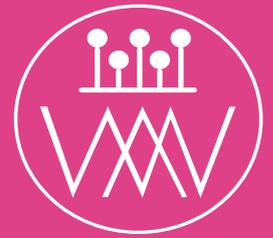


The Original VILLAGE VOICE



Official journal of the Queen Street and West Woollahra Association Ltd

No.98 September 2010 www.qswwa.com.au

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The Annual General Meeting of the QSWWA was held on April 14

Promises..promises..promises..... we are fed up with promises!

THE FOCUS OF THE MEETING WAS TO ASK THE MAYOR TO LISTEN to our concerns and to tell us when much needed improvements will be implemented.

The usually mild-mannered attendants at the AGM showed their frustration with Mayor Petrie's comments that the Queen Street and West Woollahra area was next on the Council's list to be upgraded.

It was no consolation to hear from the mayor that significant money had been spent on upgrading Double Bay and Bellevue Hill business areas and that budgeting constraints had precluded our area.

But he did say we were next on the list.

Mayor Petrie pointed out that work on footpaths, drainage and roadwork had been done and that two pedestrian crossings had been installed. He suggested that the QSWWA should compile a list of needed improvements for Council to consider.

We have previously suggested underground wiring, 'heritage' lighting, consistent park furniture, attractive and practical garbage bins, consistent paving, maintenance of stone benches, sensible loading-zone times, working fountains in Eureka Park (opposite the Goethe Institute), proper street-cleaning, repair of potholes, and of course parking, including resident parking.

At Petrie's instigation we recently had a meeting with Council staff who have been designated to draw up a concept plan for improving Woollahra Village. We discussed our 'wish list' and were assured that all suggestions would be considered. We ask residents to send their suggestions to us.

Let's hope that some of these improvements will be addressed. Fifteen years ago when Graham Freudenberg was President a streetscape plan for Queen Street was done by the Association, but never followed up by Council.. What happened to that?

Let's see if it's promises, promises or we really are next on the Council's improvements list.

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ABN 98 002 872 433



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President: Elizabeth Anne Gervay

Vice President: Ken Gresham

Committee: Richard Banks, Mary Read,
Diana Dennison, Phillip Mitchelhill,
Annette Robinson, Jennifer Rose and Alan Smith

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An Act of Charity by Woollahra Residents

ANAIS NETTIS, DAUGHTER OF QSWWA COMMITTEE MEMBER Jennifer Rose has just returned from a goodwill trip to South Africa where she distributed clothes and toys to a needy orphanage. A pupil at St Catherine's School, Anais chose this as a school charity project. She decided to send pre-loved jumpers to a worthy cause and having grandparents in South Africa she asked them to locate an orphanage in need.

A small self-funded orphanage run by 3 Anglican nuns was found in the Diocese of Natal. The 28 children there were aged between 3 and 18 years. Many had been abandoned at the orphanage gates.

Anais and her mother Jennifer gathered contributions of clothes and toys from friends and family and helped by airlines were able to deliver 12 bags to the orphanage. Bulk food was also purchased for the children.

Anais will now establish a non-profit charity named JAJA (Jumpers Anais for Africa) and will add to this with toys and books. She plans to return to Africa in December 2011.

Both mother and daughter report that they were most humbled by their experience, particularly when the children thanked them by singing songs of praise to God.

Anais is the second daughter of restaurateur Alex Nettis of Zigolinis.

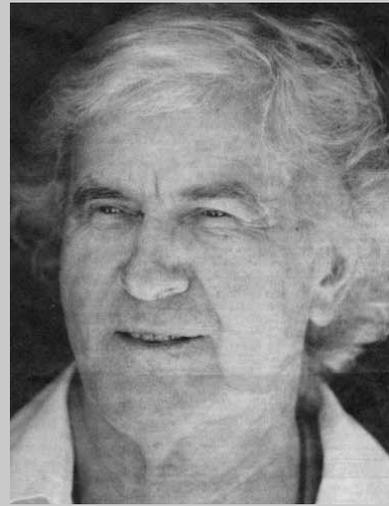


Above: Anais with the nuns at the orphanage

Below: Meeting the children of the orphanage.



VALE



Ron White 1943 – 2010

RON WHITE, TEACHER, PSYCHOLOGIST, COUNSELLOR, developer and entrepreneur lived in Queen Street and owned, among other establishments, the Woollahra Hotel. His untimely death has left a legacy of well funded institutions, beautiful buildings and wonderful restaurants.

Ron was born in Cabramatta and moved to Bundeena at the age of six. He attended school at Port Hacking and in 1960 he won a scholarship to Teachers' College, Bathurst. His first job was teaching arithmetic near Kyogle and he continued his academic career studying psychology. In 1964 he returned to Bundeena to teach and train as a school counsellor.

In 1968 Ron and his wife Robin moved to Toronto, Canada where he worked as a counsellor and completed a Masters Degree and a PhD in clinical psychology. They then returned to Sydney and he became a counsellor at the University of NSW and then a senior lecturer at Macquarie University.

In 1977 he changed direction and became a developer.

He developed Studley Royal Strata at Kirrabilli, then Stratford Hall, Darling Point, and later led a consortium that transformed Milton Park, Bowral into an elegant English-style country manor.

In 1993 he joined with restaurateur Damian Pignolet to open Bistro Moncur at the Woollahra Hotel, an innovation at that time. Sackville Hotel in Rozelle followed, then Yellowhouse apartment, Bellevue Hotel and 15 more significant buildings and 20 restaurants, including 50 Good Food Hats. His last venture was Barcelona in Kings Cross in homage to Gaudi.

Since his time in Canada, Ron had become interested in the Arts and promoted Circus Oz and Los Trios Ringbarkus. He was on the board of Performing Lines and supported the Australian Brandenburg Orchestra.

A keen sportsman, he also enjoyed camping, walking and sailing having twice crossed the Atlantic in his yacht. He died on the first day of a Coast-to-Coast Walk across England.

Ron was a man who broke the mould.

Pruniers and the Pruning of Chiswick Gardens

IN THE '50S THERE WERE PRECIOUS FEW RESTAURANTS ON OUR patch, and Tony Gemenis' Pruniers, on the Rose Bay side of NSH Road Double Bay, reigned supreme. On rare occasions this writer's grandparents took her there with her sister where they tried to make perfect skeletons from *soles meunieres*. The décor was plush and burgundy velvet. Perhaps the name came from Pruniers in Paris or its English counterpart Pruniers of St James (where this same writer was taken by her father on her 18th birthday – a memorable occasion down to the *petits pots de crème*, career waiters and heated coffee cups).



Some years later, Tony opened Pruniers After Nine on the Edgecliff end of NSH Road, Double Bay, which housed a restaurant, night club and family barbecue over three levels. In the early '70s the restaurant settled itself into Chiswick Gardens where it remained for decades, a favourite with the old school of diners and also used for functions, which could spill out into the gardens. Now due to a bungle with the lease, the site is a sorry one indeed. The public lavatory in the corner of the site has been locked for years but still bears a sign "BACK IN 5 MIN – gone for fast food!" above a mess of broken bottles and brown paper bags. Pruniers closed in May 2008 and the gutters began to sprout.

Calls to Council to gain a progress report on the DA for the Gardens are answered by the Tree Preservation Officer (bizarrely named as he is the one who gives permission to chop down trees!). The plans are to thin the trees and refurbish



the landscaped areas. *Village Voice* now understands that Council has adopted the Draft Plan of Management, outlining permissible uses of the gardens as well as the odd tree chop, and a tender has gone out for the lease of the restaurant. The tender closes on September 16th and the outcome should be known by late October.

Meanwhile the Gardens remain the venue for our annual Community Carols, this year scheduled for Tuesday December 7th at 5pm. Mark the date in your diary.

DD



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REZONING WOOLLAHRA

Increased housing density proposed for Woollahra

THE NSW GOVERNMENT HAS DIRECTED ALL METROPOLITAN Councils in NSW to prepare a new local environmental plan (LEP) which will provide opportunity for increased housing and employment for an additional 2 175 dwellings and 225 jobs.

Woollahra Council has identified properties in our QSWW precinct where zoning changes are being considered.

The Association has written to Mr Chris Bluett, Manager, Strategic Planning, Woollahra Council setting out our reaction to two of these proposed zoning changes. Below is a summary of our letter.



Moncur Street Apartments

30-36 Moncur Street

This existing block of low-cost (or housing commission) apartments is owned by the NSW State. They presently have a floor space ratio of 0.7:1.0. The proposal to double this to 1.7:1.0 would encourage the NSW State Government (or a developer) to overdevelop the site.

The Woollahra Heritage Conservation Plan encourages appropriate development to protect the heritage values and character of our area. The existing block of low-cost housing is located in the middle of a conservation zone and is already out of keeping with its Victorian terrace-type neighbours. At present there are 18 units on the site but the proposed rezoning permits a further 16 units. The proposal envisages a contemporary structure which, may conflict with the surrounding heritage classified area.

Of the present 152 dwellings in the immediate vicinity 109 do not have off- street parking. An added 16 dwellings would exacerbate the already inadequate problem of parking.

The Association is strongly against the adoption of these planning changes.

38-178 Oxford Street.

The Association supports the proposed planning control change to medium-density residential to these properties, subject to the following:

1. The proposal for no-car housing is unrealistic as people residing in these proposed dwellings are likely to own cars and would therefore add to the already intolerable parking situation.



Oxford Street in need of an upgrade

2. The heritage fabric of the area must be protected by prohibiting demolition of all heritage-listed or Victorian facades.

3. Privacy concerns and overshadowing of the adjoining residential areas dwellings should be addressed.

Another property, Woollahra Railway Lands – Edgecliff Road was not referred to in our letter as we were (until recently) unaware of its proposed rezoning. However we support the nearby residents and Railcorp, the present landowner, who have objected.



Oxford Street Residences

At a well attended meeting with Cooper Ward Councilors, Mayor Andrew Petrie, Cr David Shoebridge and Cr Malcolm Young on 12 August at the Goethe-Institut the issue of rezoning was discussed. Residents were told that the most effective way of objecting was to write individual letters. Petrie was confident that the Railway site would not be considered.

At this meeting objections were raised regarding the redevelopment of a boarding house at 370 Edgecliff Road which does not comply with council requirements of height and floor space ratio but may succeed in its application because of special dispensations for a boarding house. Residents questioned the term “boarding house” in this case

Arts, culture, ideas ... a festival celebrating Woollahra

OVER THREE VERY SPECIAL DAYS THIS NOVEMBER, WOOLLAHRA will transform into a buzzing public forum on arts, culture and ideas - a community festival in the unique surrounds of Queen Street Village.

The inaugural Woollahra Festival - Small Spaces, Big Ideas - will be a landmark event involving members of the community at all levels of operations and traversing a number of subject areas. Traditionally, festivals are about one broad field - performance or writing or ideas or food and wine, for example.

As a community-based event, Woollahra Festival will touch on all these areas, with residents helping to create the festival by being speakers, facilitators or hosts, the fundamental idea being to tap into the great wealth of local talent to foster a community spirit. Among the iconic local figures participating will be well known journalists, restaurateurs and chefs, arts figures, political identities and leading thinkers of today.

Audiences will be invited into local intimate spaces to meet some of Australia's leading minds - and discuss the big, controversial and tasty topics of today: from climate change, global politics and new media to contemporary art trends, the organic food industry, and the perfect pinot noir.

Woollahra Festival will also incorporate Siteworx, a series of short site-specific performances -involving musicians, singers, dancers, actors and other unusual street performers. These wandering minstrels and vagabond artists will be unleashed onto Queen St, emerging and vanishing down laneways, in courtyards and shop fronts to intrigue, charm, and delight passers by.

Performers will include a range of professional artists and some young new talent. Comedy, music and dance will form the backbone of a performance program that will revel in the unexpected, making Siteworx a titillating and unusual street festival experience. NIDA director and former artistic chief of Griffin Theatre Company Ros Horin is devising Siteworx.

The festival will be almost entirely funded by private donations, the exception being Woollahra Council which has embraced the concept and written the event into its three-year cultural plan.

Festival planners have been working for 18 months to develop what they believe is a unique idea. They have been incorporated as a not-for-profit cultural organization and are able to offer tax deductions to supporters.

“Some people have fond memories of the Queen Street Fair and, while this will not be a fair, we hope that this will become a much-loved annual event on the local calendar,” said festival director Carmel Dwyer. We would like to encourage locals to consider participating in whatever way they can - definitely by coming along, but also possibly by making a donation or volunteering - both of which they can do on the website. It will be an exciting and stimulating two days, and the program will be enhanced by people joining in.

“We have already had a wonderful response from donors and speakers who want to be a part of this. It's meant to be about fun, community and discussion - and with things like this it's really a case of the more the merrier.”

All festival events will be free of charge, but places will need to be reserved for indoor talks. A reservation facility will be

announced when the program is launched in late September.

Woollahra Festival will be an Australian first - a community based festival celebrating arts, culture and ideas held within the local halls, cafes, restaurants and galleries of Queen Street. For these three special days, Woollahra opens its doors and minds for a unique festival not to be missed.

Au revoir Martyn Cook

Antique Dealer with style and finesse

It is indeed sad to see that Sydney's most respected antique dealer has left Queen Street. Martyn Cook has been in Queen Street for over 20 years. He of all people contributed to Queen Street's former reputation as the most prestigious street of antiques in Australia. The shop was patronized by Australia's rich and famous as well as visiting celebrities such as Elton John. But the annual rents of over \$100 000 have forced Cook and interior decorator, Thomas Hamel out. They will relocate to an 1891 heritage building in Redfern. The shop, at Queen Street was auctioned through Richardson and Wrench.

The Wine Library Café and Bar

Is it a bar? Or is it an eatery? Well the Wine Library is a great tapas bar: *Village Voice* discovered at lunch that a snack and coffee were just fine. The menu offers mouth-watering choices such as 'andalusian chicken, leek & amontillado sherry pie', 'chicken liver & vino santo parfait, toasted sourdough' (both delicious). We sat at the zinc bar top which is developing an interesting patina, watched food being prepared and ogled the wall of wines. The mirror spruiks specials such as 'grilled haloumi, lemon and cracked pepper' and 'Coffin Bay oysters'. Dishes, which cost \$9-\$15, come with a linen napkin - a lovely touch - and the fitout is super schmick. There's a bunch of sophisticated salads and from about 5pm you can try the 'pork and veal meatballs, cabbage & tomato' and the 'wagyu beef, cabbage & gruyere gratin'. We'll have to go back for that, and a glass of Sancerre or a pinot. As the French would say: there's an embarrassment of choices. This groovy café/bar is just around the corner from Queen at 18 Oxford Street.

Polished Beauty Bar

Now that Queen Street has become the mecca for fashion the beautiful need a special place for pampering and keeping up appearances.. The Polished Beauty Bar situated above Victor Churchills is the one-stop ticket. In intimate surroundings all pampering needs are catered for.

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CHAT STREET

We are sad to have lost **Peter Mitry of Simply Seafood** in Moncur Street. Peter came to Simply Seafood straight from leaving school in 2001. He is a quiet gentle giant who quickly got to know his regular customers and took an interest in their families. Simply Seafood was named in SMH Good Food Guide 2009 as one of the "10 of the Best Fish & Chips". His very loyal followers will miss his *bonhomie* and his delicious fish. A pizza shop will replace Simply Seafood.

Although Council supported **Temple Emmanuel's** application to build a 1.8m blast wall on Ocean Street it was rejected on design considerations by the Sydney East Joint Regional Planning Panel. The QSWWA was not consulted by Council on this, and in spite of our understanding the problems of security we are relieved to see it was knocked back. We are particularly mindful that this is a heritage conservation area and we do not want fortifications to separate communities. There will be, however, extensive renovations and building going on at the Temple for some time.

On the vexed question of **garbage bins**, the editor spent some time in London recently and noticed how very tidy the parks were in that teeming city. Garbage bins were placed close to every bench in Green Park and Hyde Park and were well used by walkers, joggers and workers. The bins were attractive and built in such a way that large plastic bags of rubbish could not be inserted. No rubbish was deposited nearby, putting paid to the Council's assertion that garbage bins encourage rubbish to be left nearby.

Woollahra artist and Queen Street resident **Elizabeth Wandsworth** is renowned for her fluid landscapes. Her latest source of inspiration entitled *Inland Reflections* celebrates the revival of inland water bodies after the recent rain. Her exhibition will be at 2 Danks Street from 5-17 October.

Susan Holmwood, maker of classical women's shirts has relocated from 26 Queen Street to a studio in Darlinghurst where her collection will be available by appointment or by mail order. Contact www.susanholmwood.com.

It is pleasing to see that **Pazotti Tiles** has returned to our precinct after many years in Oxford Street. Now located in Jersey Road, Pazotti was originally in Moncur Street and was the venue for the QSWWA meetings in the nineties when Graham Freudenberg presided as president.

In our last newsletter we excitedly reported that at last **Joan Sutherland's former home** at 115 Queen Street was being restored and renovated. Now all activity has stopped. Why?

SUNDAY SCHOOL at Victor Churchill



Victor Churchill - Kids' cooking school

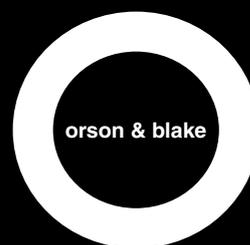
After the success of Masterchef, this month's Crave Food Festival sees our interest in gastronomy peak as international chefs, the pop stars of the food world, congregate in Sydney. Rene Redzepi whose tiny Danish restaurant Noma, has topped El Bulli from Number One on the World's Best Restaurants list, will launch the Festival in his countryman's masterpiece – the Opera House – which he admits was the draw card to get him here. Redzepi's return to foraging and eating locally produced foods could not be more different to the high-tech methods of El Bulli, where he worked for some time and learnt that rules are made for breaking. Our fascination with cuisine has prompted a spate of specialised and technical courses, some of which are on our doorstep.

Victor Churchill conducts courses on Sunday mornings when the preparation area is free. There's a Pork, Lamb and Beef Butchery program in which you can learn how to cut up a side of lamb or pork, and specialty courses in deboning and preparing poultry and rabbits. In-house chef, Jamie Thomas, (soon to open his own restaurant, Avido, around the corner in Oxford Street), says customers are keen to learn and the sessions arose due to demand. There are very popular classes for children, and sophisticated ones for the home cook, teaching the secrets of rillettes, confit de canard, terrines and more. Call 93280402 for details and bookings.

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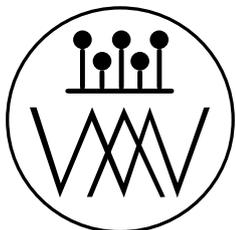
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