

## The Mixing Pot

In the early 1980s, when my flirtation with the Labor Party was still vaguely alive, I used lunch at The Mixing Pot fairly regularly with a group led by Dick Hall, the author of *Disorganised Crime* and many quasi-spy stories, formerly private secretary to Gough Whitlam.

Over the years I drifted away from the group and have been very irregularly an attendee at The Mixing Pot, probably visiting twice in the last seven years.

Recently I was asked if I would be interviewed by the biographer of Dr Margaret Mulvey, a close friend who was the first female Head of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology at King George V Hospital. Geographically The Mixing Pot was convenient and so we went there.

I was greeted by name as if I had been in twice a week for the whole of the last decade. My guest was enthusiastically received likewise and helped on the stairs as she was obviously disabled. We were taken to an excellent table on the terrace, looking down over the garden-like atmosphere of the place and drinks and bread were brought in moments.

We ate firstly stuffed zucchini flowers, crispy-fried with a stuffing of soft Italian cheese, parsley and a lot of garlic. These were superb, succulent and crunchy. Next we shared fresh asparagus, steamed with butter and Parmesan which was likewise excellent.

The *piece de resistance* however was the slow-roasted baby goat, which we both had; the meat dark and gamey falling from the bones and served with a sauce of tomato, olives and the ubiquitous garlic and onion. Side dishes of Chat potatoes with rosemary and fresh green beans rounded out a superb meal.

We had beer to start, Peroni, and a glass of Bridgewater Mill Semillon each and a glass of Piper's Brook Pinot Noir each.

This was a superb meal and I strongly recommend The Mixing Pot as it now is to anyone who wants to get a little bit out of town to lunch.

**The Mixing Pot** 178 St John's Road, Glebe

Tel: (02) 9660 7449 or (02) 9692 9424.

Open for lunch: Mon to Friday.

Open for dinner: Mon to Saturday

Credit Cards: All

## The Beach House Seafood Restaurant

Looking back, I realised that I have never given The Beach House Seafood Restaurant in Wollongong the review it richly deserves.

I recently spent a day travelling and preparing a Wollongong case, only to be marked 'Not reached' at 4.00pm the following day. This meant I had two meals in this top quality restaurant.

The décor is a little passé but the service and the food would attract attention anywhere in Australia.

On the first night, before I realised the size of the servings, I had an entrée of smoked salmon and (salmon roe) caviar on home made and puffy but delicious bread. There were four small rolls adorned with the smoked salmon and the caviar – two would have been plenty. I should have taken my wife!

For the main course I had barbequed green lobster with a garlic butter sauce, which was fabulous. I saw the lobster being taken from the tank and it turned up absolutely delicious served with mashed potato and a salad which, in view of what I am about to write, was superfluous. I ordered the garden salad which was quite the nicest salad I have had anywhere outside my own home. Red and green capsicum, carrot slivers, tomato, cucumber, Spanish onion and five different kinds of lettuce were served in a large soup-bowl like plate and topped with half an avocado, sliced for easy cutting but in one piece. It was dressed with balsamic vinegar, olive oil and garlic and it was superb.

The service was attentive and friendly and I was placed at a table with quite enough light to continue reading my book, which I did until I realised I was more absorbed in the meal!

The second night, wise to the size of the servings, I repeated the garden salad and simply had the Daily Special fish and chips. Five lovely small flathead fillets in a crisp and crunchy beer batter were served with chips and were piping hot.

Both evenings I washed the meal down with a Hill Smith Sauvignon Blanc which I had not tried before. It was fruity, crisp and delicious.

I know the Vietnamese restaurant in Wollongong has a strong following, but bookings have to be made almost three weeks ahead now and The Beach House has the merit of being but 30 metres from the door of the Novotel North Beach. The restaurant is, by country standards, not cheap but for meals of this quality you would pay a lot more in Sydney.

When next in Wollongong, give it a try.

**The Beach House Seafood Restaurant**

16 Cliff Road, North Wollongong.

Tel: (02) 4228 5590.

Open for lunch and dinner seven days a week.

Credit Cards: All