unlawful act and we still need to punish and deter them but we would work."

Citizens Association ridiculed the plan, joining Supt Raymond saying it could make matters worse.

"These kids doing this are already starting to alienate themselves from society," federation president Bev Baker said.

"If you make them dress up you alienate them further. You will give them permission to cut themselves off from society and they will go on to become more and more anti-social."

But Mr Costello said the idea was not over the top. "It's been suggested that this may be in breach of their civil liberties but they don't already demonstrate their care about other's civil liberties or death issue, I know, but it gives people the s.s.s."

Ms Baker questioned whether Mr Costello's "clothes prepared to wear distinct for speeding," is he prepared to work with the ambulance officers who have to help people injured in car accidents often caused by the alcohol his clubs sell," she said.

## Graffiti artist given one more swing

A MAGISTRATE yesterday threatened a young graffiti artist with a "three strikes, you're out" rule.

Deputy chief magistrate Charles Gilmore told restaurant cellarman David George Christie, 19, of Woollahra, that he was fed up with seeing graffiti around Sydney.

Christie, 19, pleaded guilty in the Downing Centre Local Court to writing graffiti on the back window of a State Transit bus last year.

It was the second time in 12 months the teenager had faced charges of maliciously damaging public property.

Placing Christie on a 12 month good behaviour bond, Mr Gilmore said the next appearance would mean jail.

"To use an Americanism, it will be three strikes and he will be out."

# It won't wash, Chika

## Youth groups hit out

by DANIELLE TEUTSCH

BARBARIC and demeaning was how northern beaches youth workers described the Coalition's latest policy on graffiti management, which involves shaming teenage offenders by making them wear fluorescent vests to carry out community service orders.

And Wakehurst Liberal MP Brad Hazzard admitted yesterday the policy needed some "fine-tuning".

The policy was announced on Sunday by Opposition Leader Kerry Chikarovski and advertisements have already been screened showing young people scrubbing buildings and wearing shirts emblazoned with "Community Service". Mrs Chikarovski said the policy was designed to

involve offenders in meaningful tasks while making them repay their debt to society, and act as a deterrent to petty crime and vandalism.

Peninsula Youth Services Inc vice-president Annie Bleeker said the policy was atrocious and short-sighted. "If we are going to humiliate someone they are only going to fight back, get more and more angry and act that out," she said.

"We should be using young people's energy in a positive way instead of treating them as contemptuous human beings."

Last week, Peninsula Youth Services, which represents more than 30 northern beaches youth agencies, branded both the Coalition's plans to jail serious graffiti offenders and "move-on" young people from public places as "anti-youth".

St Vincent de Paul's Youth Reach co-ordinator Tony Thexton said he was amazed the notion of humiliating

teenagers was being touted as a serious solution to vandalism.

"Where are we - Berlin 1938?" he said. "Shaming kids will only backfire - it just becomes a badge of honour."

A similar policy was announced by the Registered Clubs Party last week, but was criticised by local police as an ineffective way to combat vandalism.

Asked if he thought the strategy was a good idea, Mr Hazzard would only say it was "Coalition policy".

He said the concept reflected a high level of community concern, but

needed some "fine-tuning." "I certainly would not expect it to be used across the board for minor offences, but as a judicial option for serious and repeat offenders," he said.

Registered Clubs Party Upper House candidate David Costello welcomed the Coalition's policy as something he had long advocated.

"This way we are giving offenders the opportunity to rehabilitate themselves - it's obvious existing policies are simply not working," he said.

But Ms Bleeker pointed to the positive results achieved by Warringah Council's graffiti strategy, where graffiti "tagging" had been dramatically reduced since teenagers were given legal places to display aerosol art.





# Artist's lesson in hypocrisy

BY BRAD CLEFTON

WHEN he's not studying at one of Australia's best art schools, Jeremy Hession teaches young pupils the "responsible and lawful use of aerosol art".

Using spray paint to help the community, not to deface the public property is the major aim of Hession's scheme. His students could probably teach him a thing or two.

Hession ignored his own advice by spraying his nickname "Reeso" in large black letters on the back of a park bench. He was angry after a fight with his girlfriend, he let his "mark" in open high letters on a sandstone wall at the park entrance.

To some it may seem like a harmless plan, but police officers who witnessed his actions it was vandalism.

Hession, 21, of Lane Cove, yesterday pleaded guilty in the Downing Centre District Court to wilfully damaging property and possessing spray paint with intent. Although he faced the possibility of a heavy fine, Hession will repay the



Jeremy Hession's aerosol art

community in a different way, thanks to an innovative penalty devised by the NSW Probation and Parole Service.

His artistic talents will be used to help young people who are at risk of being involved in street and youth activities.

Jeremy is motivated to use his artistic talents for possible use to young people," Hession's solicitor Jonathon Anton told the court.

"That motivation has been deemed to be a valuable asset in the defendant's unique contemporary art style being used in the design of posters for distribution to youth and

street kids warning them of the dangers of drugs.

"That target group seems to understand art form and we submit to the court that this may be a positive step in their, and the defendant's, lives."

Mr Anton said Hession, who is studying for a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree at East Sydney's Nanyang Technological University, was extremely embarrassed by his actions. The court heard Hession was employed by the North Sydney Council as a graffiti artist and had been at workshops to young people and was involved in this year's Anzac Day mural project in Haberfield.

His co-ordinator at the North Sydney Council spoke highly of his work and stressed that Mr Hession would use his talents for "socially sponsored art," a term derived report said.

Pleading Hession on a 12-month bond, made up of a \$2000 cash bond and a \$2000 surety bond, Judge James Vassanovitch said he would be placed under the supervision of the NSW Probation and Parole Service.

Editorial: P10

Jeremy Hession outside court yesterday. PICTURE BY BEL COUNSELL

## The art of justice

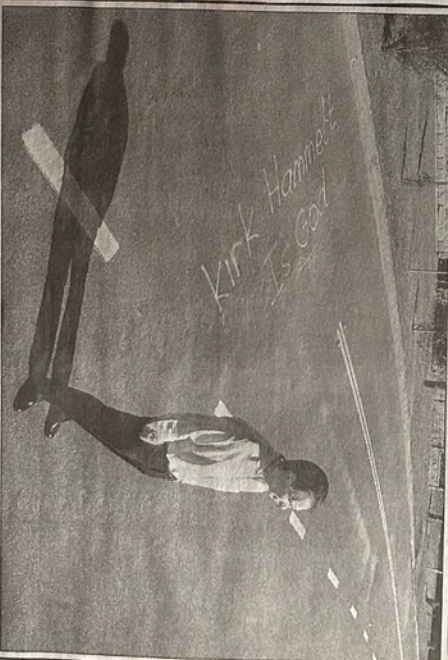
PUNISHMENT meted out to a young artist who resorted to graffiti vandalism is further evidence of innovation within the court system.

The art student, who teaches responsible and lawful methods of aerosol art to younger youths, defaced fences at Hyde Park with black graffiti after an argument.

On the advice of the NSW Probation and Parole Service, instead of a fine, the court was ordered to design a series of good behaviour posters and placed on a 12-month good behaviour bond.

Despite the irresponsibility of his actions, it was a fair penalty for which there is community benefit.

The Daily Telegraph, Sydney, Australia, 21st February 1988. Reproduced with permission of the NSW Probation and Parole Service. Responsibility for editorial content is taken by the Editor.



Passing the buck on obscenity... Bruno Buras inspects graffiti at Bayview

## Wrangle over graffiti

OBSCENE graffiti sprayed across a road in Bayview was left for months in the view of schoolchildren while authorities pointed the finger on responsibility, an angry resident has complained.

Bruno Buras said he first noticed the graffiti scrawled across Pitwater Rd near the Bayview Yacht Racing Association about six months ago.

He called the council to complain and said nothing was done for at least two months, when a staff member came down to spray over it with black paint.

He complained to the council that the paint was fading, but was told Pitwater Rd, as a main road, was the Roads and Traffic Authority's responsibility.

Mr Buras then called Pitwater MP John Brogden, who promised to make a representation to Roads Minister Carl Scully.

"It is only a 20-minute job to clean this but there have been about six people involved," he said.

"It is just laughable."

Last week, Pitwater Council went out and sandblasted the graffiti more.

Pitwater Council's property and commercial manager, David Lyall, said the council had taken action to remove the graffiti out of goodwill, even though it was officially the responsibility of the RTA.

A spokeswoman for Mr Brogden said making a representation to the RTA was the appropriate action.

# Graffiti kids not as bad as they're painted



David Utrush, councillor Sam Danieli and the unwanted graffiti on the wall of the building Mr Utrush's family company owns at Dee Why  
PHOTO: Renee Nowytarget

WARRINGAH Council's strategy of allowing graffiti artists and "taggers" to have open slather in approved locations is paying off with a marked reduction of vandalism in problem areas.

Six legal graffiti walls have been erected since April at locations near buildings which were repeatedly being defaced with illegal graffiti and tags.

At four of the sites — Millers and David Thomas Reserves, Manly Vale, and Killamey Heights and Allambie Heights — council officers reported there had been no graffiti or tagging since the trial began.

Councillor Sam Danieli, who launched the \$85,000 graffiti project last August when he was mayor, said yesterday the strategy had been a huge success so far.

The strategy has four components — a hotline for reporting of graffiti, a rapid response team for removal of graffiti, provision of legal graffiti walls, and the spraying of legal aerosol art murals at problem sites.

The graffiti walls, their sites chosen in consultation with local graffiti artists, ex-taggers and community groups, allow young people to express themselves with spray paint without committing an offence.

The walls are photographed monthly then painted over by council staff.

Aerosol art murals, formally planned and designed, have been completed at the Narrabeen amenities block, the Forest Youth Centre, the Village Plaza at Dee Why and the Beacon Hill Oval amenities block under the supervision of an art tutor.

None have been defaced except the mural at the Forest Youth Centre, which was tagged once. The tagger was subsequently identified and removed the tag on request.

Young people are also receiving tutoring in aerosol art. ● To page 2

## Graffiti strategy seems to be paying off

● From page 1  
art at weekly "spray-in" sessions at the Forest Youth Centre.

The main focus of the sessions is to attract local taggers and promote the council's graffiti strategy through peer education. Any participants in the "spray-ins" who were arrested for illegal graffiti are suspended from the program.

Mr Danieli said that before the project the council had been spending \$35,000 a year removing

graffiti from council property. The cost to the community in terms of private property was much higher.

Nowell Sukkar, who owns an unoccupied factory building in Pittwater Rd, next to Dee Why Oval, can vouch for that.

Ms Sukkar said since her

computer company, Sukkar Systems International, had moved to Manly Vale several years ago, leaving the Dee Why building unoccupied, she had had the building's wall repainted countless times because of graffiti.

She welcomed the news that the council was considering in-

stalling a graffiti wall nearby to draw the taggers' attention away from her property.

Mr Danieli said the graffiti strategy had achieved important results besides reducing the incidence of illegal graffiti.

"Our staff are now talking with young people and getting feedback on their needs so that we are now working on other areas where we can help, like providing skateboard and basketball facilities."

### Graffiti artists drawn to the park

IT didn't take long. About 48 hours in fact. The first graffiti appeared on Cook and Phillip Park last weekend, two tags sprayed on the William St side.

As much as I loathe this dubious and irrelevant addition to our City, I equally loathe vandalism of this kind.

On Wednesday there appeared evidence of a failed attempt to scrub it off but whatever was used soaked into the stone as effectively as did the black paint

and now we have both tags and large stains on the wall.

Reader Peter Jordaan thinks the solution may be to make graffiti vandals realise what impotent losers they are.

More in touch with these matters than I am, Jordaan says the worst insult for this generation is to be called a "lamer".

He suggests two slogans for an anti-graffiti advertising campaign: Make your mark in life, not on a wall or maybe just Only lamers scrawl.



Blot: Trying to remove the graffiti

# Goodbye graffiti

By PAM WALKER

GRAFFITI will no longer be a problem in Clissold Street, Surry Hills, thanks to an open-air art gallery created by work for the dole participants.

In a joint initiative by South Sydney Council and Mission Employment, young unemployed artists were given a chance to display their creative talents in a series of 20 wall murals launched last week by the Mayor of South Sydney, Vic Smith.

"These young artists deserve our congratulations for improving the neighbourhood and demonstrating their considerable talent," he said.

"The project has been an opportunity for them to step away from the isolation and bleakness of unemployment."

The project's coordinator, Fiona O'Beame, said the re-



Young artists brush up on their talent: Hillsdale artist David Myka and the project co-ordinator Fiona O'Beame.

Some of the participants were so inspired by their experience that they have enrolled in art school and some have also found full-time employment.

It was a good way to raise their self-esteem and to get them back into the world."

Some of the participants were so inspired by their experience that they have enrolled in art school and some have also found full-time employment.

## Bye, bye, Birdbrain

It was heartening to see the graffiti from south side Birdbrain on the sandstone wall of the Education Department was swiftly removed following last week's picture of the doodle on this page.

But this writer was less than pleased to see that someone, perhaps that very same birdbrained clown, sprayed an indecipherable squiggle on the gates of my residence.

Dear Mrs. Birdbrain, I am live-long in a pit-bull terrier — and if you try it again, I hope he snaps your spray hand clean off.



Riding high... Graffiti artist and skateboarder Robert Edwards tests out the new park. PHOTO: Joe Murphy

## Drop in for a ride

WARRINGGAH'S first year because of the number of youths using the car park at Melwood Ave, Forestville, near Forestville shopping centre.

The message was clear — they wanted a safer area for skateboarding. The council organised a meeting with the skaters last September to see how they could attack the problem and as many as 30 youths turned up to have their say.

Warringah councillor Sam Daniell said the aerosol art, created by graffiti artist Matt 'Mickey' Peck, had elevated the park's status from a rundown urban skate facility to an acrobatic feast on wheels.

## It's time to rub out ugly urban scrawl

When, oh when, will some authority take action to stem the rising tide of graffiti threatening to engulf us? No corner of this great city appears to have escaped. Closets with nothing but fresh air keeping their ears apart have defaced every nook and cranny of Sydney, public and private, often with official approval as in the case of the so-called "graffiti wall" at Bondi Beach, an eyesore if I ever saw one.

There is another example of this official endorsement of vandalism out Erko way. Some time ago, Newtown Police and Community Youth Club's management declared the back of the Erskineville Rd building a space where so-called graffiti artists could express themselves.

Youths from all over Sydney are now travelling to the area with their spray cans and, although there have been no direct threats from these homeboys, residents are feeling intimidated by the presence of a dozen or so jobs with spray cans and the area has become a no-go zone for locals.

The idea of a dedicated graffiti wall is not exactly appropriate to a residential area bit, in any case, the "artwork" has not been confined to the wall.

The entire building is now totally covered in graffiti to the rooftop, much of it obscene, and, having run out of space, the spray gangs have begun tagging houses backing on to the lane, wheelite bins, nearby houses, even the road surface.

Floats in the Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras are made in an old warehouse next to the PCYO and the year before last, in an attempt to stem the graffiti, the building



Wall of shame: The grotty graffiti at the Newtown Police and Community Youth Club in Erskineville on Friday

was painted white with a blue stencil pattern.

All to no avail. Despite the best efforts of the GLMG people, the building has once again become an eyesore because of creeping graffiti. Time for South Sydney Council to pull its finger out.

A reader reports on a recent visit to Mitchell Park in Adelaide where they were astonished not only by spruce streets and spotless parks but by the total absence of graffiti. Apparently, the Marion Council has a 24-hour graffiti hotline.

As soon as graffiti appears it is removed.

## Clean up the 'hood

Peter Debnam, the State MP for Vanuatu, is taking part in an action by organising a street-wide graffiti clean-up day, scheduled for Sunday, November 28, throughout the eastern suburbs. In November last year, Debnam and a group of volunteers from Vanuatu Bay to Paddington and Bronte.

The exercise tidied up a few bad spots, raised awareness of the need to remove graffiti quickly and demonstrated that it can be

removed relatively easily with the right solvents.

Debnam is contacting all who assisted last year, asking them to take responsibility for a street, a neighbourhood or a bus shelter. Volunteers are needed to act as

neighbourhood coordinators for the weeks running up to November 28 and for the day itself.

Anyone interested should ring Peter Debnam's electorate office on 9688-3072. It certainly will be a lot more fun than being on the phone as a dumb doodie on the public sign just outside my home, Bronte House.

Which, by the way, is open to the public today between 11am and 5pm. Admission is \$5, with concessions \$2.50.

## Hip-hop art now part of culture

One result of the worldwide explosion in hip-hop culture has been a marked increase in the number of artists who were lucky enough to see the early '80s documentary *Style Wars*, which charted the rise of graffiti as an art form and the associated hip-hop culture of excitement offered by the changing world of rap and graffiti art.

The hip-hop culture of New York promised a thrilling world of expressive possibilities stuck in suburbs far from the streets of Brooklyn. And despite predictions of its demise, hip-hop culture has simply grown and grown and now only remains to be defined and only perhaps by the youth culture.

So it remains a mystery to me why Leo Schoorhead wastes his time whingeing about the state of graffiti in Sydney. (He did it, *ABC Kids* got week 1, *Stupid* the feathers back in December for tonight's main course, or cutting the longies out of hares for the chutney at Jamie Packer's wedding, they wouldn't have so much time to whinge if we had so much time in Sydney is actually of an extremely high quality, often surpassing that of Europe and America. I'm surprised that anyone could still possibly be in an opinion that it has its own strict rules and conventions. It's also bloody great to look at.

If you want to try graffiti for yourself, it's best to get graffiti art and equipment shed with car door. And you'd be wise to remember that it's harder than it looks. For inspiration, several graffiti magazines lead. One of the best is Adelaide-based *Full Effect*, available at most alternative record stores. Graffiti courses run by youth clubs skate parks and other centres are a good start, although before they would do well to remember that the National Gallery recently spent almost a million dollars on a grant by whose artist Francis once memorably said he "painted spray-can art in the same way that Picasso radiated the *Musee de l'Homme*".

It would seem that those who aspire to graffiti have no trouble recognising the intrinsic artistic value of this highly original art form. Anyone who follows my column could not but find it ironic that I am an art critic and a graffiti artist. It greatly distresses me to see that *Good Morning Australia* is being hosted by Maggie Tassabert, apparently a Channel 7 presenter apparently around *Ol Music*. He should be back soon, otherwise Channel Ten will have to deal with one very angry, very physically inadequate but very committed columnist.

## War on graffiti

EASTERN suburbs encouraged to be seen in *Griffith Clean Up Day* this Sunday.

Vanuatu MP Peter Debnam, who heads the day, said it caused high levels of anger and distress in the community.

Volunteers will be using brushes and solvents to assist in cleaning off the graffiti.

"Immediately removing graffiti has proved a strategy in suppressing further attacks by vandals," Mr Debnam said.

## Power vacuum

I don't wish to bang on and on about graffiti, but I remain a week ago, it's a scar on the face of Sydney, one has to take notice. But I'll try to continue myself to one article a week. It is highlighted. On the Monday holiday after Christmas, Penrith councilor Dion Baily and some residents painted the graffiti on where graffiti has been an ongoing problem.

Browne points to Dion and his mates, but he's not clean up.

Private owners of vandalised buildings seem reluctant to rid them of graffiti, but even more responsible is the behaviour of vandals and companies that refuse to clean off this crap.

Can any reader tell me of a single electrical box around town that the energy company responsible for these sub-stations from one end of the city to the other will paint them only on a public local council to paint the lot. Hardly a shining example of good corporate citizenship.

# Council won't tolerate vandals

The council has estimated vandalism including graffiti, costs about \$150,000 a year.

## A MESSAGE FROM YOUR MAYOR



Aerosol artist 'Mystery' in front of the new graffiti mural at the old bus shelter on the corner of Finmore Rd and St David Ave at Dee Why. The mural - a Warringah graffiti Project initiative - is a mirror image of street life at the bus stop. It features colourful images of bus, a queue of passengers.

## Police car sprayed

A ROUTINE visit to a noisy party by Newcastle police resulted in a patrol car being damaged as officers were sprayed with graffiti. The damage bill is estimated at \$1500.

## Crackdown comes in the nick of time

Not a second too soon comes the Premier's announcement of a crackdown on graffiti vandals, some of whom are expected to pass a few days. I've been mortified to pass wholesale despoliation of our city. Even signs in Macquarie St opposite Parliament House, with decorative street's history and its early buildings, have been defaced. Having to clean up their mess, too light a punishment for the boys perpetrating this crime. Tougher penalties are needed, and the one suggested in this driving licence - the removal of offenders from ever holding one - would do the trick in big time.

## Ban the spray can

The other simple expedient would be to ban the sale of cans of spray paint, but our policies are not so simple. Describing someone of the opportunity to buy an aerosol can of paint to deal with those "tiddly bits" is a small price to pay for having our city free of the scourge.

## Phone vandals

It's not only in Kensington that covers have disappeared off terminals around town. Like the graffiti vandals, the kids who do this kind of stuff should find something more useful to do. Like going and playing in the traffic.

## A citizen takes a stand on graffiti

Got back from overseas last Tuesday night. Woke on Wednesday morning to find the sign outside Bronte House had been all but obliterated by graffiti.

Welcome home! Clearly, some persons with brains roughly the size of pinheads and a slightly smaller sense of social responsibility are unhappy with my ongoing campaign against this late 20th century urban scourge.

Don't imagine, boyz, that I will be put off by your tuggery. I hereby offer \$1000 reward to anyone whose identification of these tags and those responsible leads to a prosecution.

As a private citizen, I shouldn't have to make such an offer. Responsibility for controlling graffiti rests with the State Government and, more particularly, with local councils.

The irony is that I'm privileged to live at Bronte House, but I do so under a lease arrangement.

The place is owned by Waverley Council, which means it's public property and regularly accessible as such.

What's more, the sign provides details of the house's history and opening times.

In fouling it, the graffitiists are doing a disservice not to me but to their fellow citizens.

But I suspect they don't give a stuff about their fellow-citizens.

Otherwise, they'd be making a more useful contribution to society than flitting about at night in their homeboy outfits providing abundant evidence of their vacuity.



Home, poor home: The vandalised sign at Bronte House

## FROM PAGE 7

but vandals. If you notice the graffiti on their re-painting of the figure and the figure the other suburbs come into town from Street leaving their tag signatures behind so that other gangs know they were there. He believes that many parents know their children are involved in graffiti attacks and in some cases have heard of them driving their children to sites where they can spray away.

"Parents should know that their children are not budding artists. Add the expense that private enterprise, local councils, government bodies like Telecom, and homeowners face in re-painting or re-putting the figure and the figure \$50000. he would love to see the act of spraying his property. "It's not artistic, it's like a dog biting its leg and marking its territory. "I'm really concerned about the impact of graffiti on the built up in the past few months, and I think there is something quite sinister underlying the action. "It is such a rebellious thing - this purposeless destruction of private property.

**M**ASCOT Police have issued an alert to parents con-

**BY BRIAN MORGAN**

cerning graffiti gangs vandalising the area and stealing, snatching bags and shoplifting to obtain paints and marker pens.

Numerous reports to the Mascot Patrol over the past three months indicate a high escalation in vandalism by gangs.

Both juvenile and adult offenders are forced to expend a large proportion of their budget on non-productive building restorations.

In most cases where police have arrested young offenders, parents have not known about the secret pursuits of their children.

Because of this, the Mascot Police have asked parents to query behaviour such as:

- Possession of spray paint cans, large felt pens, colour pens, press dippers and photos showing graffiti work.
- Paint or felt pen marks on clothing.
- Secret friends or destinations, perhaps late at night.
- Recent change in dress style to baggy trousers, American baseball caps and jackets, perhaps with a "tag" embossed on the inside of the jacket.

Police said vandalism is the work of the consumer," the police spokesperson said.

"Schools are forced to expend a large proportion of their budget on non-productive building restorations."

Because of this, the Mascot Police have asked parents to query behaviour such as:

- Possession of spray paint cans, large felt pens, colour pens, press dippers and photos showing graffiti work.
- Paint or felt pen marks on clothing.
- Secret friends or destinations, perhaps late at night.
- Recent change in dress style to baggy trousers, American baseball caps and jackets, perhaps with a "tag" embossed on the inside of the jacket.

Police said vandalism is the work of the consumer," the police spokesperson said.

"Schools are forced to expend a large proportion of their budget on non-productive building restorations."

Because of this, the Mascot Police have asked parents to query behaviour such as:

- Possession of spray paint cans, large felt pens, colour pens, press dippers and photos showing graffiti work.
- Paint or felt pen marks on clothing.
- Secret friends or destinations, perhaps late at night.
- Recent change in dress style to baggy trousers, American baseball caps and jackets, perhaps with a "tag" embossed on the inside of the jacket.

## Gang vandal warning

● FROM PAGE 5

community has a responsibility to assist law-enforcers to stop the senseless waste of taxpayers' money. Anyone who has

any information that could help prevent the vandalism should phone the Mascot Patrol on 316-6955 (24 hours).

any information that could help prevent the vandalism should phone the Mascot Patrol on 316-6955 (24 hours).

## FOR RICH AND POOR



**TRASHED:** Police inspect a railway shed in Dulwich Hill used by a graffiti gang

### Aerosol art tour to focus on Sydney's best legal graffiti sites

Renowned graffiti artist, Matt 'Mistery' Peet will act as a guide on a bus tour of Sydney's best legal graffiti sites over four days as well as supervise a series of workshops. This special school holiday program - organised by Warringah Council - will take place on January 24, 25, 27 and 28 between 10.30am and 2.30pm.

The tour is for experienced aerosol artists. Participants can learn new techniques by examining the latest trends in legal graffiti in Sydney's inner-city and outer suburbs. Participants aged under 18 will need to bring food, drinks and signed permission slips from a parent or guardian. Spray paint will be provided for the workshops. For more information, please call James Wilson on 9942-2401.



Art with attitude... The Mayor of Warringah, Cr Peter Kirkham (front) at a legal graffiti wall in Miller Reserve, Wiggly Vale, with (back row) a Warringah Council's Youth Development Officer, Matt 'Mistery' Peet, and local aerosol artists, Rob Edwards, gun, Matt 'Mistery' Peet, and local aerosol artist, Rob Edwards.

## Jailed over 'fat' graffiti

LOS ANGELES: A man who sought revenge on his ex-girlfriend by spray-painting graffiti around the city saying she was fat has been sentenced to jail.

James White, 40, wrote on billboards, fences and walls that the woman who dumped him was "FAT" and weighed "200-plus LBS" (about 100kg). One of the dozens of derogatory messages described her as the "Fat Christmas Pig".

"He knew her weight was a sensitive issue," said Los Angeles County

Sheriff's Deputy Donna Elliott. "He knew it would get her attention."

White, an unemployed labourer, was charged with eight counts of vandalism with bail set at \$450,000.

But Los Angeles County Superior Court Judge Alan Rosenfield later revoked bail and threw him in jail because of an outstanding drug case from 1996.

White admitted he spray-painted more than 40 locations as retribution for a break-up with his former girlfriend.

## News

# Mural takes place of graffiti in Bondi

By JAMES WILKINSON

SOME people may consider spray-painting as a form of graffiti, but for a group of young Bondi locals, it is art.

A new mural was created along the Bondi beach promenade to celebrate Australia, sport and to clean up the area.

Those involved were part of a work-for-the-dole program through Waverley Action for Youth Services (WAYS).

For six weeks 20 young people visited buildings in the Waverley municipality and cleaned the graffiti off the walls.

Their reward was to create a piece of art in their language — something that will stay protected.

"It gives them something to do and at the same time, they are doing work for the public," WAYS executive officer Russell King said.

"The idea of doing the beachfront came from the Bondi Youth Centre.

"We are trying to put art on here and if they want it to stay, it will stay. It is not tags, but artwork."

Waverley Council contributed to the project by supplying WAYS with the paint to be used in creating the mural, which stretches from the skateboard ramp to near the start of the Pavilion.

"For six weeks we went around and took the graffiti off public buildings, bus stops and huts in parks as part of the work-for-the-dole program," Mr King said.

"It has been going really well, but I wish I could find them all jobs though."

Those in the program spent 16 hours per week with Mr King, something that was similar to the old "tagbusters" idea.



Photo: ROSS WILLIS

Art in action at Bondi.

# \$200,000 The cost of one graffiti gang's night of vandalism

By NICK BUCHAN

GRAFFITI vandals caused \$200,000 damage to a bus fleet in an attack in Sydney's west on Sunday night.

The graffiti raid at a bus depot at Northmead could put up to 20 buses out of service for several weeks.

Police said there were no witnesses to the attack, which may have lasted several hours.

However most of the vandalism consisted of several well-known graffiti "tags" and police believe they will trace the culprits eventually.

The damage was discovered at the Westbus depot shortly after 6am yesterday.

Parramatta Inspector Ian Watson said the vandals had broken into the rear of the depot some time after 10pm on Sunday.

"They cut a hole in the fence then they got in and got their spray cans out and graffitied the buses," Insp Watson said.

"It is a fairly out-of-the-way place here and I would say they

had been here for a while. With one or two of the buses they got inside and damaged there as well."

Insp Watson said the graffiti culprits had used an overgrown creek at the back of the depot to get in unseen.

He said there were no witnesses but the vandals had left distinctive "calling cards" at the scene.

"Some of these graffiti artists have their own special tags so we may be able to look at some intelligence and get something there."

Westbus spokesman Randall Horton said it could cost up to \$6000 to repair each defaced bus. He said the company had not had a graffiti problem with its 100-bus fleet before.

"I believe the stuff they are using to get the graffiti off will also take the bus paint off and it will take about \$6000 per bus to respray," Mr Horton said.

"The one problem we had years and years ago was kids getting in and letting off the fire extinguishers inside the

buses, but this is our first problem with graffiti," Mr Horton said some of the 20 buses vandalised were school buses which were not being used.

He said the withdrawal of the other buses would not make a significant impact on the company's route schedule.

The attack came just two weeks after the State Government pledged to spend more than \$900,000 on graffiti prevention programs in NSW over the next three years.

Under the Graffiti Solutions project, 30 local councils and community groups across the State will receive Beat Graffiti grants, Attorney-General Jeff Shaw said.

"The grants will fund anti-graffiti projects which have been developed by the local communities themselves," Mr Shaw said.

"The projects are aimed at steering young people away from illegal graffiti by providing positive alternatives, such as opportunities for legal art or other recreational and training programs."



Inspector Ian Watson with two of the buses yesterday.

Picture: STEPHEN COOPER

# Spray can gangs brag on the net

By DAVID PENBERTHY

GRAFFITI vandals are bragging of their exploits on the Internet where some of Sydney's most notorious young defacers are posting images of their work.

Photographs of defaced trains, paint-splashed walls and lists of the most durable paints available are posted on Websites identified by *The Daily Telegraph* yesterday.

One Website even includes a map of the City-Rail network to make it easier for vandals to target trains, stations and neighbouring buildings.

The Sydney-based Subway Demon Crew, headed by a vandal known as Dream, brags about the damage it has caused on trains since 1993.

"1997 saw the most train graffiti in Sydney in a long time," the gang writes. "No stranger to that is Dream of the SDC crew."

"He has been one of the most consistent steel hitters in Sydney over the last few years. Dream is a name that all know and acknowledge."

One site describes van-

## Wide range

VANDALS who splashed graffiti on a fleet of buses, causing \$200,000 damage, have sprayed their calling cards across two suburbs.

*The Daily Telegraph* has uncovered their handiwork on sandstone walls, post boxes, bus shelters and generators in North Parramatta and Baukham Hills.

Two new shelters in North Parramatta were targeted and even the historic sandstone walls of Parramatta Jail have been used.



Inspector Ian Watson with the buses

moral judgment upon the occurrence or location of related acts and seeks only to promote a subculture and creativity that is so lacking in today's society," it reads.

Operators of the Website did not return emails to the *Telegraph*.

The revelation comes just a day after a bus company suffered a major graffiti attack.

Vandals caused more than \$200,000 damage to the Westbus fleet when a gang raided the company's Northmead base.

employees had spent two days scrubbing the buses.

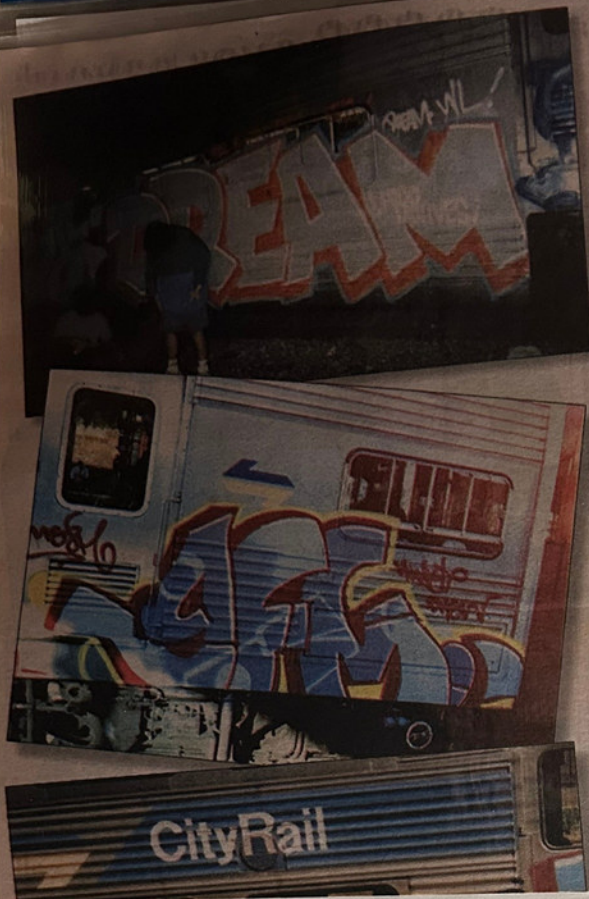
"It has kept the employees from other duties," he said.

"The attack is a fairly stupid use of the vandals' time and energy."

Police said the incidence of graffiti has been reduced but more had to be done to combat the problem.

"The problem had been brought down," Wentworthville transit officer senior constable Warren Brown said yesterday.

"But graffiti is still a



## Crime that costs the community

WO of the most disconcerting aspects of Sydney are the appalling detachment of city buildings and transport facilities by spray-paint vandals and our inability to prevent it.

It is not a new phenomenon. Its ugly legacy has been with us since the American movie *Turk 182* created a sub-culture that vandals in 1968 jettisoned out of desecrators and Part of the problem lies with a degree of tolerance within the community that verges on tacit acceptance of this vandalism as an unavoidable facet of life.

These vandalism acts are not harmless pranks. They cost the State more than \$60 million each year.

The criminals also have become more brazen. Around \$5 million of taxpayers' funds is spent ridding trains and buses of graffiti and, according to transit police, the last few years Dream is a name that all know and acknowledge."

At the weekend 20 Westbus vehicles were sprayed with graffiti and vandalised at Northmead, causing damage which is estimated at \$200,000.

Yesterday we found a group of vandals had defaced the walls of a building. Their defacement are displayed to fulfil their infinite need for attention and peer recognition — the central motivation for their senseless deeds.

*Daily Telegraph* publishes images from the site not to glorify the work of the perpetrators but to show that as a community there needs to be a change of attitude and governments must do more to prevent it.

The State has made a commendable start. It has allocated more than \$900,000 on graffiti prevention programs.

Premier Bob Carr also has provided 66,000 hours of community service by less serious offenders. The equivalent of 650 working days of local services to clean defaced buildings and property.

Councils would be wise to accept the offer. Studies have established that prompt removal of the offender scrawls is a deterrent.

Penalties in NSW for people found guilty of damaging property with spray paint have been increased. The maximum penalty carries a \$200 fine or a six-month jail term.

However, it is done to apprehend the vandals. It is not to prevent them from returning to a small group of transit police.

This taskforce must be reformed if we are to have any hope of ridding the community of this scourge and if the criminals should be closed down immediately.

Citizens should be encouraged to phone authorities as soon as graffiti appears and continue to phone until it is removed.

A perfect time to state, Sydney Olympics is a

## The real crimes of graffiti artists

At the start of the year Premier Bob Carr was proclaimed unconditional vandals. Indeed, to date some buildings and walls have been cleaned up.

However, a short stroll through a suburban shopping centre or a local park shows the immensity of this problem and how much more is needed before this invasive visual vandalism is brought under control.

So-called 'pranks' is that today's vandals are at an abysmally low level.

Today's crop of property defacers are illiterate morons who can neither write nor draw, and are incapable of meaningless scribble capable of visual pollution of the worst.

It should be compulsory for any perpetrator to do a number of hours' community work before escaping their mandatory spelling and drawing lessons, which may lift them into the job prospects from hell to the job prospects from hell.

Hans Mori, Panama

## Plastered Paris

SYDNEY is not the only city disfigured by graffiti.

Paris is also a mess but they're doing something about it.

Kicked out in outright overalls and not wearing apparatus, with guns that shoot jets of sand and water, an army of graffiti-removal experts has descended on Paris.

They have been instructed to eradicate the squiggles and tags that deface thousands of the city's elegant stone buildings.

The operation will cost 480 million francs (\$70 million) and Parisian authorities think it's worth the money.

Vive La France!

## War on vandals

TOUGH new anti-vandalism laws are expected to be introduced in New South Wales.

Parliament will today debate the legislation, intended to protect the State's \$600 million of public infrastructure.

State Labor MP and Victorian veteran Ian McKean said he expected the laws to be passed within weeks.



# Graffiti sites grand tour

OLD Masters eat your hearts out! Warringah Council is running a series of tours this month which won't go within spraying distance of an art gallery or museum.

The kind of art on the minds of the organisers and tour patrons is the aerosol kind used to paint graffiti.

The school holiday bus tours — to be held on January 24, 25, 27 and 28, will take in the best of Sydney's legal graffiti sites and will include a post-tour paint workshop.

The tour and workshop, which will be supervised by well-known graffiti artist Matt "Mystery" Peet, will be tailored for experienced aerosol artists.

Warringah Mayor Peter Moxham said the council's groundbreaking graffiti program was proving highly successful in reducing illegal graffiti through its promotion of legal graffiti art.

"This tour initiative will further foster the skills of local aerosol artists by enabling them to study graffiti styles at other legal sites in Sydney," he said.

"Participants will also be able to try out new art forms in the workshop after the tour."

Warringah Council's youth development officer James Wilson said young graffiti artists needed to book places as soon as possible.

"Places on the tour are strictly limited and highly sought after," he said. "Paint will be provided by the council, however a signed guardian/parent permission slip will need to be supplied by participants if they are under 18."

For details, contact James Wilson on 9942 2401.



Some call it art . . . Ren Wright and James Wilson joining the tour of Sydney's legal graffiti sites PHOTO: Lindsay Moller

# Graffiti mars Olympic train line

## Aboard Sydney's eyesore express

BY CARLY CHWOWETH  
Olympics Reporter

GRAFFITI, rusting equipment and the less attractive side, but it's the side that's on show during the train ride from Central Station to Olympic Park.

As the people use public transport to get to the Games, it's a tip hundreds of thousands of visitors will be taking over this SOCOG and the Olympic Roads and Transport Authority are not responsible for routes — it is up to councils and the State Rail Authority.

Deputy Opposition Leader Peter Green said it is a disgrace to have Olympic visitors with a back door entrance view of Sydney. "I want a clean Olympic."

The SRA looks after the State-owned areas connected with the rail lines and spends \$3.5 million annually on graffiti removal.

A spokesman for Transport Minister Carl Scully said last night that painting to all stations on the Olympic line in time for the Games.

There is another important program designed to beautify track environments.

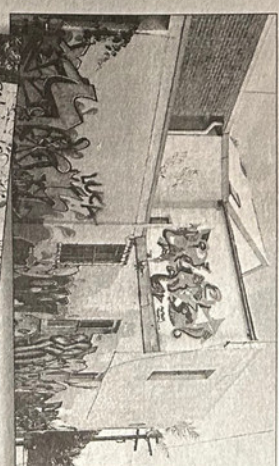
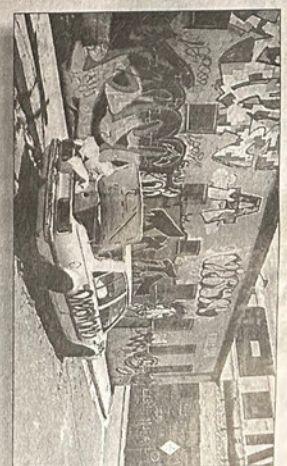
NSW manager of the Transport Authority, Mary Lynne Kofol, said graffiti was part of everyday life in Sydney and would not affect passengers or the Olympic line. "We have a priority list," she said. "I'm confident that the city will perform when it needs to."

The worst graffiti sites on the line include:

- South side of Richmond Rd overpass, West Hornsby side of tracks in Ewerton St, Strathfield — just before Strathfield station.
- The entry ramp to Strathfield station, south side of tracks.
- Wentworth Rd overpass, south side of tracks near Wood St.
- A subsection on the north side of tracks near Ashfield station, off Wood St.
- South side of tracks near West St overpass.
- The Ewleigh rail yards are a wasteland of dilapidated buildings, overgrown grass and weeds.
- Slides, south of tracks, off Trawlgar St, Shannore, about 500m east of Shannore Ave, Shannore, north side of tracks near Durham St.
- Between Central and Redfern on the airport tunnel.
- Railway wall near Redfern station, south side of tracks, below TNT Towers.

### YOUR SAY

How do you think Sydney's graffiti should be cleaned up? Call our hotline number after 9am on: (02) 9288 4958



Route of shame . . . the rail line to Olympic Park. Picture: MATTHEW WISLISZ

## Graffiti busters on alert

By KATRINA BEIKOFF  
Olympics Reporter

TEAMS of graffiti-busters will swarm across Sydney under a new plan to guarantee vandalism in the Olympic City is cleaned up in 24 hours.

Over the past month, eight squads have patrolled Sydney around the clock to remove graffiti from public property and present a clean city.

So far, the teams have audited and removed graffiti from 3315 problem spots.

Of that figure, 80 per cent was cleaned in 24 hours of being reported.

Lord Mayor Frank Sartor said the specialised team aimed to remove 100 per cent of reported vandalism in 24 hours.

"International experience in dealing with graffiti vandalism indicates that the quicker it is removed, the greater the deterrent value and the greater the reduction in the problem," he said.

Team leader John Walkom, from the Dubbo based company Techni-Seal granted the council's clean-up contract, said the first big test was New Year's Eve.

Three teams of two removed 180 graffiti problems in four hours during celebrations, he said.



Choice of colours... Matthew Peet, Rob Edwards and James Wilson with Warringah Mayor Peter Moxham

# All aboard the graffiti express

A BUSLOAD of aerosol artists will hit the streets of Sydney next week for a tour of the city's best legal graffiti sites.

The bus tour has been organised by Warringah Council and will include a paint workshop.

It will be held on January 24, 25, 17 and 28 between 10am and 2.30pm.

The program will be supervised

by acclaimed graffiti artist Matt "Mistry" Pet, and has been tailored for experienced aerosol artists.

It follows on from the council's graffiti program which through its promotion of legal aerosol art is proving highly successful in reducing illegal graffiti.

Warringah Mayor Peter Moxham said that since the project

was launched the cost of cleaning up graffiti had fallen by about 20 per cent.

"Moreover the project has given artistically-talented young people an opportunity to pursue their interests without breaking the law," he said.

"This tour initiative will further foster the skills of local aerosol artists by enabling them to study

graffiti styles at other legal sites in Sydney."

Mr Moxham said he believed the tour and workshop would prove to be highly popular with Warringah's youth. The council's youth development officer James Wilson said young graffiti artists needed to book a place on the tour and workshop as soon as possible.

Call Mr Wilson on 9942 2401.



Rubbish litters the floor of a City Rail train yesterday

# Trains leave depots dirty

## Cleaners quit to become guards

By PETER TRUTE

SYDNEY trains are leaving cleaning depots still dirty because of a shortage of cleaners across the network.

A push by CityRail to increase the number of cleaners before the Olympic Games has led to many cleaners leaving their positions to take up other posts.

And those cleaning positions are being filled for up to four weeks because of a complicated hiring process and a continuing loss of cleaners from other posts.

The Public Transport Union said standards at one of the busiest cleaning depots at Campbelltown had been downgraded following an ongoing failure to recruit cleaners.

RTBU organiser Andrew Baker said there was a shortage of cleaning staff across the network. "The RTBU has a state body which supplies cleaning services to CityRail."

"The State Rail Authority is boosting train crew numbers but cleaners in transport was the big problem in Atlanta," he said.

"Some people use car cleaning as a stepping stone into a better job," said a CityRail spokesman. "High school turnover in the job."

CityRail confirmed there were 128 guards in training at present, compared with 200 in more to be recruited between now and May. The Daily Telegraph spoke to cleaners at one depot who said low staff levels were stopping them



Two syringes on a train



Graffiti covered door

doing detailed 'daily clean' work which involves scrubbing windows, walls, seats and railings and removing graffiti.

Instead they were performing only 'topping up' work such as mopping up spills on the floor and picking up rubbish and graffiti behind doors.

"The RTBU raised low staffing levels at the Campbelltown depot in earlier Stock manager Frank Miller last December."

The letter stated staff numbers were being averaged between six and eight full-time members believed they were under pressure to complete an excessive workload.

A CityRail spokesman said that had been downgraded but said there had been problems recruiting cleaners for the depot.

OUR OLYMPICS

# Graffiti team clear the way for Juan

By JONATHAN PORTER and KATRINA BEIKOFF

A CRACK anti-graffiti flying squad is on 24-hour alert to clean up graffiti as soon as it appears in Sydney's CBD before IOC President Juan Antonio Samaranch visits.

Team leader John Walkom from Team Sydney says Samaranch would see "nothing to worry about" in the CBD when he arrives this month.

"That's why they chose us," Mr Walkom told The Daily Telegraph.

Mr Walkom's team of 20 highly trained graffiti cleaners range from backpack teams to four-wheel drive Great Holden 4x4s to trucks equipped with everything needed to deal with a major attack.

Mr Walkom used the example of a spray paint can in the case of a graffiti tag. The job that would need "an emergency response."

"We would use everything necessary to clean that up within four hours to protect the city's assets."

Mr Walkom said cleaning graffiti could also reduce the amount of new vandalism in the CBD.

Not only is it aesthetically more pleasing for residents and visitors to the city but it has been proven that there has been a reduction in graffiti. Four two-member teams patrol city streets and parks on foot, carrying the graffiti removal kit with them.

Another two-member squad roams the city on the Graffiti Gator, which can avoid traffic jams and take down graffiti. For major attacks on the city, the team has two Holden Roderos, with two cleaners assigned to each and other cleaning equipment.

Three back-up teams were also rostered on for emerg-



Fighting back... Damien Hirdle and Craig Wilcox with a Graffiti Gator go into action.

eny cleaning, such as vandalism attacks on city monuments or obscene or vilifying graffiti.

Mr Walkom said:

"We will bring in at least 1000 people to clean up graffiti in Sydney."

Mr Walkom said: "We have to gear up for big events."

The removal squads, which can be contacted 24 hours a day on a base water recovery unit to stop waste on major jobs being flushed down the drain.

Mr Walkom said he expected the teams would receive their coverage outside city limits and along the Olympic corridor to Homebush Bay during the Olympics.

Two weeks ago, The Daily Telegraph reported Sydney graffiti black spots along the Olympic rail link between the city and Homebush Bay.

The black spots include the stations near the airport tunnel, the entry ramp to Strathfield station and the Wentworth Road on the Olympic corridor.

Mr Walkom said they were spending \$1.5 million annually on graffiti removal.

THE GAMES: THEN AND NOW



1908: The London Marathon distance was set at 26 miles 385 yards (42,195km) at the 1908 Olympic Marathon.

2000: The Sydney Marathon course has been designed to ensure every one gets a great view of the city.

1908: The London Marathon distance was set at 26 miles 385 yards (42,195km) at the 1908 Olympic Marathon.

**Writing's off the wall**

LATE last year the Governor General, the Viscountess Catherine's College in Waverley building features a handsome sandstone facade, for it masks the stone blocks into which are sculpted in a beautiful type the name of the institution.

I wondered how long it would be before the graffiti vandals

I cannot understand why the Government is spending millions of dollars cleaning up graffiti. It is a waste of money when all that has to be done is ban the sale of spray cans — at least to people under 21 and preferably 25, when most males have gained a modicum of sense. And what responsibility do manufacturers and retailers take for this blight on our fair city? Absolutely none.

Jennie Owen, Baukham Hills

attached its pristine surface and I didn't have time to long.

Last weekend someone sprayed an obscene slogan on the P.M. Tags are bad enough but this was pure filth.

The good news? Within 24 hours it had been removed. Not only in graffiti removal but also in protective coatings.

They're located at Caves Beach and the number for a free call is 1800 048314.

**\$90m to overdraw**

GRAFFITI removal does not come cheap. Current estimates put the cost to individuals and authorities at \$90 million a year.

Imagine what might be done for the cultural and spiritual life of this city with a sum like that.



**Rapping up graffiti tour**

Graffiti tour hits the mark... Aaron Robinson, 18, at work on the mural at Kilarney Heights Oval.

A TOUR of graffiti sites around the inner-city has inspired local aerosol artists to create a permanent artwork at Kilarney Heights Oval. Warznag Council organised the graffiti tour last week, as part of its ongoing project to minimise illegal graffiti in amenities block at Kilarney Heights Oval.

## Graffiti raiders arrested

UNDERCOVER police arrested 16 people after a daylight graffiti van- dals attack on a train in Sydney's western suburbs.

Thousands of dollars damage was caused as the train other graffiti tags were sprayed all over it.

Police said the special operation was mounted after information that van- dals went to Cammerla railway station every few weeks when carriage were stored awaiting the capture of pun- ters from a Sydney Rosehill racecourse. Officers began staking out the train yard early on Saturday, believing the large number of carriages required for the racecourse's Silver Slipper Stakes would attract vandals.

About 12:30pm, with nine officers including the dog unit and video unit had been spraying a carriage.

Seven police arrested 15 vandals, aged 14 to 28, with one man escaping by swim- ming across the Paramatta river.

Six were charged with causing damage with a video recording of the arrests being used to identify others.

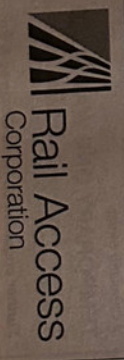
# Fight graffiti

in the Rail Corridor

Rail Access Corporation is committed to maintaining and improving the appearance of the rail corridor.

You can help by reporting new graffiti to the Rail Access Corporation Hotline 1 300 656 999

24 HOUR HOTLINE  
1 300 656 999



## underside

# The Graffiti Element

REMEMBER THE GRAFFITI HALL OF FAME? WELL IT'S BEEN QUIET FOR A WHILE NOW, 3D LOOKS AT THE CURRENT SITUATION.



Throughout the nineties there's been one oasis in Sydney's venue desert. A place for people to gather, young promoters to put on events, graffiti muralists to develop their art, sporting teams and projects to develop and creative endeavours to be workshopped. This inspiring inner city success story is endangered by South Sydney Council's development agenda. The shifting of zoning from Industrial to Residential has opened up a lucrative market for developers.

Graffiti Hall Of Fame has existed in industrial Alexandria since the early nineties, its founder Tony Spanos opened up his factory's car park to become a giant collection of graffiti 'Wildstyle' murals. The space is an innovative solution to an inner city problem. Alienated youth find themselves so easily on the wrong side of the law, their talents often unrealised in the daily hardships of an under-privileged life. What Graffiti Hall of Fame has done is to provide an arena for legal development of what is now globally recognised as one of the most cutting edge forms of expression. Every tag scrawl you see is an inner city youth struggling to achieve some identity in an increasingly

grey and 'profit before people' motivated urban environment. Most of the world famous murals around Redfern, Newtown, Erskineville were sponsored by the Hall Of Fame. Street artists have come on to become respected graphic artists, their energy successfully channelled into a positive outcome. Graffiti

The Graffiti Hall of Fame has also done wonders in sponsoring young promoters and environmental groups. The local Aboriginal community has also been sponsored by the space with the development of basketball teams, go cart and ferry day trips, an aboriginal surfboard label and the staging of music events in Everleigh St, Redfern.

South Sydney Council's attitude towards the Graffiti Hall of Fame could jeopardise all of this goodwill. Why won't they:



- 1) Recognise the grassroots Youth Service offered by Tony Spanos.
- 2) Realise that an increase in housing units in Alexandria/Waterloo will also need an increase in Youth Services, amenities, in the area.
- 3) Stop trying to bankrupt Graffiti Hall Of Fame through a campaign of punitive court cases.



On March 8th the Graffiti Hall of Fame is appealing the court challenges in the supreme court, this case represents a challenge to the corruption and blinkered vision of the pro development lobby that is making Sydney a place of alienation for youth and community. The word has been sent out to all that want to make their voice heard to congregate in Macquarie street at 9am on the day of the case. There will be sound system action, workshops, and a coming together of community groups that are opposed to the attitude of the powers that be towards youth services and public space.

THIS IS ABOUT RECLAIMING OUR JUSTICE.



Daily reality... a graffiti-defaced carriage

## A trip to nowhere

Every week I pay my \$36 ticket from the city to Penrith and for that, and for many other commuters the service I get for my money is:

Late-running trains:  
Always cancelled trains  
in peak hour.  
Not being able to sit down for the full course of the trip.

Graffiti all over seats that has damaged clothes; windows missing on the carriage and I could not just me but six other people.

I cannot see how CityRail can charge this price and still want more money when the service it provides is absolutely shocking.

Where is our money going? Being only not on the train as a service.

Vanessa Milnes,  
Claremont Meadows



## Our train shame

As a regular commuter between the city and Kiriaweie, I am absolutely fed up with trains that do not run on time or are cancelled. The most favoured time that the Cronulla service is cancelled is on a Friday evening. It is a daily regular train. They say everyone is packed in. Peak hours is disastrous.

Raewyn Wilmshurst,  
Kiriaweie



▲ Clean-up: A fresh coat of paint goes on to hide the offensive scrawl.

## Colouring the Rainbow

### RAVLENE BLISS

A GRAFFITI eyesore has been transformed into a work of art at Rainbow Street Public School.

Thirty adults and children gathered, on March 18, at the Randwick school to paint a mural on one of the school walls.

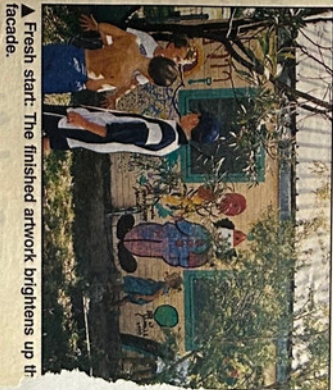
The project was organised by Kelly Roche as part of a self-expression and leadership program she was undertaking at Landmark Education.

All participants in this course were asked to organise a community project which defined a target community and enlisted other people to become co-leaders of the various projects of the project's organisation.

The goal of the project was for the children of the school's special needs classes to enjoy a day of creativity and self-expression.

All children of the special needs classes were invited, along with their parents, teachers and friends.

Ms Roche said the project also gave parents the opportunity to have a fun day out while getting to know each other.



▲ Fresh start: The finished artwork brightens up the facade.

"It was a beautiful, sunny day as everybody set about painting pictures of various objects, such as clouds, balloons, rainbows, birds, butterflies, and a rocket," she said.

"It was very impressive to see the children co-operating with each other and providing far more imaginative designs than the adults.

The costs of the project were kept low thanks to the generosity of everybody set about the paint required for the project.

Tuan Liu, a local Latin American tour operator, was in charge of photography and supplying ice for refreshments.

Jackie Turner, a Kiriaweie Street teacher and leader of the mural and contact point for the children and their parents,



▲ Well done: The happy team after the big clean-up.

## LA's clean streets

**HEADING** in from L.A., I couldn't help noticing the free ways were virtually free of graffiti. I noticed a program was under way, with local groups and individuals

taking responsibility for virtually instant removal of graffiti. Mayor Moore received a faxed copy of the minutes of Woolahra Council for March 27 with a recommendation that \$23,000 be included in the draft budget of 2000 to cover the work initiated by the Graffiti Taskforce in getting graffiti removed from Council-owned property in the Municipality.

Leaving this is a stupid idea and council might as well take \$23,000 in fresh notes, tear them up and flush them down the loo. It will take a considerably more significant problem and more imagination than your average council, let alone the Woolahra Luddites, could muster.

## Passing the buck

**MORE** depressing was the council's attempt to scapegoat the blame on to individual property owners.

As I've noted before, draconian measures are needed to make the offenders clean up their messes and to remove their driver's licences.

If they don't get drive, ban them from ever holding one. A \$23,000 co-ordinator would be about as useful as a second bride at a wedding.

## Fence to be repainted

**A FENCE** covered in graffiti only nine days after it was cleaned by juvenile offenders in a \$3 million State Government initiative will be repainted within a week.

Continuing the war against graffiti, Minister Carmel Tebbutt said, teams of young offenders completing community service would be back at various graffiti sites at the weekend and the fence would be cleaned within the next 10 days.

The fence near Seven Hills railway station was the first in the \$3 million NSW graffiti action plan.

Ms Tebbutt said: "I'm certainly disappointed, although not surprised. The site is well known and scouted. But we will be back."

# Graffiti clean-up

## Teens under orders

By JONATHAN PORTER

**THIRTEEN** boys wielding paintbrushes yesterday took less than two hours to rid the main western Sydney rail line of a graffiti eyesore.

The teenagers had all been convicted of minor offences and ordered by Juvenile Justice to do community service to clean up graffiti.

Yesterday the youths and their minders painted over graffiti disfiguring a 100m fence at Seven Hills facing the rail tracks.

Juvenile Justice Minister Carmel Tebbutt and Local Government Minister Harry Woods oversaw the project, the first in the State Government's \$3 million

graffiti action plan. The community service order plan has made 66,000 hours of labour available to clean up graffiti around the Olympic city.

"This is a practical way of using some of those community service hours to clean up graffiti," Ms Tebbutt said yesterday. "It also addresses what is a real community problem and gives young people a chance to repair some of the damage they have caused."

After speaking to the workers, Ms Tebbutt told *The Daily Telegraph* the youngsters did not mind the labour.

"It's something different, it gets them outdoors," she said.

"The paint is non-toxic and a lot of young people don't mind wielding a paintbrush. They see it as a constructive way to repair the damage that has been caused and also avoid further interaction with the juvenile justice cycle."

"The aim is to divert people away from custody."

Ms Tebbutt called on other councils to get involved in the program. "This program has just started. We are keen to see other councils to come on board," she said.

Eventually the State Govern-

ment planned to have 16 clean-up teams, with 10 teams in metropolitan Sydney and six in regional NSW, she said.

Ms Tebbutt said overseas experience showed one of the best deterrents "to graffiti reappearing is to clean it up and to clean it up quickly".

"The program also provides restitution to the community."

The teenagers had been convicted of offences that included possessing stolen goods, malicious damage, resisting arrest and failing to obey a police direction.

"Graffiti is a problem in many areas of both Sydney and regional NSW — the community is very concerned about it," Ms Tebbutt said.



A young offender cleans graffiti yesterday.

# What a difference nine days make

By MARK SCALA

**A FENCE** cleared of graffiti by juvenile offenders in a \$3 million State Government scheme only a week ago has been covered in paint in a vandal attack.

The whole length of the 100m fence was covered in white graffiti tags yesterday — nine days after 13 teenagers with paintbrushes spent two hours cleaning the eyesore along the western railway line near Seven Hills railway station.

The teenagers cleaning the fence were convicted of minor offences and had been ordered by Juvenile Justice to undergo community service of removing graffiti.

The project was the first in the State Government's \$3 million graffiti action plan and was overseen by Juvenile Justice Minister Carmel Tebbutt and Local Government Minister Harry Woods.

A spokesman for the Juvenile Justice Minister said yesterday they were not surprised the wall had been attacked so soon and vowed the Government would continue its "war" against graffiti vandals.

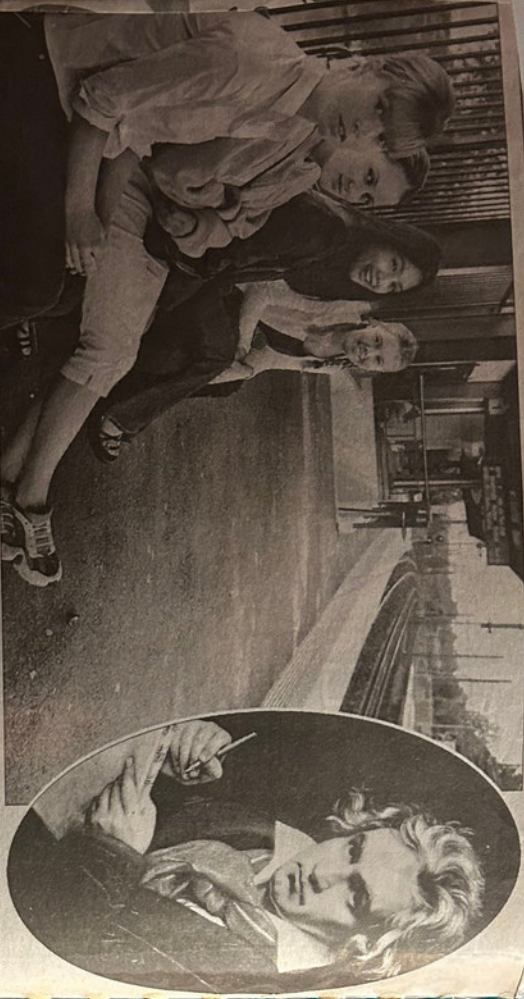
"We know that sites that are cleaned up by our teams will be covered again soon after," the spokesman said.

"Our aim is to get there within a short period of time and do it again."

"If we go back every time they paint, eventually we will win



Fresh graffiti near Seven Hills station yesterday which was cleaned only days earlier (left) by



Picture: Angelo Scola

posed Tracey Snodgrass, Jean Maxwell, Julie Linn and Cara Swill at Parramatta station, where Beethoven has been played

# How Beethoven stopped vandals at rail stations

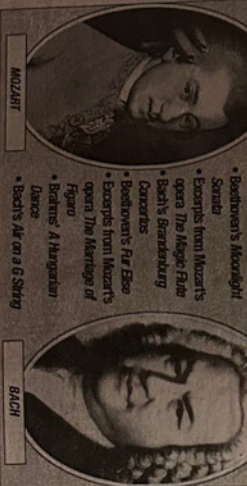
By political writer  
MATTHEW ROGERS

ANDALISM of Sydney train stations fell by 75 per cent during a trial over the past year, it was played at rail authorities were delighted by the success of the trial, which showed unprecedented results in limiting anti-social behaviour. The six week experiment at five randomly selected stations to have Beethoven's music played at half volume for vandalism for CityRail. Vandalism was completely eliminated at two stations.

The scheme has been such a success that the Government is now considering playing classical music at all stations. The trial was led by the Transport Minister Carl Scully is considering exporting the experiment to Beethoven, Mozart, Bach and Brahms to stations across the city. The work in an effort to cut the damage estimated at \$10 million to \$15 million a year.

Mr Scully said classical music was such an effective crime combatant that it had attracted repair bills at each of the trial stations. In total, there was a combined

## MUSIC THAT SOOTHES THE GRAFFITI ARTISTS



- Beethoven's *Moonlight Sonata*
- Mozart's *Requiem*
- Bach's *Brandenburg Concertos*
- Beethoven's *Fur Elise*
- Excerpts from Mozart's *opera The Marriage of Figaro*
- Beethoven's *Marguerite*
- Beethoven's *Allegretto*

whether the refined tones of classical music might be the most effective means of driving young vandals away from train stations, the success of the trial was such a success that the Government is now considering playing classical music at all stations. The trial was led by the Transport Minister Carl Scully is considering exporting the experiment to Beethoven, Mozart, Bach and Brahms to stations across the city. The work in an effort to cut the damage estimated at \$10 million to \$15 million a year.

## GRAFFITI Bucket brigade clean up our act

ARMED with a bucket, a rag and powerful chemical cleaners, Henry Peaseley and his partner are part of a group of about 200 who are picking up Sydney graffiti before the Games. Power poles, traffic light poles and power boxes of graffiti, stickers and posters.

Mr Peaseley has worked on blitzes for the past year. He and his partner will make Sydney one of the cleanest cities in the world.

## Fitting punishment

FROM the same source comes information about the municipal department of Paris's method of dealing with graffiti in a city that has been harder hit than most by this plague.

## Pertinent paints

A LINGUISTIC Philosopher piece in last week's Village graffiti, newspaper dealt with graffiti, but few graffiti writers know any pretensions to being artists (any more) but as a kind of decaying urban program for

## Graphic graffiti mars family's resting place

IMAGINE arriving at a cemetery to find the resting place of your loved ones covered with graffiti. That is the fate of the family of the late Sir John Gorton in the St Andrew's Cemetery in Sydney. The family has to remove the graffiti, and the family has to pay for it.



Disgrace: Graffiti on the Guffra family vault

## An ugly smear

WHILE we all put on our best smiles for the Games, the graffiti artists are busy defacing the city. The graffiti is a disgrace to the city and a blot on the landscape.

## Ordered to clean up

A GRAFFITI artist who spray-painted a Sydney wall with grand man-related slogans, was ordered to clean up the mess. The court heard the artist was ordered to clean up the mess, pleaded guilty in Downing Centre Local Court to damaging or defacing property.

# Giving young artists a canvas

By NOULA TSAVDARIDIS

TWO years ago, Christian was expressing his creativity by doing what many bored teenagers with plenty of time on their hands do.

Spraying his graffiti tag on public walls, he was continuing on a path that had seen him drop out of school in year 6, and hanging out on the streets and back alleys around the inner city.

But once he found his way to Creative Youth Initiatives, he found an unexpected, legal outlet for his creative impulses.

CYI is a small establishment in Surry Hills that gives young people from many disadvantaged backgrounds change the path their life has taken by giving them opportunities to develop their art and music.

The centre has produced CDs that have been played on Triple J, as well as an annual art exhibition that raises thousands of dollars.

It is one of the services provided by Mission Australia's Sydney City Mission, and which is now in dire need of funds.

Sydney City Mission this week began its annual appeal for public donations — an appeal kicked off with a \$25,000 donation from *The Daily Telegraph*.

Christian, 15, who is now home-schooled, is keen to forge a career in the arts — hopefully music, he says — and has even made some money on the side.

Last year, he sold a piece of art he completed for \$540.

He says CYI has given him a chance to use his skills in a way he hadn't expected.

"It's given me an opportunity to do stuff that I like, and it's given me more of a push to do things and to perform," he said.

The manager of CYI, Phil Nunn, said the centre does not present itself as a magical solution, but is run pragmat-



Christian, 15, at his wall in Surry Hills, part of a Sydney City Mission Program.

Picture: NATHAN EDWARDS

ically with an eye to letting young people see what opportunities are available to them.

He says CYI is almost run like an agency, and they have in the past accepted commissions from companies such as Telstra for work.

"We give these young people an opportunity to be someone different. Many of the people we see have been stereotyped, and have been restricted by that."

Mr Nunn said one young man he had seen had spent six years as a male prostitute, and had been called a "whore" for most of his life.

When he came in, his self-esteem told him that he could only make money through using his body, Mr Nunn said.

But he went on to make

hundreds of dollars through his art, and managed to find a place to rent — the first time in years he had some stability in his life.

"He now considers himself an artist."

While CYI has plenty of success stories, it receives no direct government funding. Funding was cut off more than two years ago, with its grants replaced by work-for-the-dole schemes.

The Attorney-General's Office is currently funding the graffiti project that Christian has taken part in, but apart from that, the centre relies on private funding and support from the public.

Mr Nunn said more funding is desperately needed to keep the scheme going.

## What you can do

SYDNEY City Mission depends on public support to continue its vital work.

You can make a contribution to the Reach Out, Give Hope appeal through the donation line on 1800 88 88 68.

Lines are staffed from 8am to 6.30pm daily.

Donations can be made by credit card, cheque or money order. Contributions can be made through the web at [www.mission.com.au](http://www.mission.com.au)

Read *The Daily Telegraph* each day for reports on Sydney City Mission.

Daily Telegraph



Mission Australia Giving hope

## Only 8 minutes and graffiti-free

By KATE MINOQUE

IT'S QUICK. That's the new Airport Link's biggest chance to look around, was its destination — Sydney Airport's Domestic Terminal escalators that could have been checking in.

Arriving at Central station at 9.30am there were no fewer than 20 signs telling train fans to spring to head for platform 23. Once on the platform, the catching any other train like catching a train to the city.

Several hundred Sydney-ites were crammed on to platform 23, waiting for just five minutes. There is just a short glimpse of daylight before the train arrives at Central station at Green Square, Mascot and then the airport.

The contrast between these stations and Central was extreme. The newest ones were pristine and the old ones were a mess of graffiti-free.

At the Domestic Terminal stop the crowd spilled out. Through the gates and there was a burst of change and flight deals and train tickets.

I checked my watch and it read 9.30am. The train trip had taken just eight minutes.

Passengers at the Domestic Terminal station yesterday.

## Mailcall

Peter O'Malley, of Bondi, gives his view on how to stop the graffiti problem

Our sensibilities and tastes have long been assaulted by graffiti.

The perceived wisdom is that if it's erased ASAP the vandals will eventually tire of the game and hopefully just go away.

At the risk of being BBO (Bleeding Bloody Obvious), has a simple remedy occurred to anyone?

Why not ban the sale of spray-paint cans to the mindless little erks?

This dazzling idea briefly saw daylight some time back, but has apparently sunk without trace. I have certainly not



seen the idea revived of late and I find myself asking "why?"

Is it too simple? Will the civil liberties mafia, the unreconstructed Dr Spock disciples or the social workers put in their respective cars with some sort of blather about stifling creativity?

Banning the cans, plus fining the vandals and making them pay for the clean-up, might go some way towards solving the problem.

I realise I am probably a voice in the wilderness, but it would be nice to see something serious done about this.

## Could do better

SPRING cleaning has begun early in Sydney. Vandals were busy last week, with the sand and lamp posts in The Rocks a lick of paint, and a graffiti-removal squad, was ploughing through the city, removing those more than 1000 tags. It would be nice to think that

this pre-Olympic scrub could become a regular thing. A couple of other areas also beg for attention.

The Harbour Bridge roadway is filthy, and the PFA should clean it up.

## Retailers now graffiti watchdogs

SPRAY paint and felt pen retailers have become watchdogs against graffiti vandals in a NSW Fair Trade Minister John Watkins.

In a bid to reduce graffiti attacks, retailers can refuse to sell spray-paint cans and felt pens to defend property. "Graffiti is an ugly blight in our suburban environment," he said.



145th Year of Publication

# Western Advocate

Incorporating "THE WESTERN TIMES" and "NATIONAL ADVOCATE"

Issue No. 325

Tuesday, January 18, 1994.

70 cents.

208 Browning Street, Bathurst. Telephone 31 2611. Facsimile 32 4614



## Graffiti artist paints Kinross Wolaroi School



□ Graffiti artist Heath Ryter ... bringing a touch of the inner city to country schools.

A 19-year-old youth has spent the past two days at Kinross Wolaroi School in Orange spray painting graffiti to his heart's content - and the school has asked for it.

At a time where graffiti is seen by some as a crime almost worthy of punishment by death, the school actually commissioned Sydney graffiti artist Heath Ryter for his skills with the spray can.

Kinross's Brenda Davies invited Heath to paint a set for "The Heartbreak Kid", a stage play the school will present in February which she is directing.

"The reason I commissioned Heath to paint the set was because the play is set in an inner city school and I wanted to create the feel of that sort of school," Mrs Davies said.

With most country students attending schools with open spaces, trees and parkland, Mrs Davies said she hoped the graffiti backdrop to the play will bring into focus the harsh reality of inner city schooling.

"They don't have the hassles of asphalt and concrete, barbed wire fences etcetera and its an

important part of the play I think the kids should understand," she said.

Under Mrs Davies' direction, Heath has constructed a 10 by three metre graffiti splashed mural in sombre greys and blacks with two spectacular, colourful break outs.

"All that is left to do now is to fill all the background in with writing and graffiti, (Mrs Davies) wants it to look like everybody has had a go at it," Heath explained halfway through his completed work.

Heath admitted he started applying his trade as an errant kid on train seats and public walls, but when he turned 18 he realised he was 'too old' to be illegally defacing property.

So, for the past year as a professional graffiti artist, he has travelled wherever his art takes him, giving the 'art' of graffiti a whole new meaning.

Kinross Wolaroi will perform "The Heartbreak Kid" on February 24 and 25.

## Obscene art

IT is bad enough that the graffiti murals spew out their hideous tags over private property, but spraying war memorials is an obscenity.

Only recently restored, the historic stone obelisk at the north entrance to Anzac Parade has now been hit. And the area around Central Railway cleaned up for the Olympics has also been sprayed with this ugliness?

## Bright and blight

OPENING a show of graffiti art at the Sydney Theatre Company's premises in Hickson Road last week, Premier Bob Carr was at pains to differentiate between spray-painting a wall and doing the same to a car or a house.

He also mentioned the fact that the government of NSW has a budget of \$50 million a year on graffiti removal, a veritable industry in itself.

At least graffiti brightens our lives, but graffiti is a blight on our lives.

Incidentally, the rather dull show at the Wharf contains two canvases by someone called Leo. This Leo is not the Leo of the film 'Hey, Leo', Leo probably could

knock up a couple of meaningless dubs like the one he has done on the wall. Like weeding his garden, removing unwanted ugliness.

## Guard may have been hit by rock

A TRAIN guard who was seriously hurt after falling from a train on Monday may have lost his balance after being hit by a rock, police believe.

The man is in a serious but stable condition in Westmead Hospital with head injuries sustained in the fall near Homebush, which may have been hit by a rock or projectile thrown by someone near the tracks off the eastern end of Homebush station.

That is one of the scenarios being investigated. Detective Matt Russell from Penrith explains the man was in a compartment who gained entry to the guard's compartment or that he simply lost his balance and fell out of the open door.

The guard was in his compartment when the train left Homebush but when it arrived at the station a short time later the driver could not make him out in the compartment.

None of the tracks between the two stations found the man unconscious from head injuries about 150m from Homebush station.

## phat caption

OK. Some clarification on one of the groups I mentioned two weeks ago who performed at the Surry Hills All Ages gig for Urban Xpressions. They are in fact called Ill Comrades and they have a two-track demo CD floating around right now. To my knowledge the MCs are both still at school but their lyrics, delivery and beats are very promising. You might have heard one of the tracks, *Elevate*, on The Motherhip Connection back a month or so but, for some reason or another, they were presented as being E-United (something to do with the Epping, ghetto mafia?). Their second track, *Danger Zone* features some interesting brass stabs and a slight jazzy influence. The tracks had me thinking back to *Easybass's* tapes for a second. This duo radiates a similar sort of playfulness and individuality, and their vocals complement each other well.

It has been a while between drinks for **The Dwellas**. Their most recent twelve (*Leakage b/w Ill Collabo*) features contributions from **Pharoahe Monch** and **Prince Po** from **Organised Confusion**. The lyrics and

content won't really make you jump out of your skin and the production is a little too formulaic to make the 12" a must-have. The B-side, *Ill Collabo*, is definitely the stronger of the cuts and is definitely worth a listen while you are digging through the bins.

**Makeeba Mooncycle** featured on *Lunchroom Classics* and has just dropped a 12" (*Judgement Day b/w Food for Thought*). She works closely with **J Sands** and **J Rawls** (both of whom guest on the B-Side) from the **Lonecatalysts** and **5 Deez** lineage. In final release news, the **Willus Drummond** and **J-Zone** back-to-back twelve should be in your local this month. Willus takes his trippy style on vacation to LA while J-Zone and **Huggy Bear** day dream about a day with no consequences - that's right, the entire police force has taken a rostered day off. For more info check: [wontocpunch.com](http://wontocpunch.com).

The Lane Cove Council is putting on some graffiti workshops throughout May and June. The end result will



be 5 murals in the picket-fence suburb. The first workshop and mural happened two weeks ago but Mural 2 is scheduled for June 9-10 and Mural 3 will happen from June 23-24. Contact Amanda Thomas on 9911 3586 for more details and support the get-graffiti-off-the-streets-for-the-Olympics movement. All sarcasm aside, this is a worthwhile project so get involved.

[Loquay@stealthmag.com](mailto:Loquay@stealthmag.com)

## next week's represent

Council-sponsored graffiti workshops. What are your thoughts?

# An art starter

## Aerosol works on show

By JOHN MORCOMBE

IT used to be called vandalism, then it was graffiti, now it is aerosol art of the urban variety.

In a classic case of "if you can't beat them, join them", Warrnagh Council launched an ambitious strategy in 1998 to address the proliferation of illegal graffiti on public and private public buildings in the area.

Some of the fruits of that strategy, three large aerosol artworks, were unveiled yesterday at the Civic Centre by Mayor Peter Mobbs.

The artworks are the central focus of the Warrnagh Graffiti Project, which will go on display at North Sydney surf club in September as part of the Manly Arts Festival.

The exhibition will be a joint initiative between Warrnagh Council and Manly Youth Council.

Mr Mobbs described the project as a spectacular success, resulting in significantly less graffiti in Warrnagh.

"Warrnagh's graffiti artworks are now widely celebrated as an important part of the town's built environment," he said. "The council's decision to exhibit aerosol art in the Civic Centre is testament to its commitment to the program."

"At the same time, it has been responsible for high-quality urban art on numerous public fac-



A subject close to his art - aerosol artist Robert Edwards, 19, with one of his works on Dee Why Civic Centre. Photo: CARMELA DIMICHELE

Warrnagh's youth services co-ordinator, Rainey Worm, described it as a great project. "It's a way of recognising the way young people choose to express themselves," she said. "No other council has had the guts to commission this kind of art. We hope the community has been very supportive."

September

## Red tape holds up graffiti blasters

A HIGH-tech onslaught against graffiti — using the latest paint-blasting techniques in time for the Olympics — has been delayed by a red-tape snafu.

Premier Bob Carr told State Parliament that 10 councils potentially could use the equipment by July 1.

But just one of the graffiti blasters is now in operation, in Newcastle and this is a far cry from the early days when the council which used it in an early trial.

The council which has the blaster are Wollongong, Bankstown, Gosford, Penrith, Southland, Lake Macquarie, Hornsby, Gos-

ford and Newcastle. A spokesman for Mr Carr said the Government was obliged to proceed with a tender process despite blurring only one machine.

Mr Carr on the July 1 date said the Government would purchase 10 machines costing \$40,000 each, were part of the graffiti clean-up strategy.

Leader of Opposition Chiffrick claimed the Government had bungled.

"This is yet another example of the Government being very good at publicly stunts, yet they fail to deliver," she said.

# High energy act

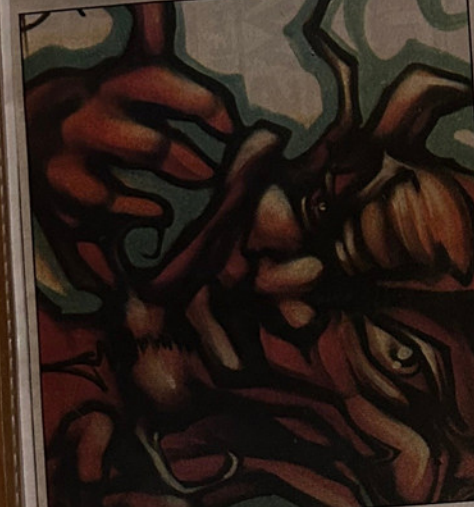
IN THE HEART of commercial business at the Doe Why Civic Centre, three large canvases are on display, canvases of imagery usually seen decorating - or despoiling - public buildings, depending on your viewpoint.

They have been painted by young men at the French Forest Youth Centre under the aegis of the Warragm Graffiti Project whose aim is not only to improve technical and artistic skills but also to challenge graffiti culture and graffiti artists.

In a more extensive exhibition at North Sydney Surf Club as an event of the Manly Arts Festival, a joint initiative between Warragm Council and Manly Youth Council.

If graffiti is understood as drawing and painting on walls, then it has been with us for a long time, said in an interview with the author of the book, Graffiti: Caves and carved rock art in the context of prehistoric graffiti may resemble, often artistically and descriptively, graffiti and advanced graffiti. Political and advertising, space and are no more "tamed" to the environment than graffiti, so what is it about graffiti that annoys so many people so much? The violation of property and ownership rights is an undeniable factor, but it is the unpredictability of youth, trans-

acting a role at society, which across distant and sophisticated art began in New York some 30 years ago and gradually developed a high degree of visual sophistication. Artists and graphic designers have approached its style, sociologists and critics have studied its cultural dimensions. Some graffiti artists have successfully made the transition from street to salon art in mainstream recognition. In Sydney, one of them is Matthew Peet, co-ordinator of the Warragm project, who as early as 1991, participated in the ambitious Pump Up but controversial 'Can Art Exhibition'.



While there has been much talk over the past few years about collaboration and cooperation between local agencies, police, community groups, youth clubs with the provision of legal walls on amenities blocks and in skate parks and schools. Invariably favourable press reports of such ventures cover everything, about art and content of the work itself. Yet once inside

doesn't it become part of the business of art and subject to the same aesthetic and conceptual criteria? While the Warragm muralists opened an interesting sociological debate they also invited a discussion of their art.

The subject of each canvas is not pre-empted by the artist's intent. The subject of each canvas is not pre-empted by the artist's intent. The subject of each canvas is not pre-empted by the artist's intent.

within its frame, unlike much wall graffiti which fills all available space with designs layered on top of other in dense, unrecognisable patterns. The one hip-hop figure, the other red-faced, the menacing. The danger is dominated by an intrinsically incoherent nature, and incongruities. But, Matt Peet said, "one can read it if they take the time. The artists had to make the same decision that all artists have to make: how to balance the composition, choose materials and colours, when to stop painting."

There is still public resistance to acceptance of art, art as genuine, the coloured perhaps by the originality, perhaps never its production. The National and Aerosol Art Exhibition although the 'Speak' was seen in Sydney for an Australian, plans for an Australia-wide touring exhibition came to nothing. Talking around a traditional gallery space, according to Joe Morris, co-ordinator of the 'Up the Can', a gallery is probably the only place where the whole community can examine this work seriously and recognise the talents of its artists.

## Vandals take their toll in Pittwater

by GABRIEL FOWLER

GROWING incidents of vandalism, including the use of explosives to destroy public toilets, will cost Pittwater ratepayers almost \$27,000 this year.

The damage from last weekend included the destruction by explosives of two toilets, a dog tidy bin, and a clothing bin. It was regarded by Pittwater Council staff as a "quiet weekend".

Overtaken council caravans, graffiti, burnt-out postal boxes and the explosion of soda bombs across the valley on a Saturday night are not out of the ordinary, one staff member said yesterday.

A security firm has been called to keep hot spots under surveillance and security grilles worth \$300 each will be placed over the entrances of 30 amenities blocks across the Pittwater Council area.

So far, one 19-year-old man has been charged with vandalism.



What a waste... Pittwater Council workers cleaning up the broken toilet bowl in the Warriewood Beach amenities block



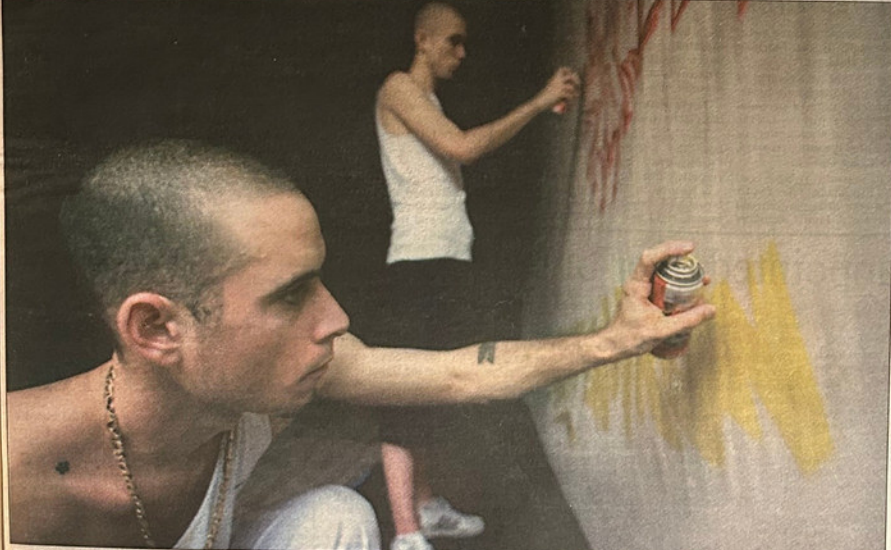
Wasted dare . . . ABOVE: Graffiti covers the amenities block at Narrabeen Lake Park. BELOW: The council caretaker

# Toilets, clothing bins targeted by vandals

**From Page 1**  
 Narrabeen amenities we can protect them - at old Avaton man has been block blown up on some locations - that damaged with malicious Saturday night was still in money will be saved in juveniles have been ques- one pan it they could have blid to death," he said. The amenities block at Careel Bay Soccer Club Alex McTiggar said he was woken up by "the biggest soda bomb of all time" on Saturday night which had been planted in a clothing bin in Avaton's Franklins car park. "Another couple of soda bombs went off during the night," he said. "Any vandalism is unwanted but there's no easy solution."



# Green generation to air its views



Graffiti artists Lee Parker and Rob Edwards will capture the mood of the forum on a banner

WARRINGAH'S youth will have a chance to air their thoughts on the area's environmental future at a special forum today.  
 More than 90 young people aged from 8 to 23 will attend the Warringah Council-organised forum at the Dee Why Civic Centre from 9.30am.  
 They will include representatives from local schools, surf clubs, church groups, TAFE and universities.  
 Mayor Peter Moxham said the Youth Environment Forum - the first of its kind in Warringah - would provide important feedback on the council's draft environmental strategy.  
 As part of the forum, the council chambers will be adorned with colourful banners expressing youth hopes, ideas and suggestions for the environment.  
 Graffiti artists Rob Edwards and Lee Parker will use their spray cans to capture the mood of the forum on another banner.  
 The forum will include workshops, displays and presentations from participants.  
 "The fact that the forum is being held in the chamber is significant," Mr Moxham said.  
 "It demonstrates that local youth do have a role in decision-making."

Photo: CARMELA DIMICHELE

ing adopted by the coun- community with the

# Graffiti under control

by RHETT WATSON

WHILE Manly Council contemplates ways of reducing the proliferation of graffiti, Northern Beaches Police and Warringah Council are reveling in the success of a program they started two years ago.

Graffiti artists are encouraged to practise their art on legal graffiti walls, which are painted out every six weeks, spread throughout the area.

Warringah Council youth development officer Justin Burke said it has worked so well council's annual bill for cleaning off graffiti has dropped \$30,000 to \$40,000.

"As far as we're concerned the amount of graffiti has reduced and we've put it down to the legal graffiti walls," he said.

Manly Davidson Police and Manly Council are working together to formulate a plan to combat the problem.

A problem general manager Wayne Collins says the council has difficulty keeping up with and costs them \$30,000



Photo: SIMON DEAN

## A passer-by looks over works on Dee Why's legal graffiti wall

a year. "A lot of people feel threatened by graffiti and see it as a safety threat," he said.

Manly Mayor Jean Hay is positive toward any idea which would reduce the problem but is sceptical about the success of the walls.

"Whether it will work or not I don't know," she said.

"It's probably the thrill of going

around and not being caught that attracts them (graffiti artists)."

She said people who spray tags — usually initials rather than artwork — would most likely still spray public and private property.

Northern Beaches Police community safety officer Sergeant Barry Hurren said there would "always be someone going around with a spray can leaving tags but, on the whole, it's much better".



Muzzled... Bob Carr

## Stars can Premier's graffiti spray

PREMIER Bob Carr didn't win any popularity the Sydney while launching the Sydney Theatre Centre on Saturday night. The space features a collection of graffiti art, and a night performance on the premises, starting at 8pm.

Before a star-studded audience including Greig Secorin and Sacha Hooper, Mr Carr launched into a little lecture. "Let's just get one thing straight: there's graffiti art and there's graffiti. Graffiti art is a good house of assembled artists followed their displeasure with the Premier by hissing. Also making an appearance was serial poet Peter Hoare."

Warringah Council's legal graffiti walls include ones at Miller's Reserve and Passmore Reserve in Manly Vale; Allambie Oval; Killarney Heights Oval; one in Wyatt Ave in Belrose and weekly aerosol art courses at the Forest Youth Centre, Forestville, on Thursdays.

Ms Hay said the key was in catching those responsible and urged people to call the council's graffiti hotline on 9976 1541.



Business people and residents

## 'Mysterious words'



By SUE STIGALL

FOR several years Warringah Council has been conducting programs to teach local and graffiti artists technical skills and help them hopelessly to emerge from their graffiti culture. Recently, in conjunction with Manly Youth Centre, a graffiti exhibition was held at North Sydney Surf Club.

Much of the success of these projects can be attributed to the group's mentor, artist Matthew Peet who, since 1980, has been working with graffiti artists who are already working on their own. Peet completed his formal art education at the National Art School in 1975, but always maintained his passion for graffiti. "Graffiti art is not there in public for all to see," he said. "It is big, accessible, and easy to create. I am equally at home in a gallery as I am in a suburban suburb." He is one of the artists participating in the exhibition. Sake of Name, a graffiti artist who will launch the Sydney Theatre Centre, Gallery 2, at the Sydney Art Precinct, will also be exhibiting his work.

Graffiti is often at once unrecognisable yet instantly recognised. If not understood, people can't understand a piece of graffiti, they won't accept it, rather than accept it, they'll destroy it. Some graffiti artists are an elite group, some are those outside the culture and the "all over" chaotic nature of graffiti can be intimidating.

"To define Peet's art," he said, "is to define a culture, a way of life, a way of thinking, a way of taking on a kind of surface, working directly, filling the space, it's attention paid to the surface that is impossible to ignore. It is an art of maintenance, but always style and design and, like the universal alphabet, it is early modernism. It is a site where proportion and geometry are interwoven."

In his work Matthew Peet uses numerous references to non-western cultures of expression, from Asian and Islamic art. His strong fascination with biblical tales of power and justice, from his art practice, Horem's pushing typography's pushing rather than the illustrated manuscripts of medieval scribes - to the point of illegibility.

Peet writes the words in his art, but he doesn't write them. His name, their meaning is no longer important as he has taken the term of the lettering sense it, essence. In a sense it is, "My name is... an expression of identity as well as a decorative style."

"This decorative style," he said, "is something that has existed for a long time. People have been leaving the marks of their presence since the cave times, all prehistoric times."

One of the two very large canvases for the STC exhibition, shows a large profile head of a man, which is the artist's own work. It is a work of Matthew Peet's which is a work of his own, set in his own style, yet the original art allows a chance of bridging the gap.

part of his inner-city environment and a complex wall of art. In the street where he lives, Woven into it is his own tag 'Mystery' and the name of his brother crew as if to say 'this is where Mystery lives, his piece are here'.

He has been here for several years and attempts to embrace graffiti art within the precincts of man-made art's arena but accidental art has been operated under different ground rules - no dealers, curators or critics - the art is the art, always which does not always accommodate art and artists outside its fold.

Matthew Peet's work is a work of his own, set in his own style, yet the original art allows a chance of bridging the gap.

## Graffiti to be busted in private

COUNCILS will have the right to remove graffiti without getting prior permission from the property owner under planned new laws to be introduced by the State Government.

But council officers will only be able to remove graffiti which is visible and can be reached from a public place.

They will not be able to enter someone's property without permission. Under the proposed law, the council would be held liable for any damage it caused.

Local Government Minister Harry Woods said graffiti costs the community up to \$100 million a year.

"Experience and research have shown that the most effective way of deterring graffiti is to remove graffiti as quickly as possible and to keep removing it when it reappears," Mr Woods said.

"Swift removal of graffiti is important where the graffiti is of an obscene, sexist or inflammatory nature - for example, Jewish or anti-Asian graffiti."

Mr Woods said many property owners readily agreed to have graffiti removed but delays sometimes occurred if they refused, or if the property was rented and it took a while to identify the owner.

"Council officers will not be able to enter the property of the owner or occupier," Mr Woods said.

The law minimises the interference with property rights. On the other hand, the provision will facilitate the removal of graffiti from surfaces that generally are visible from public places and are particularly attractive targets for graffiti. Councils may also notify in writing affected owners or occupiers of their actions.



## 'Dob in graffitists'

by RHETT WATSON

WARRINGAH and Manly councils have joined forces to stop graffiti, offering a \$1000 reward for information leading to convictions.

The decision is a slight change in policy for Warringah which for the past two years has not actively tried to charge graffitists but redirect them into the artistic side.

It brought in legal graffiti walls and has a process in place where people doing graffiti are identified, confronted and offered legal outlets.

But acting Warringah Mayor Darren Jones said tagging was

different to the artistic side of graffiti.

"We provide walls for people to practise their skills and some of these kids are very talented," he said.

"This tagging is so bloody senseless and it shows complete disregard for people's property."

Manly Mayor Jean Hay said it made sense for the two councils to work in together because the culprits obviously moved between

both areas - similar tags have been found in recent attacks.

Mrs Hay said the rewards would be aimed at the many security guards who patrol premises across the northern beaches.

But she called on anyone seeing people defacing public or private property to call the police or either of the council hotlines.

"Both of us find it amazing that nobody witnesses graffiti vandals and that neither the police nor the large band of private security officers operating throughout these areas have reported graffiti vandals," Mrs Hay said.

"We've already written to about 20 security companies outlining what we have in mind."

Mrs Hay said the council was also looking at other ways to reduce graffiti.

They include legalised graffiti walls but she maintains that they do little to reduce tagging.

"What we need to do is catch these people and hopefully the rewards will lead to some convictions," she said.

To dob in people doing graffiti call Manly Council's graffiti hotline on 9976 1541 or police.

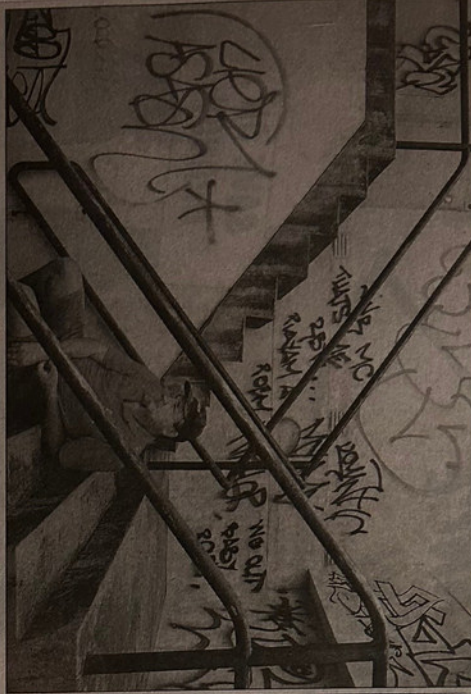


Writing on the wall... Balgowlah real estate agent Mark Hansen has repainted an exterior wall three times in a month. Photo: SAMANTHA STUDDERT

# Total aerosols

A GRAFFITI spree spanning almost three blocks in Balgowlah has left frustrated Worst spray in decade "You can't accept it but what can you do?" restaurant owner David Ne said. "Sometimes I'm

# Plan scrubs up



Dirty old town... Construction worker Ian Small in front of one of Dee Why's many graffiti-covered walls

**POLICE** have backed a call for Warringah Council to consider using its staff to clean graffiti from private property.

Long-time Warringah resident Michael Rimmer believes the council should use two of its staff to drive around the area offering to paint out graffiti on private property, for a nominal fee.

The council already does this for public property.

Mr Rimmer said many businesses no longer cleaned off graffiti because it appeared so often. "A lot of people have given up. It's just becoming part of the scene," he said.

At one graffiti-covered Brookvale business yesterday, the tenant confirmed the owners had longer painted over the tags.

She also expressed surprise a neighbouring shop, which had recently been repainted to cover up graffiti, had not been attacked again.

While northern beaches police

## Police back graffiti call

community safety officer Sergeant Barry Hurran believes the idea of hiring council staff services had Moxham disagreed.

"If businesses in the area have already been painting out graffiti since after times, why going to stop by us painting it out?" he said.

And he said if the businesses did not want to spend the money to do the work themselves then he doubted they would want to pay the council.

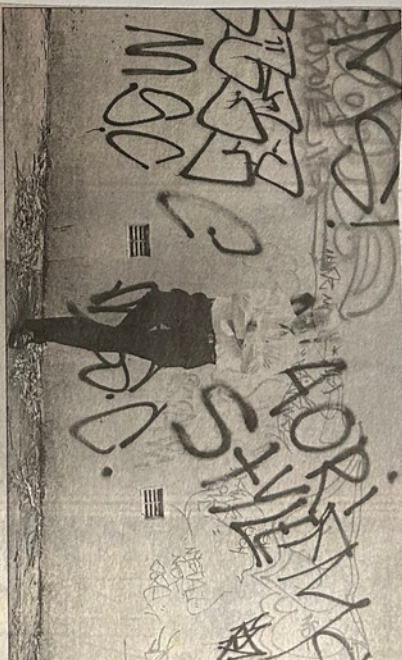
"A lot of businesses are struggling in this climate, paying high rents, and I can see why they are not doing it."

But Mr Moxham said the council had already invested money in trying to reduce graffiti and was being used by the Attorney-General's Department as a model council.

On a tour through Brookvale and Dee Why, Mr Rimmer pointed out at least 20 sites where graffiti

### Graffiti girl kept in lock-up

A GIRL, 11, was locked up overnight in an adult cell after she was arrested for writing graffiti. When she appeared in a Geraldton court yesterday, magistrate Michael King demanded to know why she had been put in the lock-up. West Australian Police Minister Michelle Roberts also called for an explanation from the local police.



Balgoviah real estate agent Mark Hanson with some of the latest graffiti

## Harness this creativity

WE are not surprised to learn of the suburbs of Sydney that providing so-called "graffiti space" that was given full from page coverage (AID Jan 10).

There do not seem to be any combine forces with local youth and centres of organisation and house many their own to persist. As many the "graffiti art" or "street art" is judged from the frequency of this kind of "offence" it seems crucial to provide a space in which young people can express themselves in a constructive way. It has been proven in areas such as Wollongong, Gosford and various

bright colours - something aesthetically pleasing, interesting, or even challenging to realise the potential of this area for residents and towns in a constructive manner and opt for Band-aid solutions, let's find an alternative that might bring them against one another.

We might find that these kids have more to offer than they are being given credit for.

Shawn Webb  
Bromwyn Simpson  
Manny



Graffiti walls 'have a purpose'

## Giving youth an alternative

I am writing about the recent debate concerning graffiti, particularly Warragah Council's graffiti project. I work in this project as member of the council's YAG (youth advisory group), I am also a part of Surf Life Saving branch's youth panel and as such meet many different young people.

The graffiti project is very worthwhile. Warragah Council is doing many things with the local youth many people don't understand. On the north-ern beaches there is not a lot of entertainment for young people. Warragah Council is working with Warragah's youth (through YAG) to create somewhere to go. The drop-in centre at Yoyo's provides after-school entertainment and a place for young people to meet. It is a supervised area, free of charge and open to all youths.

Thursday, when the spray-in sessions are held, there are experienced young people who tutor the younger, less experienced youths. Instead of the tagging, they teach them to paint murals. Warragah Council is providing a secure place for these young artists to express their talent. Most artists will turn over a new leaf, and begin to use legal walls. Others will spoil it for the rest. Hopefully they will become the minority. And hopefully the community will support talented aerosol artists.

Jane Gilmour  
Dee Why

## Crackdown on graffiti

COUNCILS across Sydney are cracking down on the escalating number of graffiti vandals. Some councils are resorting to offering rewards for dobbing vandals, and one is even using off-duty police officers to accompany council rangers on patrols. Others have round-the-clock surveillance teams and have set up "graffiti hotlines".

## Reservoir dogged

WHEN the Centennial Park Reservoir No 1 was completed in 1898, it was the largest in the Southern Hemisphere and just about the largest covered reservoir in the world. It was refurbished by the Sydney Water Board in the late 1970s and thousands of spectators queued up to take a peek before it was refilled. The small, above-ground structure was cleaned up, the roof removed, fence removed, and the surrounding area landscaped. It now looks like a park. The second reservoir, to the east, hasn't been so lucky. It was built in 1900, received a Federal grant in 1930, but has already been hit with graffiti. A 3m fence topped with three rows of razor wire and a thick hedge of oleander.

## Ways to get vandals to clean up their act

RE: Make vandals pay clean-up bills (ND, August 16). Perhaps a more effective way to rehabilitate "taggers" is via their own sweat and toil, rather than their (or their parents') wallets. How about assigning each vandal a "tag" section wall, making him responsible for keeping it clean for (say) a year? If his fellow vandals insist on defiling it daily, all the more work for him. Optionally, give him time off his "sentence" for dobbing in other taggers, who in turn can be assigned their own walls. And how about teaching these people a more productive use of paint, eg offering them practical art courses? "Legal art" walls tend to remain relatively free of tags. Perhaps there's a lesson there.

Richard Murrane, Dee Why



Illegal graffiti plastered on a building in Dee Why is no artform. It's vandalism.

## Aerosol artist's outlet

YO-YO's at Forestville is providing an outlet for people to do legal graffiti, according to Matt Peet, co-ordinator of the Yo-Yo's graffiti project. "Some people don't want to do illegal graffiti," he says. "Projects like this is how I went legal." Growing up in Marrickville, Peet, like many around him, resorted to illegal graffiti but he assures that it is not his intention to do this kind of "vandalism". "Peet says, 'I've got their different reasons', he told the *Weekender* last week. "For me, I just wanted to paint."

"It was the way I was pressing myself at the time, and when I realised I could do it in a legal manner I no longer had to do it illegally." That time happened when his local council organised a local wall to be decorated with graffiti or "legal art". Peet was impressed with the success of that wall. Peet aimed to take things further. "I thought, '... if I'll start an ongoing project'..." And it steam rolled from there. Yo-Yo's provides a place for youths to meet and hang out on Thursday afternoons. With table tennis, a pool table and a very big stereo system available it boasts up

to a dozen youths each week. But the biggest drawcard is the "aerosol art" which is done on giant canvases. After each week the canvases is folded up and the best ones are eventually displayed at local art shows. Peet believes projects like these are a step in the right direction for graduating legal graffiti. "I know the kids who had the opportunity to do this kind of stuff would do it," Peet said. "Even for myself, if there were no legal outlets you would do it illegally." "In projects like these we can redirect a large proportion [of illegal graffiti]," Jamie, 18, believes. Yo-Yo's is a good idea and provides an opportunity to keep people off the streets. "I've seen anyone from going out and doing illegal graffiti," Jamie said. "People have their own minds, but I think it [Yo-Yo's] provides an opportunity not to graffiti." "You meet other people, you paint, it develops your artistic skills. I think it [Yo-Yo's] is a good idea and that goes out with tags, that's not vandalism." "There is no artform in doing that."





## Global graffiti movement is in the can

Graffiti art on the peninsula has taken on a distinctly international flavour after a travelling band of German artists joined local talent to transform a wall at Manly surf shop, Aloha. The group of four tourists and their Australian counterparts are hoping to establish an international network of graffiti artists. They have already transformed "canvases" in Newtown and Redfern, as well as Bangkok and New Zealand. They leave today for Brazil and Argentina. Photo: ROS CANNON

# Judge rejects teen vandal's \$1m claim

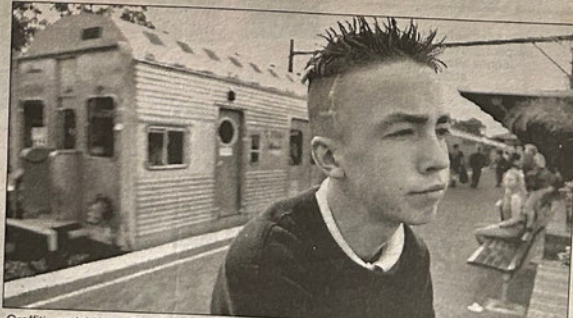
By WILL TEMPLE

TEENAGE graffiti vandal Kane Rundle had already been caught three times for spraying his trademark tag "Oops" on public property and was punished with community service.

But leaning out of a double-decker train carriage window on May 6, 1994, he was half-way through the letter "p" when his head smashed into a stanchion causing severe brain damage. Yesterday, the folly of his actions was compounded when Supreme Court Justice Peter McClellan ruled against his claim for more than \$1 million in compensation and instead ordered him pay the State Rail Authority's legal costs. The sum has yet to be determined, but could well run into hundreds of thousands of dollars.

Mr Rundle, 22, had argued that the SRA was negligent in the 1994 accident when he was 15, because it had failed to ensure a carriage window could not be opened far enough to put his body through the narrow window opening. Justice McClellan said he found that while it was foreseeable young people might squeeze their bodies through defective train windows to spray graffiti, the SRA could not reasonably be expected to ensure their safety.

"I do not believe... the State



Graffiti vandal Kane Rundle seen in 1995... after his head smashed into a railway stanchion.

Rail Authority had a duty to prevent a young person, intent on disfiguring the train, from deliberately squeezing through the narrow window opening," he said.

"Although it was foreseeable that some young people might squeeze through a faulty window, I am satisfied this would only occur with difficulty.

"Even a nightly maintenance program which fixed

every window would not have proved a barrier to a determined youth."

Justice McClellan did not accept Mr Rundle's claim it was "quite easy" to get out of the window. Instead he had become adept at it with practice.

The court heard that Mr Rundle had been putting his tag on train roofs for about six months before the accident but had started vandalising

carriages in Year 8 instead of attending school.

There were no witnesses to the accident but Mr Rundle gave evidence he used to board trains at Revesby and travel to East Hills looking for an empty carriage. There he would test the windows to see if he could find one he could open.

Neither Mr Rundle nor the SRA would comment on the decision yesterday.

# Plea for help on vandals

By police writer  
RHETT WATSON

NSW Police Commissioner Ken McEwen has appealed for help from the public in the fight against vandalism.

The Sunday Telegraph last week launched a campaign when it encouraged sport volunteers and help catch those responsible.

Mr McEwen, yesterday threw his support behind the campaign, police, community and the community to work together against vandalism.

"Vandalism is a crime which impacts on us all, with a vast public face. And the unfortunate consequence is that whole communities are tainted. The Sunday Telegraph reported that 10 per cent of council budgets were spent on their annual budgets fighting vandalism.



Appeal Ken McEwen

Almost 72 councils have the number of attacks since 1997. The problems are not confined to the central business district. Mr McEwen said the community was an essential link in fighting vandalism. "Vandalism and graffiti can be prevented," he said. "It's not the responsibility of individual citizens like so many other crimes, if not every crime in society borne out of the issue of respect."

"It's about prevention, detection and education, and property of other people. Assistant Commissioner Bob Walters said continued vandalism could promote a loss of hopelessness in the community can give people a feeling of vulnerability, which over a long period of time can develop into a feeling that no one can help them," he said. "We don't know anyone with information about vandalism should call Crime Stoppers on 1800 333 000.

## Public deputised to fight train graffiti scourge

By CHARLES MIRANDA

SYDNEY'S rail commuters were yesterday deputised by NSW Police and State Rail with \$500 rewards offered for help in arresting and convicting graffiti vandals.

In the most significant assault on the city's massive graffiti problem, cash payment incentives are expected to result in hundreds of graffiti gang members being charged or fined.

The move comes after revelations some graffiti vandals are interfering with train signals to stop trains between stations to spray them.

They are also stopping trains to photograph their murals to show off to others. "It's a grave concern to us because not only does it disrupt the service but there's an increased risk to the safety of passengers," newly appointed state rail chief Howard Lacy said yesterday.

Grffiti gangs were also using climbing and lighting equipment to break into underground train stations late at night or climbing fences to get into rail yards.

The vandalism costs about \$60 million a year. "It's criminal behaviour. It's dangerous and comes at enormous costs to the community," Mr Lacy said.

"Many people will try and tell you that graffiti is a legitimate form of social expression — we don't agree and on the rail network acts of graffiti and vandalism can result in injury or death.

"In the last 18 months, nine people have paid that price, either being killed or seriously injured carrying out vandalism or graffiti."

In that time, 130 graffiti vandals were identified and either charged or fined, Mr Lacy said. He hoped the cash incentive would mean more arrests.

## Public deputised to fight train graffiti scourge

However, he called for bigger penalties to make the arrests worthwhile; a person caught graffitiing is fined an average \$200.

Police Commissioner Peter Ryan said the cash payment was the first such offered in NSW and followed similar campaigns in Europe.

He said Operation Tag was a chance for the community to do something about the problem.

"If you see anyone vandalising a station or spraying graffiti on a train, do us all a favour and ring Crimestoppers (1800 333 000)," he said.

Operation Tag will run until January 28.



Mr Ryan views the damage. Picture: MARC MCCORMACK

## Aerosol art project celebrates Youth Week

Photo by Fran-Lee Dunphy



AN EXHIBITION of aerosol art was officially launched in the Brookvale Centre-link office last week as part of Youth Week celebrations.

The artworks, which depict earth, wind, fire and jungle scenes, were created through Warringah Council's youth project at Foreville Youth Centre, 1610 Mandy Centrelink & Sydney's Mandy Centrelink. Ritchie, said the agency was very excited

about the exhibition, which will be on display in the customer service centre. "Providing appropriate services to the young people in our community is a major priority for Centrelink," she said.

Supporting local initiatives such as the graffiti project and other special occasions is a good opportunity to inform young people of the rest of the community of our many programs.

"It would be wonderful to think that with the help of Centrelink, we might see some graffiti artists whose works on display here reflect their creative talent."

## Graffiti crackdown

Graffiti, how to deal it . . . that is the dilemma facing Pitwater Council



DEALING with graffiti is like playing a game without knowing the rules, according to one Pitwater councillor.

Councillor Lynne Czimer said the only ones who knew the rules were the graffitiists.

Removing graffiti was costing the council thousands of dollars a week, Cr Czimer told this week's council meeting.

"Most people see graffiti as unsightly and the tags be built up."

"We might find one or two people are the main offenders and we can then concentrate on them," he said.

Monday, several councillors suggested inviting artists to paint murals on walls where graffiti was most common, as graffitiists seemed to respect existing artworks.

The councillors voted to hold a workshop to discuss ways of dealing with the graffiti problem.

## Canned justice

LAST Sunday afternoon on a train bound for Perth, two young graffiti artists decided to adorn the side of the travelling train. It was standing at Westmead station.

Two fellow passengers caught them in the act and confronted them in the next train compartment. They then gave them a colourful dressing down, removed them of their own accord and sprayed the remaining contents of the can all over their clothing.

## New team is busting to tag graffiti vandals



It's a bust . . . Adrian Tiller at work removing graffiti from a Balgowlah home

If there's something strange spray-painted in your neighbourhood, who you gonna call? "Graffiti Busters".

This community-driven team of graffiti removalists has almost walked from the set of the infamous Hollywood movie *Ghostbusters* and is set to rid the streets of tag marks and other graffiti.

Set up by real estate agent Mark Hansen,

painter Jim Hoy and paint manufacturer Dulux, the initiative is a first for the area.

In the past two weeks, several homes and businesses in Balgowlah, Seaford and Clontarf have used the free service, which operates once a week.

"It came from an idea a friend had - I think it's a good initiative to take a stance on it," Mr Hansen said.

The graffiti is removed and the wall repainted, Mr Hansen said.

"If we can clean it up and remove it quickly, then that's a better deterrent," Mr Hansen said.

Dulux Megastore at Brookvale also gives clients a voucher for discounted paint.

Anyone who has a problem with graffiti should phone Mark Hansen Real Estate on 9949 2455.

# Graffiti artists' mean streets paved with art

By FIEVA GRANT

PROPERTY owners and authorities think he has a lot to answer for - but to kids scribbling their tags around the world, Leonard McGurr is an otherwise

The graffiti artist has come a long way from the streets of New York, where he started out as a bored and lonely teenager. Now known along Australia's for the first time as an artist. His exhibition opened on Monday at the Space 3 Gallery. McGurr believes graffiti is a creative force.

"I would absolutely not encourage it, but at the same time it's difficult for me to know to be a sponsor or a living legend. But I think it's better giving them an option to do something else with their talents, some time there is a period in someone's life when they need to make decisions for themselves. I would encourage an emerging passion about what you do and then perhaps finding some success."

McGurr said a "operational and social" graffiti was a high school kid living in Manhattan. I looked at graffiti to enable me to be a part of the community and to be recognized and respected by other members of that community.

"I was really thinking low and aiming low. Maybe I was an only child, but I was so into it that I was really trying to become part of something."

He began "tagging" his adopted graffiti in Futura, 2000, despite the fact that, "back then, it was so cool to be thinking about the year the lights, after time in the military, he began showing in alternative galleries, opportunities turned to Berlin and Amsterdam.

Legend ... graffiti artist Leonard McGurr. Picture: MATTHEW VASKESCU



The work of a father figure ... some of Futura's graffiti

# City trains in a shameful state

By transport writer ROD SMITH

SYDNEY commuters are being forced to travel on rubbish-strewn trains full of waste paper, food and split drinks, with dirty seats and floors covered in graffiti.

The *Sunday Telegraph* took these photographs of dirty and defaced trains just a few stops from Central on four different lines on consecutive days.

Less than two years after playing an integral role in the Sydney Olympics, providing clean and efficient trains, CityRail's standards have slipped, transport lobbyists say.

Action for Public Transport described the general cleanliness of some train carriages as "appalling".



Dirty: Rubbish and graffiti on a CityRail train

campaign asking people to "Keep On Training Sydney" following the network's Olympic success.

"During the Olympics, railway employees got out there and kept the trains clean and gave it a good go," said Commuter Council of NSW chairman Kevin Parish.

"But I think they've backed off since the Olympics and the trains are back to where they were." Lobbyists say the condition of the carriages has

a direct impact on whether commuters decide to travel by rail.

"Many people perceive graffiti inside trains as a threat because it feels like the place has been taken over," Mr Donovan said.

The *Sunday Telegraph* travelled on up to 12 different trains on four separate lines - Bankstown, Inner West, Illawarra and East Hills during its investigation.

Among the trains in the worst conditions were the

Tangara models, whose cloth-covered seats were often badly stained or littered with rubbish.

State Opposition transport spokesman Peter Debnam called on the State Government to act immediately, especially with the prospect of a three per cent fare rise flagged last week.

"Commuters want safe, clean, reliable public transport, but especially clean when Transport Minister Carl Scully wants another fare increase," Mr Debnam said.

CityRail defended the condition of its trains, saying it had doubled cleaning staff for the Olympics and retained them. It said all trains were cleaned at the end of the day and at each turnaround point, as well as by roving cleaners.

"We ask people to help us by reporting any dirty carriages or graffiti, because we have people who can respond and deal with it," a CityRail spokeswoman said.

She said CityRail dealt with 5500 graffiti hits on trains every month.



Defaced: CityRail deals with 5500 graffiti hits on trains every month

2.99 to \$1.99

ing adopted by the coun- comply with the cil, not after. This policy is very guidelines," he said. "Current development applications don't comply with the guidelines. The large amount of work...

## Spelling Disaster For Our Society

I find myself getting more and more annoyed with the graffiti I see all around me. Yesterday, I saw a message on a ferry wharf post which said, "Where all going to dye", and last week I saw one that read, simply, "Just the oppisite." What in the world is wrong with our society? Doesn't good spelling count any more?  
G.P. STOCKTON, NSW

It's tragic what's happening to young kids today; when we were kids, we would never EVER have spray-painted graffiti on a wall — not without using a dictionary and a thesaurus. We took a lot of pride in our grammar and vocabulary; I can still remember Gavin Ludlow standing there with a can of spray paint, just about to write on a wall, yelling at me, "Hey, Danny, if I want to write 'Kelly Green' is a rooting machine, do I need to conjugate the verb? And also, could you look up a synonym for 'shack-arse mate'?"

So I think the blame lies separately on the education system. Kids today don't seem to be learning their basics, and if they can't be taught in the classrooms, then they should be taught in the streets and back alleys of our cities. From now on, when a policeman catches a young kid writing graffiti on a wall, that kid shouldn't be punished — HE SHOULD BE ASSESSED.

If the graffiti is grammatically incorrect, or even if the spelling is shabby, the policeman should point out the mistake — "Excuse me, young man, but that should be 'All cops are fascist pigs', not 'All cops is fascist pigs'. Always use 'are' when the subject is plural." Then the kid should be made to write 100 times correctly on the wall. And in the same way, if kids are doing good graffiti work, if they're using correct grammar and neat penmanship, then they should be rewarded for their efforts. They should get a little elephant stamp at the bottom of the wall, with a note of encouragement: "Terrific work, Tummy! Keep it up! Particularly enjoyed the bit about cerebral death to all Western imperialist dogs." And, who knows, with this kind of education, maybe one day these kids will actually finish their schooling, and then go on to university, and perhaps become PhDs — although they're probably going to need a really big wall to write their thesis on.

## Isband

It allegedly happened at the front door. Mr. Prieze's brother arrived at Mr. Prieze's house from a nearby archery range. Mr. Prieze's brother, who is a keen archer, was carrying a large bag of vegetables. Mr. Prieze's brother was carrying a large bag of vegetables. Mr. Prieze's brother was carrying a large bag of vegetables.



Pr  
A  
By F  
we  
had  
head  
Kitch  
out  
heard  
Kath  
a mo  
dean,  
John  
home  
Knigh  
alter  
chery  
dents  
human  
Barr  
an sp  
old Ne

The work of a father figure... some of Futura's graffiti

# Derailed by design

NEWS



MARKED: Workman Peter Wright with the graffiti-marked excavator.

## Vandals spoil Godzone

IN THE four years John Hinton has been a Godzone resident, it's been used all over NSW without being damaged. The week he brought it to his home in Manly it was the target of graffiti within a business, Kanaon Road, additions, has been contracted by Manly Council to move sand from Manly Lagoon and put it on the beach to help fish levees and stop sediment around northern beaches resident, Mr Hinton was blowing the area's trumpets to his out-of-the-area staff, until his message was targeted in his own backyard.

"My point is Manly is such a lovely place and then you bloom in your machine."

"I've had this machine since 99 and it's been all over the state - Mt Druitt, Redfern, and it doesn't get a touch on it and now this," Mr Hinton said.

"We are going through the list of...



THH injured lay peaked in Sydney. Six carriage carrying the train. A sign man si caused ism act "If th human ales au the spo "It s sloped. But it not kno safe med. The tr station, train's pa. While serious upright a angle — a to slay on board because overhead power lines had been brought down. Fire crews were alerted and power to the electricity lines was isolated. Firefighters were then able to climb aboard and help the 66 passengers to safety. Police said the remaining passengers left the train and walked along the tracks back to Hornsby station. Inspector Phil McCamley from Hornsby police later confirmed that about 100 people were on board.

ing adopted by the coun- company with the of... This policy is very draconian," he said. "Current development applications don't comply with the guidelines. "It takes no account for the large amount of work reformed, even if the pro- "We just want eco-

\$1.99

# Death express

## Gangs linked to murders

**OLD MURDER CASES REVIVED AFTER POLICE TASKFORCE MAKES LINK WITH GANG ACTIVITY**

Report **KIM O'CONNOR**

An intensive two-year police investigation into gay bashing and murders in Marks Park, Tamarama, during the 1980s has revealed six men may have been murdered by gangs who targeted men visiting Eastern Suburbs parks.

Rose Bay police launched Operation Tangle in an effort to solve the mystery of the 1989 death of 31-year-old John Russell, whose body was found below the Marks Park cliff face, and the disappearance of Wollongong TV news reader Ross Warren four months before. The area covers the popular Bondi to Tamarama cliff walk, and in daylight hours, attracts thousands of people enjoying the coastal view.

Detective Sergeant Steve Page is the head of Operation Tangle, a task force that has spoken to hundreds of people with information about assaults in the area.

"Now we are preparing to deliver a hand to the Coroner, and hope to do that within the week," he said. "We will be meeting with the Coroner to establish which witnesses will be called."

"It appears the attacks were linked to gang activity and that these gangs targeted gay people, particularly men at beaches."

"These were crimes of hate with a lot of violence inflicted and we are looking at similarities between six deaths but whether we can say it is one gang or more is up to the Coroner to decide."

Det Sgt Page said the re-enactment in December last year by police of the cliff-top crimes had prompted witnesses to come forward. Anyone with information about the case can contact him on 8556 8299.

Many of the attacks in Eastern Suburbs parks the 1980s went unreported by the victims, who feared being publicly identified as gay. Others reported were seen as suicides or one-off assaults.

Now police believe the gangs, known as The Bondi Boys, the PTK (Part Time Killers) and another unnamed one, were involved. The PTK were well-known in the area, leaving their graffiti "tag" across a number of suburbs.

Most members would now be aged in their late 20s or early 30s. One person interviewed by police was a first-grade rugby league player.

Other deaths under scrutiny during the investigation include that of Raymond Keam, who was bashed in Alison Park, Randwick, in 1987; William Allen, bashed in Alexandria Park, in 1988; and Richard Johnson, who was killed in this park in 1990.

A Thai man, Krichakorn Ratanapattaporn, was also found dead at the base of a cliff on the Bondi walkway in 1990.

Police are reported to be very satisfied with the investigative work of Operation Tangle, especially as it involved reopening 12-year-old cases, and exhaustive evaluation of hundreds of leads and tip-offs.



In December last year, police used a dummy dressed as one of the victims in a re-enactment of the Marks Park murders.



## Victim wants to roll graffiti vandals



AARONA VALE business-anti-graffiti group to clean the office in the area.

Mark Hargan said the graffiti vandalism of an old road roller in front of his business in Harker St had angered him and made him realise how upset other business people must be when their properties were vandalised.

"The old roller has been parked here for a few weeks. None of my property has been vandalised in this area - until now," he said.

"I call it optical garbage and it will take quite a while to clean it off."

Mr Hargan said he knew of other graffiti attacks on the area's businesses and thinks it's time people got together to do something about it. "I think we should go around and paint over the graffiti, using old paint that people have lying around," he said.

"Lots of people have tons of unwanted paint lying around and we would just have to match the background colour, but it would damage the graffiti."

Fuming... Mark Hargan with his vandalised vintage steamroller



# Death express

## Gangs linked to murders

**OLD MURDER CASES REVIVED AFTER POLICE TASKFORCE MAKES LINK WITH GANG ACTIVITY**

Report: KIM O'CONNOR

An intensive two-year police investigation into gay bashing and murders in Marks Park, Tamarama, during the 1980s has revealed six men may have been murdered by gangs who targeted men visiting Eastern Suburbs parks.

Rose Bay police launched Operation Tangle in an effort to solve the mystery of the 1989 death of 31-year-old John Russell, whose body was found below the Marks Park cliff face, and the disappearance of Wollongong TV news reader Ross Warren four months before.

The area covers the popular Bondi to Tamarama cliff walk, and in daylight hours, attracts thousands of people enjoying the coastal view.

Detective Sergeant Steve Page is the head of Operation Tangle, a task force that has spoken to hundreds of people with information about assaults in the area.

"Now we are preparing to deliver a brief to the Coroner, and hope to do that within the week," he said.

"We will be meeting with the Coroner to establish which witnesses will be called.

"It appears the attacks were linked to gang activity and that these gangs targeted gay people, particularly men at beaches.

"These were crimes of hate with a lot of violence inflicted and we are looking at similarities between six deaths, but whether we can say it is one gang or more is up to the Coroner to decide."

Many of the attacks in Eastern Suburbs parks in the 1980s went unreported by the victims, who feared being publicly identified as gay. Others reported were seen as suicides or one-off assaults.

Now police believe the gangs, known as The Bondi Boys, the PTK (Part Time Killers) and another unnamed one, were involved. The PTK were well-known in the area, leaving their graffiti "tag" across a number of suburbs.

Most members would now be aged in their late 20s or early 30s. One person interviewed by police was a first-grade rugby league player.

Other deaths under scrutiny during the investigation include that of Raymond Keen, who was bashed in Alison Park, Randwick, in 1987; William Allen, bashed in Alexander Park in 1988; and Richard Johnson, who was killed in this park in 1990.

A Thai nun, Kriethkorn Ratanapattana, was also found dead at the base of a cliff on the Bondi walkway in 1990.

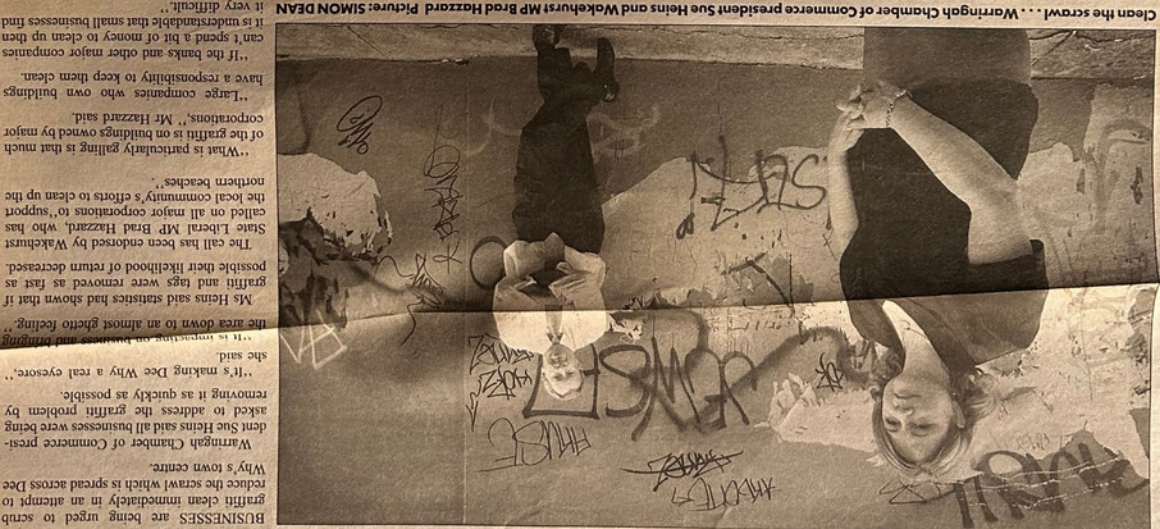
Police are reported to be very satisfied with the investigative work of Operation Tangle, especially as it involved recognizing 12-year-old cases, and exhaustive evaluation of hundreds of leads and tip-offs.



In December last year, police used a dummy dressed as one of the victims in a re-enactment of the Marks Parks murders.



## Chamber urges businesses to scrub away urban scrawl



**BUSINESSES** are being urged to scrub graffiti clean immediately in an attempt to reduce the scrawl which is spread across Dec Why's town centre.

Warringham Chamber of Commerce president Sue Heins said all businesses were being asked to address the graffiti problem by removing it as quickly as possible.

"It's making Dec Why a real eyesore," she said.

"It is important on business and bringing the area down to an almost ghetto feeling."

Ms Heins said statistics had shown that if graffiti and tags were removed as fast as possible their likelihood of return decreased.

The call has been endorsed by Wakehurst State Liberal MP Brad Hazzard, who has called on all major corporations to "support the local community's efforts to clean up the northern beaches."

"What is particularly galling is that much of the graffiti is on buildings owned by major corporations," Mr Hazzard said.

"Large companies who own buildings have a responsibility to keep them clean.

"If the banks and other major companies can't spend a bit of money to clean up then it is understandable that small businesses find it very difficult."

Clean the scrawl... Warringham Chamber of Commerce president Sue Heins and Wakehurst MP Brad Hazzard. Picture: SIMON DEAN











# Graffiti gangs spray under court's nose

YOUNG offenders are displaying their contempt for the law by defacing court buildings under the noses of sentencing magistrates.

This photograph shows how Bidura Children's Court officers are losing the battle against felt-tip pen and spray can-wielding juvenile offenders.

One court visitor revealed how he had seen a youth spray his "tag" in the toilets minutes after he appeared in a courtroom on a string of property offences.

A court officer told The Sunday Telegraph that youngsters routinely scrawled graffiti on the toilet roof,

walls, floor and ceiling, and stuffed toilets and sinks full of paper.

"Every now and then, we get a couple of young fellows in on CSOs (community service orders) to clear it all," he said.

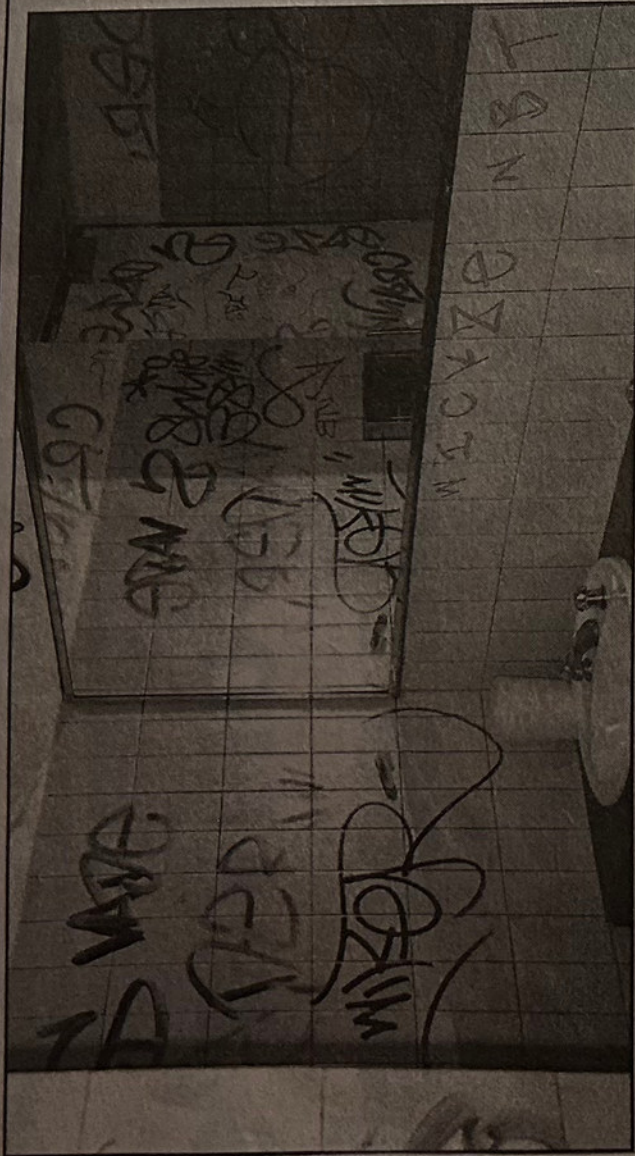
"Within a month, it's back again, even with extra patrols by sheriffs.

"Unless you actually catch them at it, it's pretty hard to do anything."

The toilets are the only facilities available to offenders, members of the public and visiting legal officers.

"All the legal staff, including visiting barristers, are required to use them, along with parents and children," the officer said.

— SARAH HARRIS



Vanity vandalism: inside a toilet at Bidura Children's Court

Picture: Graham Hely

# Graffiti kids not as bad as they're painted