

# The Original VILLAGE VOICE



Official journal of the Queen Street and West Woollahra Association Ltd No. 114 November 2015 [www.qswwa.com.au](http://www.qswwa.com.au)



Naomi Hamilton  
PHOTOGRAPHY

## Christmas Carols 2015

Tuesday 8 December 5.30 - 8.00pm Chiswick Gardens, Woollahra

## President's Report

A wonderful night was had by all at the Centennial Hotel for our annual Community Dinner. It was a full house, with fantastic food and great company. Special thanks to John Knott and Ian Mansell, Association committee members, and to the staff of the Centennial, in particular John, Carla and Justin, for all their effort and hard work in ensuring the event was a great success.



Since my last report we have established a joint working group to look into addressing the needs of our area, such as the streetscape, business initiatives and shared zones to name a few. The group includes members of our community, both resident and business representatives, Cooper Ward Councillor Katherine O'Regan and staff of Woollahra Council. Mr Allan Coker is the Director of Planning and Development and Mr Peter Kauter is the Manager of Placemaking. We have had four meetings to date and we hope that there will be a positive outcome. As we all know, our area has had been neglected for many years.

Woollahra Council are currently planning an event to mark the long reign of Queen Elizabeth II. They are considering placing a plaque in Davies Reserve near the fountain. This fountain originally came from the Rosemont Estate in Ocean Street and the Association arranged for its restoration and installation in 1987. As we go to print for this issue of the Village Voice we are waiting to hear back from Council as to their final arrangements. When we do, we will put the details of the event in the Association notice board which is located on the wall of Reads, corner of Spicer and Queen Streets.

Our Annual Community Christmas Carols will be held on Tuesday 8th December beginning at 5.30pm at Chiswick Gardens. This is a major highlight of the year and I look forward to seeing many members of our community there. There will be singing, activities for the children and again a wonderful sausage sizzle put on by the chefs of Chiswick Restaurant. A big thank you to the members of our committee and their families for all their hard work and volunteering their valuable time and to our businesses for their support in ensuring this wonderful event can take place again this year.

Seasons greetings and a happy new year.

*Rosemary McDonald*

### Advertise in Village Voice

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## Street Watch

### Hargrave Street Bus shelter

It is wonderful to see the heritage bus shelter rebuilt in Hargrave St. The Association has been assured by Woollahra Councillors and council staff that these heritage bus shelters in Woollahra and Paddington will be maintained and protected. The Brown St shelter is currently being rebuilt.



Clean Up  
Woollahra  
Day



Queen Street West  
Woollahra Association



HOLDSWORTH  
Community

Save the Date

**Clean Up Woollahra & Neighbour Day**

**Sunday 6 March 2016**

10.30 am at Moncur Reserve

Coffee and water and a sausage sizzle lunch provided  
by QSWWA and Holdsworth Centre

More information to come early in 2016

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### **The Queen Street and West Woollahra Association Ltd**

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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.

## Farewells

Recently, we have lost two very much loved and admired locals, Joyce Burnard and Robert Dickerson. Our sympathies go to their families and friends.



### *Joyce Burnard 1918–2015*

Joyce Burnard and her husband, Dr Eric Burnard bought and renovated a terrace house in John Street, Woollahra in 1967, which was her home and haven for 44 years. Joyce was a journalist with New Zealand Woman's Weekly and then sub-editor of The Australian Women's Weekly,

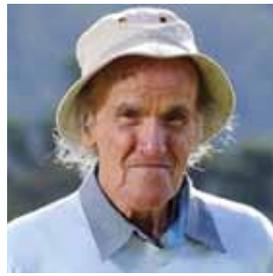
In 1974, by absolute chance as she always said, she founded Ascraft Fabrics, importing hand-loomed furnishing fabrics from India. After showing the samples to interior decorators, who thought they were "brilliant". She decided to give it a go. The business boomed and soon became a nation-wide business. After Eric died in 1991, she wrote two books: *The Early History of Ascraft Fabrics*, which detailed the heady days of the business in 1993, and *Chintz & Cotton: India's Textile Gift to the World* in 1994.

Joyce was a warm and generous friend to many. She loved to help young people setting out in life. She is remembered with much love and affection by her family, friends, god-daughters and godsons, neighbours and colleagues.

### *Robert Dickerson 1924 - 2015*

One of Australia's best known artists, Robert Dickerson, recently died at the age of 91. Robert, known as Bob, was born in 1924 and was still painting at 90. As a teenager he loved to spend hours at the Art Gallery of NSW. Although he was never formally trained, he painted in his spare time and began to exhibit in his 30s, holding his first solo exhibition in 1956.

Bob, his wife Jenny and their family lived for many years in Queen St where the Dickerson Gallery is located. He was a modest man, and has created a unique and powerful



body of work. Bob exhibited in London and Australia, including exhibitions at the Holdsworth Gallery. He has works in most regional gallery collections, many corporate collections, the National Gallery and the Art Gallery of NSW. Bob was a generous philanthropist giving to the National Gallery and Opera Australia. In 2013 he received an Order of Australia in recognition of his contributions to art and philanthropy.

He is survived by his wife Jenny, children, 25 grandchildren, three great-grandchildren and one great-great-grandchild.

## Round Robin



**The Bay Tree** is up and running at 82 Queen St. Drop in and have a look at their beautiful home décor and kitchen items. Great for Christmas presents.

Good to hear that Alexis, David and the team at the **Plane Tree Café** will continue to provide wonderful food and service until at least June 2016.

In another addition to the wonderful food offerings in the street, a sushi shop is said to be moving to 144 Queen St.

Soon to open in Moncur St is **Maloneys Grocer** whose owners tell us '*Maloneys Grocer is a family owned and run business offering locals a convenient one stop shop of quality produce, fresh food and groceries. We aim to be open the last week of November or first week of December. Looking forward to meeting the Woollahra locals!*'



**The Woollahra Hotel** has changed hands and we welcome the new owners, Mitchell Waugh's Public House Management Group.





## Letter Editor's Report

The Committee of your Association, otherwise known as Popular Front for the liberation of Queen Street and its immediate surrounds, has asked me for a brief memoir on our half-yearly dinner, which

was held on August 31 at the Centennial restaurant. As the famous injunction has it *"If you can remember the Sixties, you weren't actually there!"* Fortunately, I am pleased to report that my recall of the evening is almost picture perfect and hopefully I can transmit to you, the happy atmosphere that pervaded this successful function.

We arrived at the Centennial and were immediately struck by a most singular sensation, characterised by a happy buzz that enveloped the whole room, including guests, serving staff, the chef and kitchen crew alike.

The cuisine provided by Justin North and his team was excellent and the service, as always at the Centennial, was professional, friendly and timely. Your Committee had tried hard to choose a menu that reflected the dining needs of both people who really know good food and those with special needs. The feedback from our own table and diners in our proximity was universally positive and we received a lot of positive comments on the evening.

The speeches from the Association were mercifully brief so as not to diminish the pleasures of eating, drinking and socialising. However, it would be remiss of us not to mention the presentations made to two of our long-term office-bearers, immediate Past President Ken Gresham and Mary Read, former head of the traders division of our association. Ken has been a stalwart of QSWWA for about 10 years on and off. During that period he has seen members of Woollahra Council come and go and it is his encyclopaedic knowledge of what makes Woollahra tick that has enabled us deal with the problems that, from time-to-time, afflict the relationships that exist between local government and precinct associations.

Looking around the landscape that is Queen Street and West Woollahra, readers will readily appreciate the difficulties of dealing with local government on many of the basic issues that affect all of our residences and businesses. In this latter area, we acknowledge the unceasing efforts that Mary Read has made on behalf of traders in our area. Like Ken, she has never been one to take 'No' for an answer in trying to improve the local conditions for this important part of our membership. We congratulate them for their unstinting service and wish them well in their new roles.

I should also mention the wines and confirm that the sub-committee provided a Herculean effort in their efforts to taste varieties and vintages that would complement the menu. As one keen imbibor mentioned to me, before staggering off *"you succeeded splendidly in achieving that much sought-after melange of insouciance coupled with an appropriate stimulation of the senses"*.

Summing up the soiree, the last word is left to Georges-Auguste Escoffier who once famously said *"La bonne cuisine est la base du veritable bonheur"* Voila!

Ian Mansell.

## QSWWA Annual Dinner 2015 Centennial Hotel

*"... a happy buzz that enveloped the whole room, including guests, serving staff, the chef and kitchen crew alike."*



Top: Mr & Mrs Corbiau; Diners group; Ian Mansell & Ken Gresham; Rosemary McDonald, Ken Gresham & Mary Read. Opposite from top: Jo Carroll & Sally Beresford; Tony Sunman's table; Alan Smith & Peter Gomer; Georgia Cleary.

## Ken's Corner

Occasional musings by a QSWWA ex-president

It is funny that when you hold fairly fixed views you become more objective when explaining them to someone else. I had need to explain the controversy over the council mergers, in particular the Woollahra Council, to a friend from California. He had no knowledge of our local government system, so I set about explaining some of the background and the issues as I understood them.

My view had always been "if it ain't broke don't try to fix it" therefore opposed the merger of Woollahra Council with other councils. So I explained . . . .

- The main issue for many who write to the press seems to be that a merger would result in an increase in rates.



The logical answer for the proponents of the plan is a guaranteed pegging of the rates to a maximum of CPI increase over the first number of years.

- Woollahra Council had merged over the years with the old Vaucluse Council and bits of the city so historically not an innovation.
- Sentiment seems to play a strong role in people's opinion including mine!

My American friend asked me a tough question "Are you happy with the work of the present council?"

Before telling how I answered I do need to explain that I had recently stepped down as President of our association for about ten years off and on. I must say that although individual councillors had been very supportive, generally council's actual performance for us had been sadly lacking, eg. a Masterplan to upgrade Queen St, which was drawn up by council in co-operation with the association at a consultant's cost of \$70,000. The results after three years is that a few tiny street seats have been installed, which everyone agrees are inappropriate, and no budget towards the estimated \$2.5 million for any further works. Other council decisions contrary to the wishes of locals like the doomed Community Markets seemed strange.

My answer to my American friend – I prefer no change but if change happens it's not the end of the world!

*Ken Gresham*

*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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## Woollahra's dining heritage celebrated

On Tuesday 22nd September, The Hotel Centennial presented legendary Australian Chef Damien Pignolet alongside Justin North for a dinner to celebrate the very best of spring and to pay tribute to Damien's lifelong contribution to Woollahra's dining scene. The two Chefs prepared a menu that paid tribute to some of the iconic restaurants that Damien has made famous including Claudes and Bistro Moncur. The Spring dinner was a wonderful testament to Damien's passion, heritage and culinary credibility. Hotel Centennial is planning a night of Christmas Feasting with a special menu by chef Justin North on December 8th to coincide with the QSWWA Christmas Carols.

### Damien Pignolet 'Celebrity Chef' Third in a series of articles by John Knott

Damien Pignolet was born in Melbourne in 1948. His mother was of German and English descent and a fine home cook. His father was of French descent with a great grandfather who owned plantations in Mauritius and the Reunion Islands. The family migrated to Australia after the tragic death of his grandfather's father, Comte (Count) de Fresne.

As a young man Damien spent much time watching his beloved mother whisking, mixing and baking, and at 18 he started his journey at the William Angliss College of Hotel Management and Catering. The course covered everything to do with cooking delicious food including the history of French cuisine. The great chef Auguste Escoffier became his hero. After graduating, Damien spent several years in commercial catering, ran a cooking school and created The Culinary Arts Club. After reading Elizabeth David's French Provincial Cooking, Damien embarked on a journey of culinary discovery of France and Italy.

Back in Sydney in 1978, Damien was appointed as executive chef at the Pavilion on the Park by famous Danish Chef Mogens Bay Esbensen. This is also where he met his wife to be Josephine Carroll who was then an



Justin North, Damien Pignolet and Simon Marnie

apprentice chef. Mogens and Damien expanded and set up the Old Bank restaurant in Darlinghurst with Josephine at the helm and Damien as executive chef of both restaurants. In 1981 Damien and Josephine bought Claudes French restaurant in Woollahra, renaming it simply Claudes. Within 2 years Claudes was awarded 3 hats in the SMH Good Food Guide, which the restaurant maintained throughout the eleven years of Pignolet's reign.

Tragically in 1987, Josephine died in a motor accident which left Damien seriously injured. Claudes reopened 4 months later, but the years that followed were not the same without Josephine, and Damien longed for a new challenge. The chance came through meeting Dr Ron White and his wife Robin. Ron sparked off the idea of a larger restaurant where Damien could direct rather than cook. They bought Woollahra hotel, and in 1993 Bistro Moncur was born. This started a revolution in suburban pub dining.

Bistro Moncur with its fantastic new décor married with the growing market, and in 2005, Damien published his first book 'French'. Sadly, by 2008 with the onset of the GFC and then the tragic death of Damien's great colleague, Ron White, the decision was made to sell the Woollahra Hotel.

2016 is the 25th anniversary of the *SMH Good Food Guide's Josephine Pignolet Award*. The Young Chef of the Year award is a fine honour of Josephine Pignolet's spirit and talent and is judged by Damien and industry experts.



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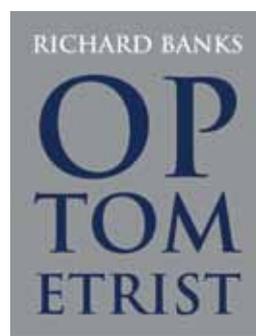
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## An early history of Queen Street

Prior to the arrival of the British in 1788, it is estimated that between 4,000 and 8,000 indigenous people lived in the area.

Queen Street was originally called Piper Street after Captain John Piper (1774-1851). John Street was also named after him.

**1820s:** Piper St was an access track leading off Old South Head Rd (this section is now called Oxford St)

**1827:** In payment of a debt, Piper divided his estate between Daniel Cooper and Solomon Levey with Cooper taking the area which is today called West Woollahra.

**1840s:** Development in Paddington gained impetus from the construction of Victoria Barracks.

**1858:** There were 8 residences on Piper St.

**1860:** Woollahra Municipal Council was established and its first official work was to repair Piper St between Ocean St and Oxford St.

**1865:** Gas lighting was provided in the street as well as the first post box.

**1867:** The name West Woollahra came into use. There were more than 50 residences in Piper St. A hotel, called the Gardeners Arms, was opened on the corner of Piper St and Moncur St, where the Woollahra Hotel stands today.

**1871:** A second hotel, called the Woollahra Hotel was opened at 43 Piper St. It was renamed several times, finally being called Queen's Hotel.

**1872:** The Post-master General was petitioned by 72 local residents to open a Woollahra post office.

**1876:** Churchill butchery was opened by James Churchill at no.132 and has remained a butcher shop ever since.

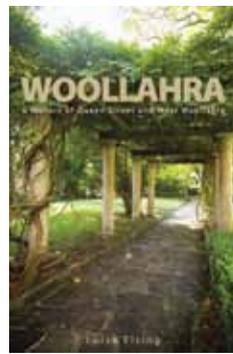
**1877:** Woollahra Public School was opened.

**1880:** The name Piper St was changed to Queen St to honour 40 years of Queen Victoria's reign. However, some of the older residents were reluctant to use the new name and for some years Queen St was still Piper St in letters and official responses.

There were by this time, 163 separate residences and shops.

**1888:** Centennial Park was opened.

*(References: Queen St and District, A history and guide, A Halliday & R Brampton, 1987. and Woollahra, A History of Queen Street and West Woollahra, L. Elsing, 2013. Both published by Queen Street West Woollahra Association.*



## Woollahra History Book

*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 [www.qswwa.com.au](http://www.qswwa.com.au)

## Being dementia friendly

A dementia-friendly community can be described as a place *“where people with dementia are understood, respected and supported, and confident they can contribute to community life. In a dementia-friendly community people will be aware of and understand dementia, and people with dementia will feel included and involved, and have choice and control over their day-to-day lives”* (Alzheimer's Society, 2013).

Alzheimer's Australia has approved Holdsworth Community Centre and Gaden Cafe as Dementia Friendly Organisations and Holdsworth is promoting the concept of a Dementia Friendly Community in Woollahra. With the support of Woollahra Council, Holdsworth is developing an awareness campaign on dementia and hopes to have the involvement of local businesses. Local identity Diana Fisher has agreed to come on board as Ambassador. To find out more about Dementia Friendly Communities, or about Holdsworth programs for older people, contact Jonathan Rhodes on 9302 3600.



## GALLERY COLLECTION

### EXHIBITION AND SALE



Tim Storrier *The Night Road* acrylic 76 x 152 cm signed



Jeffrey Smart *Figures on the Beach* 1955 oil  
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