



Faces in the street

A century later, how far have we come?

COLOUR PHOTOGRAPHY ADAM KNOTT

A PERFECTLY AVERAGE DAY IN SYDNEY, 1909. YOU'RE STANDING on the corner of Oxford and Flinders Streets in the city, waiting at the steam tram stop, not a sign of any of those newfangled car-thingies that splutter down the street disturbing the gracious flow of horse and buggy traffic. Tucked under one arm you have a copy of *The Sydney Mail* and, buried in one pocket, a little amber bottle of Dr Morse's Indian root pills – a herb elixir that promises to remedy your “sluggish” liver and “impure” blood. You've heard there is no “Dr Morse” and the pills are a concoction of some smart rich bloke in America, but you're sold on their guarantee to cure “Mondayitis”.

A perfectly average day in Sydney, 2010 (right). You're enjoying a cappuccino on the corner of Flinders and Oxford Streets and checking out the front page of *The Australian* on your iPad. You look up and see a rainbow flag fluttering in the breeze and are reminded that this spot on Taylor Square is the gay epicentre of Sydney, but you can barely hear yourself think amid the roar of traffic.

Want to see more of historic Sydney? A free photographic exhibition (1900 to the late 1940s) will be held at Customs House Library as part of History Week 2010 (September 4-12).

Greg Callaghan

