

the Quay Cafe

We always hear the saying that 'Greeks are everywhere... no matter where you go, you will find a Greek.' So, it is amazing to witness there are Greek shops and businesses everywhere in Sydney. On July 9, 2017, Vasilis Vasilas interviewed Dino (Konstantinos) Manthopoulos of The Quay Café at Circular Quay wharf no. 6 and quickly realised the historical presence of the Greeks here. During the 1970s and 1980s, most of the shops on the various wharfs, whether a milk bar or takeaway shop were run by Greeks.

Dino Manthopoulos The Quay Café, Circular Quay (wharfs)

Having worked in West Germany for a couple of years, Dino returned to Greece for his National Service; upon its completion, Dino successfully applied to migrate to Australia. Like every new beginning, life was not easy; after a couple of jobs, which only lasted a week, Dino found stability when he got a job in a workshop which produced metal wire for bundles (i.e. newspapers). Motivated to run his own business, an opportunity arose to sub lease a coffee lounge, off the Patronis brothers, on Wharf No. 5. A couple of years later, Dino and Elias Tsiolis, sub lease the milk bar on Wharf No. 3, (again) off the Patronis brothers. Dino was captivated by the throbbing heartbeat of the Quay.

In 1977, Dino returned to Greece where he marries Vivi; after returning to Sydney, he continued running businesses, whether they were coffee lounges like the Imperial or Chariotto, or a confectionery factory. After sponsoring his brothers, Iraklis and Thanas, to Australia, they would run Dino's Coffee Lounge until the late 1990s.

Dino's love affair with the Quay never ceased; an opportunity arose for him to buy The Quay Café on Wharf No. 6; a few years later, Dino and his brothers would take over the shop on Wharf No 2.

While Dino's brothers have moved on, he continues running The Quay Café and the shop on No. 2, as well as running the kiosk on the Manly Ferry line.

Vasilis was awestruck at Dino's story of the Greeks on Circular Quay's wharfs, 'There is a strong sense of history in Dino's story because he has seen so many changes to Circular Quay, and the city itself. Whether it was the brawling teenagers (after returning from Luna Park) in the early 1970s or passersby continually stealing the hat from the life-size evzone doll outside The Quay Café, Dino animatedly tells a great story of the Quay!'

