

City where race collides

THE story of Harris Park is the story of two racial worlds colliding in the very heart of western Sydney. Smack bang in the middle of the City of Parramatta - itself the centre of the whole metropolitan area - this tiny suburb is the nexus of two great migrant populations, Lebanese and Indian.

Across Sydney, the multi-cultural melting pot is bubbling away quite nicely. Many suburbs have a distinct character based around a dominant ethnic group - the Vietnamese in Fairfield or the Greeks in Canterbury - which adds to the city's rich multicultural tapestry.

But in a statistical freak of nature, almost exactly the same number of Indian-born and Lebanese-born migrants live in the Parramatta local government area and it is in Harris Park that those two cul-



tures intersect.

About 12 per cent of the 56,000 Lebanese-born migrants to NSW settled in the Parramatta LGA - about 6700.

Likewise, just over 12 per cent of the Indian-born migrants live in the area - a little bit over 7000.

It is a strange anomaly that means there is no dominant culture in the area. Now, as a

result of what was probably a random and non-racial act of aggression, the area has reached flashpoint.

The local consensus is it began as a petty crime issue - a group of reportedly Lebanese youths threw eggs and soft drink at a group of Indian students.

The students, already feeling

nervous and victimised by a spate of attacks on their countrymen in Melbourne, thought they were being targeted because of their race and staged a massive retaliation against another group of Lebanese youths.

In fact most locals suspect that the initial egging was not racial vilification but simply dumb thuggery.

It is a sobering lesson in a city that has been enriched by multiculturalism for more than half a century - even if sometimes for the wrong reasons.

When Australia opened its doors to Europe after World War II it was a matter of "populate or perish" - a fear of being overrun by Asians resulted in a reluctant decision to accept Greeks, Italians and other mainland Europeans, often displaced by war.

It was the best decision ever made. A massive immigration program saw more than two million people settle in two decades and when the white Australia policy was finally abolished in 1972 a further 90,000 Chinese and Indians were brought over in 10 years.

More than 30 years later Department of Immigration statistics reveal China and India are still the top two nations moving to NSW, taking up professional roles in workforces short on skills.

Source: *The Daily Telegraph*

Greek Minister of Culture Mr Antonis Samaras's message on the occasion of the official opening of THE ACROPOLIS MUSEUM

Message of the Greek Minister of Culture, Mr Antonis C. Samaras, on the occasion of the official opening of THE ACROPOLIS MUSEUM next Saturday, 20th June 2009:

Welcome to the new Acropolis Museum. 188 years since the declaration of the Greek Independence and 27 years since Melina Merkouri took the historic initiative to build it, a duty is fulfilled and a dream is realized:

A whole nation's duty to its own cultural heritage; Melina's dream that inspired all Greeks: The new Acropolis Museum. The paramount monument of Ancient Classical Times now has its own Museum - at last. In difficult times people need symbols to hold tight and stand straight. The Grand Opening of the new Acropolis Museum may be such a symbolic event. Where the Aesthetics of Logic, the Ethics of Freedom and the Rationality of Beauty, are all fused together and carved in stone for eternity. Acropolis hasn't stayed intact over the centuries. Yet it is still radiating its Beauty



and its Truth.

This unique embodiment of ideas, ideals, moral standards and aesthetic values in needed now, more than ever. And we enjoy these, for the first time in a Modern Museum deserving to the historical Monument. Take a tour in it. Appreciate its atmosphere and its exhibits. Be inspired by its transcending message. It is Greek because it is Ecumenical. It is ours only to share it with the rest of the World. And please, remember: What you will discover is not just a part of our History. It is also a part

of our soul, of who we are...

There are strong, sacred bonds, connecting us with every single item, from the humblest archaeological fragment to the most ornate figure. All of the artifacts are parts of our soul... Mostly the ones missing! With the anticipation that eventually - better sooner than later - they will be re-united in their birth place and in the integral form they were meant to be.

Antonis C. Samaras
Minister of Culture

VOTE FOR AUSTRALIA'S BEST YOUNG TALENT ONLINE

People's Choice voting has begun in the National Youth Week 2009 National Talent Competition. The competition showcases creative work from young Australian writers, film makers, photographers, designers and unsigned musicians.

Young Australians aged between 12 and 25 took up the challenge to RockIT, WriteIT, ShootIT, SnapIT and DesignIT, with almost 700 entries received.

For the full list of the 50 finalists, please see attached media release. All finalists' entries, a statement on their work and a photograph are available at www.youthweek.com

The Australian public now has the opportunity to show their support for up and coming young talent by voting for the fantastic finalists in each category. There are great prizes for the winners and finalists - so casting your vote counts.

Some of Australia's leading organisations and youth initiatives, including the Australian Sports Commission, beyondblue, the Butterfly Foundation, the Australian Federal Police and the Department of Health and Ageing have jumped on board to support National Youth Week and help make the talent competition bigger and better than ever. Voting closes on June 19, 2009.

Young people who missed out on entering the NTC still have time to enter the National Youth Week poster competition, also closing on 19 June.

The winner's selected design will be used to promote National Youth Week 2010. The winner will also receive a \$2000 prize, with the runner up winning \$1000.