

Grandma Ripped Off

OPINION by Neil Jenman Consumer Advocate

Dodgy dealings in Hervey Bay.

An article from the Jenman website.

Elderly ladies don't come much nicer than Hazel from Hervey Bay in Queensland. And, if you question their dealings, real estate agents don't come much nastier than Lindsay Fallon and his brother Glenn Fallon, also from Hervey Bay.

"Be very very very careful, because seriously I will come down on you like a ton of bricks," said Glenn Fallon (pronounced 'Felon') when asked for a comment this week.

So let's take Glenn Fallon's advice and be very very very careful with the story of how Hazel, a sweet 77-year-old grandmother, trusted the Fallon brothers to sell her family home.

And how she got ripped off for more than \$50,000.

It's a simple story which began in September last year, when Glenn Fallon's real estate agency, Ray White Hervey Bay, sold Hazel's home at auction.

The home sold for \$208,500. Hazel thought it was a huge sum.

But Hazel didn't know that her dilapidated home was on land suitable for apartment development. It was worth a lot more than \$208,500.

The buyer was a young woman called Lauren Taylor. Her partner is Matthew Fallon, son of Lindsay Fallon. And, yes, nephew of dear Uncle Glenn.

So thrilled was Lauren after the sale, that she began bragging around town how her "other half's father" had helped her and her partner Matt Fallon snatch a bargain.

Within weeks of the sale, Lindsay Fallon contacted a local solicitor to arrange for the home to be sold to a property developer for \$260,000.

Hazel's granddaughter believes her grandmother was ripped off. And Hazel's daughter said, "She didn't know what it was worth. They preyed on her vulnerability."

The buyer unashamedly agrees. When it was suggested to Lauren that she was making money from an owner who did not know a home's true value, she said, "Exactly right."

When asked for a comment this week, Lindsay Fallon said, "I don't know what you are talking about." He then went on to say, "I have got nothin to do with the sale of the place."

When he realised he had been caught lying, Fallon warned me to be "very careful".

He then asked, "What has this got to do with you?" "I am a consumer advocate," I replied.

“Don’t consumer around me, mate, you must have very little to do,” he said.

“But can’t you see that you ripped off a grandmother?” I asked.

“Is it your grandmother?”

“No, it is somebody else’s grandmother, Lindsay.”

“I do not care,” said Lindsay Fallon, before hanging up abruptly.

And so I called his brother, Glenn Fallon, who seemed calm – at first. I mentioned that he had sold an elderly lady’s property for \$208,500 to his nephew’s girlfriend and that the property had apparently been re-sold almost immediately for \$260,000.

“Yeah, so what? Haven’t you heard of this happening before?”

Well, of course, I replied, “When an agent doesn’t do the right thing by a seller....”

Fallon exploded, “Don’t you dare say that to me, you be very careful what you say to me, Mr Jenman.”

What followed was a sustained spray of foul language and threats.

“You really annoy me, do you want to report that? You are a very annoying person to many people, okay. I don’t have any respect for you at all.”

But never mind your opinion of me, what about the 77- year-old lady?

“It doesn’t matter if she is 77 or 17, it doesn’t matter to me,” said Fallon.

More abuse and more swearing followed.

“Why are you being so rude?” I asked.

“I am just putting you on notice,” he said.

“Why, just because I have caught you doing something dodgy?” I asked.

Fallon’s screams increased several decibels. “Seriously you are gone now. You put that in writing and you are GONE!” he shrieked.

Among the F words and being called a “rat”, Fallon told me that I “had better have heaps”.
Heaps?

“Heaps to defend yourself, because I won’t muck around.”

But, surely, rather than spending “heaps” on legal fees it would be better to work out a solution, I thought.

I waited until Glenn Fallon drew a breath and then said, "I have a solution for you."
"What is the solution?" he asked.

"Your agency should repay the lady the money," I said

"Get rooted," Fallon screamed.

Yep, Hazel's \$50,000 has gone to Matthew Fallon's partner who is still proud of what her "other's half's father" has done. "If you can make money in a short period of time, that's the way to go," she said last month.

Big Daddy and Uncle Glenn, what a pair. Helping a young lady to make a quick \$50,000 out of an elderly lady's home.

Welcome to the family. *****

Footnote: The Fallon's have been reported to the Queensland Office of Fair Trading by the journalist who assisted with the research for this story. The outcome of any investigation will be reported as soon as it is known.