

## The Outer West: The Cappuccino Wave

Date: 1 June 2015

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How far has the cappuccino wave reached across outer western Sydney?"

A decade (or so) ago, I remember driving down King Street Newtown as it was emerging from its historical past into a thriving eat street and café society with ‘cappucinno’ being sold at many venues (and one could even sit at tables on the street would you believe!). Just down the road as I drove through Enmore and Stanmore (in the same era) there were still the remnants of milk bars along the streets. Within such a short distance what I called then ‘the cappucinno wave’ had not made its way out of the CBD city centre further than King Street. But look at Enmore and Stanmore today and the coffee is in abundance. In this case the cappuccino wave has made its way organically through the old suburbs with the advent of a growing market of those who like drinking coffee while sitting on a street corner.

The wave however has not been so slow as to continue in a linear fashion (time-wise or geographically) outward from Enmore toward the Blue Mountains. Instead it has leap frogged into outer-west centres through its regional shopping centres which literally implant a whole new ‘commoditised internal township’ into the old streetscape. With this implant comes all the modern (international and national) brands and imagery including the usual cappuccino offerings.

Meanwhile what were the high streets of these towns are often relegated to secondary retail offerings. On these streets, however it is a sign of a resilient growing centre if they still hold the capacity to offer cappuccino (and the other coffee choices) at a table on a street pavement where the streetscape still resembles a scene out of a country town.

Dr Jonathan Drane



Coffee on the old High Street Penrith, May 2015, Google Maps

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