

Newsletter of the Queen Street and West Woollahra Association

PO Box 16, Woollahra, New South Wales 2025

Enter our \$2000 art competition

ENTRIES for the Association's Queen Street and District Art Competition close on Saturday, November 23.

The contest is for paintings, watercolours, drawings, other types of work on paper, etc, which reflect the life and/or environment of Queen Street and its immediate neighbourhood.

First prize is \$1000 cash donated by the Woollahra Hotel which will become the owner of the winning work. Second and third prizes are \$500 and \$250 cash, and there is a special \$250 cash prize for the best work by an artist under 18 years old.

Winning and other entries will form a special exhibition as part of Come to Queen Street Day on Saturday, December 7.

Entry forms and further details may be obtained by phoning 331 1188 (ask to speak to Jill Lehmann) or by writing to the Association at PO Box 16, Woollahra, NSW 2025.

REPEATING OUR SUCCESSFUL PRODUCTION FROM JUNE



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A BUSH DINNER

followed by

BANJO OF QUEEN STREET

A Diversion based on the works of A.B. "Banjo" Paterson
who lived in Queen Street, Woollahra

Performed by
TONY WARD and ROBIN BRAMPTON
with guest personalities

in the Regency Room of the Paddington-Woollahra RSL
226 Oxford Street, Paddington

on Wednesday October 16th at 7pm

COME IN COSTUME!

Guests are invited, if they wish, to add to the spirit of
the evening by dressing in bush or Edwardian costume

Tickets \$32 each

Obtainable from Duane Norris Garden Designers, Queens Court or
Haymes & Sons Bookshop, 43 Queen Street. Also by post from the
Queen Street Association, P.O. Box 16, Woollahra, NSW 2025

LOCAL TABLES

A tradition lives on at Prunier's

PRUNIER'S

International restaurant,
Chiswick Gardens,
65 Ocean Street, Woollahra.
Telephone: 363 1974

WHEN we dined at Prunier's this month, the unflappable John was deftly handling the table cooking; Steve was courteously making sure that nobody had empty glasses; and young Dennis was proving that a new generation of waiters is as capable of old-fashioned courtesy as the old.

In other words, Prunier's has not missed a beat despite the sudden death last month of its impish-looking presiding genius, the legendary Tony Gemenis.

So be assured that Tony's polished tradition will endure in Chiswick Gardens, with John as manager, backed by Tony's partner. And after working with Tony for 40 years, Steve is staying on for a while.

Less than a year before he died, Tony celebrated 50 years in the restaurant business, having joined Princes in the city at 14, risen to head waiter by 21, and then started his own restaurant, the original Prunier's at Double Bay.

Our dinner the other night was, as usual, pleasant with the menu offering a sound combination of international dishes plus some of Prunier's special touches, such as Beetroot and Pumpkin Ravioli. And, of course, Prunier's famous Steak Diane.

Mrs B and I settled first for soup, my Clam Chowder being of the thick traditional variety with plenty of solids.

Having a partiality for the now somewhat elusive New Zealand whitebait, I asked for the fritters of it to

be promoted from entree to main course with potatoes and garden salad. Mrs B settled for a delicious serving of Aylesbury Duckling with glazed apple and other accompaniments.

Then John table-cooked my mouth-watering Mango and Strawberries Flambe, while Mrs B had the same fruits tastefully presented in their raw state.

From Prunier's extensive and well selected wine list (even if it does heavily reflect Australia's preoccupation with chardonnay!) we chose a Peter Lehmann Dry Semillon and a Best's Great Western Chablis, both conveniently available in half bottles.

Prunier's is by no means cheap, with three courses and coffee at dinner running to over \$50, plus the cost of drinks. But even in these depressing economic times, many people besides us think that the style of the place makes it worthwhile.

And for the more budget-conscious, Prunier's now offers an "affordable lunch" of three a la carte dishes and coffee for \$30.

R.B.

Hearty portions and exotic flavours

CAFE WOOLLAHRA

The Woollahra Hotel,
Corner of Queen Street and
Moncur Street.
Telephone: 363 2782

OPENED just over two years ago, the restaurant at the Woollahra Hotel is now well established and does a brisk trade at both lunch and dinner.



TONY GEMENIS . . . He celebrated 50 years in the restaurant business before his sudden death last month. (Picture by courtesy of the Wentworth Courier.)

As is often the way, the chefs change from time to time but the food remains consistently sound with touches of the exotic. Also portions are generally hearty, perhaps because the clientele is young. No cuisine nouvelle here!

We have several times been for lunch and enjoyed the fish dishes with excellent French fries. But to prepare this review, we went as a party of four for dinner.

Highest marks would go to my wife's delicious Pan Fried Ocean Trout Fillet with a Spaghetti of Leek, Carrot and Zucchini.

Somebody Else's 400g Rib Eye Fillet with Mushroom Glaze was a real whopper. And as he likes the suspicion of charring at the edge, he did not mind that it was from the barbecue rather than the oven.

Chosen by Somebody Else's wife, the Crab and Octopus in Chilli with Black Bean and Salsa also got the thumbs up, even if she had to crack the crab claws to get at the meat.

As for myself, I had two entrees and should perhaps have known better than to order the Rock Oysters with Cucumber, Tomato and Radish Relish. I like to be able to enjoy the delicacy of the oyster without such embellishments, however tasty.

However, the Fettucine with Prawns, Red Pesto, Artichokes, Capsicum and Olives was a delight of mixed flavours.

Menu prices have been revised since our visit. Entrees are \$5 to \$8, main courses \$9.50 to \$12 and desserts \$5.50, with King Island Brie \$6.50. Vegetables are charged extra. Many dishes are available in either main course or entree size.

Desserts on the evening of our visit included a Tiramisu, and Strawberries and Cream with Mascapone.

Service is efficient and there is an excellent range of wines from the bar at reasonable prices.

R.B.

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READS

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THE ASSOCIATION AT WORK

Neville Wran as patron

WE would like to thank Neville Wran, former Premier of New South Wales and a local resident, who has graciously agreed to become the Association's patron.

He succeeds former Queen Street resident Dame Joan Sutherland who tells us that now she has retired, her visits to Australia from her home in Europe will be less frequent.

We would also like to welcome Graham Freudenberg, a resident of Bowden Street who has become a member of the Committee. A writer, Graham is well known in political circles for his work with Federal and State Labor Governments.

Come to Queen Street Day

SATURDAY, December 7, will be a red letter day in Queen Street when the Association is arranging a well-publicised Come to Queen Street Day to promote local businesses and the attractions of the street.

Features will include street entertainment, a display of flags and a shop window dressing competition. Winning and other entries from the Queen Street and District Art Competition (page 1) will be on display and available for sale.

The Association will also provide stalls along the street for charities and community service organisations and would be interested to hear from groups interested in taking these. (Ring Robin Brampton, 331 1188 during the day or 326 1257 after hours.)

Fuller details will appear in the next *Village Voice*, out in the week before the event.

St Kevin's bid rejected

THE Association decided not to oppose John Williams' recent application to use his imposing residence, St Kevin's, at 117 Queen Street as an antiques gallery.

However our approval depended on the Council imposing a number of conditions which would ensure that the exterior of the building and landscaping were untouched and signage was minimal.

To the disappointment of John and a number of his supporters among the Queen Street antiques community, his application was rejected, although he does have the right to appeal to the Land and Environment Court.

Chiswick Gardens upgrading

WOOLLAHRA Council has recently been canvassing Ocean Street residents for suggestions for upgrading Chiswick Gardens.

Although it was not formally asked for its views, the Association suggested that various elements of the Queen Street 2000 scheme, such as paving, period lighting and street furniture, might be incorporated into Chiswick Gardens.

The Association believes that this would complement what is planned for Queen Street and be a much better approach than "an ad hoc design strategy that would see a mish mash of designs".

Separately, as a resident of Ocean Street, Association Secretary Robin Brampton suggested that the park might include a memorial to a famous nature lover, the poet Dorothea Mackellar, who lived in Ocean Street.

The Council has now written back saying that the responses showed that residents would support only minor upgrading.

It is therefore proposed to upgrade all planting areas with more appropriate species for aspect; install irrigation; repair or replace the old bird bath and fountain; and install both new seating and a new park name sign.

The Council will also document for later implementation a new pergola for wisteria at the entry, new lighting and new sandstone pathway paving.



The production of *Banjo of Queen Street*, advertised on page one, will be the second this year. The Association originally staged the entertainment in June before an enthusiastic audience including the then Mayor of Woollahra, Alderman Peter King. Also present were Banjo Paterson's two granddaughters, Philippa Harvie and Rosamund Campbell, who live in Woollahra. Our picture from this night shows television compere Ian Turpie with the penny farthing bicycle with which he performed the Banjo poem *Mulga Bill's Bicycle*. The other two performers, Tony Ward and Robin Brampton, are pictured left and right. With them is Queen Street Association president, Ron Osborne (second left) and Alderman King (second right).



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BATTLE FOR OCEAN STREET

Demonstrators carrying a huge protest banner across Ocean Street as part of last month's Saturday morning demonstration by the Ocean Street, Not Ocean Freeway group.



Faithful take to the street

SPRING wasn't late this year. It came in right on cue on Saturday, September 7, just in time for the street demonstration conducted by the committee, members and friends of OSNOF — Ocean Street, Not Ocean Freeway.

Several hundred people congregated in Chiswick Gardens to listen to a jazz band, splendid in black tie and dinner suits, whip up the locals, if not to a frenzy, then to enthusiastic applause.

When the band wasn't playing, the giant 2UW juke-box let off steam. Meanwhile, an Austrian maypole troupe cut a fancy step or two on the lawns of the gardens.

Then the outgoing Mayor, Peter King, addressed the gathering and confirmed Woollahra Council's commitment to cutting traffic in Ocean Street to more manageable levels.

He was followed by Clover Moore, State Member for Bligh, who was highly critical of the RTA for its apparently haphazard direction of traffic up and down Ocean Street to the tune of nearly 36,000 vehicles a day.

Meanwhile Oxford Street, which has provision for three lanes of clearway in either

By Reg Fountain

direction at peak hours, was carrying only 28,000 vehicles a day at the last count.

She urged the residents to continue their protest and to marshal Council support in having the RTA justify its actions.

Clover believes this is more urgent because the Harbour Tunnel is about to disgorge many more vehicles into the city and Eastern Suburbs where there are no adequate facilities to disperse them.

Eastern Distributor

She deplored the State Government's action in deferring work on the Eastern Distributor and advised her hearers to pursue every effort to have these plans put in train again.

Woollahra Action Committee member, David Leach (now a Cooper Ward alderman), also spoke and echoed the sentiments of the previous speaker.

Next came a celebrity auction for such fascinating merchandise as a Balmain Rugby League tie donated by Neville Wran, a 2UE clock from John Laws and theatre

tickets from Noel Ferrier. Joe Martin was auctioneer, raising both laughter and money.

This was followed by a march up and down Ocean Street, then OSNOF treated the populace to a free sausage sizzle.

Ocean Street was festooned with huge red and black bows that adorned the plane trees the length of the street. Painted calico signs, some 30 metres long, proclaimed "Too much smog, too much clog in Ocean Street — fair go, RTA" and other slogans.

OSNOF claims that the increase in traffic is a result of "Band-aid traffic planning" by the RTA and they are fed up with a 31 per cent increase in vehicular traffic up and down Ocean Street over the past eight years.

This is largely because motorists from the East and South East are using Ocean Street as a throughway in their progress to the city CBD and the North Shore.

The RTA has denied access from Oxford Street across town to William Street by closing off the right turn at

Crown Street just after Taylor Square, so that motorists are faced with the choice of either using Ocean Street or travelling all the way through to College Street in order to turn north to link up with the Cahill Expressway and the CBD area.

OSNOF claims that Oxford Street is being under utilised, in spite of the fact that it is a clearway both morning and evening.

"Political" notices

Incidentally, in the hours leading up to the demonstration a battle royal brewed up when Woollahra Council garbos removed red and black bows tied to the trees and notices proclaiming the event.

Enraged OSNOF members, headed by Keith Sole, were told by Town Clerk Michael Regnis that this was political advertising, which the OSNOF people stoutly denied. They demanded that the Council return the signs and decorations and these were back up on Friday evening.

So — a good time was had by all. Now it's on to spur the new Council to action with the RTA.

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Mirror as fine as the original

Not quite the genuine article! Our picture shows Queen Street antiques dealer Kenneth Muggleston with an Australian-made reproduction of an Italian 18th century gilded mirror frame.

Kenneth points out that, with the popularity of antique collecting, several Queen Street dealers are selling fine reproductions as well as originals.

The frame in the picture has been reproduced in composite from the original owned by Kenneth, and is being sold in a limited edition.

Kenneth set up his business at 76 Queen Street earlier this year, having turned to antiques dealing after a career as designer for films and television.

Among the films on which he worked were *Dr Zhivago*, *Lawrence of Arabia* and *Oliver!* which won an Academy Award for its art direction.

Selling reproductions is only part of Kenneth's business. He also deals in genuine antique decorative mirrors and frames, often after restoration work including re-gilding.

By Robin Brampton

COMINGS and goings have been many in Queen Street in the past few weeks.

First we bid a welcome to three new businesses – Ken Done's Queen Street Gallery at number 51; The Cotton Boll at 14A; and the Australian Squatter's Chair Co at 101.

The presence of such a distinguished name as internationally famed artist Ken Done is particularly welcome, and we have reason to believe it will help us promote Queen Street's special character and attractions.

The newly established Cotton Boll of Ken Gardiner and Lindsay Bennett is a novel business. It sells only goods made of fine Australian cotton and manufactured in Australia.

The selection is widespread, everything from bedlinen to socks, and even including stationery made with up to 38 per cent cotton.

Ken Gardiner tells me that many more Australian designers and manufacturers are starting to produce merchandise in Australian cotton which is among the world's best.

His partner, Lindsay, has another interest in cotton as special projects officer of the Australian Cotton Foundation.

The Australian Squatter's Chair Company of Roz Mansell has taken over the John Williams antiques shop at the corner of Queen Street and Moncur Street.

Established some 10 years, the company has its own factory to make high quality outdoor furniture of teak and jarrah. It also offers iron fireside and outdoor accessories from a blacksmith in the Blue Mountains.

Roz is continuing to run the company's original Mosman shop, while husband and wife, Brian and Christine Ross, are looking after her outpost in Queen Street.

In other changes, the delightfully named Decad-

ence antiques shop from Surry Hills is moving into 88 Queen Street which has been a number of different restaurants over the years, most recently Legends.

And two doors up at 84, the shop of Robert Morrison, who has sold up and retired, is the new home of Howell-Orlando Antiques. They are moving up the hill from 110A, though still operating the old shop.

Also on the move – antiques dealer Oliver Von Wilpert who has left number 22 but is still living in Queen Street and can be contacted on 327 2831 or 361 3533.

* * *

I WAS apparently in error in assuming in the article, *When Banjo Lived in Queen Street* (Village Voice, June), that Banjo Paterson lived towards the end of his life in South Street, Edgecliff, off Glenmore Road.

Banjo's granddaughter, Philippa Harvie, tells me that although "South Street, Edgecliff" appeared at the head of his letters, he actually lived in what is now South Avenue, Double Bay.

The house on the site today is very Mediterranean in style and it is safe to assume that it has been completely rebuilt or remodelled from the home in which such an Australian traditionalist as Banjo lived.

* * *

A DOGGED and long time worker for pensioners in our area, George Warnecke of Paddington is again appealing for help this Christmas.

Each year, George organises Christmas boxes of goodies for senior citizens

who are scratching along on the pension.

"As the cost of living rises continually, and the aged pension remains practically static, well below the lowest wage, pensioners again face a cheerless Christmas unless some action is taken to assist them," says George.

To raise money, he uses his truck to collect donations of old furniture and other saleable household items.

George also organises a Christmas guessing competition with modestly priced books of tickets.

If you would like to help, George can be contacted on 331 4887. His postal address is PO Box 3444, GPO Sydney, 2001.

CENTENNIAL END of QUEEN STREET



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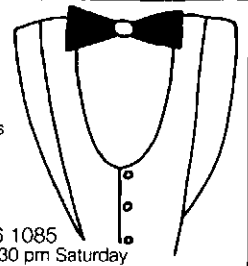



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