

VILLAGE VOICE

No. 58 NOVEMBER, 1994

Newsletter of the Queen Street and West Woollahra Association Ltd.

Address: PO Box 16, Woollahra, NSW 2025.

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NSW 2025. Phone and Fax 362 0713.

COMMUNITY EVENTS

Fun Christmas Dinner

Monday 21st November

Arranged by the Queen Street and West Woollahra Association.
See notice below

Jerusalem: Above My Chiefest Joy

Tuesday 22nd November

Official opening of the exhibition at St Columba's Uniting Church, Ocean Street, by Sir Zelman Cowan, 6pm. The evening will also include a musical soiree. Tickets \$50 each.

The exhibition shows the evolution of Jerusalem from the days of King David to the present. Open 11am to 4pm on Saturday and Sunday. Tuesday to Sunday during Festival of Sydney. Inquiries Julie Stevenson, Ph 361 5310 or (0419) 202 779. Fax: 360 5717.

Woollahra Antiques Centre's 100th Birthday Fair

Saturday and Sunday, 26th and 27th November.

Formerly the Parisian Laundry, the Antiques Centre property at 160 Oxford Street was completed in 1894. The centre will celebrate the centenary with its best ever selection of antiques. Open 10am to 6pm.

*The Queen Street and West Woollahra
Association invites you to*

A FUN CHRISTMAS DINNER

*Damien Pignolet will be providing
a menu reflecting the season*



**BISTRO MONCUR
Woollahra Hotel**

**Monday 21st November at 7.15 pm
Tickets \$60 each**

**Including a glass of bubbly on arrival,
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Join in the Lucky Christmas Draw!

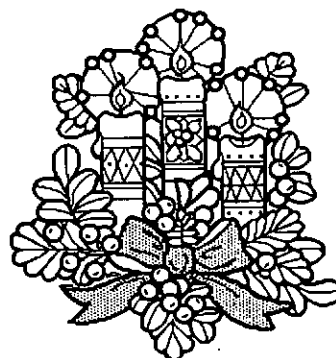
Tickets are limited

Book at:

Orson & Blake Collectables, 83 Queen Street, Woollahra (326 1155).

Queen Street Association Stall in Queen Street Shopping Centre,
morning of Saturday 19th November.

Or by post from the Association at PO Box 16, Woollahra, NSW 2025.
(Enclose cheque for full amount)





100th BIRTHDAY ANTIQUA FAIR

Saturday 26th and
Sunday 27th
November

Our premises are 100 years old this year. We're celebrating with our best ever selections of antiques. Join many of Australia's leading dealers on a nostalgic journey through a wide range of antique furniture, fine objects, jewellery, decorative items and sought-after collectables. And there will be some surprises, too.

Do drop in!

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160 Oxford Street, Woollahra
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Open seven days Ph: 327 8840
10 am to 6 pm

LOCAL TABLES

An old favourite revisited

PRUNIER'S RESTAURANT
Chiswick Gardens,
65 Ocean Street
Woollahra
Telephone: 363 1974

OTHER days... other ways.

I have always taken an affectionate interest in Prunier's, set in the leafy purlieus of Chiswick Gardens, just opposite our home.

Established in 1947, it moved from Double Bay in 1955 and probably is Sydney's oldest restaurant operating under the original name.

But a great tradition ended when its impish owner, Tony Gemenis, died suddenly in 1991, just after celebrating 50 years in the restaurant business.

Hearing of new management, we re-visited Prunier's in a party of five for a double birthday celebration.

Although the decor was the same, the style was noticeably different. Gone was Steve, the patient veteran sommelier; gone was the table cooking; and gone was the Steak Diane which so entranced an earlier generation of diners.

Also instead of John, who managed the restaurant so capably after Tony's death, we were greeted by a new maitre de, Remi Bancal.

His style, and that of his staff, is more restrained than of old, though just as attentive and considerate. And the cuisine is more in the style of the 90s, though with traditional touches.

The menu is also much smaller, offering at the time of our visit, six entrees, seven main courses and five desserts, plus cheese.

Irritatingly, the menu's entree of Ravioli de Crevettes Royale was not available when two of our party tried to order it.

However, three of us chose a substitute dish of king prawns in a crustacean sauce, deprived of the ravioli. This was accorded two verdicts of "delicious" and one of "spot on".

The party's banker, who is instinctively numerate, awarded 8½ points out of 10 to his coriander pancake rolled up with cured salmon and sour cream.

Watching my avoirdupois after a self-indulgent visit to Europe, I chose Prunier's Fameuse Salade, a pleasant mixture of cos lettuce, pine nuts, grated eggs, fried mushrooms and shaved parmesan.

For main course, two of us opted for fillets of John Dory and salmon mousse, served with saffron sauce. I enjoyed this and, having a delicate palate, was relieved that the saffron taste was so mild.

One of the birthday girls enthused about her fillet of beef with poached Sydney rock oysters. However, she found the accompanying red wine bordelaise sauce too rich.

My wife found no fault with her roast duck, served with caramelised apples, but perhaps our least successful dish was the pan fried red mullet with silverbeet and tapenade dressing. Our banker would only award this 6, pronouncing it too salty.

Only three of us made it to dessert. I shared a birthday girl's crepe filled with Chartreuse souffle and raspberry coulis. This tasted as spectacular as it looked. My wife enjoyed another elaborate confection, poached pear with almond ice-cream and chocolate sauce.

Prunier's still has a well-chosen wine list. However, mark-ups are somewhat fierce, with a Tyrrells Old Winery Shiraz priced at \$26. Champagnes range from a Piper Heidsieck non-vintage at \$70 a bottle (\$12.50 a glass) to a Krug 82 at a breathtaking \$197.

We cheapskated with a very acceptable bottle of Marienberg 91 Chablis (\$23) and a 1989 Grant Burge Cabernet (\$24.50).

Our total bill of \$285 for five people, some of whom skipped dessert and coffee, indicates that Prunier's is not for the culinary bargain seeker.

But from the expensive cars outside and the birthday candles flickering at dessert time, it is obviously doing deservedly good business with the grand survivors of the recession and humbler folk like us who enjoy splurging out occasionally for a celebration.

R.B.

Funding for Banjo Paterson memorial off to a good start

THE Queen Street Association hopes soon to announce plans for the financing of its proposal for a Banjo Paterson memorial wall in Queen Street.

An excellent start was made in August when our Patron, Neville Wran, a local resident, was the principal speaker at a dinner to initiate the funding.

Neville complimented the Association on what he called a "marvellous scheme", adding that the proposed site, facing Queen Street at the edge of Dorhauser Lane carpark, was "exactly right".

The evening included Banjo Paterson readings by several Association personalities and by Harry Bell, a District Court judge noted for his Banjo Paterson recitations.

His Honour favoured us with a very enjoyable *Man from Snowy River* while Neville Wran rendered a less familiar poem about the autocratic behaviour of the AJC.

Association president Graham Freudenberg revealed an unexpected histrionic talent, assuming the resonant voice of his hero Winston Churchill in a Paterson dispatch from the Boer War; while Association administrator Robin Brampton evoked Banjo's sentimental side with the delightful love poem, *As Long As Your Eyes Are Blue*.

\$2000 from auction

The evening also included an auction of various lots, principally with some Banjo Paterson connection, kindly donated by local businesses and other friends of the Association. (A full list appears at the end of this report.)

Donations included dinner for two at the Banjo Paterson Cottage Restaurant; a hat similar to that Banjo is wearing on the \$10 note; an early 1913 edition of Banjo's verses; and bottles of Clancy's Gold Premium red wine which wine-maker Peter Lehmann named after Clancy of the Overflow.

The auction raised \$2000, with the highest bid for \$550 coming from Neville Wran for a travel voucher generously donated by Ursula King Travel.

Banjo Paterson lived at 135 Queen Street from his marriage in 1903 until 1908 when the family moved to Wee Jasper on the Upper Murrumbidgee. Later when they returned to Sydney, they lived in The Grove, off Queen Street.

The memorial wall will be of bush stone, hopefully from Wee Jasper, with three panels in bas-relief by Sydney sculptor Gaye Porter.

A head of Banjo in the famous hat will appear with a memorial inscription on the central panel. The other two panels will be illustrations from two of his



Queen Street Association president Graham Freudenberg (left) with Association patron Neville Wran and his wife Jill at the Banjo Paterson dinner in August.

poems, *Mulga Bill's Bicycle* and *The Man From Ironbark*.

The memorial wall will stand on land owned by Woollahra Council which has endorsed the project by allocating \$4200 for its construction. However the Association will have to raise the money for the bas-reliefs.

Auction donors

G.L. Auchinachie & Son; The Banjo Paterson Cottage Restaurant, Gladesville; Robin and Dorothy Brampton; Vic Cooper Hats, Royal Arcade, City; Graham Freudenberg; Haymes & Sons, Bookdealers; Hickson & Associates, Literary Agents; Ursula King Travel; Tim McCormick, Bookdealer; Negotiants Australia/Peter Lehmann Wines; Orson & Blake Collectables; Leslie Walford Interiors.

The Queen Street and West Woollahra Association Ltd

ACN 002 872 433

A residents' 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, NSW 2025.

Patron: Neville Wran.

President: Graham Freudenberg.

Vice-President: Gail Booth.

Treasurer: Tim McCormick.

Secretary: Nick Eddy.

Membership Secretary: Mary Read.

Committee: Tanya Atkins, Colin Brady, Lynda Hayden, David Heimann, Ursula King, Trish Langford, Mary Read, Heather Smith.

Administrator and Editor of Village Voice:

Robin Brampton. Phone and Fax 362 0713

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A little bit of Heaven goes for \$1 million

AS a result of an on-site auction on October 29, the burned out Congregational Church at the corner of Jersey Road and Moncur Street will almost certainly be preserved.

However, the restored structure will be used for residences and not, as the Association had hoped, for local community purposes.

The property was knocked down for \$1 million to Edward Bonsor, bidding on behalf of a family company.

An encouraging factor for the Queen Street Association is that the architect for the redevelopment will be Hector Abrahams who works in association with the noted Sydney conservation architect Clive Lucas.

The Asia Pacific Foundation put the property on the market very quickly after Woollahra Council took a generally negative view of its plans to turn the church into a conservatory of music and the arts.

Council's Urban Conservation Advisory Committee advised against the Foundation's plan to envelop the building in a giant transparent dome, preparatory to later restoration.

At the subsequent meeting, Council apparently told the Foundation that the community uses proposed for the site would be too intensive for residents or the Council to accept. Particular concerns were the issues of traffic and parking.

While providing the Foundation with opportunities to present its ideas to local residents, the Queen Street Association has also taken a cautious view of the scheme.

In September, we wrote to the Council endorsing the report of an architect member of our committee, Colin Brady, who said the proposal had not demonstrated an impact which the Association found acceptable either to the building or to the local community.

Naturally, the Association will follow the plans of the new owners with great interest, and trust they will be in the best interests of both the environment and the neighbourhood.



Edward Bonsor (centre) whose family company has bought the burned out Congregational Church in Jersey Road for a residential development. He is pictured after the auction with Woollahra Council members Darel Hughes (left) and Drew Robertson

Queen Street 2000 gets a new lease of life

HOPEFULLY in association with Woollahra Council, the Association plans to develop a new scheme for the refurbishment of Queen Street.

This will be less ambitious than the multi-million dollar Queen Street 2000 scheme, launched in 1989, which fell victim to the recession and because its principal author, Duane Norris, left the area.

Now an eminent local landscape architect has indicated interest in formulating a new and more realisable approach, and we are inspired by Council's largesse to Double Bay and Paddington.

Woollahra's new Mayor, Councillor David Leach, who represents our area, has offered his sympathetic support when we make a funding approach.

Traffic study strays over the Paddington border

AN invitation for the Association to be represented on a Paddington Traffic Working Party has resulted in the administrator, Robin Brampton, attending two meetings.

The committee has been set up to "co-ordinate the functional and aesthetic requirements" of the Paddington Traffic Management Scheme resulting from a study by Sinclair Knight and Partners, Consulting Engineers.

A curious feature of this report,

acknowledged by the committee, is that although it ignores part of Paddington, west of Glenmore Road, it trespasses considerably into West Woollahra which is essentially a different area.

Despite this, Sinclair Knight has taken no interest in the related traffic problems of Ocean Street. No information was sought from the Association nor the Ocean Street Not Ocean Freeway group (OSNOF).

Already strong protests by local residents and the Association have led to the veto of a Sinclair Knight proposal for angle parking in John Street which is far away from Paddington proper.

The current thrust of the "Paddington" working party's work is on the provision of "portal treatments" in Jersey Road and off Oxford Street which would deter traffic from going through Paddington.

It is also considering the provision of a 40 km/h speed limit, a proposal the traffic police point out they do not have the resources to enforce.

In West Woollahra, Sinclair Knight recommends three pedestrian refuges in Jersey Road which represents our area's border with Paddington.

There is also a recommendation for a traffic roundabout at the junction of John Street and Moncur Street; and for three speed humps in Holdsworth Street.

Woollahra Council has included \$100,000 in its current budget to implement traffic measures in the report's rather lopsided interpretation of what constitutes Paddington.



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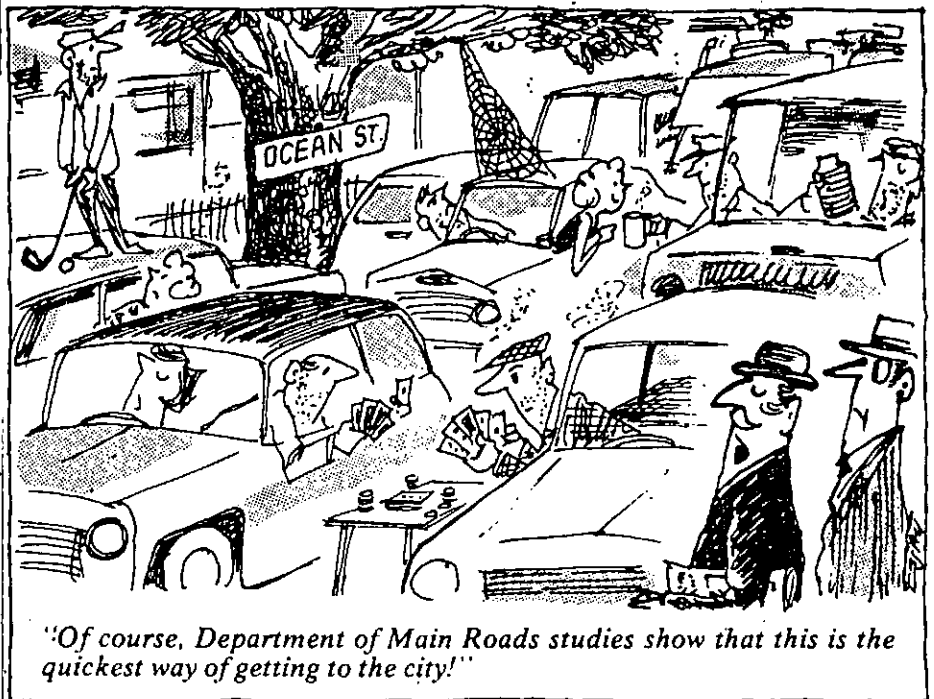
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Practically every resident of John Street between Ocean Street and Moncur Street has signed a petition to Woollahra



In its first success, new directional signs have been placed at the end of the Bondi Junction By-pass and York Road, directing city bound traffic along Oxford Street.

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Art is a lark in the park

Warwick Mayne-Wilson, the West Woollahra representative on the Centennial Park & Moore Park Community Consultative Committee, has contributed the following report on recent events:

USERS of Centennial Park may have been surprised to come across artful objects lurking in various parts of the grounds recently.

These were designed and placed there by final year students of the Sydney College of Arts, with the enthusiastic co-operation of the Centennial Park & Moore Park Trust.

The Artful Park project, which ended on October 31, not only gave students the opportunity to present larger scale works to the public in an open air forum, they also added a touch of whimsy, humour, irreverence and environmental interpretation.

The Minister for the Arts, Peter Collins, who launched the project, welcomed it as an important step in introducing art and sculptural objects to public places. Both he and the college director hoped it would be an annual event.

The park's director, Robin Grimwade, agreed, reminding participants that the park had originally contained numerous sculptures, but most had been vandalised over the years.

He hopes to reintroduce some permanent pieces in future, probably cast in vandal-resistant bronze.

Pantomime

The next few months will also see other cultural events in Centennial Park. The Jam Factory plans to hold a pantomime for children, *The Toymaker*, in the amphitheatre space in the period December 10-24, while there will be an Art Kite Fly Out on January 7 and 8, organised by the Sydney Festival.

The Fly Out will take place between 11am and 5pm and involve about 100 kites designed by some of the world's leading artists and kite makers.

In view of the large numbers of people expected, the park will operate as it does on a "car free day".

Meanwhile the Centennial Park & Moore Park Trust is preparing to launch a Friends

of Centennial Park and Moore Park scheme.

Sponsorship officer Catherine Sharpe (331 5056) would welcome suggestions on the kinds of activities and benefits which would encourage people to join up.

It is hoped, however, that people who are frequent users of the parks will want to join anyway, as a means of giving back something in return for the many benefits they have enjoyed over the years.

Catherine, is also approaching corporate sponsors for support.

Turf dying

The drought is having severe impact on Centennial Park. Large scale irrigation is not possible, as supplies of bore water are limited, and the extensive use of town water is neither desirable nor practicable.

Large areas of turf are already starting to die, and if the drought continues, many of the playing fields will have to be closed. Let's hope the drought breaks before such action becomes necessary, as returfing will be expensive.

While park users will have welcomed the recent proclamation of Clover Moore's Bill on the transfer of the Showground site to the Centennial Park & Moore Park Trust when the RAS vacates it, they may be apprehensive of recent approaches from 20th Century Fox to create a "Hollywood on the Harbour".

We all need to know much more about what Mr Rupert Murdoch may have in mind, and whether the Australian film industry, too, will benefit from the project.

Meanwhile, the Trust and the public will want their needs met too - the Trust to obtain much-needed financial benefit and additional recreational space, and the people continued access to the open spaces and key public facilities on the site, as well as securing the renovation of heritage pavilions.

(Warwick Mayne-Wilson welcomes comments and input about the two parks from local residents. His phone number is 327 1872, and fax 327 2183.)

QUEEN Street has been the focus of intense media attention in the past few weeks following the decision of a certain eminent person to pay \$2.2 million for St Kevins.

And there is an obvious irony in Australia's leading republican deciding he wants to live in QUEEN Street.

His commendable choice has also proved a shot in the arm for local real estate prices. One home owner commented, "I'm making money while I sleep!"

* * *

AFTER the hiatus of the past few months, Queens Court should be buzzing with life again by Christmas.

The big news is that well known caterer Margie Agostini, of Paddington, is opening her first restaurant in what was originally Hooray Henry's but now extended into the former boutique premises next door. Food will also be served in the courtyard.

Called AGOSTINI'S CAFE, the new eatery will offer modern, innovative, Italian style cuisine and be open from 8am to 10pm, seven days a week.

It will not be licensed and patrons will be encouraged to bring their own wine.

Margie lived for many years in Rome and Genoa, and told me she learned her cooking from "the wonderful women in Italy who have devoted their lives to feeding their families".

She plans to make the restaurant look like a homely Italian cafe, warm and light. Among the dishes, she promises fresh pasta made on the premises.

Other developments will see Queens Court become a strong centre for both stylish fashion and high quality homewares.

Andriga Chapman is bringing her HOMEWORKS store, specialising in chic bedroom and bathroom linen, from Paddington to the shop formerly occupied by Duane and Sylvia Norris.

This will go very nicely with Sue Jenkins' ACCOUTREMENT which has already opened, offering attractive homewares for the kitchen and dining room.

The selection includes wildly colourful European ceramics; more restrained English tableware from Denby; lovely napery and placemats; and such novelties as a special cook's soap.



With Robin Brampton

Also a new store offering smart casual and weekend wear for men is to open on the Moncur Street frontage, in the former Top Brass premises.

The new men's fashion store will ideally complement the highly successful RIADA modern women's fashion boutique which Elizabeth Jones has opened in what must surely be Queen Street's best trading position on the Moncur Street corner of Queens Court.

* * *

TALKING of Queens Court, many people besides myself must have suffered a tinge of regret at the disappearance from its portals of HOORAY HENRY'S eatery.

Ivan and Barbara Stander offered cheerful, dedicated service and good basic food at down-to-earth prices.

So I am please to report that they are now in full operation again at the Woollahra Antiques Centre, 160 Oxford Street, from Tuesday to Sunday, 10 am to 4.30 pm (Ph 326 1085).

I'm sure they would be pleased to see their old friends at their new location.

* * *

I WAS naturally tickled by the ingenious name which Susie Carleton, of Bellevue

Hotel fame, and her former chef, Greg Pickup, have chosen for their quality takeaway at 148 Queen Street.

Basically QUEEN STREET FARE offers food ready to be served at a dinner party, although some may need a little finishing off to give the host a sense of involvement.

Or you may, as I did the other day, grab a few tasty morsels for a lunchtime snack.

Formerly Queen Street Flower Shop, the store has both an appetising aroma and a practical ambience, with a scattering of interesting ceramics and old cookbooks for decoration, and colourful bottles of various sauces for sale.

Susie was formerly a restaurateur in Canberra and Macquarie Street (EJs) which has led to her reputation for pleasing the palates of politicians.

So is it any coincidence that you-know-who may soon be living opposite the new outlet?

Other Queen Street newcomers to whom we bid welcome are:

AMANDA GARRETT DESIGN: Amanda and her husband, Michael Ennis, are now offering women's fashion designed by Amanda at 14a, formerly Orson & Blake a La Mode. This is a return to Queen Street for Amanda who once sold antique fabric items at Grant Roberts' fondly remembered Kaleidoscope.

PETER LANE GALLERY: Formerly in Martin Place, Peter is now in the former Orson & Blake Collectables shop at 76 Queen Street. He specialises in quite a range of antiques including antiquities, small furniture, pictures, and tribal and Indian art.

Also, I note that Tyrone Dearing is now "flying solo" at 88 Queen Street where since 1991 he had partnered John Sheperdson in Decadence. Under the new name of TYRONE DEARING DECORATIVE



Eve Breuer has achieved a miracle of compression to achieve an attractive art gallery in the tiny premises at 83 Moncur Street formerly used by Randall Reed for his antiques business. Hungarian born Eva, a former art teacher, specialises in Australian Art of "museum quality" at affordable prices. Until November 27 she has an excellent show of "Brett Whiteley and other Graphics". By curious coincidence, in the early 1970s when the premises were used for exterior shots in the TV soapie Number 96, Eva's part of the building was a fictional art gallery, run by a character named Dudley Butterfield.

ART AND ANTIQUES he is still specialising in items from the period 1820-1960 in superb condition, particularly art deco.

* * *

SILLY twisted fool that I am, I collect antique corkscrews, a fascinating hobby for wine bibbers like myself which has become very popular worldwide in the past 20 years.

My collection goes back to the 18th century and includes items which are valuable, curious, comic and even political.

On Saturday and Sunday, November 26 and 27, I will be helping Woollahra Antiques Centre celebrate its birthday by demonstrating the hobby under the title, "The Happy Helixophile".

The centre at 160 Oxford Street was erected in 1894 and traded as the Parisian Laundry for most of the 20th Century before being turned over to the antiques trade 17 years ago.

I'll be doing my "opening performances" on both days at 1pm and 3pm. And, yes, they will be very practical, with complimentary glasses of wine to taste from the newly uncorked bottles.

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