

A BRIEF HISTORY OF SOME HOTELS

**Limerick Hotel, formerly Limerick Arms Hotel 1855 -
364 Clarendon Street, corner Park Street, South Melbourne
MEL: 2K D3**



In 1841 an Irish farm servant Matthew Toohey, his wife Honora and their young son John left Limerick to build a new life in Melbourne. After several years raising beef in the Victorian cattle country, Matthew became the first publican of the Limerick Arms Hotel in 1855. Toohey would later establish the Great Britain Hotel, also in Clarendon Street. After property prices slumped, the Tooheys moved to Sydney, where in 1872, John Toohey and his younger brother James would launch the Darling Brewery, and its famous successor Tooheys Standard Brewery that remains a famous and powerful company today.

The Limerick Arms was the site of the first cabstands gazetted in Emerald Hill, which were in use until the 1880s. Joseph Glaysher, licensee in 1865, was formerly of the Volunteer Arms Hotel in Montague Street.

The Emerald Hill branch of the Australian Natives Association was established at James Laing's Limerick Arms in September 1874. Laing held the license between 1870 and 1880. In 1873, architects Powell and Whitaker called for tenders for painting and the addition of a billiard room. Further alterations took place in 1883 according to the designs of architects Wilson and Beswicke.



Picnic to be transported in furniture vans

**Orient Hotel
Clarendon Street, corner Alfred Place, South Melbourne
MEL: 2K C1**

Formerly a produce store managed by John M Hill, a license for the two-bedroom wood house with bath and plaster divisions, was granted to George Bottriel in 1870. Named the Green Man Hotel, an auction of the hotel took place on 18 January 1873. That year architect Charles Boykett called for tenders for alterations and additions to the hotel. Vacant, briefly, in 1874, it was renamed the Nugget Hotel by licensee Mrs E Adam in 1876, but its original name was restored by Mrs Cowson in 1881. The following year William Riggs changed its name to the Albion; in 1885, it became the Garfield Hotel, and in 1891 it was renamed the Orient – a name that would remain until it was de-licensed on 31 December 1913.

**Golden Gate Hotel 1853 -
238 Clarendon Street, corner Coventry Street, South Melbourne
MEL: 2K C1**



Golden Gate Hotel, 1940

The Golden Gate Hotel was built in 1853, although on 19 December 1854, a license was refused. It was eventually granted to William Ashling on 24 April 1855. Ashling was a member of Emerald Hill's Local Council.

The Golden Gate replaced the Myrtle Hotel as the most popular meeting spot for local societies and clubs. Catherine Ellis, a licensed brick maker and alleged heavy drinker, lived in a two-roomed timber house and kiln behind the hotel in 1856.

In 1864, the Donaldson brothers tendered for additions to the hotel. On 19 May of that year, the community celebrations of the marriage of Albert Edward, Prince of Wales, and Princess Alexandra of Denmark, involved the erection of an arch that spanned the roads between the Golden Gate and the Royal Hotel.

An advertisement in the local paper *The Record* (17 June 1881) announced a billiard tournament where two silver cups – one for each table – were offered as prizes.

The entrance to the Golden Gate was blockaded on 6 September 1890 after a football match between South Melbourne and Carlton. Proprietor Henry Skinner's had been provisioning of catering to non-unionists at the gas works during the mercantile, seamen and wharf workers' strike of that year. The Golden Gate was both Skinner's home and the base for his burgeoning and ultimately wildly successful catering business. Skinner was a well-known name in the community: he was president of the South Melbourne Football Club (1904-11), fundraised on a large scale for sports clubs and won the Melbourne South seat on the Legislative Council in September 1911, only five months before his death. Skinner was so mourned by the community of which he had been such a generous sponsor and patron, that a statue was erected in his memory at the South Melbourne Cricket Ground. The Golden Gate is still a popular hotel in South Melbourne.

Hit or Miss Hotel, formerly National Hotel and Steet's Hotel 1854 - 1908

**206-212 Clarendon Street, corner York Street, South Melbourne
MEL: 2K C1**



Site of Hit or Miss Hotel, 1940

The Hit or Miss Hotel, founded by Peter Ross in 1854, was the site of several important meetings. One of these meetings resulted in the creation of the South Melbourne Municipal Council, however only after burning an effigy of John Thomas Smith, the Mayor of Melbourne. Ironically, an agreement to form a local fire brigade was reached at a council meeting at the hotel in 1854. It was renamed the National Hotel by James L Ross in 1873, but became Hit or Miss in 1874. Publican William Steet renamed it Steet's Hotel in 1880, but by 1884, Fanny Nelson restored the original name Hit or Miss. It was amongst thirteen hotels closed by the Licenses Reduction Board in 1908 and de-licensed on 31 December of that year.

Clarendon Hotel 1858 - 1917
241-243 Clarendon Street, corner Coventry Street, South Melbourne
MEL: 2K D1



The Clarendon Hotel was established by Asher Hann, a relative of Ferdinand B Hann, a successful tenderer who was a partner in a chain of butcher shops, in 1858, with a butcher's shop in Coventry Street, near the Clarendon Street corner.

An auction on 30 September 1865 reveals that the hotel comprised of twelve rooms, a bar, wine stores and a large brick tank. In 1866, under the ownership of PJ Martin, a fire in the billiard room caused slight damage. The Clarendon Hotel was de-licensed on 2 July 1917. In 2003, the block comprises Optus World, alterations and key cutting shop called House of Services and Golden Thimble, and a vacant shop.

Star Hotel, formerly Phoenix Hotel 1854 –

**160 Clarendon Street, corner Market Street, South Melbourne
MEL: 2F C12**



Star Hotel, 2004

One of four hotels built on allotments purchased in the first land sales in Emerald Hill in 1852, the Phoenix, a ten-room brick hotel with a slate roof, was first licensed by Thomas Dollard in 1854. His wife's funeral proceeded from the hotel on 9 June 1859. There are reports that the Phoenix was used as the headquarters of Emerald Hill's first local paper, the *Weekly Times*. The Phoenix was renamed Star Hotel in 1862 by Christian Henry Heier, who had previously been a publican of the Star Hotel in Swanston Street. Architects WH Ellerker & Co called for tenders for alterations in 1871. The hotel was auctioned on 1 June 1874. It was rebuilt in 1877 by Thomas Cowen, formerly of the Market Hotel. During the early 1990s, the Star Hotel converted to a nightclub and today is considered one of Melbourne's premiere live entertainment venues featuring Australia's leading cover bands, hottest DJs and special events.

Victoria Hotel 1873 - 1920

**113 Cecil Street, corner York Street, South Melbourne
MEL: 2K B1**



Facade of former Victoria Hotel, 2004

Established in 1873, Henry Foreman was the original licensee of the Victoria Hotel. It was de-licensed on 16 August 1920. In 2003, it is the site of a vacant warehouse, known as Red Bears, proposed for a multi-storey mixed development.

Mile End Gate Hotel, formerly Coventry Hotel, Ballarat Arms Hotel, Prince George Hotel, Mack's Tavern Hotel, Three Crowns Tavern, and Prince George Hotel 1865 – 1908

**270 Coventry Street, South Melbourne
MEL: 2K C1**

Stephen Benyon established the Coventry Hotel in 1865, at the corner of Little York Street, which has since been built over. After undergoing seven name changes in practically as many years, it became the Mile End Gate Hotel in 1878. This hotel was de-licensed on 31 December 1908. In 2003, it is the site of a vacant shop, Sergio M Macchia Jeweller and Designer, and Sia Clothing Shop. While the ground level has been modernised, it appears that the first floor has retained the original balustrade.

Maori Chief Hotel 1867 -

**117 Moray Street, corner York Street, South Melbourne
MEL: 2F D12**

First licensed by John Reidy in 1867, the Maori Chief Hotel, whose name probably derives from an association with Maori groups who visited Melbourne in 1863 and 1866, was taken over by John Reidy's widow Johanna (Walsh) Reidy after his death in 1878. The hotel stayed within the family for several years: in 1885, the license was transferred to Johanna's new husband, a Scot named Andrew Black, and eventually to Johanna's brother-in-law Peter Campbell and sister, Mary Campbell.

The original 1867 building was replaced in 1875 according to the design specifications of architect M Hennessy who had also designed the Meagher's Family Hotel (now Palace) and Freer's Family Hotel (now Bell's). It has remained an architectural landmark in South Melbourne, both for its dominance over the corner on which it stands (tall, three storeyed, relatively narrow) and the high quality of its detailing. A huge painting of a Maori Chief sits above the entrance to the hotel. There are meals available in the comfortable back room with old couches and crocheted rugs, while the front bar contains a pool table and television screens.



Maori Chief Hotel, 2004

Medic Hotel, formerly Holder's Hotel, Whaler's Return Hotel and Star of the South Hotel 1869 - 1908

109-111 York Street, South Melbourne

MEL 2K C1

James Holder established holder's Hotel in 1869. It was renamed Whaler's Return by W Cockbill in 1872. Architect John Box designed brick additions to the hotel in 1885. A year later, the hotel was renamed the Star of the South by Charlotte M Carter, and ultimately the Medic, after the ship that took soldiers to the Boer War, by Ellen Fulham in 1901. It was amongst thirteen hotels closed by the Licenses Reduction Board in 1908 and de-licensed on 31 December of that year.

Newmarket Hotel, formerly Harp of Erin Hotel 1866 – 1913

99 Market Street, South Melbourne

MEL 2F B12

Edward Broderick was the first licensee of the Harp of Erin Hotel in 1866. It was renamed the Newmarket Hotel by Robert Clarke in 1888. Architects Sydney Smith and Ogg later designed an additional storey. It was de-licensed on 31 December 1913.



Criterion Hotel, formerly Walsh Hotel and Criterion Hotel 1873 - 1920
189 Clarendon Street, corner Ross Street, South Melbourne
MEL: 2F C12

An attempt by Henry Johnston in June 1873 to acquire a license for a house that had belonged to William H Johnston in 1872 was unsuccessful, yet in September 1873, a license was granted to Frank Johnston for the same premises. After several publicans, Bridget Walsh became licensee of the Criterion in 1879 and changed the name to the Walsh Hotel, a name that only lasted until the license was transferred from Michael Walsh to

Michael Power in 1890, after which its original title returned. The Criterion was closed on 31 December 1920. In 2003, it is the site of Clarendon Café and Sandwich Bar.

Clarendon Lounge Bar
209 Clarendon Street, corner York Street, South Melbourne
MEL: 2K C1

Charles Chessell established the Albion Hotel in 1861. Renamed the Glasgow Arms in 1866, in 1889 it was rebuilt to the design of prominent Melbourne architect William Pitt, well known for his role in designing the Princess Theatre and the Olderfleet and Rialto Buildings. The Glasgow Arms became the Federal Hotel in 1913.

One of the most substantial hotels in the area prominently located on the uphill corner of Clarendon and Market Streets, its architecture reflects its late Victorian date of construction. With three storeys clad in render, its two main facades are embellished and feature highly decorated windows.

It was known as the Clarendon Hotel for much of its existence, then renamed the Intrepid Fox, yet maintained the same style as the Clarendon – a seven-day-a-week venue with a central bar, a bottle shop and pub meals.

In 2001, it was bought by a division of Lion Nathan Australia, and was converted into the Clarendon Lounge Bar. After a million-dollar refurbishment, not much of the original interior has remained, yet there are apparently two ghosts haunting the premises. The first is that of an elderly gentleman who passed away on the second floor - footsteps and knocking are audible in a nearby function room, which is always bitterly cold. The other ghost, reputed to be that of a former proprietor of the hotel in the 1920s or 1930s, is a middle-aged man who carries a pointer and inhabits the ground floor.

**Bell's Hotel, Freer's Family Hotel 1874 -
209 Clarendon Street, corner York Street, South Melbourne
MEL: 2K C1**



Freer's Family Hotel, c.1880

At the quarterly meeting on 19 September 1874, the licensing magistrate for the Emerald Hill district granted a publican's license to HW Freer, who named his hotel Freer's Family Hotel. This hotel was designed by architect M Hennessy who was also responsible for the Meagher's Family Hotel in City Road and the Maori Chief Hotel in Moray Street. This hotel is seen to reflect more restraint on the architect's part: the system of pilasters on the rendered façade is less adorned than on his other hotels.

Water Rat Bar and Cafe, formerly Freemasons' Hotel, Druids' Hotel and Enzee Hotel 1858 –



Founded by Henry Glynn in 1858, the Freemason's Hotel was originally at 252 Moray Street. Publican Allen Wyatt had his license cancelled on 23 July 1864 for allowing a Mrs. Crunies, who had bought the hotel, to manage without a license. His successor Peter Madden (1864-1872) was buried from the hotel on 2 February 1872. After an auction on 16 April 1874, the Freemasons' Hotel was renamed Druid's Hotel.

While it was not a traditional painters and dockers hotel, it is often associated with the union, largely because of the 1973 murder of union secretary Pat Shannon who was gunned down at the hotel. Billy 'The Texan' Longley, a key figure in the union, was found guilty of Shannon's murder that he had instigated although not directly executed. During the 1980s, a group of solicitors who named the hotel the Splash Club after their weekly Friday night drinks bought the hotel, but by 1985, it was known as the Enzeder. It was renamed the Water Rat in 1991 and was one of the first hotels in South Melbourne to introduce outdoor seating. A wood fire for winter nicely complements the curvaceous central bar. It closed at the end of 2003

Royal Hotel 1864 - 1888

**Clarendon Street, corner Coventry Street, South Melbourne
MEL: 2K D1**

Samuel Charles Sims first licensed the Royal Hotel in 1864. The funeral cortege of Samuel Augustus, a later publican, left from the Royal on 18 January 1872. Architects Powell and Whitaker designed alterations to the hotel in 1888.

George Hotel 1865 -

139 Cecil Street, corner Coventry Street, South Melbourne
MEL: 2K B2



Patrick Reardon, who had previously run a produce store, first licensed the George in 1865. After Reardon's lease expired in 1874, an auction of the hotel, including furniture and effects and a beer engine, took place on 28 September that year. The hotel was rebuilt by architect Sydney W Smith in 1874, and later altered in the 1930s. The hotel was popular amongst council workers and Board of Works employees and was notable for having a strong police presence, which deterred bad behaviour!

Before 1984 when the Swans Football Club moved from South Melbourne to Sydney, the George was their meeting place after both matches and Monday night training. The George was the first hotel in South Melbourne, and the sixteenth in Metropolitan Victoria, to introduce the TAB (Totaliser Agency Board) at the bar. The George Hotel is one of the few hotels in South Melbourne that continues to provide accommodation.

Council Club Hotel, formerly Court House Hotel 1864 - 1997
115 Cecil Street, corner York Street, South Melbourne
MEL: 2K B1



In 1864, William Waymouth Litton established the Council Club Hotel. Comprising thirteen rooms and a large cellar, it was let at £250.0s.0d a year and its average takings were £35.0s.0d a week. It was sold in 1867, and again in 1870 at the instruction of the proprietor, possibly George Sims, who was giving up the business due to poor health. On 7 August of that year, Sims' funeral departed from the hotel. The Court House was renamed the Council Club in 1871 by new publican T Fitzsimmons. His successor Andrew Kavanagh (1872-1878) buried his wife from the hotel in 1874. The hotel was owned by Thomas Fogarty, Lonsdale Street wine & spirit merchant from 1881, until his death in November 1900. His family continued to own the hotel for another twenty years.

Harry R Johnson (1892-1954), architect, purchased it in 1927, and carried out extensive alterations to the premises including the addition of another entire floor of accommodation. The Johnson family continued to own it until 1979. It was a popular hotel amongst the painters and dockers. In 1997, David Parry bought the hotel and converted it to Nomad's Market Inn, a backpackers' hostel.



South Melbourne with the two-storey Council Club Hotel at street corner, c.1870

**Cricket Club Hotel 1870 -
435 Clarendon Street, corner Thomson Street, South Melbourne
MEL: 2K E5**

Charles H Tocknall originally licensed the Cricket Club Hotel in 1870. It was situated on the corner of Thomson Street, which was then known as Little Raglan Street. In 1975, the hotel was licensed by footballer Brian Roberts who played for both South Melbourne and Richmond. During his management, the hotel was referred to as 'Whales Hotel', an allusion to the size of the publican! Roberts would later manage the Duke of Wellington Hotel on the corner of Flinders and Russell Streets until its closure in 2003. The room at the back of the hotel was featured in the 1990 film 'Father' starring Max Von Sydow.

John and Tania McConnan, who have been at the hotel since 2000, have extensively refurbished its interior while maintaining its authentic pub atmosphere, enhanced by the original judge's chair and witness box from the old Prahran Courthouse. In 2001, the Cricket Club was one of the finalists in the Best Metropolitan Pub Without Gaming category of the Australian Hotel Association State Awards for Excellence. An English style hotel, it is highly regarded by its patrons as a warm and friendly pub where good food and conversation are readily available.

