

# Editorial by Karl Fitzgerald

Welcome to my third edition as *Progress* editor. The nature of a 113 year old magazine in a digital age has raised its head of recent. After a long day of scanning emails, word searching PDF documents and triple checking an article on google docs, I actually appreciate reading the written word on paper. With all those pixels and all that information competing for our attention online, there is a sense of focus when picking up an edition of *Progress* and turning one page after another.

One of the other issues I find myself wrestling with is the length of articles. Some say we should stick to short and snappy articles. For me, that's the strength of the online world. I want *Progress* to give readers a deep dive on a particular theme. I want people to read long form for the love of reading. Pure and simple.

On that note, if you love writing, please email your article, long or short to [progress@prosper.org.au](mailto:progress@prosper.org.au). All submissions will be considered.

This edition features two long articles. *House of Cards* is a next paradigm deep dive into the state of the Australian economic miracle. We only present 40% of the article, which we encourage you to dig out online, where over 100 insightful links will present you with the alternative facts one needs in this age of the Murdocracy. Are we on the precipice of major change?

We must remind ourselves how easy it is to fall into the trap of negativity. The transcript of Phillip Anderson's *126th Annual Henry George Dinner* presentation provides the necessary counter argument. Building on key learnings in recent editions, Phillip delves into his passion - understanding the business cycle and the role economic rents play in driving it. Is the Queen showing genuine leadership?

Economic cycles are the key theme I'd like you to dwell on in this edition. Georgists have an incredible advantage in being able to decipher the myriad of societal issues back to the stewardship of land. Amidst our learnings, we also have the ability to manage our own finances according to the 18.6

year cycle. The jury is out as to whether we are due to have the economic bust 'we need to have' or whether a minor mid-cycle correction is set to occur in 2019. Is China a go or a woe? Is economic manipulation a matter of fact today? It is time we all considered this carefully.

We start off with young up and coming UK Georgist Laurie McFarlane - another article jam packed with key data points. Just how lucky have the baby boomers been? Upon reading this one can only agree that economic policy just has to get more radical. With news in recent days that even Tony Blair is supporting LVT, the time is nearing. One thing is certain, the fact the UK's Office of National Statistics has finally separated land and buildings is something to cheer. Please note what happened to land prices in 2007, well before Northern Rock.

In Prosper news, we are pleased to see the Victorian government announce more specifics on the January 1 vacancy tax. Of particular interest was to see the State Revenue Office using water consumption statistics to demonstrate 20,000 inner city vacancies. Catherine Cashmore and I met with the SRO earlier this year to discuss our vacancy measure. For the SRO to publish these findings was a stamp of approval for our water-based methodology. We are still concerned that the vacancy tax only targets inner city vacancies, in effect channeling speculative intentions out to the sprawl. We note how similar this was to the Liberal Party's *Neighborhood Residential Zoning*, which also channelled additional demand out to the mass estates of major campaign contributors.

Prosper's press release on the prodigious increase in national land prices (2016-17) reveals why employers face such pressure to provide wage increases. Share those figures with your friends! Ricardo's Law is essential to grasp, as demonstrated in this edition's *Geoists in History*. Finally, Catherine Cashmore was interviewed by former UK Labor Party leader Ed Milliband on his *Reasons to be Cheerful* podcast.

Enjoy this edition from your favourite reading chair. Time is ticking. We have a big 2018 in store.