

6.4. MM04: Vale Jim Saad– Sixty Years a Shoemaker

Railway concourses are by nature cold, hard-edged impersonal spaces. Commuters rush heads down, AirPods in, intent on boarding their regular morning or evening train.

Milsons Point station has always been a bit different – warmer, friendlier and less frantic. That’s because Milson’s Point station, for the last sixty years, had Jim the shoemaker.

Jim Saad brought new meaning to the word *sole*-mate. He never just fixed shoes, he was the friendly face that infused the Milsons Point community with joy and jest whenever they visited his shop, Shoe Repairs and Key Cuttings.

Sadly, Mr Saad passed away last month from a heart attack, after contracting COVID-19. Tributes were left outside his shop as a testimony to the difference he made in our lives and some of them included:

“A bit cheeky but always a gentleman”,

“Fond memories of Jim trying to make my size 36 shoes fit my size 39 feet. Vale Jim our friend.”

(To his family) “Thank you for sharing Jim with us, we were so lucky we knew him”.

“We will all miss your good cheer”

Of course, locals patronised Jim’s shop for reasons more than the magic he performed to make old shoes look new again. We all went there for the jokes, smiles, banter and kind words.

Jim was born in Lebanon and arrived in Sydney Australia in 1962 at the age of 20. He started work at Milson Point Shoe Repairs & Key Cutting when he was 22 years of age. After 2 years Jim bought the business and worked there until he was 80.

He had no intention of retiring because his shop was more than just a place of work - it was a home away from home where he spent his days chatting with his regulars. Many customers lived within walking distance and others lived further afield. The daily commuters loved the convenience of this concourse shop and he often stated proudly that once a customer bought a shoe in for repair, they wouldn’t go anywhere else. In fact he even made the oversized shoes for the Luna Park clowns. Jim owned the longest trading business in our LGA.

I’m sure you will all join me in sending our condolences to his family for this significant loss.

I therefore recommend:

1. THAT Council install a small, appropriate memorial near the Milsons Point station, possibly a small tree with a plaque.

**COUNCILLOR JILLY GIBSON
MAYOR**