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What a big, brash, wonderful town

WE are starting to have a really good conversation here in Liverpool.

It began a few years ago with that perennial old problem of the lack of parking in the central business district, moved on to rubbish collection or the lack of it, and last week we were confident enough to tackle the pros and cons of the carbon tax debate.

This conversation tells me several things about Liverpool. And the first is that for anyone to suggest we do not have a community that cares here in this town is an outrage.

Not only do we have a real community, we have also a level of sophistication that is the envy of other parts of the metropolitan area.

There are places where they boast of everyone knowing everyone else as though it were a plus but it is really code for lack of progress.

Everyone does not know everyone else in Liverpool, and thank God for that. Other places can keep their stifling small town culture.

Liverpool is nothing like that. Quite the opposite in fact: Liverpool is big and brash and growing. It is also full of

EDITOR'S
CORNER

ERIC KONTOS



tribes, but tribes that talk to each other. They are definitely part of the conversation in this neck of the woods. I get around a bit and I have seen this with my own eyes.

And now to the future: No need to embarrass the councillor behind this, so let's just say one of the wise old heads elected to Liverpool Council in 2008 has suggested to me that we not only continue to have this conversation but that we formalise it in the style of last week's carbon tax forum.

"Due to the success of the [carbon tax forum] debate, what about a debate on the future of the council and the southern end of town along with car parking charges, intermodal? Just a thought." That was the email message I received from this obviously

loyal Liverpool resident and servant of may decades.

Wonderful stuff and it lifts the spirits without a doubt. We must obviously be careful we don't end getting bogged down talking too much and doing too little – but other than that little mild negative note, your correspondent is all in favour of a couple of forums each year that identify the pressing issues of our town as we get bigger and better.

But there must be some guarantee of action at the end of the gabfest; not being a bureaucrat I have no idea how you would ensure that.

Well, I do have one little thought: the creation of a committee for Liverpool that has five years to achieve some important goals. There'd be a representative or two from council, one from the chamber of commerce, one from one of the big businesses, say Peter Warren's for example, and a few of the others.

We certainly have the potential to be a Sydney "hot spot" when it comes to riverside dining, theatre and big sport events. If we keep working together, I've no doubt we going to get there; it's just a matter of time.

MY JOB

Name: Jeffrey Gough.

Job: Owner of Liverpool Glass Company, Hoxton Park Road, Prestons.

How did you end up in your current job? I sold my fleet of trucks to a multinational company and I was too young to retire, so I bought this business a few years ago.

Do you need any formal qualifications for your job? Yes. I did an adult apprenticeship at Lidcombe TAFE whilst training under the guidance of my senior tradesperson.

What is the best part of your job? Dealing with people and customer service is king.

Would you recommend your job to young people? Yes. Because there will always be glass that needs repairing.

Outside of work, do you have any hobbies or interests? I love my Harley Davidson and the freedom it gives me.

What other talent do you wish you had? Play the saxophone: I love the sound. It's an awesome instrument.

What is your favourite local haunt? The Macquarie Hotel in Liverpool.

Describe Liverpool in a few words? Vibrant and ever-changing.

What is your greatest extravagance? I will let you know when it happens.

What would you never do again? I have no regrets.

■ LIVERPOOL real estate legend Tony Pascale will celebrate three big milestones next year, but he wants to keep everyone in suspense, so he's asked us not to reveal what the 50, 60 and 80 marks correspond with. Any guesses from readers who do NOT know Tony? The invite list for the big night next March at Gemele Ristorante in Liverpool is pretty impressive and includes at least one former prime minister.

■ Last week's funeral of former Liverpool mayor Kevin Napier became a little tinged with controversy because of the absence of a Liverpool council or a Liverpool Labor Party representative. So we asked the family what they thought and they reluctantly told us that "our family did contact the Liverpool mayor's office and was told there would be a couple of councillors at the funeral. We didn't realise until I read this article [in the *Liverpool City Champion*] that none of them attended. Very disappointing indeed." Indeed.

■ Former mayor George Paciullo is ever the gentleman: asked at a recent lunch of he would consider running for



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Liverpool Council next year, he batted the question off with: "No, and I don't think [current ALP mayor] Wendy Waller would be amused if I did." Now some of you may be thinking, who was the dill who asked a man who is closer to 80 than 70 years of age? Well consider this: Paciullo may have had two bouts of cancer, but he's beaten them both, and most of all, intellectually, he's still sharp as a pin. And the dill who asked the question tells us that if George were to run, not only would he win at a canter, but it would be a big story around the world.

■ Speaking of the world, here's a small world story: our police and entertainment reporter, Sheree Mutton, is related to rugby league legend Keith Holman, who died last week. When news broke of his passing, Sheree informed us that she had an obituary published on the *Sydney Morning Herald* website which she had written about Keith. Naturally, we asked for details on how she is related to the legend, and she explained it this way: "My nan's sister, Hazel Holman, was Keith Holman's wife. So he is my great-uncle."

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