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# 'Burleigh Eyesore' gets a makeover

Michelle Lacey = | July 16th, 2011

IT'S taken 60 litres of white paint, 30 determined people and an = entire Saturday morning to clean up the Burleigh building known as 'The = Burleigh Eyesore' and the day was not without its drama.

Located on the Gold Coast Highway the former medical centre has been = the target of graffiti artists and vandals for years.

Co-owner Mary Ann Boehme said the damage of the site had pushed her = and her husband Brian to their limits, so she had decided to accept the help of = local residents to clean up the two-storied building.

**For more on this story see Monday's Gold = Coast Bulletin**

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During the morning clean-up her husband Brian, who appeared to have = been unaware of the clean-up arrangements, arrived at the 1857 Gold Coast = Highway site and was clearly outraged and distressed about the volunteers = painting his building.

Local residents kept their distance as Mr Boehme pushed and shoved = his way through the waiting media.

Councillor Eddy Sarroff took him to one side and calmed Mr Boehme = down.

Shortly after the episode, Mr Boehme apologised for his actions and = thanked everyone for their efforts.

Mrs Boehme said she could not stop crying for hours when she saw the = damage that was done to the 28 offices upstairs.

"What kind of society do we live in for people to do this and get = away with it?" she said.

Mrs Boehme said the clean-up was an ongoing issue and that even = copper wiring had been taken from the building.

She said the building was a prime development site suited for a high = rise or a medical centre.

"We are working out what to do with it," she said.

Area councillor Greg Betts said the look of the building really = brought down the Burleigh area.

"By all of us coming here today it's a sign of the community saying = enough is enough," he said.

"People are frustrated about the amount of graffiti in the city and = want to see some change."

He said it was empowering for the community to take action and help = clean up the mess.

Councillor Eddy Sarroff said he wanted to see these types of = 'clean-up days' citywide.

"We need to get the community together to help clean up these = high-profile vandalised sites," he said.

"The plan is to have groups on the southern end, central and = northern areas of the Coast helping to clean up sites like this one."

The Gold Coast City Council has called for the couple to clean up the = site since 2007.

In 1993, Mr Boehme bought the building for \$2 million.

After some discussion, it is believed the couple are considering a non-for-profit group to move into the premises to help maintain the property.

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