

"Resumption by stealth" plan strongly opposed

A LARGE group of members of the local business community and residents are strongly opposing a Woollahra Council proposal designed to alleviate parking problems in Queen Street.

A meeting of some 30 residents on April 13 unanimously passed a resolution condemning the plan which would affect premises along the commercial "strip" of Queen Street.

Three people who attended the meeting subsequently formed a protest delegation to Woollahra Council - dentist Tony Cruikshank, solicitor John Read and resident Jennifer Dickerson.

Designed as a long term measure, the Council proposal is to amend the Development Control Plan in respect of properties from numbers 28 to 150 Queen Street.

In future, in certain circumstances, if a property owner put in a development application, he would have to agree to create a hardstanding area at the rear of his property in Smith Street or Peaker Lane.

This open area would have to be at least six metres deep and extend the full width of the property.

The owner would be required to do this if the new use proposed for the property would generate more traffic or require on-site loading facilities.

The proposal follows petitions from a small number of residents, particularly of numbers 63-71, concerning congestion caused by delivery trucks in Queen Street.

However, a report from the Council's chief planner shows that there is a theoretical deficiency of 255 car parking spaces in Queen Street.

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Clover Moore, MLA

All local residents are invited to the Association's

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Holdsworth Street Community Centre

TUESDAY, MAY 23rd, at 7 pm

Speaker

CLOVER MOORE on

"A New Girl in Macquarie Street"

After her very active membership of Sydney City Council, Clover Moore successfully contested our electorate of Bligh as an independent at last year's State election, defeating the sitting Liberal member Michael Yabsley. Clover will give an insight into what it is like to be a newcomer to State Parliament, particularly with no major party machinery to support you.

The evening will end with a free wine and cheese tasting.

Association's upgrading scheme for Queen Street

• This is the Annual Report of the President, Duane Norris, to be presented at the Annual General Meeting of the Queen Street and West Woollahra Association Limited on Tuesday, May 23:

AFTER its major achievements in 1987 in producing a lively history of the area and seeing the beautiful Victorian garden fountain at last installed in Davies Reserve, 1988 was a quieter year for the Association.

But behind the scenes a lot of planning has been going on for future years, the results of which will be seen both in the short and long term.

It has long been the wish of the Association to see the upgrading of the streetscape and plans are now going ahead with a landscape and master plan due to be ready for the Annual General Meeting.

The project has been named *Queen Street 2000* and will be a joint venture with local businesses, property owners and Woollahra Council.

It is envisaged that the plans will include all of Queen Street, from Oxford Street to Ocean Street. The plan will look at developing a landscape theme which will be sympathetic to the architectural style of an ever increasing flow of shoppers and residents into Queen Street.

Period Lighting

The work will include new paving, period street lighting similar to the original gas lamps, seating, a village clock and a tribute to some of Woollahra's past famous identities.

As well, an overall colour theme will be produced to make the project distinctive to Queen Street.

The project is being conceived and drawn up by two local architects, Lyn and Alex de la Vega. The design work will be funded by the Association in the first instance but an application has also been made for assistance from the Australian Design Council.

When complete, the scheme will create a link between Oxford Street, Paddington, and Double Bay, two areas which already have completed plans for the refurbishment of selected streetscapes.

Work on our scheme could even begin as early as 1990 as Woollahra Council has already made budget recommendations for the landscaping of Davies Reserve.

The landscaping would complement the fountain which the Association

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Australia Post denies threat to post office

IS Queen Street Post Office under threat?

Although Australia Post keeps blandly denying that it has any plans for wholesale downgrading of post office facilities, the recent closure of Watsons Bay Post Office shows we may have cause for apprehension.

A report that Queen Street might also be targeted for downgrading to agency status caused us to write to Australia Post for information.

In reply, we received what is obviously a blanket letter to answer such queries, saying: "Currently, there are no post offices either being discussed or programmed for closure, including Woollahra".

However, Australia Post admits that it is embarking on a long range restructuring programme to overcome its losses.

Under this, it is envisaged that the current number of retail outlets will remain the same, but some facilities will be converted to a different style of operation.

Presumably "converted to a different style of operation" is a euphemism for downgrading to agency status, which echoes our fears.

These have been somewhat substantiated by a report that counter staff at Queen Street Post Office is to be reduced from four to two - to the understandable dismay of the Postal Workers Union.

As it is impossible to be served at the Post Office at any time of the day without having to queue, it is difficult to imagine how a lower manning level could be considered.

We have written back to Australia Post protesting at any plans to cut counter staff and asking to be consulted should it develop any scheme to change the status of the Post Office.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

continued

installed in 1987, marking the gateway to Queen Street, and would act as a precursor for the rest of the project.

The work may take some years until completion but it is certainly the most exciting project that the street will have seen this century and be a lasting tribute to the people of Woollahra.

The Environment

The Association continues to act as watchdog group for the area in matters of planning and development.

There have been several occasions in the past year when we have taken objection to proposals before Woollahra Council which we felt would be against the best interests of local residents.

I am pleased to report that work on Waimea House, the lovely Georgian style home which was almost destroyed in 1973, continues to progress, albeit slowly.

We also hope to see a start this year on the transformation of the unsightly old Diamond Horseshoe building in Oxford Street to a theatre school with auditorium.

And the latest news from Woollahra Council is that the second stage of the Eastern Distributor will go ahead, though very much behind schedule.

This is good news for the long-suffering residents of Ocean Street as it will hopefully provide a preferable route for some of the through traffic which now flows past their doors.

One sad blow to the environment was the gutting by fire in January of this year of the wonderful Uniting Church building in Jersey Road.

The disaster came as a shock to all local people, and whether the church will be rebuilt or not will not be known for some time.

We have nominated Mrs Eileen Cumming as our repre-

sentative on a committee formed to act as a liaison point with local residents about the church's future. Another member is our secretary, Robin Brampton.

Business Group

Although Queen Street has never had a local chamber of commerce, the Association has taken under its umbrella the newly formed Woollahra Business Group.

Formed by Association members Mary Read (Reads), John Haymes (Haymes Bookshop) and Leonie Furber (Elle Effe) the group has about 70 members.

At the end of 1988, they had a well-planned advertising promotion in *Vogue* and produced the distinctive Queen Street giftwrapping paper with a design of local architecture.

In 1989, the group plans to produce a shopping directory and map of the area, partly printed in Japanese to encourage tourist dollars.

Social Events

In 1988, a generous offer from the National Trust to provide us with free use of the magnificently restored Juniper Hall in its opening week enabled us to arrange a special entertainment of words and music, followed by champagne supper.

Practically the entire programme was written by people associated with the area such as Dorothea Mackellar, Banjo Paterson, Christopher Brennan and the contemporary local poet Charles McCausland.

The then National Trust president Max Kelly was an interesting speaker at our Annual Meeting in May and the Taverner Consort again led us in a community concert of Christmas carols and songs at Queens Court in December.

This year we are again arranging an entertainment, a Queen Street Music Hall of the traditional type in association with Woollahra Senior Citizens Association.

This will be held in the hall on Gaden Reserve on Friday and Saturday, July 21 and 22. It should be a fun night and all residents are invited to this ticketed affair.

On Saturday, October 28, the Association plans to hold a Community Day and Super Garage Sale at Holdsworth Street Community Centre.

Finally, the annual Carol Concert will again be held in December. As usual, it will be free with refreshments provided.

The Committee

As the outgoing President I would like to take this opportunity to thank all members of the Committee and in particular Monica McDonald and James Furber, both of whom will be standing down after a number of years on the Committee.

Monica has been a tireless and diligent worker for the Association, attending to minutes and correspondence, organising the carol concerts, doing the books and being very active and involved in all the local developments.

Monica will be very difficult to replace and on behalf of all the Committee we thank her for a job well done.

Two members left the Committee during the year. Both Ray Reynolds and Robyn Pinkstone were forced to retire due to increased work commitments.

I thank them both for their respective contributions. They have been replaced by two new committee members - Alex and Lyn de la Vega.

The rest of 1989 looks like being a busy year for the Association and I would like to wish the new incoming Committee every success.



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Strong concern on future of Uniting Church

NATURALLY, many people in our area are wondering what will happen to the lovely Uniting Church building in Jersey Road which was gutted in a disastrous fire in January.

A decision about its future is made more difficult because, even before the fire, the 112-year-old building had become structurally unsafe and was no longer used.

A well-attended gathering of concerned local people in February heard from the Rev Rod Pattenden that it would take a considerable time before a decision was made on the building's future.

The meeting set up a committee under the chairmanship of Drew Robertson to represent the interests of local people in liaison with the church authorities.

Mrs Eileen Cumming has been appointed as the Queen Street Association's representative on this committee which also includes Queen Street Association secretary Robin Brampton.

From the committee's subsequent discussions with Mr Pattenden, it appears that the Uniting Church would be more likely to want to use the building for its parochial social work than use it for some secular purpose such as an art gallery.

However, it would be possible for some imaginative person or group with deep pockets to purchase the property from the church and put it to some community use, such as art gallery or performance space.

Lot of goodwill

The liaison committee has written to tell the Eastside Parish Council that there is a lot of goodwill and willingness to help in the local community.

This could be tapped if decisions about the building's future were made while the loss of the church was still prominent in people's minds.

"Our intention is to help in any way we can in what looks like a difficult project..." the committee has told the parish council. "Through our local contacts, we shall endeavour to act as a clearing house for ideas and suggestions."

While we wait to hear what the Uniting Church has in mind, the site has been cleared and made safe. All the stone has been kept for possible reuse.



FUTURE NOT DETERMINED... The burned out Uniting Church in Jersey Road.

"Resumption by stealth" plan opposed

Veteran Queen Street antique dealer Bill Bradshaw described the proposal to *Village Voice* as "resumption by stealth".

He told the meeting that if his premises came under the proposal, he would have to demolish a garage used for six cars and his reserve stock.

Yet he only received a container of antiques twice a year and it took only an hour to unload it.

Mr Read said that if the area at the back of the shop he owns at the corner of Spicer Street was turned into hard-standing, the garden would be destroyed.

This includes three beautiful ornamental trees and a courtyard providing a much needed "lung" for the area.

Dr Robert Diamond was cheered by the meeting when he suggested that if further car parking facilities were needed in Queen Street, Woollahra Council should go and build them.

The proposal would involve "willy nilly" destruction of property and Dr Diamond said it was ludicrous that he had got so far.

The meeting was convened by Jennifer Dickerson and chaired by print dealer Tony Ward.

Only one representative of Woollahra Council attended, Alderman Margaret Carter, who emphasised that the Council would listen to the

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views being expressed and suggested the deputation.

• The Association has decided to write to Woollahra Council in support of the protesters, saying that while it approves of moves to improve the parking situation, it considers the proposal would be both ineffective and unfair to owners of the affected properties.

Cycle safety and Devonshire tea

OUR Neighbourhood Watch Group C37 continues to be very active.

On Saturday, May 27, it is holding a Bicycle Safety Day at the Holdsworth Street Community Centre, from 10 am to noon.

Both adults and children are invited to bring their bicycles along to be safety tested by Constable Ray Attard of Maroubra Police, and also learn a few cycle safety rules.

Owners of bicycles which pass the test will be given a safety certificate.

To make it a social occasion, Neighbourhood Watch will serve Devonshire morning tea.

Contact the Neighbourhood Watch coordinator Robyn Pinkstone, 32 3810 evenings, or just come along on the day.



The Queen Street and West Woollahra Association Ltd

A resident's action association covering the area bounded by Jersey Road, Edgecliff Road and Oxford Street, West Woollahra, N.S.W. Affiliated to the National Trust.

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

Patron: Dame Joan Sutherland

President: Duane Norris.

Vice-President: Tom Wilhelm.

Treasurer: James Furber.

Secretary: Robin Brampton.

Membership Secretary: Monica McDonald.

Committee: Dee Dorgan, Ronald Osborne, Alex de la Vega, Lynette de la Vega, Anthony Sunman.

Honorary Committee Member: Leo Schofield.

Village Voice Editor: Robin Brampton.

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DO YOU BELONG?

Join the Queen Street and West Woollahra Association Limited and have a say.

The Association is an action group formed in 1972 to protect the interests of local residents and business people. Through it, we can effectively voice opinions – and influence decisions of public authorities – on:

- Planning and development
- Preservation of architectural characteristics
- Prevention of properties falling into disrepair
- Beautification of streets and recreation areas
- The fight against pollution or disfigurement of the area.

In four VILLAGE VOICE newsletters a year, you can get information about local events, learn about new businesses and read items of historical interest. There are social functions and a Christmas Carols concert – opportunities for people to meet.

You do not have to reside in the area to join.

The annual cost of membership (January to December) is:

Individual	\$10
Family (two adults)	\$15
Corporate	\$20
Life	\$100

Fill in the form below and post with your cheque to:

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The Association at Work

Phoenix Hotel plan modified

AS reported in the previous *Village Voice*, the Association sympathised with the concern of local residents about alterations planned for the Phoenix Hotel in Wallis Street.

Nearby residents feared that rowdiness might result from increased drinking facilities and longer drinking hours. They were also worried about bringing additional cars into an area with so little parking.

While seeing some merit in the Phoenix Hotel's application, the Association wrote to Woollahra Council supporting the residents by requesting that no approval be granted which would threaten their amenities.

Council has now told us that it has approved modified plans for alterations and additions to the ground floor of the hotel, subject to 10 conditions.

Council resolved to inform all objectors that the modified plans are substantially different from those advertised and do not include any alterations and additions to the first floor of the hotel.

We trust this means that the Phoenix will remain what it has always been, a pleasant neighbourhood "local", and that we will be spared the sort of horrors recently visited on Paddington residents when the Windsor Castle Hotel was granted extended hours.

St Kevins back in Queen Street

AFTER having had a large input into Woollahra Local Environment Plan no 24 (Western Zone) which protects our area's architectural and environmental heritage, the Association keeps a wary eye out for any attempts to change it.

Recently Woollahra Council published a document with a number of amendments and invited the Association's comment. We in turn submitted it for analysis to our town planning adviser, Jack Devery.

Jack substantially confirmed the Council's assurance that the amendments gave no cause for alarm and were mainly "tidying up" of some minor matters of description, spelling and location.

One curious little anomaly put right by the amendments is that St Kevins, the imposing residence restored by Leo Schofield, is no longer described as being at 117 *Ocean Street*. It's back where it belongs at 117 Queen Street.

Old bus depot plan rejected

SOME aspects of a proposal by the Shipton Group to reconstruct premises at 63 Jersey Road, corner of Halls Lane, to provide living accommodation in addition to showrooms caused us to object to Woollahra Council.

The building is historic, having started life as Floods horse bus depot, and is now occupied by Poorterre International.

Under the Shipton scheme, what is now a blank wall facing the reserve in Halls Lane would have had windows and other detail which we believe would have been unsympathetic with the general architectural character of the area. Some would resemble ships' portholes.

We understand that Woollahra Council's urban conservation advisory committee also took exception to this feature. Another problem identified by the Council is that the proposal is such a complete reconstruction that more parking would be necessary.

In the upshot, the Council has rejected the scheme.

Does this sound like you?

WITH a high turnover of committee members, the Association constantly needs new volunteers prepared to give a few hours a month to committee work.

We would also like somebody with professional accountancy or banking qualifications to volunteer to conduct our annual audit as a public company. The present cost of paying for this to be done is a heavy drain on the association's limited finances.

If you can help, please contact the president, Duane Norris (326 2160 business hours), or the secretary, Robin Brampton (331 1188 business hours, 326 1257 after hours).

VIBES from the TRIANGLE

Compiled by Monica McDonald,
Robin Brampton and Dee Dorgan

STILL they come and go!

The new Victoria Galleries at the corner of Queen Street and Victoria Avenue were only occupied for a few weeks by James Granger Antiques.

When this column was compiled, the building stood empty, waiting for a buyer.

James Granger and his wife Teresa have moved their business to the more intimate atmosphere of number 47 Queen Street, the former home of the curiously named C20 decorative art shop.

With the Grangers departure, Raine and Horne put the Victoria Galleries up for auction in March, but the building was passed in at \$2.05 million. We understand that the reserve price was \$2.5 million, but offers would be considered nearer that figure.

Planning permission is granted for an art or antiques gallery, showroom or offices. However, the building could not be used as a restaurant.

Among other business changes in Queen Street, Ernest Elphinstone has moved his oriental antiques business from number 78 to the Woollahra Galleries in Oxford Street.

His Queen Street shop has subsequently been completely remodelled for the antique and decorative lighting business of Phillip Lachlan and Gary Ziles.

Over the road, Anthony Whitaker has taken over the hairdressing salon at number 83 formerly run by Margaret Williams who has moved to Oxford Street.

Anthony had a distinguished career in London as artistic director of two of Vidal Sassoon's salons and creative director of the Vidal Sassoon London Academy.

Another departure from Queen Street is Daphne Tyson whose American designer cotton and fabrics shop has closed down at number 86.

And in Ocean Street, The Designer Glass Studio has departed from number 37, to be replaced by the Redelman Fabrics and Floor Coverings.



Also departed from Ocean Street is the delightful little Terence 'n' Caz "boutique for the individual". Before she left, Caz left a touching note in the window thanking her customers, other businesses in the area and "that wonderful man Terence".

PRICES of Queen Street real estate continue to soar. St Kevins, the mansion restored and originally occupied by Leo Schofield, fetched \$1.835 million at auction in April - \$445,000 more than Leo received when he put it up for auction in 1987.

Andrew Gibbons, the auctioneers would not disclose the purchaser other than to tell us it is a family who want plenty of room for the children.



Young Caroller... A study by Dee Dorgan from the Association Carol Concert at Queens Court in December.

HERE'S a tip if you are contemplating a protest to a local authority or indeed any public body - a photograph can be more effective than words.

Our former treasurer Mollie Lenthall had got nowhere with her protests about the state of the pavement at the Victoria Avenue end of John Street, except to be told the money was not available to set matters right.

Then she wrote another very factual protest to Woollahra Council, this time accompanied by a series of photographs showing the extent of the problem.

One showed Mollie standing amidst weeds growing up to her waist. To underline her protest, the photographs were arranged to make a giant exclamation mark!

Result: Council workers were on the job a few days later; broken kerbstones were replaced with concrete; waist-high weeds gave way to asphalt; and the pavement is now again a picture of municipal competence.

PUBLISHED by the Association 18 months ago, Queen Street and District - A History and Guide, is still selling steadily.

The softcover edition, at \$10, may be bought in Queen Street from Queen Street Newsagency or Haymes Bookshop, and also from the National Trust Shop at Juniper Hall, Paddington.

Both the softcover edition and a hardcover version at \$17.50 are also obtainable by writing to the Association at PO Box 16, Woollahra, NSW 2025. But please add \$1 for postage.

Gaden bush harmony at Music Hall

These cheerful ladies are from the Bush Music Group formed last year from the "young at heart" who get together at the Senior Citizens Centre on Gaden Reserve at the Edgecliff Road end of Queen Street.

Some of the 20-strong group are in their 60s and 70s. Oldest is 87-year-old "Doc" Shaw who plays the clarinet and arrives at rehearsals on his motor cycle.

The group made their concert debut last October at Woollahra's Bicentennial Community Concert in Cooper Park and will be one of the principal attractions at the Queen Street Music Hall in the Gaden Reserve Hall on the Friday and Saturday, July 21 and 22.

It will be a real old time music hall entertainment with a bill of "famous artistes", a chairman to keep the evening flowing merrily and a chance for the audience to sing along.

The ticket price will include a hearty mid-winter dinner, probably of soup, roast beef and trifle, but you must bring your own alcoholic drinks.

Tickets will be available from mid-June from the stores of Duane Norris and Top Brass in Queens Court.

QUEEN Street has another creditable eatery with the opening of the Hotel Woollahra Cafe, reconstructed from the old Bees Garden Restaurant at the Woollahra Hotel.

The decor is cool blues and greys, with sophisticated prints on the wall, although slightly incongruous to our eyes are the Greek columns and capitals supporting empty air.

However, there is no doubt about the food quality - light, tastefully presented and, in our experience, delicious.

We have enjoyed the fish dishes, with slim, cooked-to-perfection french fries and salad, and also the fresh pasta. Both change from day to day. For heartier appetites, the Cafe has an offering of char-grilled dishes, again with those wonderful french fries and salad.

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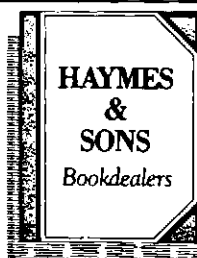
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