

**Briefly**

Fitzroy is celebrating peace this week, March 17 to 25. Events will be sponsored by the Fitzroy People for Nuclear Disarmament, the Fitzroy ALP, Fitzroy Council and many Fitzroy churches.

On Saturday, 17 March, a 24-hour prayer vigil for peace will be held at Saint Marks, corner George and Moor Streets, from 7 pm onwards.

On Sunday 18 March, a multicultural festival for peace will take place in the Edinburgh Gardens, North Fitzroy, starting at 11 am.

On Wednesday 21 March, anti-nuclear films will be shown at Fitzroy Town Hall, Napier Street, starting at 8 pm.

On Sunday 25 March, the final day of the peace week, a peace picnic will be held in Atherton Gardens, commencing at 2 pm.

For further information about Fitzroy's Peace Week, phone Warren Talbot on 419 1103, Frances Ford on 417 5710, Anne Byrne on 487 0174 or David Peake on 417 2751.

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The Fitzroy History Society is holding a public tour, this Sunday, 18 March, of many of the suburb's commercial buildings.

The tour will begin at 10 am and run till 4 pm, with light refreshments served at lunchtime.

Those interested are asked to book in advance by ringing 419 6030 after 4 pm. The tour will cost \$2.

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March 18 to 25 is the second celebration of Senior Citizens' Week. The Fitzroy/Collingwood Adult Day-Care Centre groups, with the full co-operation of the both councils and other willing, interested folk are holding two main separate functions.

Sunday 18 March: all afternoon — at Darling Gardens, Clifton Hill. Stalls, ethnic foods, Boece, Greek music and dancing, BYO wife and children and make a happening together.

Thursday 22 March: 1.30 to 3.30 pm at the Fitzroy Lower Town Hall. A monster Sing-a-long. Song, dance, music, afternoon tea and prizes.

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The West Melbourne Action Group is continuing to push its case for greater residential amenity in the area.

At a recent meeting of the group, concern was expressed over a number of issues considered detrimental to the area.

They included the State Government intention to demolish terrace houses and a hotel so that a remand centre can be established close to the city, and the heavy volume of trucks and transports using minor streets.

**Collingwood Tech's wall of renown**



"I think people enjoy graffiti because it's symbolic. The fact that it doesn't have direct meaning gives it a poetic quality," said New York graffiti artist, Keith Haring.

Amid the volatile New York art world, Haring and other graffiti artists, have taken the city by storm, spreading their symbolic messages in subway stations, sidewalks and rock clubs.

Few critics, curators or gallery owners took their work seriously, that is, until it became obvious that Haring had suddenly become New York's favorite uncommissioned public artist, creating work which was widely accessible as well as aesthetically and intellectually demanding.

Keith Haring has been touring Australia for the past month. In that time he has painted a gigantic mural on an interior wall of the Art Gallery of New South Wales, a mural in the National Gallery of Victoria, a piece of graffiti at the Hardware Club in the heart of Melbourne and another large work at our own Collingwood Technical School, Johnston Street.

"The reason I'm painting a mural in Collingwood is because I was given a grant from the Australia Council two years ago to do so. It fits in with my desire to combine works for galleries with 'neighbourhood' commissions.

"Collingwood has a great community feeling about it. Though it's supposed to be a poor area, it's nothing like the poverty I've seen in New York," he said.

As Haring put the finishing touches on the brick wall at Collingwood Tech last week, school kids milled around him. He talked to them happily, eagerly answering their queries.

Haring has not always been so forthright. When he first started painting, he felt more comfortable exhibiting anonymously in the subterranean corridors of the New York subway system than the private enclaves of the local art aristocracy.

Now he combines the best of both worlds exhibiting in large galleries, while still doing the odd piece just for the heck of it wherever he chooses.

Haring's figures are simply human and humane. Thick lines define their

by **LOUISE BELLAMY**

movements. His graffiti adopts an exciting rhythmic symmetry.

In his work at Collingwood, figures dance in and around abstract lines and curves. The background is light yellow, in sharp contrast to the red, black, green and blue lines of the figures.

Haring describes his work as "classical". His obsession with the simple human form, or suitably anthropomorphic forms, justifies this assessment.

His work is designed around formal patterns which retain classical lines, despite their stilted simplicity.

"In commercial and high art the image is all important. My graffiti is more classical. Andy Warhol broke the ice for commercial art 20 years ago. Because of that, graffiti is easily accepted now. In fact it doesn't look like graffiti at all," he said.

Haring wasn't always as confident or established as he now appears.

In 1979, the church fathers of the Holy Cross Polish National Church in New York decided to turn their basement into a community centre for local youth. When former theatre student, Ann Magnuson took over the job of running the centre in May, she immediately turned it into a cross between a '30's Berlin cabaret and a '50's sock hop.

Haring, a reluctant art student at the time, was one of the first arrivals at "Club 57".

"I used to wear funny clothes and be a B-52 groupie, a band that had just arrived from Georgia with a cult hit single, Rock Lobster. Then one day I just thought to myself, 'I'm an artist, I should do some art,'" he said.

Haring still has a nice zany side to his active

Keith Haring... messages from subway.

personality, but now it's strictly channelled into his work, which, he said, he "must do all the time."

Lucky for Collingwood that a snippet of his work

and his spirit to boot, has been left at the Tech, though Haring has already returned to New York to its established galleries and subways.

**AUS opposes Uni selection changes**

The Australian Union of Students (AUS) is vehemently opposed to proposals put forward by the Melbourne University Council to change student selection procedures.

The university is in the throes of examining the adoption of its own entrance exam to replace the Higher School Certificate (HSC) assessment presently used for university and college entrances.

AUS has accused Melbourne University Council of being "elitist" in their proposals which are devoid of community input.

AUS vice-president Lesley Yates, said: "The university shouldn't screen who they want; that takes the control away from the community and shuts it up behind closed doors.

"The university is arguing that the introduction of its own entrance exam won't change the status of HSC, but it will. HSC is a six-year process, starting from Form One. If it no longer holds relevance in terms of tertiary education, students will become disenchanting with it — and school, in general."

Mr Yates said AUS was also encouraging universities throughout Australia to review their "snobby" attitude to the Tertiary Orientation Programme (TOP), an alternative to HSC.

"At present, universities arbitrarily wack off 25 percent of a TOP student's final results before they consider them for university

entrance. That doesn't give these students a hope.

"AUS believes universities should have more flexibility. TOP is a valid form of assessment and it shouldn't be discriminated against."

Most TOP students at present don't even apply for university entrance. Most go to Colleges of Advanced Education, according to AUS.

Ms Yates said numerous studies have proven that State school students do better at universities than private school students.

"That's been the 'plus' of free education. Now Melbourne University is going backwards in its plans for an in-house entrance exam."

The Victorian Minister for Education, Robert Fordham, has intervened in the controversy, and has asked the university to defer taking action until after talks with the government.

The university has set up a working party to "consider matters relating to selection".

Members of the working party include professor David Caro, the university's vice-chancellor, Dr Norman Curry, the director-general of Education, and professor Kwong Lee Dow, dean of the university's faculty of education.

The working party is expected to report back to the university council on April 2.

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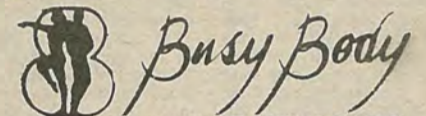
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