



## The Scandal of *Ulysses* 1997

An arcade show, directed by Simon McGuinness

In 1997, the focus was on why *Ulysses* had achieved such notoriety.

The Bloomsday community met in the early morning (7.30am) at a courtroom in the Mint, kindly made available to Bloomsday by Chief Justice Phillips. There the reading of the 1933 judgement of Justice Woolsey was re-enacted, with an assembly of supporters and detractors (among them George Bernard Shaw and W. B. Yeats) interrupting proceedings. Leaving the Mint, it was necessary to pass by a painting of Queen Victoria, which was subjected to some Ulyssean obloquy.

The carriageway entrance to the Supreme Court was our next stop, where a legally-focussed reading was interrupted, to our delight, by the strong arm of the law, who, it seems, had not communicated recently with the Chief Justice.

Cafe Duomo in the Block Arcade, a remnant of 'Marvellous Melbourne' of the post-gold-boom of the 1880s, provided breakfast. We were less than purist in not ordering kidneys for breakfast, preferring the kind of continental fare that Stephen was been more familiar with. The humble iron bedstead, complete with a slumbrous Molly, was centrally located under the dome, and within easy reach of a chemist where soap was purchased, and a sweet shop.

Further up the arcade, outside an Irish goods shop and under the gaze of Gog and Magog, the Citizen's illuminated hanky was celebrated while a 30-metre long washing line was hung with illuminated Irish-linen tea-towels - a feat that took up a high proportion of the available space.

The David Jones foodhall provided an opportunity for Blazes to purchase a peach from a none-too-unwilling beautiful woman.

Walking up Collins Street to the Uniting Church on Russell Street, Bloomsday flaneurs passed Kay Craddock's Antiquarian Bookshop, which featured Joyce in its knee-level window. The superb acoustics of the Georgian style church with its surround balcony enabled a staging of Bloom's encounter with the pious in the Lotus Eater's chapter, and a counterpointed exchange between Stephen and Bloom about their respective religious traditions between Stephen and Bloom drawn from Ithaca.

A brisk walk down Collins took us to lunch at the Mitre Tavern, Melbourne's oldest pub (it shares the distinction with one other). Outside, the boxing match between the Dublin Lamb and his imperial adversary was staged with Maureen Andrew letting loose from the side of the ring. Here, Mary Kenneally demonstrated why it is that Joyce so offended nationalist pieties in the Cyclops chapter, and Bloom was put on trial for his deviant behaviours.

Kay Craddock's Bookshop was the site for Joyce's canter through English Literature taken from Oxen of the Sun.

The afternoon seminar at the State Library of Victoria featured Professor John McLaren of Victoria University and Jack Hibberd, who read a story in which Joyce met Monk O'Neil on One Tree Hill. It demonstrated the affinities between the two writers.

The evening gala was held at the appropriately named Savage Club. The oldest literary club in the city, it boasts an Imperial decor, complete with spears, shrunken heads and solar topees. Seating was in individual leather armchairs around the manorial fireplaces. The stage is a bijou affair with the oldest footlights in Melbourne. The show focussed on Bloom's and Molly's fantasy lives, bringing to life the Photobits girl/Poulaphouca nymph, and Bloom's many tormentors and critics.