

Superb seafood in the suburbs

dining out

with David Bray

HERE'S another well-known restaurant name moving from the Gold Coast to Brisbane's western suburbs.

Omeros Brothers By The River they call it and it is, in fact, run by Nick and Angelo Omeros, who built their fame and, by the looks of it, a strong band of loyal supporters at Southport's Marina Mirage.

They opened last month at the corner of Coronation Drive and Park Rd, Milton, which experienced Brisbane diners-out will remember as Louis Pherad's and, before that, Harrowers.

It was only a few months ago that Mario Alfieri brought the equally welcomed Nicolini from the Coast to Toowong.

The Omeros family has been in the business since Michael Omeros opened Sydney's pioneering seafood restaurant the Paragon at La Perouse in 1968.

Over the years there has been a string of popular and often award-winning restaurants through Omeros Brothers at Malabar, Escoffiers in Kogarah, Deep Sea Tavern in Canterbury, Paragons at Burleigh Heads and Gosford, then Omeros at Labrador and the Spit.

These brothers know their business and they were going great guns when we were there on a recent Saturday night.

They have lightened the decor of the fine old building and those canny enough to book the right tables have a view of the Milton Reach of the river.

As so often happens, the application for a licence to sell liquor had not been productive three weeks after opening and was still on the way when we checked yesterday.

This unfortunate but no doubt unavoidable delay has recently posed problems for more than a few newly opened establishments.

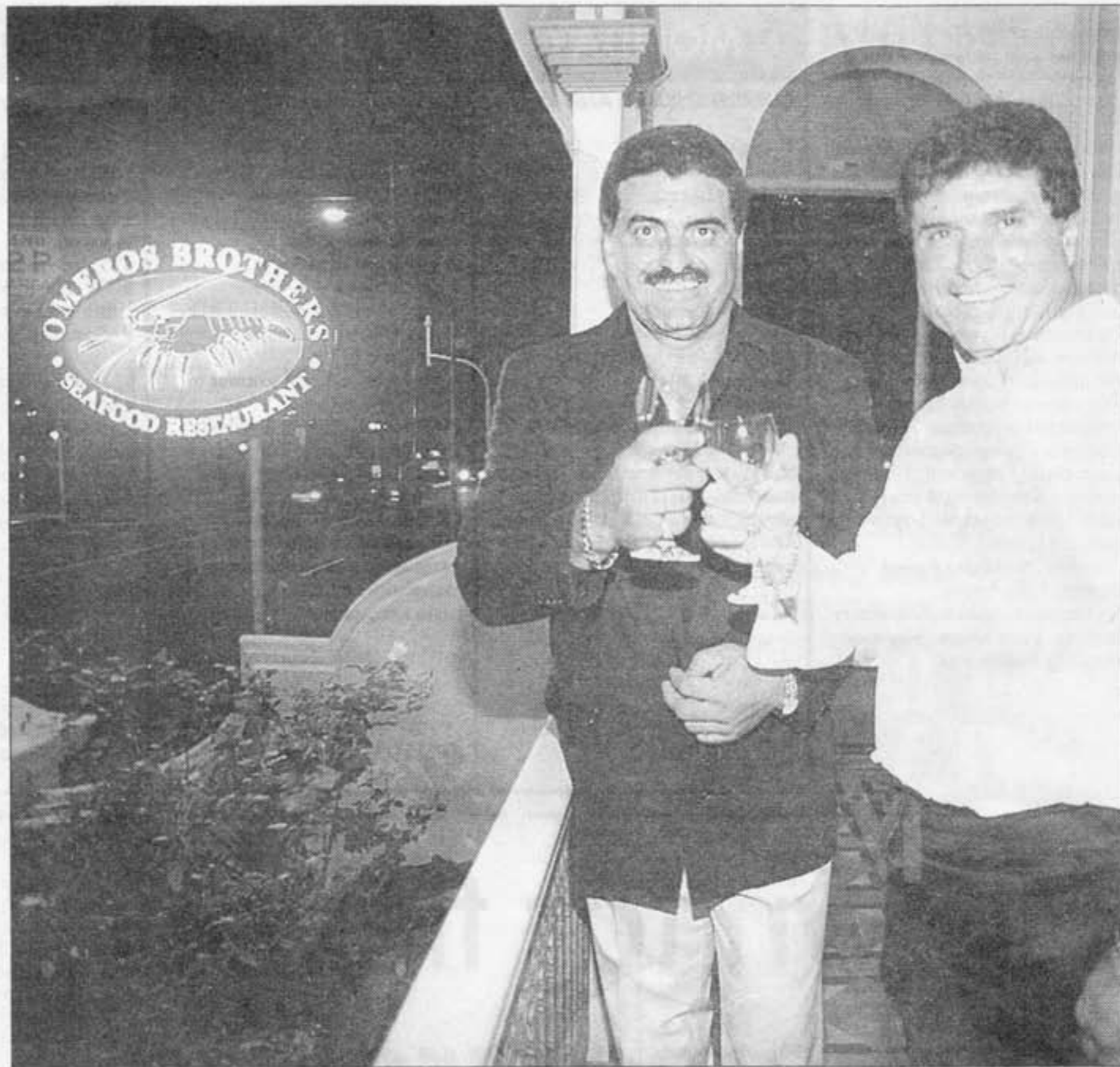
Patrons become used to BYO and the proprietors may well have some difficulty in breaking them of this habit. Fairly hefty corkage charges seem to be one way of doing it.

Anyway, we had fine service in the drinks area, with staff who obviously know their job opening the bottles and pouring properly.

The service in this place is excellent, friendly, quick, unobtrusive and thoroughly professional.

So is the cooking. Nothing terribly complicated, which is probably the way most of us like our seafood.

First courses range from cream of oyster soup (\$5.90) through prawn cocktail, smoked salmon, avocado seafood, calamari, prawns deep-fried or in mild curry sauce, barbecued baby octopus and



ANGELO, left, and Nick Omeros at their newly opened Omeros Brothers By The River restaurant at Milton, which specialises in seafood.

poached mussels to a dozen oysters kilpatrick (\$18.90).

It's hard to beat a plate of fresh rock oysters and that's just how we started. A dozen of them, from Port Stephens, as fresh as could be, for \$16.90.

The seafood chowder was generous in size and flavour, rich with oysters and a meal in itself at \$10.90.

There were oysters again in a very fine sauce that came with the snapper fillet (\$21.90 the fillet, \$3.50 the sauce), high-quality fish simply prepared and a generous serving.

Similarly the fried whiting fillets, exemplary in quality and presentation.

With these there was a bowl of sturdy chips and we shared an attractive Greek salad (\$9.50).

Main course choices range through the expected fish and crus-

taceans, from whole sole to barramundi, Moreton Bay bugs, mud crabs and lobsters. Look out for the crab, barbecued Greek style.

There's a bouillabaise, a couple of fettuccine dishes and two steaks, simple fillet and Diane.

Parents will welcome the children's menu — steak and chips, fish and chips and calamari and chips, each \$9.90.

Desserts include crepe Suzette (\$13 for two) and a "symphony" of five sorbets (\$6.50).

The wine list, when it is permitted to come into force, is a good one, with most styles, including champagne (Moet et Chandon) by the glass.

OMEROS BROTHERS BY THE RIVER: Corner Coronation Drive and Park Rd, Milton. Tel. 3368 1200.

BYO until licence arrives; no corkage.

HOURS: Open for lunch Monday to Friday noon to 2.30pm; dinner Monday to Saturday 6pm until late, late orders 9.30-10pm.

SEATS: 120, private room 20; air conditioned; fireplaces; quiet cocktail bar; booking "essential"; member Restaurant and Caterers Assn.

PRICE: Average cost of meal \$39-\$45, plus drinks.

CARDS: AE BC DC MC V.

RATINGS

FOOD: ★ ★ ★ ★
SERVICE: ★ ★ ★ ★
AMBIENCE: ★ ★ ★ ★
VALUE FOR MONEY: ★ ★ ★ ½
OVERALL: ★ ★ ★ ★

KEY: Five stars is perfection, four super, three pretty good, two okay one so-so.