

## Australians tagged as the world's biggest gamblers

### From the President

Do you gamble? I mean with money, on the horses, poker or the lotteries. I confess I do. I have a few tickets running on Tattslotto and Powerball in Australia. My biggest win was over \$6000 a few years ago but I guess that has just about been 'reinvested' by now.

I raise this because it seems that Australians are, according to *The Economist*, the world's biggest gamblers per capita. They spent the equivalent of €902 (\$1208) each last year. I think I contributed a bit above my quota.

According to *The Economist*, when the Australian Securities and Investments Commission quietly dropped its opposition recently to betting on interest rate moves it raised the odds of the lucky country continuing an unwanted winning streak.

"Australia has led for the past decade, since we started doing this, and has always been well ahead of the other nations," said Joel Keeble of H2 Gambling Capital, which provided the British publication's data.

Ignoring the statistical anomaly that is Singapore - its two new casinos nearly match the entire Las Vegas strip in terms of the gambling spend - the next closest competition for Australia is Ireland, which spent less than half as much on gambling.

Electronic gaming machines, the catch-all term that includes poker machines, account for most of this outsized lead on other developed nations, H2 said, but it noted Australians' propensity to engage in a range of forms of gambling. This now includes bets on the interest rate decision by the Reserve Bank after the commission dropped attempts to ban the practice.

The betting agency that the commission targeted, Centrebet, was offering punters a \$1.12 return if interest rates remain unchanged and \$26 if they were cut. The corporate watchdog objected on the grounds that this amounts to trading in derivatives without a financial licence - a reference to the exotic financial instruments that helped trigger the global financial crisis.

But the most contentious issue remains Australians' love affair with poker machines. A report by the Productivity Commission said \$19 billion was spent on gambling in 2008-09, \$12 billion of it on poker machines.

There is another form of gambling that I could talk about....and that is organising events for our members.

I say this, lightly, because some events need a bit of effort to make them successful, especially if they involve excursions outside Vienna. We don't do many of these but there are a couple in the pipeline and we would appreciate some input from members. We are not asking for a firm commitment yet because both events are down the track. But to turn a possibility into a reality can be a gamble if we don't know if people are interested.

We are looking at a return to lovely Krems for lunch and a wine tasting, and a ride on a steam train through some picturesque countryside.

Have a look at coming events starting on page 4 and get in touch with the named organiser if you would like them to go ahead with the planning.

I think we have managed to draw together some interesting reading again this month. I hope you agree. Until next month. – Brett

## *Historic cathedral plans from the Middle Ages on display*

Everyone living in Vienna is aware of the beauty and dominance of St. Stephan's Cathedral at the heart of the city.

But not everyone is aware that the architectural drawings of the cathedral from the late Middle Ages are unique and no fewer than 294 of the original plans exist today. No comparable Gothic cathedral in Europe possesses as many plan outlines on parchment and paper. These detailed plans, used by master builders and stone masons, have been on the UNESCO list of world cultural heritage since 2005.

It took more than 300 years to build the cathedral and today a special exhibition on the history of the cathedral that took a year to prepare is being held at the Wien Museum on Karlsplatz.

The original plans exist despite Europe being afflicted at the time by environmental disasters, epidemics -- the Black Death when Vienna lost one third of its population and all work on the cathedral stopped for lack of workers -- and wars.



These are the original drawings for the north tower made on six separate parchments (calf hides) six metres in length and completed in 1464. The tower reached only 68 metres before work stopped, never to be resumed. I took this photo before being told "no photos" and I'm glad I did because the

parchment was about to be removed from display because of its fragility.

The parchments were first cut or indented. Only when the master builder was satisfied with the design would the indentations be marked in ink.

"Up high" was the motto of Gothic sacral buildings, and the cathedral's huge South Tower was also an expression of "urban marketing" and symbol of

ecclesiastical and secular power. When completed in 1433 it was the highest tower in Europe. Some years later the north tower of Strasbourg Cathedral claimed this title.

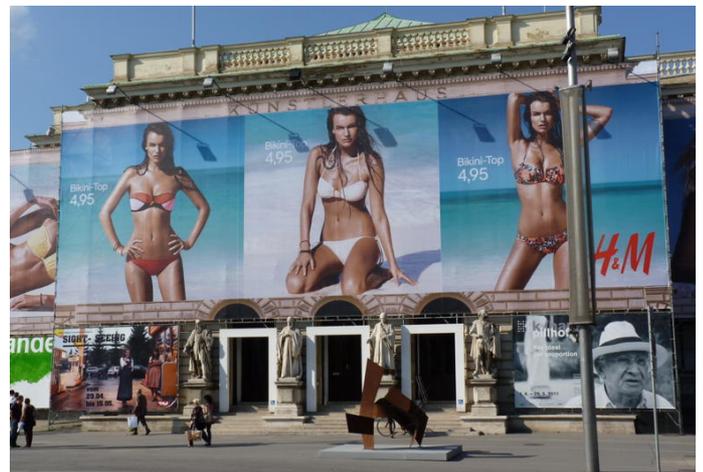
The monumental cathedral with the colorful tiled roof was visible from a distance and became the symbolic center of Vienna.



*Coffee and cake in the cafe after the tour*

The exhibition reveals how the cathedral was financed, the role the Viennese bourgeoisie played, how the medieval workshop operated and where the materials came from. The exhibition closes on 21 August. – *Brett Bayly*

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The Vienna Künstlerhaus is a traditional venue in the Vienna scene. The historical building was built in 1868 in a central position alongside the equally world famous Musikverein building on Karlsplatz as a corporate and exhibition center of the oldest art association in Austria. After 1945 the building was continuously adapted to a modern exhibition venue. So what a shame to see it decorated in such 'modern day' advertising during renovations.

## Lunch Outside the MAK

The Austrian Museum of Applied Arts (MAK) is an old building on the Stubenring across from Stadtpark worth visiting at any time. A visit to the restaurant alone has its features, such as the chandelier made of bottles.



But the weather was too nice to be indoors and so last month's Lunch Out was outside.



*Jacquie, Kate, Jeanette, Sharon and Anne enjoy the food, wine and spring weather*

After lunch a couple went on to view Erwin Wurm's 'Schoner Wohnen,' a collection of playful sculptural furniture.

### Blonde joke

**A blonde gets a job as a teacher. She notices a boy in the field standing alone, while all the other kids are running around having fun..**

**She takes pity on him and decides to speak to him.**

**'You ok?' she says.**

**'Yes.' he says.**

**'You can go and play with the other kids you know' she says.**

**'It's best I stay here.' he says.**

**'Why?' says the blonde.**

**The boy says: "Because I'm the f\*\*king goal keeper"**

## A walking weekend in Brussels

*--by Jeanette Hannaford*

The weather was perfect in Brussels for Easter 2011 although I understand it is famed for grey skies and rain. The pleasant efficiency of our flight to Brussels airport was undone by an extremely long line to buy train tickets into the city. But after checking-in to our hotel (which was also hosting the Belgian scrabble championship), we enjoyed walking around the town and were drawn by the crowds to what must be the most overrated tourist attraction in the Western hemisphere.

We could not understand how a tiny statue of a boy urinating should have such fame, but we did laugh the first time we saw him reproduced as a souvenir corkscrew. No prizes for guessing which part of his anatomy was replaced by the screw.



*What the Hannafords think of cherry beer*

We were very impressed with the Grand Place and also walked to the Royal Square to look at the palace and parliament and sat by the huge fountain in the park. After booking early tickets for the Magritte museum the next day, we shared sticky waffles topped with cream from a Smurf street van.

Heading east, we walked up the European mile, heading past the various EU buildings and ended up in another large and lovely park. After gazing up at a beautiful arch which formed one of its boundaries for five minutes as we rested our feet on a park bench, we finally noticed that the very cool mobile Electrolux café had landed on top of it. (for an explanation see next article)

The next morning we hopped on the metro and

headed straight for the new Magritte museum. It was a great advantage to have booked tickets and to be able to visit at opening time. It was a very enjoyable and interesting museum with many highlights. Then we headed next door to the Museum des Beaux-Arts, which featured “the Death of Marat” by Jacques-Louis David. After this we had a lovely lunch at a popular cafe on the rooftop of the beautiful fin-de-siecle cast iron building, Old England, a former department store which now houses a museum of musical instruments. After lunch we walked to the elegant Sablon district. It was very chic and we proceeded to visit each of the artisan chocolateries in the main square.

In the evening we set off to St Catherine, a recommended restaurant location and enjoyed moules and frites and after dinner walked back to the Grand Palace to see the buildings lit at night.

On Sunday we took a train to Bruges. The main square was impressive but our first truly educational experience of the day commenced as we stepped into the beef and horse fat atmosphere of the Frites Museum. After this we strolled around the back streets, enjoying the beauty of the canals and the 14<sup>th</sup> century churches. The chocolate museum was next, where Playmobile figures helped illustrate the text. But they did give free samples. The highlight was definitely the tasteful milk chocolate life-sized Barack Obama statue. After this we visited the town hall and the very beautiful, decorative Church of the Holy Blood. This was an absolute gem.

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### ***Search the skyline for the flying restaurant***

During your summer travels in Europe look out for the Electrolux Cube (as spotted in Brussels by the Hannaford family). This is a fun, temporary dining space which will be appearing on a series of landmark sites during 2011.

Designed by the Italian architects Park Associati, the Cubes (there are two) are constructed from a laser-cut aluminium skin, and contain a dining room for 18 people as well as a large terrace from which to take in the views.

The transparent and semi-transparent structures will

be seen atop of monuments, buildings and even water platforms in Belgium, Italy, Russia, Switzerland and Sweden, but only for three months at each location.

The Cube will employ a number of well known chefs from the locale in which they have landed, who will demonstrate Electrolux products while creating meals for the dining guests. (It is after all a promotional exercise.)

It will be open for lunch and dinner. You just need to find one first!



*The Electrolux “Cube on top of the Parc du Cinquantenaire in Brussels*

The one thing the website does not tell you is how they get the Cube onto these sites. Helicopter maybe?

## ***Events***

### **Anybody for a scenic ride on a steam train?**



Your Board is looking at a number of possible events and outings for members during the summer. These include a day trip to Krems by train for lunch followed by a wine tasting at a winery.

Eden Sarelius is looking into an outing on one of the few steam trains that still operate in Austria and he wants to know if you are interested. Such an outing requires organisation and so Eden needs to know how many people – number of adults and children (with

ages) - are interested before bookings can be made.

Eden asks you to look at the links below and this will provide some information. **“As a group we can arrange better deals so please contact me just to let me know if you are interested and I will work on the rest.”**

[elr.sarelius@hotmail.com](mailto:elr.sarelius@hotmail.com). Eden Sarelius

**There are three different lines still running steam trains and through June to October they are open Saturday and Sundays with different programs and facilities at each.**

The **Waldviertalbahn** runs from Gmund to Gross Gerungs and back, with stops at many stations for 10 to 15 minutes with the last stop in Gross Gerung where the train turns around being for two hours. The kids and adults alike can cool down in the water park or play in the recreational park. It's also a nice place for a picnic before heading back for the return trip.

This is a full day leaving Vienna by train at 10am and getting home around 7pm or 9pm depending on the day. A great day out!

<http://www.waldviertlerbahn.at/wvbahn2006/us/timetables/days.htm>

**The Austrian Society for Railway History** has two places, one at Ampflwang and the other in Steyrtal. Both are some distance from Vienna and so we could arrange a bus. We need a minimum of 25 to get a discount and a separate rail carriage. There is a mining and railway museum and other entertainment for kids. <http://www.oegeg.at/index.php/oegeg/english>

Eden would appreciate hearing your preferences (for trains and timing) and any suggestions. “Then I can work on researching what the best options are. Thanks and enjoy the holidays.”

## ***Lunch Out at old haunt***

Please join us on **Friday 17 June** at 1.00pm for Lunch Out at the beautiful Palmenhaus in the Burggarten. This was the long-standing venue for OzCon lunches so come and see where the old guys like Brett and Leon used to hang out...

The Palmenhaus was part of the Hofburg Palace and the original greenhouse dates back to 1823. It is just 200 metres from the opera building. Lunch will be followed by an optional visit to the grassy lawns of the beautiful Burggarten, particularly if the temperature is warm and there is shade to be found, for a cultural observation of the liegewiese society of Vienna! (A liegewiese is a public lawn on which you may lie down and sunbake.)

RSVP to [jeanettehannaford@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:jeanettehannaford@yahoo.co.uk).



## ***Bar night***

We returned to Flanagans last month thinking that we might be able to sit outside. Well thunderstorms put an end to that idea. But we will try again this month.

**So Friday 24 June at Flanagans.**

## ***Summer BBQ***

Our annual BBQ is booked for **Sunday 24 July** at the Naturfreunde Club on the Alte Donau. The address is An der alten unteren Donau 51. Sounds complicated, but isn't and specific directions will be given next month. The club provides an area with wood/charcoal fire, tables and bench seats, a change room and a fridge that will be switched on the day before.

The club charges an admission fee which will be paid by OzCon for all members. It can be a fun day, especially if the weather is kind to allow swimming in the Alte Donau.



[http://www.naturfreunde-haeuser.net/data\\_geofinder\\_item.php?AppComeFrom=Resultlist&App=Geofinder&Item=138](http://www.naturfreunde-haeuser.net/data_geofinder_item.php?AppComeFrom=Resultlist&App=Geofinder&Item=138)



*Flashback:  
after lunch  
activities at  
the BBQ  
2007*

## ***Return to Krems for lunch and wine tasting***

We've done it a couple of times and now we are tentatively booked to do it again. And we have opted for a nice time of the year.....end of summer. Still a way off but another event for the diary.

We catch a train at a nominated station for the short journey to Krems where we walk to the lovely Alte Post restaurant (seit 1500) in the main street for a leisurely

lunch, hopefully under the umbrellas in the courtyard (see photo of some of our group from May 2008).

[www.altepost-krems.at](http://www.altepost-krems.at)

Then we walk to the nearby seventh generation family Salomon Undhof winery to taste some Austrian whites and Australian reds.



Our host will be Dr Bert Salomon who in 1995 founded the Salomon Estate at Finnis River about 20 km southeast of McLaren Vale in South Australia.

[www.salmononwines.com](http://www.salmononwines.com)

Dr Salomon has very kindly on a number of occasions donated a selection of his Aussie red wines for sale at the OzCon stand at the UN charity bazaar

We are booking for [Saturday 24 September](#) which is during harvest time when Dr Salomon is sure to be in town.

Further details will be published at a later date when we will call for names of definite starters. But it would assist us to know now that people are interested and so feel free to let Gabrielle Costigan know if you hope to join us. Children are welcome.

[Gabrielle.Costigan@omv.com](mailto:Gabrielle.Costigan@omv.com)

## ***Rolling thunderstorms could not stop us***

Rolling thunderstorms across the city did not stop our 'diehards' with some guests from attending Bar Night at Flanagans.

We had hoped to be able to sit outside. But others who set up for the evening at the outdoor tables were soon back inside as a storm struck.



*Kate and Eden*

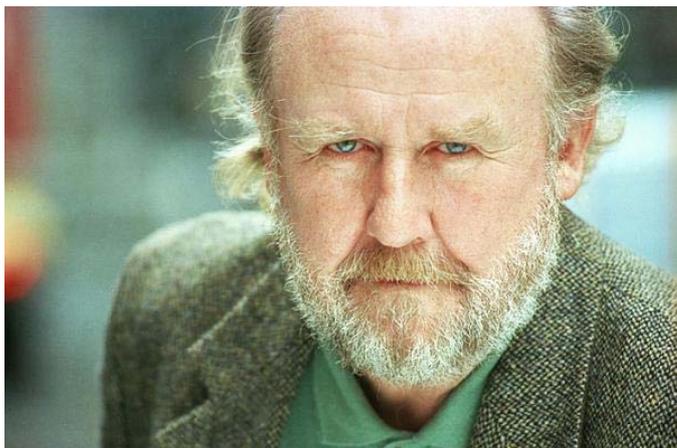
It was a good turn out and especially pleasing to see Eden Sarelius after his recent stint in hospital. We also welcomed back to Vienna George and Meredith Park who had been in Australia since December, primarily to sell their house in Sydney and welcome new arrivals Malcolm and Lois Boardman.

## **Aussie News Briefs**

27 May - **ONE of the world's most influential news magazines has lauded Australia's resilient economy but says our politicians "couldn't pull the skin off a rice pudding"**. In a 16-page critique in its May 28 issue, *The Economist* portrays Australia has a "she'll be right" nation with a low level of political discourse. The British journal - with sales of 1.4 million plus at least five million readers online - says the reforms of the 1980s and 1990s allowed Australia to pass the "stress test" of the global financial crisis. But it takes a dim view of Australian politics, describing it as "a non-stop Punch and Judy show". (Australian)

26 May -- **THE United Nations' top human rights watchdog has attacked Australia's tough refugee policies and the treatment of outback Aborigines**, saying there was a strong undercurrent of racism in the country. Long-standing policies of locking up asylum seekers had "cast a shadow over Australia's human

rights record", and appeared to be completely arbitrary, UN Human Rights Commissioner Navi Pillay said. (Reuters)



22 May - **TODAY there is a great big curmudgeon-shaped hole in the Australian film industry where Bill Hunter used to stand.** The veteran of almost 60 films and dozens of TV movies, series and mini-series died of cancer in a hospice in Kew last night, aged 71. (Canberra Times)

18 May - **IMAGES of scantily clad women are being widely circulated without their knowledge through a private "men's only" Facebook group,** reigniting the debate for stricter privacy laws for social media in Australia. Since its inception two weeks ago, "The Brocial Network" has attracted more than 8000 members, including at least four players from a Melbourne-based AFL club. The site features hundreds of images of women in bikinis and lingerie, obtained from the personal Facebook photo albums of the members' female friends. (Age)

16 May - **SUPPORT for Julia Gillard has plunged after voters gave their lowest rating to Labor's fourth budget,** the overall worst reaction in almost 20 years, leaving the Prime Minister's personal standing below that of Kevin Rudd when he was removed as leader. Voter approval of Ms Gillard is the lowest it has been since she became Prime Minister last June. Tony Abbott is as close to her as preferred prime minister as he has ever been and closer than he ever was to Mr Rudd. (Australian)

14 May - **QANTAS will have to raise international airfares to Europe from January** next year after the European Union penalised the airline because Australia does not have a price on greenhouse gas emissions. Under changes to the EU's emissions trading scheme, Qantas would be forced to pay a tax on 15 per cent of its carbon emissions from its nearest port of call, the national carrier told a meeting of business leaders in Canberra this week. (AAP)

11 May - **WOOLWORTHS says it will change the**

**way it labels fruit and vegetables after being named and shamed** for describing imported produce as Australian grown. The NSW Food Authority has slapped the supermarket giant and its rival Coles with fines for incorrectly labelling imported fruit as Australian produce in two Sydney stores. (Sydney Morning Herald)

9 May - **JON Stanhope has announced that he will resign as ACT Chief Minister** during a press conference at the ACT Legislative Assembly. Mr Stanhope has anointed his deputy Katy Gallagher to take over as the ACT's next chief minister, saying that he expects her appointment to be uncontested. He confirmed he would resign at the end of the week, and that Monday would be his last day in the Assembly. (Canberra Times)

8 May - **IN A dramatic bid to shut down people smuggling, the next 800 asylum seekers to arrive in Australia by boat will be sent to Malaysia** under a controversial deal announced by Prime Minister Julia Gillard yesterday. In return for Malaysia taking the asylum seekers, Australia will resettle 4000 refugees, mostly Burmese. This resettlement - 1000 people to arrive annually for the next four years - will occur regardless of whether Australia sends 800 asylum seekers to Malaysia. The policy, significantly expanding offshore processing, was immediately condemned by refugee advocates and the Greens because of Malaysia's record of mistreating its 90,000 refugees. (Age)

4 May - **VIRGIN Blue Holdings's new Virgin Australia airline brand will attempt to capture a larger slice of the business travel market.** Virgin Australia was launched in Sydney today by Sir Richard Branson and chief executive John Borghetti, with new colours, uniforms and services. In today's announcement, Virgin Blue will spend \$30 million to \$35 million on rebranding, new uniforms and new services. It will buy 12 to 14 new planes this year in the new all-white colour scheme with red trim. Virgin Australia will replace the existing domestic Virgin Blue brand immediately and international brands V Australia and Pacific Blue by the end of the year. (Advertiser)

3 May - **OPPOSITION Leader John Robertson has admitted his small team of Labor MPs will have to make an "extraordinary contribution" if they are to have a voice in NSW parliament.** After their historic loss in the March 26 state election, Labor's numbers in the lower house have been reduced to just 20, compared to the O'Farrell government's 69. In his inaugural speech as the new member for Blacktown, in western Sydney, Mr Robertson said "the picture already looks very different here in the parliament". Labor lost 30 seats at the state poll. (AAP)

The Federal Budget for 2011-12 was delivered to the Australian Parliament by the Treasurer Wayne Swan on Tuesday 10 May.

## Selected lead newspapers articles

### The Australian

#### Wayne Swan cuts middle-class welfare but delivers on jobs

**WAYNE Swan will raise at least \$2 billion through a freeze on middle-class welfare to help bankroll a workforce participation agenda that will nudge the idle towards work in an attempt to lift them out of welfare dependence.**

Releasing the 2011-12 budget last night, the Treasurer announced \$22bn in cuts over four years, including a freeze on the income limit on family assistance at \$150,000 a year - effectively enshrining that wage level as the administrative definition of wealth.

However, of the \$22bn in cuts only \$3.84bn are to be made in 2011-12. Of these, only \$2.3bn is actual savings, with the remainder coming from the one-off flood levy.

The Treasurer will roll out the remaining cuts over the following three years, combining a range of welfare and other cuts with hundreds of smaller measures across the budget. Much of the pain will be inflicted after the next election. This will coincide with a rise in government revenues amid an expected acceleration in the mining boom.

Mr Swan will phase out tax concessions for dependent spouses and scrap eligibility for minors to claim low-income tax offsets on unearned income. The Treasurer also delivered an expected boost to mental health spending, pumping \$1.5bn into the system.

Taxpayers face a blow-out in previously anticipated costs of running detention centres, with offshore processing of asylum-seekers requiring a \$290 million injection of funds in the current financial year and \$819m extra in 2011-12 over earlier expectations.

But defence spending has taken a hit, with the Defence Department to contribute \$4.3bn to the Gillard government's drive for a surplus over four years through a combination of cuts and savings measures.

Opposition Treasury spokesman Joe Hockey said the budget failed the "essential test" of easing cost-of-living pressures on Australians.

### Sydney Morning Herald

#### Swan outlines plan for working nation

**WELFARE recipients will be sent to work and higher income earners will lose \$5 billion in tax benefits and concessions in a budget that returns the**

#### **coffers to surplus before the next federal election and prepares the economy for the new mining boom.**

The government has also honoured its promise to fund mental health with measures costing \$2.2 billion over the

As well as toughening requirements to "nudge" people off welfare, the budget will also encourage people to get back to work.

At its centrepiece is spending of \$3 billion over six years, of which about \$2.2 billion is new. It includes programs to provide training and extra skills for the young, old and disabled and a \$558 million workforce development fund that will provide 130,000 new training places.



There will be wage subsidies to encourage employers to hire the long-term unemployed and those

with mild disabilities.

"This budget gets us back in the black, gets more people into better jobs and spreads the opportunities of the boom," the Treasurer, Wayne Swan said as he delivered his fourth budget.

"The core of this budget is the conviction that we don't have a single person to waste. We want to spread opportunity to every postcode."

After promising a tough budget to ensure the return to a forecast surplus of \$3.5 billion in 2012-13, Mr Swan unveiled \$22 billion in savings over four years, of which about two-thirds was achieved by cutting spending.

The budget deficit blew out from a forecast \$41.5 billion to \$49.4 billion because of a hangover from the financial crisis that has ravaged revenues over this financial year and next by \$16 billion more than was forecast at the end of last year.

The natural disasters at home also cost the budget \$6 billion in revenue this financial year, but this was offset by the flood levy and associated budget cuts announced this year and incorporated into yesterday's document.

The forecast deficit for 2011-12 has blown out from \$12.3 billion to \$22.6 billion, due in part to less than expected tax revenue.

The year after, the economy is forecast to return to surplus in what would be the fastest three-year financial reversal in 44 years.

### AAP

#### Surplus still likely in 2012/13: Swan

**Federal Treasurer Wayne Swan remains on course to preside over the first Labor government budget surplus since Bob Hawke was returned for a fourth time as prime minister in 1990.**

But the opposition says the budget is out of touch with everyday Australians, while economists say it will do nothing to prevent the Reserve Bank from lifting interest rates in the coming months.

If Treasury's forecasts prove correct, the Gillard

government will be parading a \$3.5 billion surplus in 2012/13, a huge turnaround from a record shortfall in \$54.8 billion in 2009/10.



"We'll be back in the black by 2012/13, on time, as promised," Mr Swan told parliament on Tuesday, handing down his fourth budget.

"The alternative - meandering back to surplus - would compound the pressures in our economy and push up the cost of living for pensioners and working people."

Still, the impact of this summer's spate of natural disasters - both home and abroad - a strong Australian dollar and a patchy economy has taken its toll, wiping \$16 billion off government tax receipts over both this year and next.

This has resulted in even deeper budget deficits in the near term than forecast in November's mid-year budget review.

### **Brisbane Times**

## **Budget delivers \$20b in cuts**

**The Gillard government claims lingering pain from the global financial crisis has forced more than \$20 billion of cuts in tonight's federal budget.**

Higher income earners have been hit by the loss of some perks, such as stiffer rules for fringe benefits for company car use, as the government insists on keeping alive its planned return to surplus in the financial year 2012-13.

The result is a lean budget with the government pitching a claim to be economically responsible and limiting big spending to some carefully chosen areas.

A series of savings measures, leaked in the lead-up to budget day have been confirmed. A tightening of the fringe benefits tax rules on company cars only saves the government \$26.4 million next year, but the benefits grow dramatically in the following years to a total saving of almost \$1 billion by 2014-15. Among the benefits chopped back for higher income earners, is the phasing out of the Dependent Spouse Tax Offset, beginning with partners under 40, which will save \$755 million.

## **Comment**



Joyless Budget that breaks the mould and might mark the beginning of a Labor recovery – The Age

## **Patches to fix a patchy economy**

Paul Kelly, Editor-at-large

**THIS is a patchwork budget to suit a patchwork economy. It is neither overtly tough nor generous.**

Its guiding stars are the restoration of the budget surplus, championing the work ethic and sensitivity to political damage outside punishing high-income earners. For a post-election budget, it is short on character. The budget is riddled with contradictions that mirror the contradictions of an unprecedented resources boom that generates winners and losers.

It seeks to protect the losers, redistribute the benefits, tighten spending down the track and keep alive Labor's political hopes for another year.

It is the work of a struggling government too tentative to reclaim its authority yet still moving in the right direction. Wayne Swan says Labor is managing the transition from "deficits in tough times to surpluses in better times".

## **Deep cuts may inoculate against future pain**

By Ross Gittins

**Despite apparent contradictions, Swan has shown real courage.**

Julia Gillard and her government may be suckers, but they deserve an even break. Every budget contains things to criticise but, overall, this one is good. We were warned it would be tough and it is - especially on the better-off.

It could have been more excruciating - economists are hard to please when it comes to inflicting pain - but it's tougher and more courageous than all but the first of the 12 budgets the now-sainted Peter Costello delivered.

Wayne Swan plans to tighten up on people with company cars, private health insurance and family trusts. He will get at those who pay their university fees up-front, mothers who stay at home and wealthier couples with dependent children and older workers using salary sacrifice to supplement their super.

--Compiled by Brett Bayly

### *A new feature*

### *This month's OzCon flashback*



*The Australian Embassy December 2008*

### **From the Southern Cross Group's Occasional Newsletter**

No. 4 of 2011 of 5 May 2011

### **Recognition of Australian driving licences by other countries**

Australia now has a number of arrangements in place with other countries so that Australian expats can often swap their Australian licence for a local licence when they move abroad, without going through local theory and practical driving tests to qualify afresh (sometimes in foreign languages).

It is not always the case that if Australia recognises a foreign licence (Austria recognises an Australian licence). When countries apply for recognition of their national licences with AustRoads, AustRoads encourages them to put in place reciprocal arrangements for Australian expatriates, but it is

ultimately up to the foreign licensing authority as to how they will treat Australian licences.

It is very important to make sure that you are driving with a valid driving licence in the country in which you live within the required timeframe. Usually, after a certain period of residence which can be as little as one month, you will be required by local law to have a licence issued by the local authority, whether as the result of a mutual recognition/swap arrangement between that country and Australia, or (if there is no other alternative) as the result of sitting local driving tests.

We sometimes hear of Australians who have lived abroad for many years and continue to drive overseas on just their Australian driving licence, perhaps in conjunction with an International Driving Permit renewed every 12 months. In particular, where no mutual recognition is in place, people may find it very offputting and difficult to sit local driving tests. Or they simply haven't got around to organising a local licence for themselves.

If you are in this situation, be aware that if you have a road traffic accident, your insurance company may well check whether you were driving on a valid local licence. If it emerges that you did not have a valid licence, the financial consequences could be very serious, and in addition you may be subject to prosecution for violation of local laws.

**The Australian Embassy in Vienna advises** that Australians living in Austria can use their Australian driving licence for a period of up to six months. Then it must be exchanged at the Verkehrsamt (Vienna, phone 01 31310/87194), or at the local Bezirkshauptmannschaft/State Government Office to an Austrian licence. The information regarding conditions, including the list of documents required by applicants, should be obtained at the office where the application is lodged. As there is no date of issue on Australian driving licences, the Embassy in some cases has to assist with a supporting letter to the Austrian authority.

Unless otherwise specified, all telephone numbers are in Vienna

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### **Bank Account Details:**

Susanna Martin-Murtinger

OZCON Account

Raiffeisenlandesbank Niederosterreich – Wien

BLZ 32000

Kontonummer (Account Number): 12.097.176

Membership Fee: €20

### **Australian Embassy**

Mattiellistrasse 2-4, 1040 Vienna

Tel: 506740

[www.australian-embassy.at](http://www.australian-embassy.at)

### ***Other Associations***

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Hubert Heine, General Secretary

Tel: 0676 5003058; 9847328

[Heine69at@yahoo.de](mailto:Heine69at@yahoo.de)

[www.australia-austria.at](http://www.australia-austria.at)

### **Useful Websites:**

[www.wien.info/en/music-stage-shows/operaperetta/open-air-opera](http://www.wien.info/en/music-stage-shows/operaperetta/open-air-opera)

[www.awavienna.com/publications/living-in-vienna.html](http://www.awavienna.com/publications/living-in-vienna.html)

[www.language-learning-advisor.com/learning-german.html](http://www.language-learning-advisor.com/learning-german.html)

[www.aussiehouseswap.com.au](http://www.aussiehouseswap.com.au)

[www.wien.gv.at](http://www.wien.gv.at)

[www.nucolorvue.com.au](http://www.nucolorvue.com.au)

[www.australien-lifestyle.de](http://www.australien-lifestyle.de)

[www.australien-info.de](http://www.australien-info.de)

[www.virtualvienna.net](http://www.virtualvienna.net)

[www.ninemsn.com.au](http://www.ninemsn.com.au)

[www.kids-days.com/Wien/index\\_wien.html](http://www.kids-days.com/Wien/index_wien.html)

[www.expatsconsulting.com](http://www.expatsconsulting.com)

[www.homesick.com.au](http://www.homesick.com.au)

[www.viennababiesclub.com](http://www.viennababiesclub.com)

[www.abc.net.au/vod/news/](http://www.abc.net.au/vod/news/)

[www.australianaonline.com.au](http://www.australianaonline.com.au)

[www.news.com.au](http://www.news.com.au)

[www.expatriates.com](http://www.expatriates.com)

[www.australia.gov.au](http://www.australia.gov.au)

[www.amadeus.net/home/dialing\\_codes/en/top.htm](http://www.amadeus.net/home/dialing_codes/en/top.htm)

[www.austrain.vc](http://www.austrain.vc)

[www.vienna-expats.at](http://www.vienna-expats.at)

[www.aussiehouseswap.com.au](http://www.aussiehouseswap.com.au)

### **Austrian media in English:**

Austrian Times, daily English news

[www.austriantimes.at](http://www.austriantimes.at)

The Vienna Review, monthly produced by Webster University [www.viennareview.net](http://www.viennareview.net)

Ether magazine, monthly [www.ethermagazine.at](http://www.ethermagazine.at)

Worldwide media guide [www.mondotimes.com](http://www.mondotimes.com)

### ***Guided Walks***

Places of Human Rights, Shadow of the Past  
Schonberg and Freud

Roman Findings in Carnuntum and the National  
Park

More information visit: [www.viennawalks.at](http://www.viennawalks.at)

The Old City of Vienna

The Third Man

More information visit: [www.wienguide.at](http://www.wienguide.at)

