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discovering

by KEMING KUO

"When you come to our place, relax and take your time. We don't rush ourselves or you as customers. Stay awhile . . . talk with someone. Leave behind the fast pace of the street . . ."

That suggestion, from the Classic Coffeehouse, is what coffeehouses are all about.

Coffeehouses were the hangouts of the 1950s beat generation — the beatniks with sweatshirts and beards. There was coffee, poetry, jazz, chess and talk.

The bohemians are gone, but coffeehouses still are around, some in the tradition of the 50s, some with a completely different atmosphere but the same menu. Here are some of Seattle's:

At the **Classic**, 5509 University Way N.E., you know it's a coffeehouse because that's what the big sign in front says.

Still called "Otto's" by local folks, the Classic is owned and operated by Marianne Wolfe. The tastefully appointed home was transformed into a coffeehouse by Otto Borsodi on Halloween night, 1976. Otto had started several other cafes and a year later decided to move on to New Orleans (where he's started a new coffeehouse).

When Otto left, Marianne purchased most of the furnishings, paid the \$325 rent and changed its name. It's open Thursday through Sunday from 7 p.m. to 2 a.m. (Marianne works at a bookstore Monday through Wednesday.) Poetry readings are held periodically.

Marianne says most of the clients are neighborhood residents or movie-goers from a theater across the street.

"We figure we're breaking even," Marianne said. "Our espresso is 35 cents, probably the cheapest in the city. But the other, more elaborate coffees make up for its low price and the general

rise in coffee prices."

Amid background classical music (KING-FM), customers sit in modest chairs and tables drinking one of 20 types of coffee ranging from plain old American, 20 cents, to Caffe Pagliacci, \$1.25. Other homemade beverages, soups, salads, sandwiches and deserts are also offered.

Another authentic looking coffeehouse is the **B and O Espresso**, 204 Belmont Ave. E. (at the intersection of Belmont and Olive, hence "B and O").

The owners, Jane Goode and Lois Pierris, met while traveling in Greece in 1972. Four years later, they decided to start the coffeehouse.

"We tried to make it a European atmosphere rather than Bohemian," Lois said. "The density of apartment dwellings in the Capitol Hill area attract many young people, but a few are in their 60s and 70s."

The pair are so busy at night that "we can't deal with other things like music and poetry," Jane said. "We did have some jazz a year ago, but it was too loud for our neighbors."

A full range of espresso coffee is served, and the B and O variety is better than the rest, Jane said, because the coffee beans are from the famed Graffeo's of San Francisco.

Homemade meals and Viennese pastry are served at the B and O, and they have applied for a license to serve wine, Lois said.

The B and O is open from 11 a.m. to 1 a.m. during the week and until 2 a.m. on Friday and Saturday. Sunday hours are 8 to 12 p.m.

"There's more out there than Lipton's," said Yetta Rouse of Yettas, 1807 42nd Ave. E. in Madison Park.

Yetta's really is a tea room, which, like the Classic, is tucked away in a house.

Afternoon-tea sandwiches, soups and deserts are served, but Yetta added:

"I don't want to be known as a restaurant."

So there are 20 different types of coffees, 60 kinds of teas, at least 75 types of herbs and lots of candies. It is as much a store as a coffeehouse.



Marianne Wolfe in the Classic.

— Staff photo by Richard S. Heyza.

All of the food is homemade, Yetta says, and pains are taken to get the best ingredients. The ginger, for example, is imported from Canada.

Afternoons finds the place packed with folks of all ages. Since the coffeehouse is near Broadmoor, the clientele may be more familiar with Cadillacs and Guccis rather than the Volkswagens and Earth Shoes of the usual coffeehouse crowd.

Yetta's is open from 10 a.m. until 5:30 p.m. weekdays; until 5 on Saturdays.

Four University District restaurants serve as coffeehouses: The **Allegro Espresso Bar**, 4214 University Way N.E., the **Last Exit on Brooklyn**, 3930 Brooklyn Ave.

N.E., the **Continental Pastry Shop**, 4549 University Way N.E., and **Woerne's European Cafe and Pastry Shop**, 4108 University Way N.E.

The **Allegro** and **Last Exit** are long-time in-spots of the university crowd. The **Allegro** is modest in furnishings and decor. It keeps newspapers handy for readers and sippers. The **Last Exit** has impromptu, unknown and often not very good singers, but its peanut butter sandwich is a traditional favorite.

The other two are more formal restaurants and specialists more in pastry than coffee.

The uptown **Continental** calls itself the "only Zaharoplateion in the Northwest." If it all sounds

Greek to you, it's because the word means Greek pastry shop. **Souvlaki** (skewers of beef) and **Bifteki** with **Tzatziki** (beef patties) are available. **Zorba's** music may be heard in the background.

**Woerne's** is the shop with all the kids eating pastries while waiting for the bus outside its front door. **Woerne's** doesn't play Wagner on the Muzak, but the menu has the best of the worst — **Jagdwurst**, **Warmespeisen**. There's also **mocca eclairs**, **Viennese Pretzel** — and coffee.

The **Washington Post Cafe**, 3425 Fremont Ave. N., specializes in egg dishes as well as its coffee. Jazz wafts through the greenery and solid, big tables. The "hot tuna" sandwich is for environmen-

talists: It's line-caught bonita and not a threat to dolphins, which are killed when other tuna is caught with a net.

The **Cafe Society**, 89 S. Washington, St. is Pioneer Square's answer: exposed pipe and brick and jazzy music. Dinner is served Thursday and Friday nights. **Bockwurst**, salads, deserts and other beverages are offered in addition to espresso.

The **Raison D'Etre**, First Avenue and Virginia Street, has Otto's old espresso machine.

The **Vitium Capitale**, two flights up on the Corner Market in the Pike Place Market, has brief hours, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. It, too, is tiny, yet has interesting tapestries on the walls.