

The Original VILLAGE VOICE



Official journal of the Queen Street and West Woollahra Association Ltd No. 113 August 2015 www.qswwa.com.au



QSWWA Annual Dinner

**Come and join us on Monday 31st August from 7.15 at
The Centennial Hotel, 88 Oxford St, Woollahra.**

**Experience Justin North's sumptuous cuisine. Pre-dinner glass of bubbly and
canapes from 7.15, 3 course menu from 7.45 plus wines from the cellar.
\$135 per person. Booking essential. Ticket information on the back page.
Places are limited so book early.**

President's Report



At our recent AGM I was elected President of the Queen Street West Woollahra Association. I feel honoured to follow in the footsteps of people such as Leo Schofield, Robin Brampton, Ron Osborne and Ken Gresham to name but a few. I have lived in the area for approximately 40 years and my mother, Monica McDonald, was a long serving committee member of the Association. I remember those very, very, early mornings on the Queen St Fair days when she and the other committee members would be up and organising the stalls and directing traffic. I also remember her saying it was the only day of the year that the street was cleaned properly!!

As I stated at the AGM in May, my goals as President include:

- to ensure that this area of the Municipality receives its fair allocation of budget resources
- to establish a working party of councillors, council staff, the Association and members of the community to review and strengthen the Master Plan for the area
- to strengthen communication links with Council so that we know who and how to contact the 'right' people rather than get lost in the records@
- to introduce a new community event in 2016 - Clean up Woollahra in conjunction with Clean Up Australia Day

Following the AGM, I met with Cooper Ward Councillor Katherine O'Regan to discuss the failings of the current Master Plan and to provide her with the history of what little has been done in the area.

We will continue to have monthly meetings and plan to establish the joint working committee in the next couple of months.

To assist us I would ask you to contact me with a short statement as to what you value and/or love about our area of Woollahra. This will assist us in ensuring that these special attributes are the basis of any future plans.

You can contact me at: admin@qswwa.com.au

I also hope many of you come to our Community Dinner at the Centennial Hotel. It is always an extremely enjoyable event where you can meet new neighbours and catch up with others.

Rosemary McDonald

Advertise in Village Voice

Your company, shop or product can reach a discerning local audience with a distribution of over 5000 in Woollahra and Paddington. Reasonable rates and assistance with artwork if necessary. Contact admin@qswwa.com.au or go to www.qswwa.com.au for advertising rates and a booking form

Street Watch

1. Intersection of John St and Ocean St

Concern about the danger of turning from Ocean St into John St, as a result of the kerb extension, prompted the QSWWA and members of the community to contact the Council.

A response from Councillor Elsing, which included information from Council staff, noted the following points.

- The kerb extension at this location, was developed in conjunction with other capital works in John St between Ocean St and Moncur St, was to improve the overall safety of road users, improve pedestrian access (including improved footpaths) and improve the storm water system.
- unbroken centre line in John St, from the intersection with Ocean St, for a distance of 7m. This is intended to help guide drivers, particularly those exiting out of John St so that they do not occupy the mid-section of the road opening at Ocean St, and thereby ensure they are staying on their side of the road to make the turn easier for other users.
- The Traffic department recently advised that the line marking is incorrect – the contractor who undertook the works placed the double white lines too close to the southern kerb line (where vehicles turn into John St from Ocean St), thereby exaggerating the tightness of the turn. I understand that this will be corrected shortly. Once it is corrected, we will then allow a period of time for drivers to adjust, and the Traffic team will monitor the location during this process.

2. Bus Shelter, Hargrave St

The Association contacted our Councillors about the state of the bus shelter in Hargrave St.

A response from Council engineers via Councillor O'Regan stated;

"To make sure that the Hargraves Street (SIC) bus shelter is safe and does not get destroyed again by buses in the

future, Council staff are examining the possibility of relocating the shelter away from the kerb and away from bus overhang turning paths. Relocating the shelter away from the kerb also increases the width of the footpaths making the area more pedestrian friendly, particularly for pedestrians with mobility issues and people with prams.

We are awaiting advice from structural engineers as to the condition of the shelter and what is needed to be done to repair the shelter.

We will also be liaising with the adjacent property owners prior to repairing the shelter. It is anticipated that the Hargrave Street bus shelter will be repaired by the end of June 2015, weather permitting." Street Watch looks forward to the shelter being repaired soon.



The Queen Street and West Woollahra Association Ltd

ABN 98002872433

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

The QSWWA is a residents and traders group covering the area bounded by Jersey Road, Ocean Street between Jersey Road and Edgecliff Road, Edgecliff Road between Ocean Street and Leswell Street, Leswell Street and Oxford Street between Leswell Street and Jersey Road.

President: Rosemary McDonald

Past President: Ken Gresham

Treasurer: Alan Smith

Committee: Ian Mansell, Richard Banks, John Knott,

Phillip Mitchelhill, Giles Edmonds.

Village Voice Editor: Jane Nutter. Layout: Eric Scott.



Resident Visitor Parking Permit

You can buy Resident Visitor Parking Permits from the Woollahra Council Customer Service Centre for \$2 each. Each residential property in a Resident Parking Area is entitled to 10 Visitor Parking Permits per financial year.

The permit will give you an exemption from the time limits and/or meter parking fees for one day, but there

are some rules to follow - you need to park in the parking area written on the front of the permit and you must park in designated 'Permit Holders Exempted' areas. The permits may be utilised by resident's family, friends and tradespeople.

Talking About Art

Waverley Woollahra Art School will present the third in a series of in-depth talks about art on Friday 25th September at 7pm. The topic is '**Political Satire in Australia**'. It will be held at the Waverley Woollahra Art School, 138



Bondi Rd., Bondi. The guest speakers are two of Australia's best known and loved political cartoonists, esteemed Woollahra local, Bruce Petty and the much lauded, Ward O'Neill.

Bruce Petty – Cartoonist for The Age, The Australian, New York Times, Punch, Director of first Australian Film to win an Academy Award (Oscar) in America for his film "*Leisure*". Author of numerous books on Political Satire.

Ward O'Neill – Cartoonist for The Financial Review where he commented for many years. He has worked for The London Daily Mail, The Australian, SMH, the Bulletin and the National Times. He has won the Walkley Award for illustration several times.

The talk starts at 7pm followed by a Q & A and includes wine and cheese. To find out more collect a flyer from the Art School. Entrance fee \$15 if pre booked, or \$20 at the door. Fee payable at Art School email: info@wwas.org.au Contact School or phone Luce 9387 2461 or John Knott 0413 328 815

In addition, Bruce Petty and Ward O'Neill will host a 'hands on' workshop on Saturday 26th September from 10am - 3pm where you can create your own cartoons and gain practical insights into interpreting political issues. Email info@wwas.org.au for bookings.

John Knott

Is small beautiful? Will Woollahra Council win the argument to stay independent?

There's a battle raging in NSW Local Government at the moment and Woollahra Council is taking a leading role. In one corner is the State Government, which wants to rationalise the number of Councils across the state under its 'Fit for the Future' Local Government Reform Program, including reducing the number of Sydney councils from 41 to between 15 and 18. In the other corner are most of the councils in Sydney, including Woollahra Council, who are vehemently opposed to any merger.

The Fit for the Future program bases its recommendations on an independent review, which recommended a number of mergers, including the creation of a "mega-city council", merging City of Sydney, Woollahra, Waverley, Randwick and Botany. Now, there is certainly plenty to improve in local government, and Woollahra is no exception, but the Council's polling claims that over 80% of residents are against any amalgamations. The arguments put forward by the Council against any amalgamation include that it will meet all the Governments performance measures by 2017; that, with a much higher average rateable property value, residents will see increases in rates of between 22% to 53%, cross-subsidising rate payers in other council areas; there is no evidence to demonstrate that larger councils are more efficient; there will loss of local understanding and application of uniform planning controls across an amalgamated council which will undermine Woollahra's character, and; there will be a significant reduction in local representation with only two to three councillors representing the whole of Woollahra on any amalgamated council.

Woollahra Council submission will have been lodged by the 30 June deadline and is available on its website. The public then has a month to submit their own comments to IPART, the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal who will evaluate all proposals. Their evaluation of which Council proposals meet the Fit for the Future criteria and which don't will be made to the Minister by October 15, who will then announce outcomes and next steps, with Cabinet making any final decisions next year.

Watch this space - the final outcomes will be political decisions, not necessarily fact-based. We could be dealing with a completely new local government within the next two years.

Giles Edmonds





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& Edgecliff Rd

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Reading letters that correspondents have taken the trouble to write, I am struck by the cyclical nature of this correspondence. The letters, tend to follow a discernible

pattern. Firstly, an issue regarding some dastardly state of affairs in the 'hood', then a formal complaint to the guardians of our 'Little Eden' and finally ...utter inaction on the part of sundry Council officers.

I'm not sure of the answer to many of these vexing and long-standing issues. Should we adopt the approach of other polities, notably, some US states and civic-minded societies in parts of Europe, where local citizens band together and as Nike would have it, '*Just do it*'. Alternatively, do we simply accept the current state of affairs.

While these ruminations flow across the grey matter of your Letter Editor as an excellent Yarra Valley Pinot Noir disappears, apparently due to Global Warming, unseasonal temperatures and premature evaporation, a more serious issue arises to challenge the status quo. The question is, notwithstanding the inaction of Woollahra Council on so many of the heartfelt matters that disturb the serenity of our locals, would we be better off under a proposed amalgamation with a cashed-up council like Sydney? Would Woollahra Village return to its former glory or not? Now, as the late Frankie Howerd would have said '*The Prologue*'.

Ian Mansell

Ken's Korner

Occasional thoughts by a Past President

There is so much talk of property bubbles and the pressure on prices caused by imported money from the orient. Now retired, I spent most of my working life in the Real Estate "Industry".

Having survived, probably four or five full cycles in the past 45 years, I feel qualified to be somewhat mystified by bubbles and crashes.

Yes, the market has, after a decade in the doldrums finally had a couple of strong years. Is West Woollahra the same as the bubble suburbs?

The strength in the prices is a result of the lack of supply and it is after all a supply and demand driven market. More buyers than sellers always make the market strengthen. So what if houses increase in price in suburbs some of us could not locate with a GPS. What matters to us is how is our suburb doing or maybe just our street or even just our end of the street.

Many who were unfortunate to buy about six-ish years ago in the mini-boom in the Eastern Suburbs may find it difficult to get their investment back. In fact there have been a significant number of recent sales that only just made it back after such a period. Also several withdrawals after disappointing open for inspection results.

Do not misunderstand me I am a believer in real property as a stable growth investment over time but this price rise was predictable with or without crazy low interest rates and in West Woollahra there is no bubble to burst just business as usual.

By the way, how long will Woollahra Council continue to support the handing over of our only off street car park in Queen St on our busiest day, Sunday?

The tiny market of about 12 stalls operates rent-free in an area with limited parking and in direct opposition to shopkeepers who pay high Queen St rents.

Can we have our car park back, please?

Ken Gresham



SHOOT
to
WIN

EXPLORE THE SUBURBS
Submit your community snapshots to the Di Jones Team for a chance to win a \$300 voucher to spend locally. Just #dijonesrealestate #suburb (example #Woollahra) to enter. Visit our Facebook for more information.

The views expressed in this publication are those of the writers and not necessarily those of The Queen Street and West Woollahra Association Ltd

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Alfred Weissberger: The World's Best Tailor

Second in a series of articles on locals by John Knott.

Alfred Weissberger, known as Fred, migrated to Australia after the WWII. Bravely, Fred came to a land he knew little of, to a language he did not speak, little money and he built a life to be proud of. Fred was born in 1925 to Hungarian parents, and at 13 he was apprenticed to his father, a respected tailor in the town of Senec, in Czechoslovakia. The tailoring skills he learnt were to stand him in good stead for his life in Australia.



Fred was 19 years old when, as a result of the Hungarian invasion, his family were split up and relocated to a ghetto. His parents were taken, with many others by train to Auschwitz Concentration Camp. Sadly Fred never heard from them again. He recalls the parting words of his father Max, 'because you are a talented boy you may survive this'. While in a labour camp Fred's talents were recognised and he was sent to Hungary to make uniforms for the Hungarian Army. In 1944 he was transported to work in the Austrian forests with his fellow Jewish co-workers. At the fall of Vienna he was sent to Mauthausen concentration camp, eventually being liberated in 1945.

At the end of the war, Fred returned to Senec to find his family home occupied by Gypsies. His parents and younger brother perished at Auschwitz, and his sister, older brother and many school friends had not survived the war. Fred left Europe and arriving in Sydney in 1950, was posted to the Bathurst Migrant Camp where he met his wife Magda. After working in the timber mills for two years, he returned to his trade, tailoring, quickly gathering a following.

Fred opened his first shop in Sydney in Darlinghurst. As his clientele grew, he moved to Elizabeth Bay, then Double Bay, and in 1970 he purchased his own premises in Queen St, Woollahra. Due to the growing demand for fashionable women's wear, he turned his attention to ladies wear. Fred has seen many changes over the years, not only in fashion, but in Queen St itself.

Fred closed his Queen St shop in 1996, but has kept his hand in, and still makes suits for his many friends. That is no mean feat for a man of 91 years! Fred's customers included many well known people, including the Duchess of Gloucester, the Fairfax and Packer families, Gordon Samuels (then Governor of NSW), and the daughter of the Japanese Emperor, Mrs Shimazu.

Fred and Magda had two sons, Andrew and Stephen, but sadly Fred's dear wife Magda passed away in 2012 after a long and loving marriage of 48 years. Fred's favourite meal is a steaming hot plate of Hungarian Goulash; his favourite wine Riesling and his favourite coffee shop 'Plane Tree' (ex Zigolini's). Fred has not lost his sense of humour, he is still as sharp as a button (or a tailor's needle for that matter)!

LEGAL CORNER

Renovating . . . a heritage item!

West Woollahra covers a part of Woollahra municipality blanketed by a "heritage conservation area" containing many fine buildings, trees, structures and streetscapes. Some 700 of these are called "heritage items". Local planning laws provide that Woollahra Council must not grant development approval to alter a heritage item unless it "considers the effect" on the heritage item and also, on the heritage conservation area.

That's as it should be - we all rely heavily upon Council to ensure the preservation of our heritage values, but what exactly is meant by "consider the effect"? To assess with an eye to changing times as well as Council's development standards?

Heritage renovations might involve a roof-top deck, car-parking, en-suite bathroom or skylight - in short, improvements for comfortable modern living. Unfortunately, once Council decides to oppose your renovation, it will often raise a host of collateral objections relating to town planning, landscaping, traffic, site density, engineering or construction, even where such issues have nothing to do with heritage.

Sadly, you will need to address them all by obtaining (expensive) consultants' reports and legal advice in addition to providing the standard "Heritage Impact Statement" required by Council. And even if you obtain a suite of complimentary heritage reports to bolster your heritage impact statement, that will by no means assure you of success without Council support.

From a practical perspective you should therefore try and convince Council's heritage officers of the merits of your proposal. But if Council is unsupportive, an appeal to the Land and Environment Court may be an option.

The Court may well take a more positive view of your heritage renovation than Council, paying due regard to changing circumstances in addition to planning controls. Even if an appeal to the Court is unsuccessful, only in exceptional circumstances would an applicant have to pay the Council's costs.

Ron Osborne BA LLM

(Ron Osborne is the principal of Osborne & Associates, Lawyers of level 1, 99 Queen Street Woollahra. This article is intended to be of general interest and not the provision of legal advice).

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Woollahra's last Open Gardens - closes after 27 years

Three beautiful gardens in Woollahra were open to the public on the weekend of May 16-17. To the disappointment of many keen gardeners this is the last year the Open Gardens scheme will operate. Financial pressure and increased competition have been cited as the reason.

However, Woollahra gardeners and would-be gardeners were treated to a finale of three beautiful gardens. On each side of a brick pathway Rosie's Garden in Ocean St is crammed with gardenias, hellebores, plectranthus, camellias, cliveas, daphne, salvia, ginger, heliotrope and lilies around a central urn and a border of clipped box. Roses and hoya climb over the front of the Victorian terrace verandah.

The inner courtyard is filled with three enormous Boston ferns in hanging baskets complementing the pink bromeliads and urns of aspidistra. Their beautiful fronds drape down to the dining table. Magic.

The rear courtyard wall features star jasmine trained in a diamond pattern with stephanotis and two small magnolias beside a large copper water bowl. Succulents and herbs in pots, an abundance of climbing roses and sasanquas make this small garden a joy to behold.



The front entrance to Annie's Garden in Quambi Place is a patchwork of different coloured leaves and shapes. Alternanthera, variegated star jasmine, helichrysum, lilies and baby mother-in-law tongue create this diversity with two weeping mulberry trees underplanted with "Society Garlic" and "Mauritian Hemp". The rear garden with its lovely swimming pool sports a white flowering crepe myrtle and white bougainvillea that covers the rear decking.

Myrele in Queen Street is an established garden furnishing an eclectic collection of herbaceous plants with a sandstone path winding beneath a shady brush box underplanted with begonias, bromeliads, justicia and viburnum. Garden beds are filled with salvia, lobster plant, ginger and self-sown Amaranthus. Nandina shrubs, star jasmine and hostas shelter under a clipped cotoneaster framing the verandah steps. An exciting find for the owners was the discovery of an old well beside the terrace, seven and a half metres deep. It has been lovingly restored.

Dizzy Robinson

The Importance of Regular Eye Examinations

Many people, especially those with good vision, don't have their eyes checked on a regular basis. However, it's imperative not to overlook your eyes, even if you feel there's nothing wrong with them.

This is the first in a series of articles, explaining why it's important to have regular eye checkups. I'll discuss the diagnosis of some eye and health conditions that may be present, even when vision seems normal.



Beginning with young children, they should be checked at pre-school age, or just before they start school, as undiagnosed problems can lead to learning difficulties, which slows their progress in the classroom. Children often don't complain about

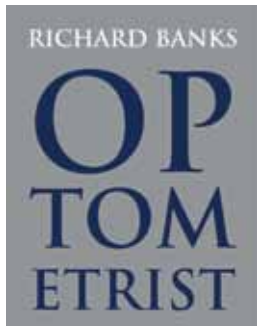
their eyes because they have nothing to compare their vision to, and may not know what they're missing out on. For example, they might think everyone gets sore eyes reading or has intermittently blurry vision, when this doesn't have to be the case.

A child's eye exam can detect if the eye muscles are not working normally for their age group; if they're long or short-sighted, or have other vision problems which will affect learning and comprehension.

Many parents and children are concerned that having an eye examination will result in glasses being prescribed, which is usually not the case. Often, all that's needed is either some advice, or a series of simple eye exercises to help the eyes develop normally.

If glasses are required, it may only be for a relatively short period of time, as once the eyes have developed further, they may not be required. Even when no problems are detected, children should have a routine checkup every two years, but sooner if the child notices a change in their vision, eyestrain or headaches.

Richard Banks



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115 Queen St

How wonderful to see this home restored to its former glory. In 1856, Joseph Trickett, a civil engineer, built a single storey home in a Georgian style at 115 Queen St. It was named Clyde Cottage.

Master builder Alexander McAusland Alston and his family owned Clyde Cottage from 1885 to 1958. He built the upper storey and extensions at the back to create a four-bedroom house.

In 1932, Alston's granddaughter, Dame Joan Sutherland, and her family moved into Clyde Cottage following the death of her father. She was just six and it was her home for the next 19 years. As she reminisced for an article on Clyde Cottage for the Herald in 1999,

"There was a large, somewhat wild garden at the back of the property ... and my uncle kept the facade of the house in perfect condition. It was a very happy period of my life, which has stood me in good stead ever since."

The next owner held it for over 50 years. Unfortunately, little maintenance was done to the house and in 1998 the verandah collapsed.

After much restoration and refurbishment it is finally a beautiful home again and a very welcome sight to be seen in Queen Street.

(Source: *Woollahra, a History of Queen Street and West Woollahra*. Published by QSWWA, Sydney Morning Herald 6.3.99)

Rosemary McDonald

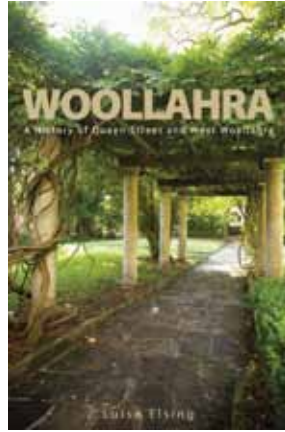


Then



Now

Woollahra History



For over 100 years Woollahra residents and commercial businesses have lived side by side in a successfully developed urban environment or "village". A History of Queen Street and West Woollahra, recounts the background and events relevant to local people, economy and buildings.

Copies of the book are available for \$20 by completing the form online at qswwa.com.au



The Bay Tree is moving!

Look for The Bay Tree coming to 82 Queen St in August. Pop in and see their wonderful products.

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After being closed for extensive renovations for the past 6 weeks, we are proud to announce that Kukthai has re-opened as Woollahra's newest, most anticipated dining venue. Kukthai is now operating as a 30 seat, fully licensed restaurant, serving lunch and dinner 7 days a week. Of course, we are also continuing to offer the great coffee, juices and sandwiches you've come to know and love. Please join us in our new heated, undercover courtyard for a light lunch, after work drinks or a decadent dinner. BYO wine is also available.

114 Queen Street, Woollahra. Ph 9327 1199

Open 7 days - 7am - 10pm. Coffee & Breakfast from 7am

Lunch from 10am. Dinner 5pm - 9.30pm. 10pm close

The Queen Street And West Woollahra Association Ltd

Your community voice!



Annual Dinner



Invitation	You're invited to the Queen Street & West Woollahra Association's Annual Dinner on Monday 31st August 2015. 7.15 pm for 7.45pm at Centennial Hotel, 88 Oxford Street. Experience Justin North's sumptuous cuisine. Tickets include a glass of bubbly and canapés on arrival, a sumptuous 3 course menu, red and white wine from the Centennial cellar, tea and coffee, for \$135 per person.	
Tickets	To buy tickets: complete this form and post to PO Box 16, Woollahra 1350; or call John Knott on 0413 328 815 or Alan Smith on 0417 446 748; or email admin@qswwa.co.au. (Please note seating is limited to 100 places, with a maximum of 6 places per table).	
Your details	Name:	
	Address:	
	Phone:	Email:
Seating Preferences	Tables are available for groups up to 6 per table. Seating will be allocated on a best efforts basis. Preferred number of diners per table:	
	Names of diners you would prefer to be seated with (max 6):	
Ticket numbers & Payment Details	Number of tickets x \$135 = total payment of \$.....	
	Names of ticket holders:	
	Payment method (please make cheque payable to Queen Street and West Woollahra Association) Cheque <input type="checkbox"/> (you can drop cheques off at Laing & Simmons at 88 Queen St Woollahra) Visa <input type="checkbox"/> Mastercard <input type="checkbox"/>	
	Cardholder name:	
	Card number:	Expiry:
Post or collect	Please send me tickets to address above Yes / No or I will collect tickets from Laing & Simmons at 88 Queen Street, Woollahra Yes / No	

THANK YOU

- + We have had an overwhelming response to our spring campaign and we couldn't have done it without you. HOWEVER, it's not too late to get on board
- + With a limited number of spaces available call us today to secure your space for our Spring Auctions
- + Follow us on Facebook to be the first to see new property both for sale and for rent.
- + Get in touch with our office to go into the draw to win a \$400 dinner voucher to Bistro Moncur (T&Cs apply)

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