

Where there's muck, there's a buck or two on eBay

IT IS not yet a dying art, but it is getting harder to find treasure in other people's trash.

The kerbside crawl on hard rubbish night used to yield gems. A family trip to the tip often gleaned more than was thrown away. But changing consumer habits, eBay, mass-produced furniture, the cost of disposal and council rules - fossicking in tips has been banned for safety reasons - have made the lot of the scavenger an increasingly sparse one.

"The opportunities are decreasing, because you've got eBay, and because councils are changing the way they collect rubbish," said Damian Kringas, of Hurlstone Park, a historian and publisher, and a former secondhand shop owner.

"[But] I still find things and make a bit of extra cash."

Finding decent timber furniture on the kerb is rare these days, but Mr Kringas recently salvaged a working computer for his daughter and found an ALP cap autographed by Mark Latham. ("Never been worn, as you can imagine.")

It may be harder to scavenge good stuff for free, but that is because the secondhand economy is thriving, Professor Gay Hawkins of the University



Look what the human brought in... Mr Kringas with salvaged items, including the cat.

of NSW said.

"There's all these growing second economies now around harvesting people's waste ... eBay is crucial, the whole charity sector has become more savvy, there are businesses that pick up stuff people want to get rid of. There's a great growth in the entrepreneurialisation of waste."

That is partly driven by the cost of throwing stuff away.

John Hitchen, who runs a rubbish disposal service in the northern suburbs, said his clients were often shocked to hear that it cost up to \$180 a tonne to dump stuff at the tip.

He often disposes of newish furniture that no one wants.

"I do a lot of deceased estates," he said.

"I don't throw out antiques, but if there's normal furniture no one's interested. It's too easy to get credit [for something new] at Harvey Norman."

The City of Sydney cautiously approves of street scavenging. "People taking items placed on the street ... doesn't cause a problem," a council spokesman said. "Reusing items is better than sending things to landfill, and better than recycling because it saves more energy and resources. The only risk is that the rubbish may be hazardous, for example some electronic goods."

But there are still golden opportunities for those who persevere. Nick Taylor, of Douglas Park, built his South Coast holiday house entirely from salvaged materials. His motivations were environmental and financial. "I love the fact that I can recycle and use stuff again,"

Mr Kringas remembers chuck-out night "was better than Christmas" when he was a child. "It was like going shopping and you didn't have to pay for anything, and it wasn't stealing so you didn't get in trouble," he said. "Except from your mum when you tried to convince her that all this shit you'd dragged in was worth it."

The world is drinking less fruit juice

The world is drinking less fruit juice, but when the global economy recovers the expectation is that the demand for pure fruit juices will grow. One of the most marked effects of the recession has been a decline in consumption of pure fruit juices as consumers count the pennies and switch to soft drinks and fruit beverages that contain less than 100% fruit juice. This has caused prices for apple and orange juice concentrates to plummet to levels not seen for several years.

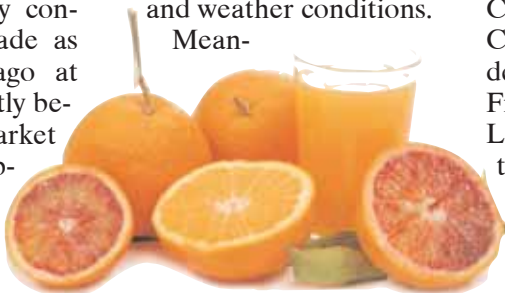
However, retail prices of apple and orange juice have not necessarily reflected the fall in raw material prices, partly because some buyers have had to abide by contracts which were made as long as two years ago at higher prices, and partly because the supermarket chains have seen an opportunity to increase margins by maintaining their selling

prices.

The market for not from concentrate (NFC) juices had held up well until the start of this year, but now declines in consumption of these premium juices can also be seen, presumably also for economic reasons.

Nevertheless, it is believed that when the global economy recovers, the world will increase its thirst for pure fruit juices. This may well cause prices to rise, because whereas the current low prices are the result of low demand rather than overproduction, the orange juice industries in Brazil and the US have warned that their orange production is unlikely to increase due to disease and weather conditions.

Mean-



while, there are some bright spots. Consumers are turning to more exotic products, and demand for passion fruit and pineapple juices remains buoyant and prices (especially for the former) high. As a general interest in health and wellness gathers momentum, manufacturers are fortifying their products with vitamins and ingredients such as Omega-3. And the new generation of superfruits (goji, aḡav, guava, mangosteen, etc) is finding its way into more blends.

These and other issue will be discussed at World Juice 2009 to be held on 5-8 October 2009. Speakers include Guy Wollaert, General Manager of the Global Juice Center at The Coca-Cola Company, Liang Gao, President of Shaanxi Haisheng Fresh Fruit Juice Co, Hans Lanzinger, Managing Director of Hermann Pfanner Getränke and Kate Dillon, Food Technologist at Marks and Spencer.



Tasty treats in store at school

HOSPITALITY students at Kingsgrove High School are the proud operators of their very own cafe.

Year 12 students opened Kings Kafe to teaching staff last month and the menu offers tasty treats, including fresh salads and ground coffee.

Hospitality teacher Amy Gibson said the students were in charge of everything from purchasing ingredients to preparing meals, seating customers and providing service.

The project was initiated by vocational education co-ordinator and former chef Paul Smith to teach students how to cope with real life hospitality issues.