

Local History Walking Tour

Woollahra Libraries

Queen Street: Celebrating 2025



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- 1 All Woollahra Libraries are closed on public holidays
- 2 All our Libraries are accessible

Watsons Bay Library
8 Marine Parade,
Watsons Bay
9391 7999
Mon, Fri: 2.00pm – 5.00pm
Tue, Thu: 9.30am – 5.00pm
Wed: 12 noon – 7.00pm
Sat, Sun: closed

Paddington Library
(Jointly funded with City of Sydney)
247 Oxford St, Paddington
9391 7988
Mon, Tue: 9.30am – 6.00pm
Wed: 12 noon – 8.00pm
Thu, Fri: 9.30am – 6.00pm
Sat: 10.00am – 4.00pm
Sun: 10.00am – 4.00pm

Double Bay Library at Double Bay
451 New South Head Rd,
Double Bay
9391 7100
Mon to Fri: 9.00am – 8.00pm
Sat, Sun: 10.00am – 4.00pm



Discover Woollahra's rich history through our research guides and the Woollahra Libraries Digital Archive.

Want to explore more?

1884 view with tram looking east down Queen Street at Moncur Street corner. Woollahra Libraries MS 182.



This walk of approximately 20 minutes takes you along Queen Street from east to west, stopping at 21 sites along the way. Follow the northern side of Queen Street from the Nelson Street intersection to the Oxford Street crossing and return on the southern side.

This area was booming in the 1860s with gas street lighting and the first post box installed in 1865. In 1878, Piper Street was renamed Queen Street to honour Queen Victoria. Steam trams travelled from the city in 1881, establishing the street as the residential and commercial centre still seen today.

Historic Queen Street

4 168 Queen Street



1884, Woollahra Libraries MS 182

On the north-western corner with Ocean Street, this group of interwar buildings masks a forgotten history. On 13 July 1866 city merchant David Jones laid the foundation stone of a Congregational Church that once graced this corner, alongside its school (built in 1870s). In 1923, the Ocean Street and the Jersey Road Congregational Churches merged, and demolition of the Ocean Street Congregation's buildings made room for the house on the corner, "Rosyth" and two residential flat buildings seen today.

5 118 Queen Street



1958 image by Ian Scott, Woollahra Libraries Digital Archive PF003193

This pink structure, known as Queen's Court, approximates a former group of corner buildings in a sympathetic 1976 reconstruction. The collection of original shops was known as MacDonald's corner, for William MacDonald and his family, who operated a hardware store for decades starting in 1887. The family expanded into china, glass and confectionary retail in adjacent storefronts. Later the corner shop became a long-time pharmacy operated first by William Bulgin (1911 to c1925), then L.V. Solomon (until 1942) and finally Ted Robinson, Solomon's apprentice (until 1976).

Keeping on the northern side of Queen Street, cross Moncur Street at the lights

1 180 Queen Street



Pre 1970s, Woollahra Libraries Digital Archive pf005720

This simple Georgian style house, with a central door and sash windows either side was probably built c1858. Note the difference between the dressed and smaller stones now that the veranda is removed. Frederick Tiddeman, a carpenter, was in residence by 1859, and remained the occupant until 1887.

2 170 Queen Street



#170 (left) in 1976, Woollahra Libraries Digital Archive pf001854

The Nisbet family resided here with their paint, oil and colour merchant business from 1869 until the 1880s. Neville Gruzman (a distinguished architect) operated his architectural practice from here after 1970.

3 31 Ocean Street



1991, Woollahra Libraries Digital Archive me044a

The oldest surviving shop in the area has housed a butcher, fishmonger, boot warehouse, green grocers, stationers, oil and colour merchant and general store. The Parterre Garden has been a fixture on the Ocean Street frontage for forty years.

Keeping on the northern side of Queen Street, cross Ocean Street at the lights



6 116 Queen Street



Aklands Hotel c1900, Woollahra Libraries Digital Archive pf008321

Henry Akland built the substantial hotel captured in this image c1887. In the 1930s it was completely rebuilt as the Art Deco hotel on the site today. Now known as the "Woollahra Hotel," that name was once attached to a hotel at #43 Queen St, built c1871 (see Stop 13).

7 100 Queen Street



1982, West Woollahra Field Survey

Alfred Carter operated a chemist in this single storey shop between 1884 and 1887, after which his wife Emma continued the business until 1891. Carter was fined in his first year in Queen Street for violating the Poisons Act, after he sold strychnine to Frances Ann Payne without making a sales entry in his records. Payne subsequently died.

8 80-82 Queen Street



#80 (left) and #82 (middle) in 1976, Woollahra Libraries Digital Archive pf001886

Robert Powys, furniture dealer, built #82 in 1879 to accommodate his family and business. In 1885 he added #80, eventually letting both buildings to tenants - a boot warehouse, stationer and tailor. From 1910-c1955, #80 housed the Woollahra School of Arts and Institute, where space and classes were offered for

adults to read and pursue cultural interests. The Trustees of the Institute acquired both properties from the Powys family c1912, holding them until c1961. The Institute was part of an era when schooling was not a universal right, and many workers strived to self-educate.

9 36-40 Queen Street



1976, Woollahra Libraries Digital Archive pf001876

Built in the late 1860s, the three-storey façade was completed by 1870 and a hall added in 1922. #38 housed the Oddfellows Hall, which started with 107 members in 1863. The Oddfellows held meetings every Tuesday and provided a health care fund. By 1930, the building was converted to a factory

to process and store tobacco. Leo and Anne Schofield restored the building in the 1970s, with Anne Schofield's antique business continuing from #36 today.

10 18-32 Queen Street



1976, Woollahra Libraries Digital Archive pf001874

This building, in the variety of its use, epitomises the history of the built environment of Queen Street. Described in 1870 as a four-room stone building, six years later the land supported a house and shop. The upper storey was added by 1880. The building later housed

a grocery store, a milliner (1886), and William Knust who was a furniture broker (1887-9). Frank Lopez's hairdressing shop started in 1890 and was eventually operated by Percival Browne. Finally, in the 1920s and 30s, Mr Browne ran a tobacco store from the shop, with a factory in operation a few doors down. The variety in businesses has continued to today.

11 20-26 Queen Street



1976, Woollahra Libraries Digital Archive pf001871

This group of four 1888 Italianate terraces illustrate the late 19th century building boom. The four were built by Emanuel Saber, a man of considerable means who lived at "Runnymede, currently #23 Jersey Road, a modest-sized Victorian mansion set in a generous garden. He

named these houses #20 "Tara," #22 "Kent," #24 "Elba," and #26 "Omer" as still seen in the glass above their doorways.

12 14 Queen Street



1976, Woollahra Libraries Digital Archive pf001868

Today's Hughenden Hotel began in 1876 as the Gothic and Italianate mansion of Frederick Quaife. A graduate of both Glasgow and Sydney, Quaife was president of the British Medical Association (1884-5). In the twentieth century, his former home became a boarding house called

"Centennial Lodge." Susanne Gervay revived the building as the "Hughenden" from 1993-2007. As an author of Young Adult literature, she opened its doors to writers, illustrators, librarians and teachers for book launches and author talks.

Cross to the southern side of Queen Street using the crossings and lights

13 43 Queen Street



1982, West Woollahra Field Survey

This is the site of the original "Woollahra Hotel," rebuilt to three-storeys from 1905. Early publican Samuel Studd had built a smaller hotel at this location in 1871. That building was also called Moore's Hotel (1890) and Queens Hotel under later proprietors O'Halloran

14 97-99 Queen Street



The Woollahra Post Office Woollahra Libraries Digital Archive PF008317

(c1893) and Edward Cook (1898). The name "Woollahra Hotel" moved to the corner of Moncur and Queen in the 1930s (see Stop 6). Before the Woollahra Post Office was built - seen here under construction in 1905 - Frederick Konneke operated a butcher shop (seen below) from this corner of Moncur and Queen Streets. The Post Office closed its doors in 2011 and now houses a few small, commercial tenancies. Queen Street's earliest postal 'service' had been the installation of a pillar box on the kerb outside Thomas Griffith's corner shop, in 1865 (See Stop 3). Later, a post office operated from a draper's shop in Ocean Street. The 1905 building was the first purpose-built local structure for postal services.



1890, Woollahra Libraries Digital Archive pf008373

15 101-103 Queen Street

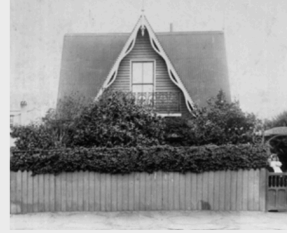


1966, Woollahra Libraries Digital Archive pf004381

This corner of Queen and Moncur Street was the site of master-builder Heinrich Dorhauer's business, which stretched to Dorhauer Lane and John Street. In the 1850s, Heinrich established workshops, builders' yards, offices and premises to let, including the large corner building.

Dating to the 1870s, it is shown here shortly before restoration by Neville Marsh (also the restorer of the former bank at Stop 19).

16 109 Queen Street



c1900, Woollahra Libraries Digital Archive pf008401

This street parking scheme marks the former site of "Lorelei," the Dorhauer family home, demolished in 1958 to create car spaces. "Lorelei" was a timber house with a steeply pitched roof. Carpenter and cabinet maker Heinrich died here in 1890.

17 115 Queen Street



1982, West Woollahra Field Survey

From 1932 to 1951, "Clyde Cottage" was the childhood home of operatic soprano Dame Joan Sutherland OM, AC, DBE, following her father's sudden death. Her maternal grandfather had long before enlarged the 1850s single-storey cottage, which comfortably

housed the unexpected extension of the family. Throughout her exceptional career, Sutherland travelled widely but looked back on life in Queen Street as "a very happy period of my life which has stood me in good stead ever since."

18 117 Queen Street



1883, Woollahra Libraries Digital Archive pf008418

The Thomson family manufactured hat and bonnet boxes here in the 1860s in a since-demolished wooden house. "ST KEVIN'S" was built in 1893 for Dr Patrick Collins (seen in the image) to the design of John Bede Barlow. It is the only known building by Barlow surviving unaltered. Leo

Schofield, journalist / wine and food critic restored it in the 1970's. Between 1991-6 former prime minister Paul Keating owned this local heritage property.

19 123 Queen Street



c1886, Woollahra Libraries Digital Archive pf008417

This grand two-storey structure was built as the English, Scottish and Australian Chartered Bank in 1886. The former bank building became the private house of Edward Pulsford, a politician of the Federation era who served in both the NSW Legislative Council and the Federal Senate. A careful

restoration by Queen Street locals Neville Marsh and George Freedman in the 1970s preceded its 1980s occupant Dr William McBride, well-known for his medical research.

20 135 Queen Street



Woollahra Libraries Digital Archive mm000291

"West Hall," the two-storey sandstone Victorian gothic house that once stood at #135 Queen Street, was home from 1903 to 1908 to poet 'Banjo' Paterson and his wife Alice. It was the family home when Paterson edited "Old Bush Songs: Composed and Sung in the Bushranging." A 'walk' of plaques outside

Stop 5 commemorates Paterson's Woollahra connection.

21 14 Waimea Ave



1950s image by Ian Scott Woollahra Libraries Digital Archive pf004107

At the end of Waimea Avenue, this two-storey regency townhouse was converted into the Royal Blind Society's "Helen Keller Hostel" in 1949, with Keller herself laying a foundation stone for the building modifications. Left vulnerable to demolition by the hostel's closure in 1973, local residents

defended "Waimea" when bulldozers pulled the veranda off, prompting a "green ban" on the site and ultimately rescuing the house from destruction.