

The Original VILLAGE VOICE



Official journal of the Queen Street and West Woollahra Association Ltd

No.103 April 2012

www.woollahravillage.com.au

www.qswwa.com.au

The Queen Street and West Woollahra Association

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Tuesday May 8 at 6pm

Goethe Institut

**Corner of Ocean Street and
Jersey Road, Woollahra**

Meet your Mayor Susan Wynne

Question your Councillors

Voice your concerns for Woollahra

Demand to be heard!

QSWWA ANNUAL DINNER INVITATION

Monday May 7 at 7pm

**at the new exciting Chiswick Restaurant
in Chiswick Gardens 65 Ocean Street, Woollahra**

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FRANZ KAFKA – EAT YOUR HEART OUT!

This year marked the 86th anniversary of Kafka's renowned novel 'The Trial' originally called 'Der Process' and recently re-reading it brought a touch of nostalgia in observing your Association's dealings with Woollahra Council. As you may be aware, 'The Trial' recounts the experiences of Josef K who is arraigned before the undefined authorities of a nameless state, without having any idea of the crimes for which he is arrested and then having to deal with an amorphous and largely faceless bureaucracy, in a futile attempt to determine his fate.

Flicking through past minutes of the Association, reading old correspondence and listening to current accounts of conversations with the Council, I was struck by the obvious parallels between these 'works in progress'. In September, I ruefully commented in this journal, on the degraded state of this once-proud precinct. The decaying infrastructure of our streets would make any visiting Chechen from Grozny (after the Soviet tanks had rearranged its streets) feel right at home. The absolute scandal of our footpaths, kerbs, off ramps and electricity box surrounds, beggars belief in an area which is both proud of its heritage and a popular destination for local and overseas tourists.

Pardon the pun, but to get anything concrete done about it by our municipal guardians causes us to enter the realm of Alice in Wonderland, where the Cheshire Cat listens politely to the complaints and then begins to vapourise, until 'poof!' there is nothing left but the smile and faintly echoing words 'curiouser and curiouser'. Well then, it's one thing to identify problems and have a good old ozzie whinge, but what is to be done about this? Do we need another Tea Party (like the original Bostonian version), is there a case for 'no taxation without representation', are we to reclaim the democratic heritage of our forefathers? Is it back to the barricades like the Paris Commune in 1848?

Alas Comrades, times have changed, but we do have one element that has the force to change all that, to make our voice heard by those in control and it is the internet. So in pursuit of the democratic ideal, the Association invites you, its constituents, to post your worst Council experience on our website. Tell us about your futile and frustrated efforts to obtain action on street repairs, rubbish and litter in the precinct, excessive noise issues, insensitive bureaucracy, traffic complaints, street lighting and any of the other irritating things that upset your daily equilibrium.

A panel of impartial judges (shipped in from Mars) will vet your entries over a long and important wine tasting. The one judged to be the most egregious example of municipal government bastardry will receive the coveted trophy of the Red Cockade. Furthermore, as punishment for daring to raise your voice, afternoon tea with the Committee of the Popular Front for the liberation of Queen Street and West Woollahra, known by the acronym PFOQ. So, I urge you to Join the revolution, send your entries to www.qswwa. but please maintain a civil polity.

*Comrade Mansell
Village Voice Page 2*

Acting President's Report

Our president Ken Gresham has taken a leave of absence to deal with some medical issues, so I have been appointed as Acting President for the time being. All of us at the Association, plus Ken's legion of friends wish him a very speedy recovery and look forward to his return to the jungle.

This report has been prepared with his help and outlines the momentous year of 2011/2012 for your Association and Woollahra in general.

The ongoing development of our websites has continued apace and a lot of effort has gone into improving the look and content of the Village Voice. In addition to dealing with the Council on your behalf, we organize the annual Christmas carols at Chiswick Gardens, at which over 200 enthusiastic participants joined in a really happy communal event and thanks to our volunteers and sponsors - it was one of the best yet.

We were also a sponsor and supporter of the Woollahra Festival and this event really puts Woollahra on the map, not only for locals, but many overseas visitors who attended this year. We congratulate the presenters, volunteers and performers at this fantastic cultural event. The QSWWA looks forward to doing its bit for 2012.

Queen Street continues to evolve and its change in focus from one of the major antiques areas in Sydney to its current mix of food, clothing, art galleries and boutiques creates a liveliness in the precinct that belies the gloomy trading conditions in other parts of Sydney.

Thanks to our committee members who volunteer to balance the needs of our residents, businesses and traders and act as your interface with the municipal authorities.

Our committee comprises Ken Gresham (President), Ian Mansell (Acting President), Mary Read (Vice President) who heads the Traders' Group, Dizzy Robinson who edits and produces *Village Voice*, Alan Smith (Treasurer), Phillip Mitchellhill (in charge of *Streetwatch*), Rosemary McDonald our Minutes Secretary and Colin Pannell.

If you are interested in making a difference to your own environment, please join us at our AGM on May 8th at The Goethe Institut on May 8th commencing at 6pm followed by light refreshments after the formalities.

Please also make a diary note of our annual dinner being held at the fabulous CHISWICK Restaurant and Bar on May 7th. Bookings Mary Read 9328 1036.

Ian Mansell, Acting President QSWWA.

Annual Dinner at Chiswick Restaurant

The Queen Street and West Woollahra Association (QSWWA) has pleasure in inviting you to our annual dinner, which is to be held at one of Sydney's most exciting new dining venues, CHISWICK Restaurant and Bar, located in Chiswick Gardens, Ocean Street, Woollahra, which is co-owned and operated by two of our most respected and loved restaurateurs, Matt Moran and Peter Sullivan. For those foodies among you who enjoyed The Paddington Inn Bistro, Moran's and ARIA, this latest incarnation of Matt's contagious passion for food and Peter's obsession with excellent service represents the apogee of their successful partnership, which has now lasted for over 20 years. The difficulty in getting a booking at CHISWICK'S says it all, and the QSWWA is very pleased to bring this opportunity to our members and friends.

On May 7th, we will be bringing you a very special evening that will showcase CHISWICK'S passion for seasonal food, accompanied by tailor-made wines served in an atmosphere that is chic, but delivers the ambience expected by aficionados of fine food. The essence of this restaurant is in its local produce and kitchen garden where much of the ingredients that appear on your plate will be grown.

To help titillate your taste buds, the head chef and sommelier will give an entertaining and erudite exposition of the special menu that has been created for the QSWWA. For those of you who have special dining needs, don't despair! Options will be available that suit the most fastidious Pescatarian or Vegetarian. Please let us know any special needs on your RSVP.

The cost of this culinary cornucopia is a mere \$145 per head, with wine and a welcoming glass of champagne. It includes 3 courses and wine. In addition, there will be a limited raffle with excellent prizes and a lucky door prize.



Tickets for the event are available from business@qswwa.com.au or Reads, 130 Queen Street, Woollahra, 9328 1036 to secure your booking, but be quick! Places are limited and the early indications are that this event will be sold out before you can type Georges Auguste Escoffier.



Check Out Old Copies of the *Village Voice*

You can now see all the issues of *Village Voice* on the Queen Street and West Woollahra website thanks to Committee member Rosemary McDonald. Rosemary's mother was a stalwart in the early days of the Association and it is great that her daughter is following in her footsteps.

Village Voice started in 1972 under the chairmanship of Leo Schofield and many well known Woollahra identities joined his Committee. Their objective was to save Woollahra from over-development, high-rise and to maintain the unique character of our precinct. This is still our objective.

Over the years Committee members have included Graham Freudenberg, (Gough Whitlam's speech writer), Joy Barraclough, Pat Thompson after whom the park next to the Holdsworth Centre is named and of course Robin Brampton who was the Editor for many years. Other well known members included Neville Gruzeman, June Hazel (first proprietor of the Bay Tree in Holdsworth Street) artist Elwyn Lynn and barrister "Ant" Vincent.

Perusing the newsletters makes interesting reading. Parking and traffic problems have loomed large over the years and the Queen Street Fair really put our precinct on the map. The August 1998 newsletter writes with concern about Dame Joan Sutherland's former home at 151 Queen Street. It had been allowed to fall into disrepair and QSWWA were looking at ways to restore it. Nothing happened until last year when it was bought, hopefully for renovation. But now that buyer has gone into receivership. *Plus ca change!*
STOP PRESS! A new buyer has emerged.



From a watercolour of the house from Joan Sutherland's time by John van Vlier

Community Carols

The community carols held in December were, as always, well attended and a very happy family event. They were held in Chiswick Park and no one seemed put off by the construction hoarding for the new Chiswick restaurant. By the time you read this the restaurant will be fully operational and residents will be looking forward to dine there again.

The Woollahra Chamber Orchestra String Trio and the Senior Citizens Choir led the carol singing aided by the very enthusiastic Preschool Choir. For extra entertainment there was a barbeque, (sausages courtesy of Zigolinis), a coffee cart, santa surprises (thankyou Kidstuff) two jumping castles (a generous donation from Committee member Phillip Mitchelhill) and a wonderful silent auction with goods donated by local traders. Big Santa (courtesy of Nostimos) was a great success.



Our honorary photographer, Michael Robinson, has been gazumped by a real professional, Naomi Hamilton whose studio is at 7 Weroona Avenue (0416245350). Naomi has been taking photographs of people and children, and of their pets for 11 years. She has graciously offered to photograph people at our events and we include a charming photograph taken at last year's Carols.

The guest speaker for the May 1992. issue was Leslie Walford, a long time resident and well known interior decorator, antique dealer, newspaper columnist, lecturer on interior design, world traveler, social figure and bon vivant. Leslie died in February this year. He was a Director of the Art Gallery of NSW and a National President of the Society of Interior Designers. In 2008 he was inducted into the DIA Design Hall of Fame. Vale Leslie Walford.



Mr Leslie Walford from Village Voice May 1992

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A LABYRINTH FOR CENTENNIAL PARK



On January 26th 1888, Sir Henry Parkes dubbed Sydney's Centennial Park, "The People's Park". More than 124 years later our beloved 'People's Park' is about to receive something new and wonderful in the form of a labyrinth, which is a simple path for walking meditation and contemplation. The Centennial Park Labyrinth is the brainchild of Emily Simpson, a long-time Paddington resident, with a passion for labyrinths. "The design is based on the 800 year old labyrinth in Chartres Cathedral in France. It will be built of sandstone and will be the first major public labyrinth in Sydney. It will be a thing of great beauty – a significant public artwork", she explains. When the original labyrinth was built in the Chartres Cathedral in the early 13th century, it was seen as an alternate form of pilgrimage. During the crusades, the journey to Jerusalem was too dangerous, so people would make their way to one of several Cathedrals across Europe, which at that time all had labyrinths in them.

But the labyrinth doesn't belong to Christianity alone. There are Neolithic petro-glyphs, which show the ancient version of the labyrinth. The Romans had labyrinth mosaic floors. There are coins from the 3rd Century BC in Greece, which have the imprint of the labyrinth on them. Turf labyrinths were created on village greens in the UK and Germany. There are ancient examples in India, China and North and South America. While designs may vary, the use of the labyrinth for meditation and contemplation remains the same across cultures and time. It is a truly universal symbol that is non-denominational and open to people of all faiths. In the last few decades there's been a revival of interest in the labyrinth. In the United States, there have been more than 200 labyrinths built in hospitals alone. Bethesda Naval Hospital near Washington has recently built a labyrinth, which is proving very effective in helping veterans with PTSD.

They are also being built in universities, parks and schools where they are finding that children with ADHD are able to concentrate for longer after walking the labyrinth. "Unlike a maze, which has several different paths and is designed to confuse and frustrate, a labyrinth has a single path, and is designed to soothe and calm. If a maze is an intellectual exercise, a labyrinth is a spiritual one", says Simpson.

John Walker, Chairman of the Board of the Centennial Parklands Trust Says: "When the idea of a labyrinth in the Parklands was first put to the Trust it generated a lot of discussion about whether or not Centennial Park was an appropriate location. It is!! Visitors to the Park come for many purposes - quiet reflection, contemplation and meditation included. A labyrinth will complement the park and provide a wonderful experience. I urge people to get behind this project and make it a reality for current visitors and future generations"

Emily fell in love with the labyrinth several years ago and believes the people who love Centennial Park will too. She is raising the funds to manifest this great public artwork and has created a website for donations. So far the group has raised \$110,000 of the \$500,000 needed to build the sandstone labyrinth. You can help by making your tax-deductible donation via the labyrinth project website: www.sydneylabyrinth.org

Readers are invited to come and experience walking a canvas labyrinth at one of her monthly labyrinth walks, at the Mosman Art Gallery. See the website for details. Come walk the mystery...

The plan of a labyrinth is shown on the front cover

The Poisonous Apple...Organic or non-organic?

By Amber Knight

As children we all learnt what happened to Snow White when she ate the poisonous apple....however many of us are unaware of the consequences on our own bodies from consuming chemically enhanced foods. While the chemical additives sprayed onto one apple may not harm us, the accumulation of eating hundreds of apples over the years, may be harmful.

Chemicals can increase the speed at which cancer develops when mixed with other harmful compounds that may already be stored in your system. They also contribute to the development of various diseases, the disruption of hormone levels, and an increased risk of obesity. Pesticides have been found in the body years after their consumption.

LEGAL CORNER

Lawyer Ron Osborne is the principal of Osborne & Associates, Lawyers of level 1, 99 Queen Street Woollahra. The above article is intended to be of general interest and not the provision of legal advice. Next issue: "The Dunny Lane".)

Can I sue the Agent?

I recently bought a terrace-style house in one of Woollahra's leafier avenues, which came with a rare tennis court alongside it. I have since learned that a standard tennis court is supposed to have clearances of at least 3.05 metres along each side-line. On the agent's brochure was a diagram headed "Tennis Court" showing a court with those very clearances. Rightly or wrongly I had instructed my solicitor not to bother getting a fresh survey but to just use the one attached to the contract. That survey contained an identical diagram of the tennis court to the one in the brochure. It now turns out that a newly built wall on next-door's property significantly encroaches onto my tennis court, which is a good metre and a half narrower than it's supposed to be and not one of my friends wants to play on it. To make matters worse, the next door owner has served me with a notice under section 88K of the Conveyancing Act to obtain a formal easement over the land underneath the new wall. The vendor has left the country. Can I sue the agent whose brochure was plainly wrong? I would never have bought the property without a full-size tennis court. The brochure contained the following disclaimer:

"All information contained herein is gathered from sources we believe to be reliable. However we cannot guarantee it's(sic) accuracy and interested persons should rely on their own enquiries".
Signed **Misled**

Dear Misled

Relying upon old surveys attached to contracts can be a recipe for disaster, simply because things change - in your case, it was the location of a new wall, in other cases it might be a newly protruding deck, an overhanging gutter or even your own renovations encroaching onto next door's property. And yes, misleading and deceptive conduct by agents and others is actionable under the Competition and Consumer Act 2010 (formerly the Trade Practices Act 1974). Firstly however the agent must be shown to have engaged in misleading and deceptive conduct.

A few years ago the High Court held that where a real estate agent does nothing more than to pass on information which was obviously supplied by others, if it should have been obvious to a prospective purchaser that the agent was not the source of the information, the agent's conduct will not be deceptive or misleading. You would have a tough time proving misleading and deceptive conduct on the part of the agent in your circumstances.

Ron Osborne BA LLM

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Inforum Group

Local residents Fiona Coogan and Jenny Garber launched INFORUM group last year. Their concept is to provide a range of interesting speakers who will inspire, entertain and fulfill many of the personal and professional areas of interest for women and men, both experientially and intellectually. All speakers are well recognized as inspirational leaders having expert knowledge in their different fields.

Fiona and Jenny have extensive career backgrounds in public relations, marketing and media and have built key relationships and worthwhile networks. They have had considerable success with their Forums, most recently in Sydney and Melbourne with Marion Hume, International Fashion Editor for The Australian Financial Review Magazine. On March 27 a Forum on Social Media was held at The Ivy, George Street Sydney. A panel of experts discussed the power of social media in our society today.

On May 7 the Inforum Group is organizing a fundraising dinner to support the local Queen Street and West Woollahra community at the exciting new restaurant, Chiswick. It should be a great night.

www.inforumgroup.com

The Queen Street And West Woollahra Association Ltd

ABN 98 002 872 433



A residents and traders group covering the area bounded by Jersey Road, Edgecliff Road and Oxford Street, West Woollahra

Patron: Neville Wran AC QC

President: Ken Gresham

Vice President/Convenor of Trader's Group: Mary Read

Committee: Ian Mansell (Acting President,) Phillip Mitchelhill,
Rosemary McDonald, Colin Pannell, Annette Robinson
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OUT AND ABOUT

- **Chiswick Gardens welcomes a great restaurant again.**

We are pleased to welcome Matt Moran and Paul Sullivan to their new **Chiswick Restaurant** located in Chiswick Park, where we hold the community carols each year. Older residents will remember Pruniers Restaurant with affection, a great institution in its heyday. Tony Geminis, the proprietor was a legend. I remember that he even lent money to one of his good customers when he needed to bail out an old friend who had created a scene in another restaurant. It was Saturday night and those were the days before ATMS!

"You will know who you are." I am sure Matt and Paul will have their own tales to tell. Meanwhile we look forward to many superb meals at Chiswick Restaurant starting with the annual QSWWA dinner on May 7.

- Last year the **Woollahra Hotel** tabled a Development Application to Council for footpath use outside the pub and restaurant. The Application was for six tables (24 chairs) to be on the footpath in Queen Street and seven tables (23 chairs) on the footpath in Moncur Street. Hours requested are from 10am to 10 pm. At present the DA is being assessed by Council and details have been sent to the police for comment. A report will be sent to the Development Control Committee in due course. So far 20 submissions have been received from residents; most are overwhelmingly against the proposal. Objections cited are noise, accessibility for pedestrians, and amenity of residents.



It's great to see the new **verandah at Queens Court**. Perfect timing for the wonderful exhibition of Margaret Olley's 27 new works shown at Sothebys by Brisbane's Philip Bacon Galleries.

- The **Post office closures** have struck again. A letter box drop on March 5 was the only notification Vaucluse residents received before the post office was closed the next day. At least we at Woollahra were not treated with quite such disdain. We had some notice but in spite of petitions and letters to the various ministers our protestations were of no avail. Perhaps the abruptness of the Vaucluse closure was to avoid the expected complaints.

- We still have a post office of sorts. The **"Community Post Office"** is located in the convenience store Queens Fresh run by James Mo in the main drag. You can buy stamps there and you can leave parcels for collection by Australia Post as long as their weight is not more than 20kg. Australia Post collects letters and parcels between 4 and 5 pm Monday to Friday. You can also direct parcels to be sent to the Community Post Office for your collection.

- At last a **garbage bin has been put in Thompson Park**, adjacent to the Holdsworth Centre. It is a great success and is used by the many picnickers there, so the once rubbish-filled park is now pristine. Nearby residents are delighted.

- Woollahra Council has devised a plan to improve an otherwise mundane structure in our urban environment. Dubbed the **signal box art competition** local artists have been encouraged to submit designs for the three RTA signal boxes in Rose Bay, Woollahra and Rushcutters Bay. The final selection for the signal box in our area, corner of Jersey Road and Oxford Street, outside the Light Brigade, is illustrated below. An interesting alternative to those boring boxes.



- The popular **Wine Library's** newest chef, Mitch Orr is a former winner of the Josephine Pignolet Young Chef of the Year Award and has appeared on *Masterchef*. The Wine Library has seven active beehives on the roof, a welcome contribution to its Oxford Street environment.

- Two **"cycle friendly" bumps may be installed in Centennial Park** adjacent to the small learn-to-ride track used mainly by children. The plan has angered cyclists, but the Moore Park Trust has claimed that it will enable children and mothers to cross Grand Drive with safety.

- On October 31, 2011 Woollahra Council approved the licensed restaurant to be run by tenants, **Small Bar and Kitchens Limited** in the retail and commercial complex at **156 Edgecliff Road**. Residents have been concerned about noise and late trading hours for this new bar type restaurant. Approval was granted subject to the following conditions: Opening hours 7am-10pm (Monday-Thursday, Sunday) 7am-midnight (Friday, Saturday), no amplified music, retractable roof to be closed at 9pm, no alcohol in the courtyard, maximum capacity (including staff).

- Queen Street welcomes yet another fashion label to the strip. **Anna Thomas** has two successful stores in Melbourne and now two in Sydney.

- The old Post Office on the corner of Moncur and Queen Street is being revamped for the famous cosmetic chain **Napoleon Perdis**.



The Queen Street And West Woollahra Association Ltd

Your community voice!

ABN 98 002 872 433



P.O. Box 16 Woollahra 1350 Email: admin@qswwa.com.au

The Queen Street and West Woollahra Association works on behalf of the residents and businesses in Woollahra Village.

Holdsworth Community Centre to merge with Meals on Wheels and Woollahra Seniors' Community Centre(Gaden Centre)

Sometimes opportunities present themselves which are just irresistible. Holdsworth has been offered the chance to create a new concept for our community which it hopes will form the basis for much improved community interaction and quality of life.

With the support of Woollahra Council, the encouragement of Ageing Disability & Home Care, and at the invitation of Woollahra Voluntary Community Services, Holdsworth is merging the activities of Woollahra Meals on Wheels and the Woollahra Seniors and Community Centre to create a new community facility. It's 700m around the corner from Holdsworth on the corner of Queen Street and Edgecliff Road at what is known as the Gaden Centre. After renovations at the Centre, which will include improving access and upgrading the kitchen facilities, Holdsworth is set to launch a Community Cafe in early 2013.

Over the rest of 2012 the Holdsworth team will be talking to lots of people to get feedback and support as it brings together three organisations into one. For the next twelve months, there will be few obvious changes other than a single management of the three services by Holdsworth. There is plenty of time to ensure this becomes a really exciting addition to the Woollahra scene. Holdsworth is looking to local businesses and residents



to get behind what they are doing to revitalise the Gaden Centre and to make this a great new community resource. Clearly Meals on Wheels continues as a vital service to housebound members of our community, but there is nothing to stop the expansion of this model to include Wheels to Meals. Social isolation as an even bigger issue than good nutrition and Holdsworth wants to make sure that every member of the community is supported to connect with other people. To make this happen they will be relying on the fabulous team of people who have been working or volunteering with both Meals on Wheels and the Seniors Centre, many of whom have been doing this unfailingly for up to 30 or 40 years!

For more information please contact Michael Ryan, Holdsworth CEO, on 9302 3600.



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