

Brisbane News "our public art"

Feature article by Phil Brown

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ART



Caught attention:
Barbara Heath and
her work *Net*

Smile for the
camera: A stern
Queen Victoria

public art can be a more mature statement about ourselves because we really do have a very dynamic community."

The art may be very different from the civic-minded statuary of the past but it all has its place, says Barbara.

What about Queen Victoria, just up the street, towering regally over the small park in front of the Conrad Treasury Hotel? Perhaps Barbara could help make her a more modern woman, attach something or build on to the existing work. She gets a twinkle in her eye at the suggestion.

"She could probably benefit from a bit of chain mesh," she laughs.

Hmmm. We think the Queen would not be so amused.



tion with the government and the architects.

Barbara's work trails down the side of the building and refers to themes such as interconnectedness (rings joined together) and the fishing practises of the original habitants of the area. It also looks, one hesitates to say it to her, like an elongated basketball hoop and net.

She's cheery enough about the insinuation. "Basketball didn't actually come into it but halfway through I knew someone would see that," she laughs.

A well-known artist and jeweller, Barbara was commissioned for the piece on the basis of her previous work.

Not everyone took to it at once though.

"There was a vox pop in *The Courier-*

Mail when it was put up and one man said it was a crock of sh*t," she says.

Most seem comfortable with it now, though, and it has received a mostly enthusiastic response, with some who didn't like it at first changing their minds after several viewings.

"Now I get mostly good feedback,

she says. "I think it's great that local artists are working on these projects. It's a great opportunity for artists to do something in the community and it is a really local thing.

"We've gone beyond the need to say let's get a really famous international artist to do something and then we can feel on a par with the rest of the world. Our