

THE NEED TO GET A LIFE

Retirement or unemployment can be a hard time for anyone. This is especially the case for men. We men have much of our self esteem tied to the work we do.

It has become clear over the last year that many of our older retired male clients are making the running of the strata group where they live far too important in their lives.

The lack of a broader social life can result in retired males turning into autocrats, that in the worst cases bully their fellow residents. This shows up as complaints over minor infringements of the Corporation's Articles and a failure to embrace a 'live and let live' approach to unit living. Our concern is not only for the men caught in this behaviour but also for the many older residents who approach us feeling intimidated and wanting to move out of the group.

There are some great ways in which unit owners with a little time and energy to spare can make a useful and rewarding contribution to our broader community.

Volunteering proved to be highlight of the recent Sydney Olympics. Tens of thousands of locals found that helping out gave them a sense of wellbeing and purpose. Many are continuing to volunteer their time.

This year is the International Year of the Volunteer. If you need to find some new friends and restore a little balance in your outlook we suggest you contact Volunteering SA at 1st Floor, 220 Victoria Sq. Adelaide SA 5000 phone 8221 7177 Fax 8221 9188. They place volunteers with some 500 agencies varying from animal welfare, sports and recreation to environment groups.

Cheers
Gordon Russell

Gordon Russell CREI

ps: Do you have any friends who need to read our newsletter?



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emergency numbers

Service	Name	Contact Number
Plumbing & Gas	Unitech	0412 420 544
Roof Leaks	Unitech	0412 420 544
Electrical	Men at Work	0411 195 275
Glazing	Hartley	8347 2211
Police to attend - noise/robbery etc		11444
State Emergency Services		8204 2999

www.unitcare.com.au

THANKS

Thanks to all our clients who have stood by us whilst we underwent some growing pains during the last quarter of 2000.

We have been concerned that in some cases we have not been able to keep to our Performance Guarantee.

In October last year we took on the management of a portfolio based in Glenelg.

We are now consolidating our business and improving our systems to ensure we meet our promise to our clients.

Our Team Working for You

It is important for many of us to be able to put a face to the voice on the end of the phone, so here is the photo of the team at UnitCare.

Hilary is an REISA trained strata manager and comes from a background in dentistry and veterinary nursing.

Gordon is an REISA trained strata manager with 13 years in the industry with a background in building and local government.

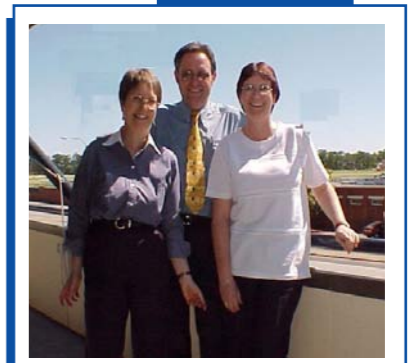
Erica recently joined us and comes from the horse racing and retail sectors. Erica will be undertaking the REISA strata management course

ON ITS WAY



UnitCare will be accepting levy payments by BPay later this year. Many of our younger clients are telling us that they would like to pay using the BPay system. This system enables those with bank accounts and credit cards to transfer funds and pay accounts using the phone, Internet or the local Post Office.

You will know you can pay using this system when you see the BPay logo and reference numbers on your levy notice. Note: BPay will only apply to those unit owners paying into our UnitCare Adelaide Trust



Your UnitCare Team



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Urban Affairs - stories from the strata community

The rising stars of the magazine industry are That's Life and Who Weekly (report in The Australian 4/1/2001). It seems that we Australians have a passion for gossip.

Recently our clients have been asking for a few more stories from unit land.

To this end we are putting aside some of the more exciting events for this our new newsletter column. The names have been changed or removed to protect both the guilty, innocent and our bank account.

Story 1: Sex for Money:

In November 2000 we received written and verbal complaints about the behaviour of some young tenants at one of our larger groups. One owner had overheard telephone conversations offering sex for cash. They also reported young men visiting for short periods from 11pm until the small hours of the morning. There was apparently much banging of doors and noisy cars. Unfortunately we were unable to convince at least two residents to sign a formal complaint however we let the owner know of the allegations and asked them not to renew the lease.

Story 2 Democracy wins - in the end:

Over the last year we have seen some disturbing examples of officers at groups we manage and those who approach us for help. A couple of recent examples include:

The Presiding Officer of a self managed group refused to help organise a meeting to approve some improvements at a unit.

The Secretary who was reported to be harassing fellow owners, many of whom were

over 75 years of age. The Secretary was also making significant decisions without reference to a meeting of the committee.

A Presiding Officer who reported residents who failed to pull out all weeds in the front gardens.

Following some pain many of these officers have been replaced with more democratic and reasonable owners. Democracy has been restored and the owners are more relaxed. (see back page for our help finding a balance).

Story 3: Building Rip Offs:

Recently we wrote and phoned the Housing Industry Association. We complained about their public opposition to the Government's new Building Audit legislation. The HIA stated in the media that S A had high quality building work. We tried to bring to the HIA's attention many of the building faults our clients were suffering. Unfortunately they refused to take our calls. We referred our concerns to ABC Radio who broadcast our concerns. The legislation has been passed and we hope to see improved standards soon.

Your Story: We are offering 2 free movie tickets for each newsworthy story about unit living. Mail, fax or email your



Urban affairs

free check-

We have been able to save money for many of our clients through insurance premiums, after hours maintenance and preventative works.

Examples include savings on insurance and fees - \$1200 for a group of 14 and \$700 for a group of 19.

If you are not one of our clients, give us a ring and we can review your group's costs to find possible savings.

This service is free and with no obligation.

Call us on **08 8364 0022**.

Theodore Bruce Real Estate - New Service for UnitCare Clients

Many of our clients have over the years asked us to recommend a firm to handle the sale of their unit.

We have been keen to find operators who can be trusted to act honestly and will look after our clients.

We are pleased to announce that we have joined with Theodore Bruce Real Estate.

Theodore Bruce is an established and respected Adelaide real estate firm for over 150 years. Bill and Jean Wilson have been selling units for more than 35 years. They can be contacted on 8379 8395 or call Bill or Jean on 0413 834 881 anytime.

They were the appointed Real Estate Agents for selling the Mira Monte unit complex at Urbrae and the Garden East apartments in the city.

They have also had wide experience of selling strata-titled home units and are fully conversant with the ramifications related to the Articles of Association of strata titled property.

Free appraisals can be arranged for owners thinking of selling or simply keeping abreast of the value of their property.

Our alliance with Theodore Bruce brings together some of Adelaide's top specialists in sales with a special focus on units.



Bill Wilson

Jean Wilson



Help for Landlords - 1902 283 507

There is now a new service to help landlords with rental problems. The Rental Advice Line can be contacted on 1902 283 507 all hours. It is staffed by qualified residential tenancy advisors 24 hours a day 7 days a week.

ETSA Privatisation Costing Unit Owners

It appears that the recent privatisation of ETSA is going to cost unit owners. Australian Gas & Light (AGL) now read the meters and bill residential customers for the electricity they consume.

We have received a number of calls from AGL stating that they will no longer be using the keys supplied by the strata corporation for meter boxes. They use a master key system that requires a change to the meter box at all groups. This will cost groups that wish to keep their meter boxes locked. If nothing is done residents will receive averaged accounts that guess at the electricity consumed.

It appears the change is to save AGL the cost of managing the keys for many groups. We have written to AGL and the Electricity Industry Ombudsman seeking a change in this policy or as AGL benefit they should wear the cost.

We will keep you informed.

Unit sales