



# VILLAGE VOICE

QUEEN STREET & WEST WOOLLAHRA ASSOCIATION NEWS BULLETIN

NOVEMBER, 1976

## COME TO QUEEN STREET FAIR

Following approval from the State Government for the street closure, Queen Street Fair will be held as planned on Saturday, November 27, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

The Minister for Transport, Mr. Peter Cox, has arranged for the closing of Queen Street to traffic between Oxford Street and Ocean Street, with cross traffic allowed in Moncur Street, as in former years.

The 1976 Queen Street Fair will be the fifth to be held and this year we have endeavoured to make it more of a local community event. Stalls have been limited to just over 200 and we have given priority in booking to local people and charities. The reduction in stalls should also help to reduce congestion.

However, we will still have the same funfair attractions and continuous free entertainment will be provided from two band-stands.

This year our plans to hold the Fair again met with criticism from a very small group of local residents and shopkeepers. Our belief that their views are not representative was confirmed when we polled all homes and businesses in the locality where a responsible occupant was home (see separate report, back page).

However, we would not like it to be thought that we are completely oblivious of the fact that some inconvenience is caused to Queen Street residents on Fair Day.

We know that most of them enjoy the Fair and are tolerant enough to appreciate that it is worthwhile to bring joy and excitement to so many thousands of people and benefits to so many good causes.

One thing we do ask – and we appreciate the cooperation we have received in past years – **WOULD RESIDENTS OF QUEEN STREET PLEASE NOT LEAVE THEIR CARS IN THE ROAD AFTER MIDNIGHT ON FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 26.**

The Fair is planned on the basis of an unobstructed roadway. Parked vehicles not only upset the plan of the Fair, they are in danger of being damaged by the thousands of visitors. The association can make special arrangements for the parking of Queen Street residents' cars during the Fair if you telephone the Secretary.

We would also like to make it clear that there is no basis for two of the criticisms which have been made of the Fair.

It is not necessary, as has been suggested, for visitors to knock on the doors of local residents and ask to use the toilet. On Fair Day, the association provides temporary toilets in Halls Lane.

And the Fair does not create the risk of increased fire damage because of lack of access for emergency vehicles. The event is planned in close cooperation with the police who are very conscious of



the need for emergency access and insist that we provide it.

Once again, in addition to thanking our local supporters, we would like to acknowledge the many people whose help and goodwill have enabled the Fair to be held.

Most especially we would like to thank the Premier, Mr. Wran, who is a local resident; the Minister for Transport, Mr. Cox; our local MLA, John Barraclough; the Mayor of Woollahra, Alderman Michael Bray; and the majority of members of Woollahra Municipal Council who supported a Council resolution which enabled the Fair to be held.

We hope you enjoy it.

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## SHOP REOPENING POLICY

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Without going into the personalities involved, the reopening of some premises in Queen Street as shops has created a certain amount of controversy and anguish.

In almost every case, the premises concerned were originally designed and built for commercial purposes many years ago.

When Queen Street went into a decline, they closed their doors. Now with the renaissance of the street as a shopping centre, there are imaginative business people willing to restore and open them for trading again.

Unfortunately, our town planning legislation does not make it easy for shops to be reopened in a residential area after a prolonged lapse of time – even though it would be incongruous to use them for any other purpose.

One of the aims of the Queen Street and West Woollahra Association, as specified in its constitution, is to foster and develop the special "village high street" character of Queen Street.

We believe the street is quite unique in the way shops and residences are harmoniously intermingled, and are fortunate that so much interesting architecture of the past is preserved in the mix.

Our view on breathing new life into dormant business premises was quite clearly stated in our submission to Woollahra Municipal Council when it was formulating the area plan.

We believe that it is only common sense that buildings originally designed and built for commercial purposes should be allowed to be used for commercial purposes again, however long they may have been closed.

In our comment on the control plan, we stated that the area included a small number of 19th century commercial buildings which in recent years had been poorly adapted for residential use.

"Sensible restoration of these buildings and the return to their use as shops could add much to the visual fabric of the Queen Street townscape," it was added.

The town planning proposals for West Woollahra which have been approved by Woollahra Municipal Council, but not yet gazetted, allow for 2 (g) (Redevelopment) zoning for much of the association's area, including the north side of Queen Street (where most of the shops are).

This is flexible enough to permit disused shops to return to commercial use, even outside the business area.

However, on the southern side of Queen Street, the Council proposes a 2 (b) zoning, which generally speaking is less flexible in regard to commercial use of properties.

On this side, there are several isolated business premises, some of which have been magnificently restored to commercial use in recent years, and one or two of

which still have potential to be used again as shops.

It is our belief that despite the 2 (b) zoning, it is in the best interest of the local community and the development of a pleasing streetscape that these properties should be able to open as shops.

On the other hand, we would be absolutely opposed to house premises being used or adapted for commercial purposes, except for what is described as "home occupation".

We have therefore written to the Minister for Planning and Environment, Mr. Paul Landa, requesting that the interpretation of the 2 (b) zoning on the south side of Queen Street be flexible enough to allow premises originally designed for commercial use to be used for commercial purposes of an appropriate type.

We feel this should be allowed even in cases where commercial use has lapsed for a long period of time, and have expressed our general support for owners of such premises who seek the requisite planning permission.

Mr. Landa has acknowledged our letter and told us he has noted our suggestion.

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## SHOPPING AROUND

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It's a slow, step-by-step process, but the commercial life of Queen Street gets ever more colourful and fascinating.

Our only regret is that the development of specialised shops is not matched by the arrival of more service businesses of the type we so sorely need.

However, we must congratulate our former president, Leo Schofield, and his wife Anne, on their fine restoration of the former tobacco bond building at No. 40 Queen Street and Grant Roberts on his brave new Kaleidoscope at Nos. 42-44.

Leo and Anne had to fight a very involved and difficult battle to be able to turn the tobacco bond over to the low-key uses of art gallery and antique dealers. We applaud their intestinal fortitude in seeing this through to a successful conclusion.

In what sounds like a game of musical chairs, Adler Antiques have moved into Anne Schofield's old shop at 46 Queen Street, Elphinstone Antiques now occupy that lovely Dickensian building in Moncur Street which was formerly Kaleidoscope, Campaign has crossed the street to take dazzling possession of Col McCristal's butchery, and Nigel's Birthday is now celebrated at the old Campaign.

We bid welcome to Adler, Elphinstone and Nigel's Birthday.

Now, please, where is the new fish shop, cake shop, supermarket and elegant take-away food emporium?

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## LOCAL MEMBERSHIP HIGH

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Is the Queen Street and West Woollahra Association truly representative of the local community?

In answer to that question, we can only point out that our membership of almost 200 people contains the highest number of local people in our history.

Because we have discontinued the practice of requiring people who book stalls at Queen Street Fair to become members, our membership consists almost exclusively of people living and/or working in the area.

At our annual meeting in May, it was unanimously resolved that our foundation president, Leo Schofield, should be enrolled as our first, and so far only, honorary life member.

We also have 17 other life members to whom we would like to express our gratitude for their support. They are:

Mr. W. F. (Bill) Bradshaw, Mrs. Marion Cowper, Mr. Mark Crittle, Mr. Eric Dare, Mr. Douglas Gordon, Mrs. M. T. Goodman, Mr. R. E. Newton, Roderick Palmer, Dr. T. L. Pascoe, Mr. Marcel Piat, Mrs. Dorothy Rosewall, "Say Cheez", Mrs. Anne Schofield, Mrs. Elaine Townsend, Mr. Peter Watson, Miss Susan L. Williams, and Woollahra Senior Citizens' Welfare Association.

If you are receiving this newsletter and you are not an association member, may we ask you to join?

Ordinary membership costs \$3 a year, and life membership \$25 as a once-and-for-all payment (think of it as a hedge against inflation).

You will find an application form on the back page of this newsletter.

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## YOUR COMMITTEE

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This year we welcomed three new members to our committee following the annual general meeting in May – Ann Giorgi, Austin Chapman and Mark Crittle.

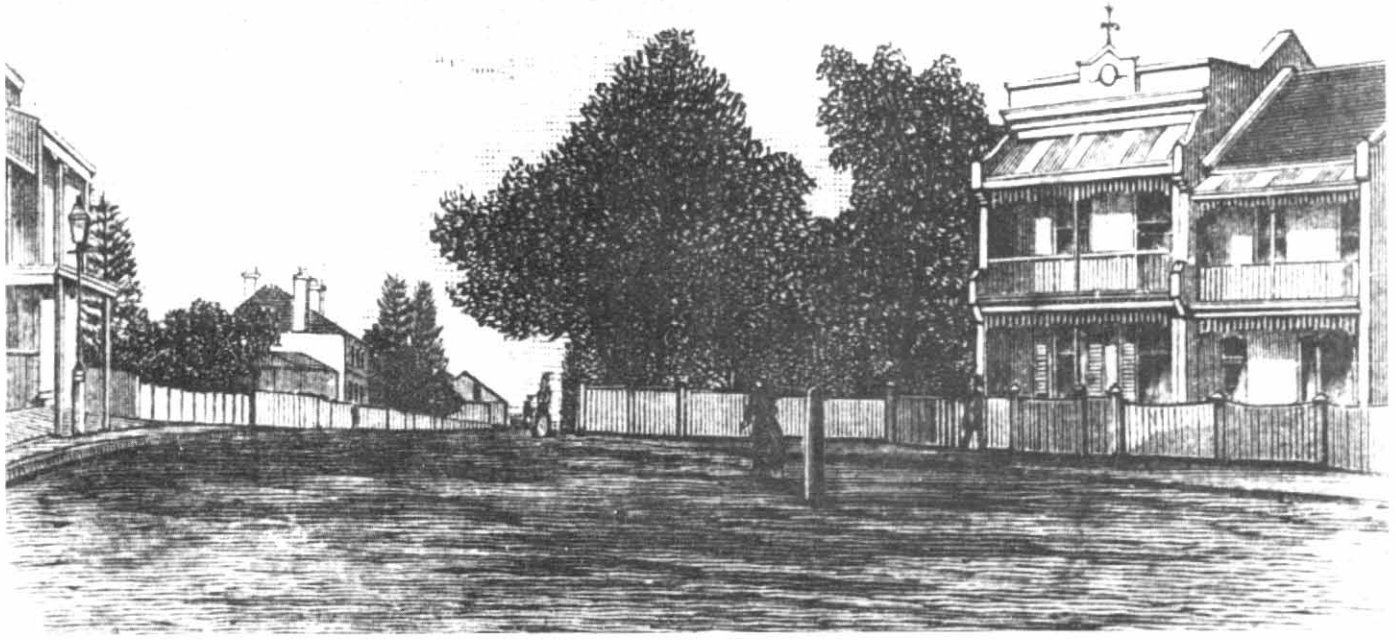
Although they live in our district, Mr. Chapman and Mr. Crittle are very involved with The Rocks area, where some of the preservation problems are similar to our own.

Mr. Chapman is heading the special Queen Street Fair Committee, with a great deal of help from Mr. Crittle.

Unfortunately for us, Mrs. Giorgi left the district in September to live in Europe.

The committee unanimously decided to co-opt Mr. Grant Roberts, of Kaleidoscope, to take her place. Mr. Roberts is responsible for the plan of this year's Queen Street Fair.

Mrs. Giorgi's departure means that the association's committee is now all-male – though we trust not chauvinistic in its approach.



## TALKING ABOUT TREES

In the last *Village Voice* we reported that the association had offered to give \$1000 from the surplus on the 1975 Queen Street Fair for a tree-planting scheme for Queen Street.

We have never been very happy with the street's rather bitty arboreal arrangements and believe that it is time for a comprehensive scheme, designed to give an interesting overall effect.

Following our offer of a subsidy, we had a useful meeting with the Council's horticultural officer, David Moss, and paced out the street with him to discuss what was needed.

Alderman Tony Perry, one of our ward aldermen, who is very interested in environmental matters, was present at this meeting.

Since then the matter has been referred to the Council's Visual Improvements Committee to hold discussions with us. After much delay, we were hoping that this meeting would be held late in November.

As most local residents know, a member of our first committee, Rowan Beckett, evolved a practical and interesting tree-planting scheme which the Council adopted in 1973.

For Queen Street itself, she suggested jacarandas and illawarra flame trees, planted alternately to give both colour and shade.

We believe fairly advanced trees should be planted, and want particular attention to be given to the tree guards.

These should be sturdy enough to offer protection and so designed that they do not become repositories for unsightly litter.

Know where this is? It's Jersey Road, looking towards Oxford Street at the junction with Rush Street, as it appeared in the 1880s. At that time Jersey Road was known as Point Piper Road, and had considerably fewer homes. Two two terrace houses on the right still exist but the garden in the middle of the picture is now where Caledonia Street runs into Jersey Road. The property on the left, with the street lamp outside, is today a pair of shops—as it probably was then—and the group of terrace houses further up with the distinctive chimney pots is 25-29 Jersey Road which still exist in their original form. In 1900, Paddington Municipal Council renamed Point Piper Road Jersey Road after Lord Jersey, a contemporary Governor of New South Wales. Queen Street, Woollahra, was formerly known as Piper Street. The older names are still retained in Point Piper Lane which runs behind Jersey Road. (Picture by courtesy of the Mitchell Collection)

## MONCUR STREET CROSSROADS

At our annual meeting, a member, Mrs. Joyce Burnard, expressed concern at the chaos affecting both pedestrians and traffic at the junction of Moncur and Queen Streets.

This has got considerably worse in the past few years. Particularly in the evening, vehicles coming down Queen Street from Oxford Street tend to hurtle towards the junction at excessive speed.

Mrs. Burnard has suggested that at least there should be a pedestrian crossing between the Post Office and the Woollahra Hotel.

Some residents probably think the traffic authorities should go further and install traffic lights at the spot.

Our inquiries have revealed that there are no plans at the moment for either traffic lights or a pedestrian crossing.

Our association's view is that something most definitely should be done to improve safety at this busy junction, but we are reluctant to make a positive recommendation until we have done some research into accident statistics and residents' attitudes.

This is in hand, and we hope to be able to report further soon.

## HORSESHOE APPEAL FAILS

Last year the association gave its support in principle to a scheme to use the old Diamond Horseshoe nightclub building in Oxford Street, opposite Centennial Park, as a small cinema for Australian films.

We did this partly because we believe such a cinema would be a useful cultural amenity in the area, and partly because of our frustration that the building should be allowed to deteriorate so badly through lack of use.

Earlier this year, the owner appealed to the Lands Tribunal against the refusal of the Woollahra Municipal Council to grant planning permission for the cinema.

In the absence overseas of the chairman of the architectural committee, your president, Robin Brampton, gave evidence before the tribunal.

The appeal was unsuccessful, entirely we understand because the tribunal considered car parking would be inadequate for the project. This was a matter on which the association itself had expressed reservations.

When this issue of *Village Voice* went to press, the owner was still considering the next move.

**THE QUEEN STREET AND WEST WOOLLAHRA ASSOCIATION**

*A residents' action association covering the area bounded by Jersey Road, Edgecliff Road and Oxford Street, West Woollahra, N.S.W.*

Address: Box 16, P.O. Woollahra, N.S.W. 2025.

Subscription: \$3.00 a year. Life membership \$25.00.

President: Robin Brampton  
Vice President: Leo Schofield  
Treasurer: Anthony Sernack

Committee: Austin Chapman, Mark Crittle, Douglas Gordon, Michael Magnus, Marcel Piat, Grant Roberts (co-opted, October 1976).

Chairman of the Architectural Committee: Douglas Gordon

Secretary: Mrs. Anne MacCallum, 387 3207

Temporary Queen Street Fair Office: 43 Jersey Road, 32 4274

Auditor: Michael Gilovitz

*Village Voice is published approximately every six months. Letters and other contributions on local topics are invited. The editor is Robin Brampton (357 1488 day, 32 4475 evening and weekends).*

**AN INVITATION TO JOIN US**

Every home in the area covered by the Queen Street and West Woollahra Association gets a copy of *Village Voice*.

If you're reading this and you're not a member of the association, please join us by filling in the coupon below.

We need your support, both moral and financial, in our constant fight to preserve the architectural heritage of our area and ensure that it always remains a pleasant place to live.

**RALLYING TO THE FAIR**

*"Our stall at the Queen Street Fair has brought more than \$15,000 for the benefit of handicapped children at Warrah School, Dural - including of ratepayers in the Municipality.*

*"Our business is forced to close on the day of the Queen Street Fair, but we gladly suffer this inconvenience.*

*"The Fair gives to Queen Street its own special identity, and to kill the Fair is to kill business incentive and to harm employment in today's critical economic climate.*

*"For the sake of charities, free enterprise and democratic local government, we earnestly request that the Council resolve to raise no objection to the Fair."*

*John and Myrtle Cowling,  
105 Queen Street*

Fortunately, Woollahra Municipal Council heeded the pleas of John and Myrtle Cowling and our many other supporters - but it was a close thing.

In September, following advice from the State Government, we asked the Council to approve the holding of the Fair and apply to the State Government for a temporary street closure.

After taking legal advice, the Council decided it had no power to do this.

Back we went to the State Government who said that provided Woollahra Council did not object, we could probably still hold our Fair.

Following our representations to the Mayor, Alderman Michael Bray, Council passed the required resolution by 6 votes to 5, only to throw the Fair back into the melting pot with a recission motion.

It was then we realised that we would have to get active and prove there was a groundswell of popular support for the Fair, and that the objectors were in a minority.

Committee members polled all homes and businesses where a responsible occupant was home in Queen Street, from Oxford Street to Holdsworth Street, in John Street, Rush Street, James Street and Victoria Avenue.

They were asked the simple question: "Are you for or against Queen Street Fair being held this year?"

Results in Queen Street were 85 for and 7 against. For the whole of the survey, it was 199 for and 12 against. Many individual supporters, like Mr. and Mrs. Cowling, sent messages to the Council.

The recission motion produced an interesting debate on November 1, and we must give the speakers for the motion credit for presenting a case which was as well argued and thoughtfully prepared (if not as sound!) as that of the Fair's supporters.

Speakers in favour of raising no objection to the Fair were two of our local ward aldermen, Mark Johnson and Taylor; a former Mayor, Alderman O'Neill; and George Warnecke, the Paddington Labor Alderman who voted against his two Paddington Labor colleagues in the debate.

The recission motion was lost without a show of hands, and the way was cleared for us to apply to the State Government.

Our inability to get Woollahra Council to pass easily a simple resolution of "no objection" to the Fair hindered our planning but it served a useful purpose in showing once and for all that local support for the Fair on official and unofficial level is very high indeed.

So high that we can be very optimistic that no killjoy attempt to stifle the Fair will ever be successful.

**MALL SCHEME HELD UP**

What has become of that imaginative scheme to close off the Queen Street end of Spicer Street and turn it into a pedestrian mall with flowers and shrubs?

At the beginning of the year, Woollahra Municipal Council decided to go ahead with the project on a trial basis.

We gave details in the last *Village Voice*, thinking that before the end of the year, the mall would be providing a restful oasis for shoppers in Queen Street.

Unfortunately, officialdom does not work as quickly as that.

An inquiry this month revealed that Woollahra Council wants the scheme to proceed, but before it can do so the newly established Traffic Authority must give approval.

And the Authority has such an enormous number of these sort of applications to consider that it hasn't got round to ours.

Sorry, folks!

**THE QUEEN STREET AND WEST WOOLLAHRA ASSOCIATION**

ENCLOSED IS MY SUBSCRIPTION OF \$3 FOR ONE YEAR.  
IF YOU HAVE PREVIOUSLY BEEN A MEMBER, PLEASE PUT A TICK HERE . . . . .

NAME . . . . .

ADDRESS . . . . .

POST TO: The Secretary,  
Queen Street and West Woollahra Association,  
PO Box 50,  
WOOLLAHRA, NSW 2025.