

# VILLAGE VOICE

NO. 62 NOVEMBER, 1996.

Newsletter of the Queen Street and West Woollahra Association Ltd.

Address: PO Box 16, Woollahra, NSW 2025.

Editor: Robin Brampton, PO Box 75, Woollahra, NSW 2026. Phone and Fax 9362 0713

## Not if we can help it!

THE Association was horrified in August when an unusual two-storey timber home at 18 John Street, which adds much to the charm of the streetscape, was offered for sale "to renovate or demolish".

As a result, we asked Woollahra Council for information on its general policy on the retention of this type of architecturally and historically interesting property. Possibly as a result of our displeasure, the real estate agency deleted the words "or demolish" from the For Sale sign and the property has now changed hands.

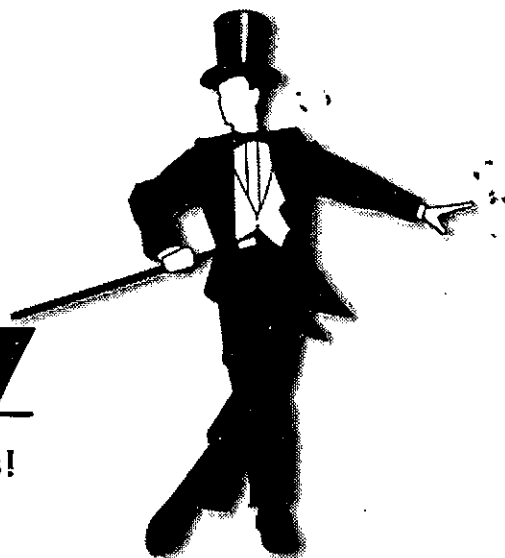
We are also concerned about the dilapidation and continued deterioration of 115 Queen Street, with its central position and architectural merit. The house is important historically as the early home of Dame Joan Sutherland.

We've asked the Council if it has any redress. So far, no comment has been received.

STEP OUT WITH  
THE QUEEN STREET AND  
WEST WOOLLAHRA ASSOCIATION FOR

# A NIGHT AT THE RITZ

A dining occasion just brimming with class!



At the Dining Room, RITZ HOTEL

Jersey Road, Woollahra

(near corner of Oxford Street)

Wednesday, November 27th

Tickets \$65 each

Chef Gregg Lewis has arranged a three-course dinner to appeal to the more discriminating palate, with a glass of bubbly on arrival and the finest of table wines.

### YOU GOT ELEGANCE?

A prize for the gentleman sporting the smartest and most colourful bow tie.

### LUCKY CHRISTMAS DRAW

You can win a hamper of select food and wines. Just the thing to pop in the boot of the Daimler for the picnic races.

### TOP DRAWER AUCTION

Bid (discreetly, of course) for superior merchandise from the creme de la creme of local business houses.

### BOOKING

As the Ritz is a small, select venue, tickets are severely limited.

They may be booked at the Arden Gallery, 26 Queen Street; or by post by writing to Freepost 40, Night at the Ritz, Queen Street Association Limited, PO Box 16, Woollahra, NSW 2025. (No stamp needed.)

### MENU

#### Entree

Caesar Salad; or Duck and Vegetable Spring Rolls with Sweet Chilli Sauce; or Savoury Tart of Smoked Fish, Spinach and Tomato.

#### Main Course

Chargrilled Atlantic Salmon with Gazpacho Sauce; or Roast Lamb Cutlets with Hummous, Chick Peas and Basil Oil; or Chargrilled Chicken Breast with Couscous.

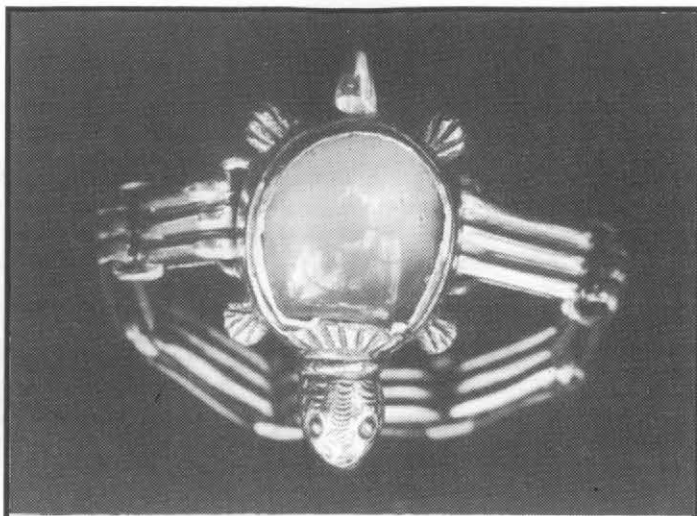
#### Dessert

Chocolate Mousse Cake with Coffee Anglaise; or Stickydate Pudding with Fruit Mince Ice Cream.

#### Coffee

#### Wines

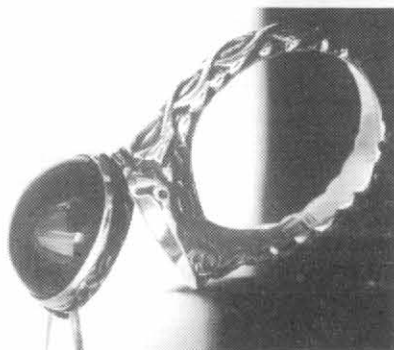
Taltarni Brut Tache  
(Pink Champagne)  
Cockatoo Ridge Chardonnay  
Yalumba Galway Hermitage



*Turtle ring, 9ct with hidden locket. Chrysoprase stone. Flexible band for arthritic finger. Circa 1860.*

## THE ETERNAL CIRCLE

*Signet Ring with family crest of a bird, assumed to have knowledge of the Heavens. English, 1942.*



*Historic poison ring. Poison from the secret compartment could be popped in an enemy's food or drink.*

Above are just a few of the 500 fascinating rings, spanning 2000 years, in our highly successful Rings Through the Ages exhibition last month. Many are still available, together with other wonderful items of antique and reproduction jewellery. Just the thing for a very special and individual gift this Christmas – or any time. And although we are open every day, why not come and see us for an unhurried viewing on Sunday? We'll even find you a cup of coffee.

### *Marian's Collection*

Woollahra Antique Centre  
160 Oxford Street, Woollahra

**Tel: (02) 9363 1928**

*Open 7 days 10am - 6pm*

## Long view for the Parks

• After the expiry of his two-year term, Warwick Mayne-Wilson has ceased to be the local representative on the Centennial Park & Moore Park Community Consultative Committee. However, he has provided this report on the recent work of the Trust which manages Centennial Park and Moore Park:

THE Centennial Park and Moore Park Trust and the Parks administration have been developing a long-term strategy for the Parks, as well as a comprehensive plan for their management.

Drafts are expected to be made available for public discussion and comment, as soon as released by the Minister for the Environment, Pam Allan.

Meanwhile, the Parks administration has been preparing for the takeover of the Royal Hall of Industries, the Hordern Pavilion and the Stables from the Royal Agricultural Society after the last Royal Easter Show is held at the Showground next year.

A lot of refurbishment of services infrastructure and buildings is required, as well as the preparation of an events management plan.

Meanwhile, the Parks administration is devoting a lot of attention to the likely impacts of the proposed Eastern Distributor on Moore Park, especially the Drivers Triangle area and the western edge of the golf links.

It is making detailed representations to the body handling the environment impact assessment processes.

### **New basis**

Related to this is the need to co-ordinate traffic and parking in the adjacent area, particularly when major events are held on one or more venues in the Showgrounds complex.

A traffic committee of all relevant stakeholders is being convened to resolve these complex problems.

Meanwhile, a separate series of meetings to prepare a Centennial Park Traffic Management Study has been conducted by Rust PPK.

At its most recent meeting the Trust decided to change the basis of representation of the Parks' Community Consultative Committee.

The intention is to focus on the upgrading of services to visitors

of a defined category such as cyclists, joggers, equestrians, sports field users, dog walkers, picnickers, etc.

Where in the past the majority of committee members represented geographical areas surrounding the Parks, such as West Woollahra, in future there will be only one "park neighbour" representative.

The committee's new role will be to participate in service planning and evaluation, and advise on possible new and/or modified services.

As my two-year term on the Community Consultative Committee has expired, I have recently retired both from the committee and as its representative on the Trust.

Any reader of this newsletter who would like to join the revamped committee should contact the Parks administration immediately on 9339 6699 to obtain an application form.

### **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, NSW. Affiliated to the National Trust.

Address: Box 16, PO Woollahra, NSW 2025.

Patron: Neville Wran.

President: Graham Freudenthal

Vice-President: Vacant.

Treasurer: Tim McCormick.

Secretary: Nick Eddy.

Membership Secretary: Mary Read.

Committee: Gail Booth, Colin Brady, Robin Brampton, Trish Langford, Mary Read, Heather Smith.

Editor of Village Voice: Robin Brampton.

Village Voice is always pleased to receive letters and contributions commenting on matters affecting the community. However, items published in Village Voice do not necessarily represent the official view of the Association.



## **SIMPLY SEAFOOD**

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## ASSOCIATION REPORT

# Working party for Queen Street plan

HOW are things progressing with the Queen Street refurbishment scheme?

Last year, the Queen Street Association and Woollahra Council jointly sponsored a design for the refurbishment of Queen Street from Stevens Wallman Associates.

The author, Diane Stevens, a distinguished landscape architect, both lives and works locally in Jersey Road.

The resultant scheme created a great deal of interest when it was exhibited in Queen Street earlier this year and at the Association's annual meeting in May.

A number of comments have been received and these have been passed on to Woollahra Council which, where possible, has acknowledged them individually.

Council has now agreed to the setting up of a small working party to implement a scheme, with representatives of both the Council and the Association.

### Two purposes

Its purposes will be:

- On the basis of the Stevens Wallman plan, and the comments, to evolve a final, definitive plan acceptable both to the Council and the Association.

- To set down a scheme to implement this plan, probably in stages over several years according to the likely availability of funds.

The implementation scheme could take into account which elements might be considered most urgent, recognising the structural advantages of proper co-ordination over time.

Although generally approving, the comments of local residents covered a wide variety of views, some controversial.

Several people were concerned about traffic issues, and one went so far as to suggest blocking Queen Street off to traffic completely, from Oxford Street.

The Woollahra Access Committee and others were concerned that any new paving on the footpaths should have strong frictional properties. Otherwise when wet, it might prove treacherous to elderly people and those with mobility problems.

When this report was compiled, the working party was about to meet for the first time.

We trust it can get down to its work quickly and decisively.

It is now seven years since the Association first produced a scheme for refurbishment in Queen Street. Let's hope that at last something is going to happen!

### Why does Optus get the pole position?

ALONG with many local residents, the Association has written to support Woollahra Council in its opposition to Optus overhead television cables in the municipality.

The infuriating thing is that unsightly overhead cabling would be completely unnecessary if Optus would negotiate to share Telstra's underground ducts. And why doesn't the Federal Government insist?

Even before the Optus menace, the Association has long been pleading unsuccessfully for the undergrounding of ugly power cables in Queen Street.

Perhaps the new pavement works needed for the refurbishment scheme might at last provide the opportunity, at least in the area round the Moncur Street junction.

### Keeping the magic of Queen Street

AS usual, the Association's annual meeting, held on May 28, was a lively occasion, attended by some 70 members and other local residents.

Principal interest was in the refurbishment plans for Queen Street on show at the meeting, and also currently being exhibited at the Queen Street premises of I. and B. Perryman.

In the discussion, speakers were understandably anxious that nothing in the scheme would interfere with the cherished village high street atmosphere of Queen Street.

There was also some anxiety about the possible impact of the plans for the Dorhauser Lane carpark on surrounding premises.

However, most of the evening's discussion focussed



*Holdsworth Galleries, now closed after 29 years of exhibiting Australia's top artists and awaiting demolition to be turned into seven home sites. However, it is planned to keep a small art gallery on the site. See report page 4*

not on the architectural details of the scheme but on the traffic build-up in the area.

The evening also included an informative, and well delivered, talk on development at Centennial Park by Paul Sandells, visitor services manager for the Centennial Park & Moore Park Trust.

He said the two Parks were the most significant open spaces in Australia, attracting 20,000 people a day.

Everybody present was able to enjoy a chat over a glass of wine with seafood nibbles kindly provided by Simply Seafood.

The election of Association officers was again without controversy — only one candidate for each position.

Political speechwriter and author Graham Freudenberg continues as president, solicitor Nick Eddy as secretary, and antiquarian book dealer Tim McCormick as treasurer.

Association stalwart Robin Brampton, a journalist and retired publisher, was elected to the committee, having relinquished the post of administrator. He is also continuing as editor of *Village Voice*.

Unfortunately, although he was elected vice-president, landscape architect and former diplomat Warwick Mayne-Wilson has since had to resign owing to pressure of work. And the Association will have another vacancy as Trish Langford is leaving the area.

Any volunteers? Preferably with useful qualifications for the Association's work and some time to give apart from attending committee meetings.

### Why the mail is sometimes late

AS previously reported, the Association last year made representations to Australia Post about the lateness of local mail delivery.

Although there has been a vast improvement this year, it is recognised that there is room for a little more.

Peter Clark, postal manager at Queen Street Post Office, says that now all correctly addressed mail should be in the PO boxes by 9.30am on Mondays and 9am on other weekdays.

Generally, also, Australia Post is meeting its aim of having all mail for Queen Street business addresses delivered by 11am; and to the rest of the district by 1pm.

However, there are certain "bad" days caused by staff shortages, sickness and the use of relief "posties" unfamiliar with our area when one of our seven "regulars" is on holiday.

Another unavoidable problem is that the volume of mail can fluctuate considerably from day to day.

For instance, a considerably "blip" is caused by the NRMA journal *Open Road*, delivered over two days, and Peter notices a significant increase in mail at the end of the month when invoices go out.

Bearing these problems in mind, and the necessity for Australia Post to be cost effective and stabilise its charges, we should perhaps be forbearing about the occasional late delivery.

However, complaint is obviously justified if mail is consistently late.

*More reports page 4*

IF YOU HAVE ANY ANTIQUES, ETC, YOU WISH TO SELL, PLEASE CONSULT US

◆ MICHAEL GREENE ANTIQUES ◆

PHONE 9328 1712

108 QUEEN STREET, WOOLLAHRA

FAX 9327 5166

# Lesley McKay's Bookshop

*Comes to Queen Street*

Known for 28 years as one of Sydney's finest bookshops, Lesley McKay's has also opened in Woollahra at Queens Court. Here you will find a wide range of beautiful, entertaining and unusual books, and a quality of service that is a hallmark of our Double Bay shops.

## **Titles include**

Fiction ♦ Art ♦ Biography ♦ Design  
History ♦ Gardening ♦ Classics  
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## **Hours:**

Monday to Friday 10am - 6.30pm  
Saturday 9am - 6pm ♦ Sunday 10am - 4pm

**Lesley McKay's Bookshop**

Queens Court, 118 Queen Street, Woollahra  
**Phone: (02) 9328 2733**

## ASSOCIATION REPORT

### **Better town houses on Holdsworth site**

WITH renewed interest in building new homes in our area, the Association will need to be even more vigilant to ensure the area's architectural character is preserved and prevent out-of-scale development.

The Holdsworth Galleries at the corner of Holdsworth Street and Jersey Road closed this month, ready to be demolished.

Earlier this year, many local residents opposed a plan submitted to Woollahra Council for eight large town houses on the site. They considered the plan would constitute an over-intensive use of the site and add to parking congestion.

The application was withdrawn and the owner, Mrs Gisella Scheinberg, has now sold the property to a developer who will sub-divide the site and offer it as seven individual home sites.

This scheme also makes provision for a small art gallery, presumably taking advantage of existing use rights.

Nick Eddy, secretary of the Queen Street Association, represented the objectors to the original scheme.

However, he believes the new approach is more attractive because it should lead to smaller and better quality homes on the seven plots.

The demolition of the Holdsworth means our area is losing one of its great characters who has contributed enormously to local artistic life.

Gisella Scheinberg opened the spacious gallery in 1969, having converted it from a factory used for making electric cables.

Many of Australia's best contemporary artists, including Ray Crooke and Bob Dickerson, have exhibited there and some were featured in a closing down sale which saw thousands of dollars slashed from the original prices.

Partly because of her husband's health, and partly because she does not feel she can continue to undertake the necessary advance planning, Gisella Scheinberg is reluctantly retiring from gallery ownership.

"I've made my decision", she told the *Village Voice* editor firmly. "... But it's very sad".

### **A friendly step at Centennial Park**

RIGHT from its earliest days, the Association has taken a strong interest in the preservation and responsible management of Centennial Park, opposing any threat to this green paradise on our doorstep.

As noted elsewhere in this issue, after a creditable two years, Warwick Mayne-Wilson has ceased to be the local representative on the Centennial Park & Moore Park Consultative Committee.

As this committee's chairman, Warwick was also a member of the Trust which administers the two Parks.

The consultative committee is being revamped to be more representative of the groups who use the parks, such as joggers and cyclists, but it will still have a "park neighbour" representative.

The Association would be interested to hear from any suitably qualified local resident who would like its endorsement to take Warwick's place.

You can write to the Association at PO Box 16, Woollahra, NSW 2025; or ring Robin Brampton on 9362 0713.

## **Participation**

Also, though the Association is understandably cautious about allying itself with other groups, it has become a member of the recently formed Friends of Centennial Park & Moore Park Trust.

The Friends are designed to be more than a group of park lovers and to form an important association of like-minded people, committed to preserving the Parks' history and culture for future generations.

We are told: "It will provide a forum for discussion, social interaction and opportunities for active participation in Park projects. It will be a practical way of making a positive difference."

If you are interested in becoming a Friend, contact the Centennial Park & Moore Park Trust, Locked Bag 15, Paddington, NSW 2021. Ph 339 6699. Fax 360 4215.

# WE'RE STILL TRAVELLING WELL!

ANOTHER honour! This year, for the fifth time in 10 years, we won the award for the best suburban corporate travel agency in New South Wales, given by the Australian Federation of Travel Agents.

Last year we were a finalist in the national Travel Agency of the Year Awards, meaning we were chosen as one of Australia's top five travel agents. And the year before, we were proud winners of the supreme award!

But there's something else we're proud of - being a part of the West Woollahra community and offering our acclaimed service and courtesy to local people and businesses. There is even a special discount for local residents.

So if you plan to travel, come and see us first. Not only are we the nearest - we're the best!

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Open for breakfast, lunch and  
all afternoon until 6pm  
Opening for dinner in 1997

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Woollahra

Phone  
9362 4277



# No less traffic with Eastern Distributor

A MAJOR disappointment for Ocean Street residents is that the recently announced plans for the design of the Eastern Distributor will have no effect on traffic volumes along the street.

The Queen Street Association has been campaigning strongly for a reduction in Ocean Street traffic since 1980, recently in support of the OSNOF (Ocean Street Not Ocean Freeway) residents' group.

For some years, we were led to believe that the Eastern Distributor would reduce through traffic passing down Ocean Street because it would become more attractive to reach city by joining the Distributor in the Moore Park area.

However, at a public meeting arranged by OSNOF on October 17, Gary Humphrey of the Roads and Traffic Authority admitted that, as at present designed, the Eastern Distributor would have no effect.

The reason is that only one lane has been allocated at the entrance to the Distributor from Moore Park Road for traffic to and from the Eastern Suburbs.

In a letter to the RTA expressing its disappointment, OSNOF says: "The RTA seems to have missed a golden opportunity to link up three lane roads, namely Sid Einfield Drive, Oxford Street and Moore Park Road, with the Eastern Distributor.

"This would have been an ideal way for people to travel from the Eastern Suburbs to the CBD and North Sydney.

"It is clear that the Eastern Distributor will effectively be a Southern Distributor and the builders of the Distributor will lose large revenue by the fact that the Eastern Suburbs traffic has not been catered for.

## Meetings

The letter was signed by OSNOF president Nick Eddy, who is also secretary of the Queen Street Association, with copies to Woollahra Council and the local State members of Parliament, Clover Moore and Peter Debnam.

Mr Eddy said that to avoid a bottleneck at the entrance to the Distributor, and make its use more attractive, at least two entrance lanes should be provided for Eastern Suburbs traffic.

Although Clover Moore has been pressing for the building of the Eastern Distributor for many years, she has outlined to the RTA a number of concerns about the published proposal.

She has arranged five public meetings this month, to be attended by RTA officers, to sound public opinion preparatory to making a submission on the Environmental Impact Statement.

The next are at Paddington RSL (Monday, November 18, 7pm); Surry Hills Neighbourhood Centre, corner Crown and Collins Streets (Thursday, November 21, 7pm); and Heffron Hall, corner Burton and Palmer Streets, Darlinghurst (Saturday, November 23, 2pm). Further information from Clover Moore's office, ph 360 3053.

The Environmental Impact Statement may be inspected at the Eastern Distributor Community Access Centre, 535 Crown Street, Surry Hills. The Info Line number is 9699 4106.

Any body or person interested may submit comments with the promise that all will be considered.

## Volume down

On the brighter side for Ocean Street residents, information provided to OSNOF by Woollahra Council shows that the traffic calming measures introduced in Ocean Street at the end of 1994 have reduced both the volume and speed to traffic.

A survey conducted in May last year showed that compared with the previous June, average traffic volumes over five days decreased by 16 per cent from 15,635 vehicles a day to 13,105.

Also the average speed of vehicles dropped 15 per cent, or 9.2 km/h, from 60.9 km/h to 51 km/h.

Unfortunately, more up to date figures are not available.

However, in another victory for OSNOF, Woollahra Council has agreed to provide another pedestrian refuge in Ocean Street, on the Albert Street side of the intersection of Ocean Street and Jersey Road.



Dr Frederico Catania, the Italian Consul-General, came to Queen St last month to open the new Giancarlo Hair Art Gallery at number 53. He is seen, right, with the partners in the Gallery, Giancarlo Aymondo, from Rome, and Deborah Gray. See Round Robin, page 7.

# What's in a name? Higher premiums

LAST year, the Queen Street Association wrote to the Geographical Names Board, strongly supporting retention of the whole of Jersey Road in Woollahra.

In this action, we believed we had the support of most Jersey Road residents.

Unfortunately, the board thought otherwise and now we have the confusing situation that the eastern side of Jersey Road is in Woollahra, and western side in Paddington.

However, the determination has not affected mail delivery and the whole of Jersey Road continues to come under the 2025 Woollahra postcode.

The board says putting the boundary down the middle of the road follows the historical municipal boundary established in 1860.

Its determination was supported by Woollahra Council and, it is claimed, by historical societies and the wider community.

But it certainly does not enjoy the support of Jersey Road resident, Sir Noel Mayes, who recently wrote to the *Wentworth Courier*:

## Madcap

"The Geographical Names Board announcement of the Minister's decision to rename the western half of Jersey Road "Paddington" flies in the face of the will of Woollahra residents and rationality.

If the fact that it was once Paddington is good reason, then might we expect Jersey Road to be renamed Captain Piper's Road; Rose Bay to go back to Shark Bay; etc.

"The madcap decision comes after more than a year of deliberation and raises more questions.

"Will the postcode book indicate that Paddington is 2021 except even numbers of Jersey Road? Of course not.

"If you show Paddington in the phone book, people writing will add the Paddington postcode. Mail will be delayed going first to Paddington and then to Woollahra after redirection."

Sir Noel also points out that the decision could affect the car and house insurance premiums of residents on the western side of Jersey Road. Paddington rates, in most cases, are higher.

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Tel: 9362 4671

## LOCAL TABLES

### Tastily politically correct

*The Bellevue Hotel  
159 Hargrave Street  
Paddington  
Telephone: 9363 2293*

*Open for lunch seven days a week; dinner Monday-Saturday*

SITUATED just outside the Association's area, this pleasant old Paddington pub is both a culinary and political landmark.

Its owner, Susie Carleton, gained a reputation for pleasing the palates of politicians when she ran a Canberra restaurant, and then at EJs in Macquarie Street. Her political admirers still come to the Bellevue for private celebrations.

The hotel's bar area has the warm, cosy atmosphere of and English pub; and the rather starker restaurant serves the sort of food where simple basic dishes are teamed with interesting accompaniments.

Portions are generous and it was partly for this reason that, when we dined in a party of five last month, we skipped entrees and went straight to the main event.

However, several dishes can be ordered as either entree or main course, such as the Gravalax of Salmon with Wasabi Mousseline and Pikelets (\$11.50 and \$16.50).

One of our English visitors pronounced as excellent his Moroccan Spiced Rack of Lamb with Couscous and Cummin Yogurt (\$16.50). His wife was almost as enthusiastic about the Steamed Chicken Breast with Rissoni, Ginger and Shallots (\$16.50) though she would have preferred the chicken to have been skinned.

The visitors' Australian-resident sister was generally approving of her Macaroni with Pumpkin, Pancetta and Parmesan (\$15.00) though she felt it a shade too peppery. (This is obviously a matter of individual choice.)

My wife, who likes playing safe, enjoyed the Sausages with Peas and Onion Gravy (a bargain at \$10) but asked to have the establishment's excellent chips instead of mashed potato. And I opted for the Veal Shanks with Spinach in its own Broth with Preserved Lemon (\$16.50).

I love this sort of juicy dish, with reminders of home cooking, which you rarely see on restaurant menus. And having skipped entree, I indulged with it in a bowl of the Bellevue's lovely creamy mashed potato (\$4).

Four of us had desserts (all \$8) which probably were fair average quality for a situation where some of the constituents are pre-prepared. My Caramelised Strawberries were fresh and deliciously sauced, but the encasing Mascarpone Tart was a touch arid.

The Bellevue's wine list is a real delight with an agreeable range of styles from vineyards famous and obscure. Price range from \$16.50 for Lindemans Bin 65 Chardonnay to \$80 for a bottle of Moet. Three whites and three reds are available by the glass (\$5-7).

We chose two excellent Hunter wines, Cockfighters' Ghost Semillon, made by Neil McGuigan (\$21); and Arrowfield Show Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon 1993 (\$27.50).

Altogether, with a few soft drinks and coffees, our bill came to a modest enough \$172.

Incidentally, full marks to the Bellevue for conveniently putting its whole menu and wine list on either side of one sheet of laminated A4, so easy to handle.

And my compliments to our waiter person, Jo(anna), who alone was handling service to the whole 40-seat restaurant with both cool efficiency and the right touch of friendliness.

\* \* \*

MY appetite is whetted by the news that Aldo Zuzza, for 17 years at Darcy's, has come out of retirement to take over Pruniers and installed another old Darcy's hand, Enzo Cesta, to head the kitchen.

Although the cuisine will basically be Northern Italian, Aldo tells me other dishes will be available. The restaurant is open from Monday to Friday for lunch and dinner, and on Saturday for dinner. (ph 9363 1974).

I'll review the new team's efforts in the next Village Voice.

R.B.

## MARRIAGE CELEBRANT



**Gail Booth**

11 JOHN STREET, WOOLAHRA NSW 2025  
(02) 9327 887

# ROUND ROBIN

With Robin Brampton

OUR area has a brand new tourist landmark, St Kevins at 117 Queen Street, which Paul Keating bought some time ago from antiques dealer John Williams.

I hope the group of seniors we spotted looking expectantly at the house the other day were not expecting to see the former PM emerge.

Currently the house is being extensively refurbished. But I'm reliably informed that the ratings expect to be in residence next month.

\* \* \*

IN the past two decades, many people have regretted - some very vocally - the way Queen Street has been deprived of neighbourhood service shops as the antiques dealers and real estate agents moved in.

But change is in the air with the arrival of new stores catering for basic needs and providing fresh excitement for folk like myself who enjoy shopping locally.

So welcome to JONES THE GROCER (corner Moncur and Rush Streets), LESLEY MCKAY'S BOOKSHOP (Queens Court), GIANCARLO HAIR ART GALLERY (53 Queen Street) and INNE (47 Queen Street).

Due to open on Saturday, November 30, Jones the Grocer is a first time retailing enterprise for former Melbourne TV designer, Lindsay Jones-Evans, and Londoner Rachel Peart who previously was involved in academic research.

Designed for sophisticated one-stop food shopping, Jones the Grocer will sell a wide range of delicatessen lines but a bay of the roomy emporium will be devoted to quality fresh fruit and vegetables.

The mouth watering delicatessen selection will range from the commonplace cheeses, salamis, terrines and pastries to the more exotic shushi and nori rolls. A third of the shop's 300 sq m area will be a kitchen offering takeaway food.

Jones the Grocer will make a feature of its comprehensive range of coffees, ready packaged or ground to your liking, and the store includes a 12-seater cafe where you can enjoy a cup of coffee and light food on the spot.

Already known for her wonderful, long-established Double Bay bookstore, Lesley McKay has taken over the area of Queens

Court formerly the Montiford Real Estate Agency which has moved to Double Bay.

The Queen Street shop is a book lover's paradise, brimming with books displayed in such an appealing way they cry out to be bought.

Manager Faye Sutherland is assisted by Penny Peel. Previously for 17 years, Faye was Lesley's relief manager at Double Bay in the evening when the bookshop is open for the cinema crowds.

Giancarlo Aymondo, from Rome, and his Australian fiancée, Deborah Gray, have set up the Giancarlo Hair Art Gallery in the former premises of antiquarian bookseller Tim McCormick who has moved to newly reconstructed premises at 92 Queen Street.

Although well known in Double Bay, where he has worked for Lloyd Lomas, Giancarlo decided that Queen Street offers more spacious and less competitive opportunities for his craft.

Deborah is something of a personality in her own right. She comes from the family of an Irish vaudevillian who migrated to Australia in the last century, and has a singing career which has taken her to the height of an appearance at Maxim's in New York.

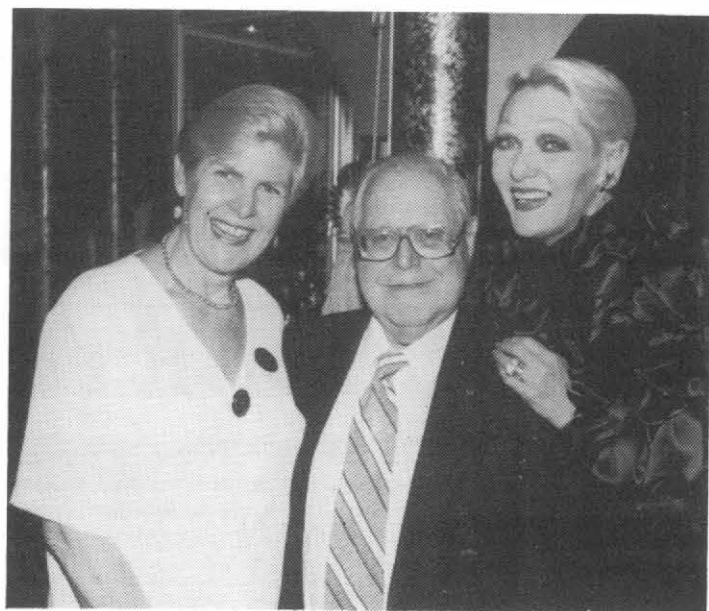
Inne, featuring well-designed furniture from Sweden and elegant plain and coloured glassware from several sources, is the initiative of two Swedish girls, Lena Truusoot and Anna-Carin McNamara.

Until recently, the shop was occupied by Tony Healy of Wallis Street. But it was so bursting at the seams (and into the gardens) with his large scale architectural antiques that he has moved to Parramatta Road.

Lena and Anna-Carin have gone to the other extreme, displaying their wares with a cool, simple elegance in the Scandanavian tradition against plain white walls.

Also a welcome to two other newcomers, although their business is not new. Ivan Havas and Eli Malek have taken over SIMPLY SEAFOOD from Peter and Simone Hunt who established our delightful seafood shop just off Queen Street four years ago.

Ivan, a very experienced caterer, assures me that the seafood will still be "the freshest of the fresh" and hopes soon to open on Monday as well as every other day of the week.



Jeanne Little (right) did the opening honours when Marian Clarke, of Marian's Collection staged, a fascinating exhibition of 500 rings, many historic, at the Woollahra Antiques Centre last month. With Marian and Jeanne in the picture are Rabbi Brasch who has written a book on antique rings.

**DROLL fellow is Andy Goulding, longest serving butcher at Churchills where he did his apprenticeship.**

Telling me the other day that he has now been working at the famous Queen Street establishment for 14 years, he added with a smile, "... And you only have to serve seven years for murder!"

\* \* \*

HAPPY coincidence? Soon all three of Britain's most famous international art and antiques auction houses will have their Australian outposts in and around Queen Street.

So there will be even more prestige for the street in the antiques business. And I'm told that three more Melbourne dealers would move in if only there were any vacant shops.

From early next year, Sotheby's Australia will expand from the restrictions of their Paddington shop premises to take over the whole top floor of Queens Court.

Here they will provide a viewing room for treasures from upcoming auctions. But the actual auctions will continue to be held elsewhere, with managing director Justin Miller making the bids soar with his renowned skill.

Also Christie's, under the management of Nellie Dawes, has moved from Double Bay to the prominent premises at corner of Jersey Road and Hargrave Street where Lynda Hayden established her lovely Harlequin Trim curtain and accessory shop before moving to London. (Phone 9326 1422.)

And, of course, Phillips International Auctioneers has for some time operated at 158 Queen Street, now with a new managing director, Andrew Shapiro. An unusual venture for them this month was an auction of sporting memorabilia. (Phone 9326 1588.)

It looks as though you would be so spoilt for choice if you want to sell valuable art and antiques. So former Phillips director in Australia, Alison Harper, has established an interesting consultancy to advise on the right auction house for your needs.

Other services of her Fox Harper firm include advice on value and saleability, the best time to sell and even "understanding the psychology of auction". (Phone 9360 9272.)

\* \* \*

JEANNE Little did the opening honours with her usual gusto at a charity evening for the Australian Red Cross when Marian Clarke staged a major exhibition of rings at Woollahra Antiques Centre last month.

Beautifully displayed, the 500 rings from all over the world spanned 27 centuries of craftsmanship and provided fascinating reflections of history and culture.

Apparently, the custom of putting a ring on the third finger of a lover's left hand began in Ancient Rome where it was believed a vein ran from there direct to the heart.

Delicately nurtured Victorian women wore a vinaigrette ring. If they swooned, a compartment could be opened to provide a reviving whiff of vinegar or aromatic oils.

Then there were the secret rings by which early suffragettes recognised each other; memorial rings to contain a picture or lock of hair from the dear departed; and gruesome poison rings with a secret compartment holding a deadly substance to drop in an enemy's food or drink.

Many of the rings are still available from Marian's Collection counter at the Antiques Centre.

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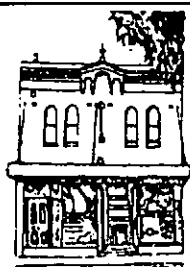
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