The Hopetoun Hotel

– a colonial survivor?

by John Walter Ross

Cover photos:

Top: The Hopetoun Hotel, 2009
Bottom left: The Hopetoun Hotel as the Kilkenny Inn, 1878 (source: Mitchell Library)
Bottom right: Okkervil River performing at the Hopetoun, 2005

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Foreword

This is the history of an early colonial-era hotel in the inner-city suburb of Surry Hills in Sydney. It is also the history of the environment that has contributed to the life of the pub, such as the licensing laws, breweries, sports and entertainment, food and accommodation, the temperance movement, and the live music scene. The Hopetoun Hotel is significant because it represents the traditional qualities of a neighbourhood pub in a residential area, and because it still retains evidence of most aspects of its history, despite many alterations.

The history is divided into two parts by the two centuries it covers: the nineteenth and twentieth. This is done to blend the hotel's early history with the topics that relate to that era, and then to present the later period after Tooth & Co. took over with the events that affected the pub during that time. The idea is to place the pub in its social and historical context over a long period of time.

The Hopetoun Hotel started its long life in 1839 as the Cockatoo Inn, located in Bourke Street, a few doors from its present site. Seven years later the second licensee, Joseph Olliffe, moved "the sign of the Cockatoo" to a handsome new Victorian Georgian building on the corner of Bourke and Fitzroy Streets where it remains today. By this time, the depression of the early 1840s was over, and the economy was back to normal. Gold discoveries in the early 1850s drove a long economic boom that saw the scrubby sandhills of Surry Hills transformed into rows of terrace houses, industries and a few large mansions owned by settlers who had become wealthy from their industry and from land speculation.

By the end of the nineteenth century, the hotel had gone through five different names. To minimise confusion, it is called the Hopetoun Hotel in this history, whenever possible. The many name changes probably illustrate the turbulence of the time, as the colony endured a series of booms and busts through the century until Federation in 1901. Coinciding with the new century, the hotel was taken over by the large brewing company Tooth & Co, heralding a long period of stability for the hotel. It was refurbished in the Federation Boom style, and the owners successfully faced challenges such as the cancellation of several neighbouring pub licences in the 1920s, early closing from 1916, the threat of demolition in the 1940s, and constant changes to licensing and building requirements.

The early licensing laws required the Hopetoun to provide a range of facilities, as with all hotels in the colony. Travellers had to be accommodated and supplied with meals, a lamp had to burn outside all night, and the hotel had to host inquests when necessary. The English tradition of inns, taverns and alehouses were transported to the early colony, but without the formal distinction between them. Attempts to restrict drinking hours simply created the sly grog market of illegal trading, especially on Sundays. The spread of radio broadcasting and the telephone system facilitated off-course gambling, which was based in public bars. Both of these activities were illegal but hugely popular.

The brewing of beer in the hot climate of New South Wales was very much a hit or miss occupation for the first hundred years. Barley and hops would not grow well in hot weather, and the brewing process was plagued with impurities that spoiled much of the output. It was only the introduction of lager-style brewing in the late 1880s, along with the recent inventions of refrigeration and pasteurisation, that led to a reliable brew. However, these new technologies were very expensive,

and only the largest companies could afford them, resulting in the closure of most of the small breweries by the end of the nineteenth century.

The end of six o'clock closing in the 1950s in New South Wales and the 1960s in Victoria coincided with the rise of an Australian popular music industry, and the result was the era of pub rock. The Hopetoun Hotel became famous as an enthusiastic promoter of new bands from the 1980s, and was one of the few venues to persevere as the live music scene faded after the introduction of poker machines in pubs in the 1990s.

Unfortunately, the downsides of maintaining an ageing building and dealing with noise complaints in a residential area finally proved too much for the owners, and the Hopetoun closed its doors in September 2009. It is fervently hoped among music lovers and locals alike that the pub can be restored to its former position as a supporter of new music and as a popular local pub.

This history was written to gain experience in technical writing, and is not intended for publication, so permission has not been sought for any of the references or images used. I have tried to make it comprehensive and accurate, as well as entertaining. The reading audience is anyone with a general interest in the central role that neighbourhood pubs have played in the development of urban communities from early colonial times to the present.

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Historical Time Line

1794 – Land grant to John Palmer in Surry Hills.

1798 – James Squire founded the first commercial brewery in the colony.

1808 – Governor Bligh was overthrown by the New South Wales Corps in the Rum Rebellion.

1814 – James Meehan divided John Palmer's lands into allotments for sale, at the same time drawing up a street plan for Surry Hills.

1827 – The Albion Brewery commenced operation in Surry Hills.

1830 – The Licensing Act in New South Wales set the first ground rules for hotel operation.

1831 – Thomas Mitchell drew up a street plan for Surry Hills that conflicted with the 1814 plan.

1839 – The Hopetoun Hotel opened as the Cockatoo Inn in Bourke Street.

1840s – Severe depression in the colony, triggered by a drought and falling wheat and wool prices.

1846 – The Cockatoo Inn moved to the corner of Bourke and Fitzroy Streets.

1851 – Gold discoveries triggered a long economic boom in the colony.

1857 – Marshall's Paddington Brewery commenced operation.

1861 – The Cockatoo Inn was renamed to the Sportsman's Arms.

1873 – The Sportsman's Arms was renamed to the Kilkenny Inn.
The Women's Christian Temperance Union was founded in the United States.

1885 – The Kilkenny Inn was renamed to the Great Western Hotel.

1888 – The Foster brothers started brewing Foster's Lager in Melbourne, triggering the lager revolution in the brewing industry.

1893 – The Great Depression began when several banks collapsed.

1901 – Tooth & Co. purchased the hotel, and renamed it to the Hopetoun Hotel.

1916 – Six o'clock closing commenced in most states.

1922 – Vegemite was invented as a by-product of the brewing industry.

1922 – The Licences Reduction Board closed several hotels in Surry Hills.

1955 – Six o'clock closing ended in New South Wales.

1966 – Six o'clock closing ended in Victoria, heralding the start of the pub rock music scene.

1970s – End of gender segregation in bars.

1979 – Sunday trading became legal for everyone in New South Wales.

1997 – Hotels in New South Wales were permitted to install up to 15 poker machines.

2009 – The Hopetoun Hotel closed its doors.

Part One – the Nineteenth Century

Early history of the two hotel sites

Land grants and the Rum Rebellion

In 1794, Commissary-General John Palmer was granted 70 aces in the Surry Hills area, calling it George farm. Palmer acquired 25 acres more, and then bought Joseph Foveaux's land grant to the west of his when Foveaux left for Norfolk Island. By 1800, Palmer had accumulated about 200 acres in Surry Hills. In January 1808, the Rum Rebellion by the New South Wales Corps overthrew Governor William Bligh. Palmer had supported the Governor, and for this he was sacked by the rebel administration.

Following this, John Palmer spent six years in England at various enquiries into the rebellion, and his businesses in New South Wales went into debt. He finally returned to New South Wales in 1814 with his affairs in a very bad financial state. The Sheriff, William Gore, ordered that his Surry Hills estate be sold to pay off his debts. The government surveyor James Meehan subdivided the estate into 27 allotments, while at the same time trying to develop Surry Hills in an orderly way. In October 1814, the allotments were sold by public auction.

The original hotel site

At the auction of Palmer's land in 1814, Captain Richard Brooks purchased an allotment of about six acres that included the proposed alignment of Bourke Street to the north of Fitzroy Street. This land also included the site of the first Hopetoun Hotel, at 471B Bourke Street. Isaac Nichols purchased the allotment to the east of this.

Most of Brooks' land was subdivided into large lots, mostly of half an acre, for villa development, and sold in July 1831. Nichols' heirs sold his land in 1833. The sale of these two allotments drew the attention of speculators and builders to Surry Hills. The auctioneers emphasised its elevated position with fresh air and views, away from the dirt and bustle of the city. This area formed the core of villa development until construction of terrace houses began in the 1850s.

The current hotel site

At the 1814 auction, James Chisholm, a former Corporal in the New South Wales Corps, acquired about eight acres and in the same year sold it all to Robert Cooper, the ex-convict distiller. From 1819 to 1821, Chisholm was the publican and landlord of the Thistle Hotel in George St, and Robert Cooper was landlord of the Beehive Inn, also in George St.

Land values increased through the 1830s, driven by financial prosperity from wool exports. In 1831, the allotments originally devised in 1814 by James Meehan were divided into villa-sized allotments for sale, after Surveyor-General Thomas Mitchell imposed a new street layout on Surry Hills. In 1833, Robert Cooper sold part of the land, 2 roods 11 perches, to the stonecutter Charles Jenkins, including the present Hopetoun Hotel site.

In 1834, Jenkins divided the land into smaller portions, leased 18 perches to the east of the Hopetoun to John Perry (this is now 57-63 Fitzroy Street), and 11 perches on the present Hopetoun

site to the quarryman Thomas Jones. The land allocated in the future Bourke Street was included in this sale, although the streets were still unformed. Thomas Jones mortgaged the 11 perches to Peter William Plomer in December 1834, and six months later Plomer owned it. Plomer was a clerk at the Hyde Park Barracks from 1815 to 1820, under Commissioner John Thomas Bigge, and later a storekeeper at the Lumber Yard during the administrations of Governors Sir Ralph Darling and Sir Richard Bourke. He owned the present Hopetoun Hotel site until his death in 1864[1].

These land transactions showed that even men of modest rank and background were able to take advantage of the great opportunities in the early years of the colony. Anyone who could manage to acquire land via grant or purchase by the 1820s was likely to do very well by selling it in the 1830s.

The Hopetoun Hotel in the nineteenth century

The original location at 471B Bourke Street

In July, 1837, Joseph Ward became the first licensee of the Cockatoo Inn in Pitt Street, Sydney. He had previously been a police constable. Two years later in July 1839, he transferred the licence and name to new premises on Bourke Street. This was on the site of the present Metro Automotives business at 471B Bourke Street. The building was a brick shingle-roofed house with three floors (including cellar) and nine rooms, with a kitchen and stable.

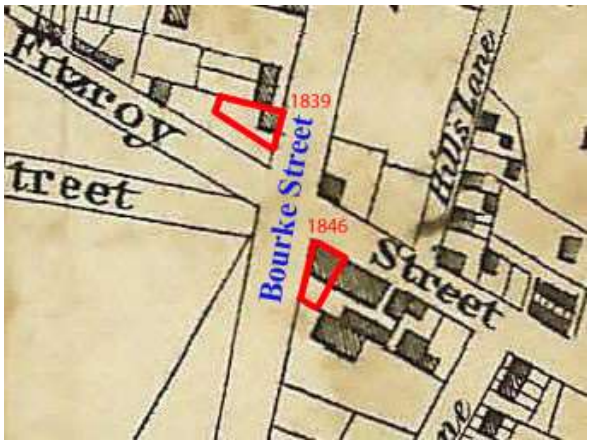
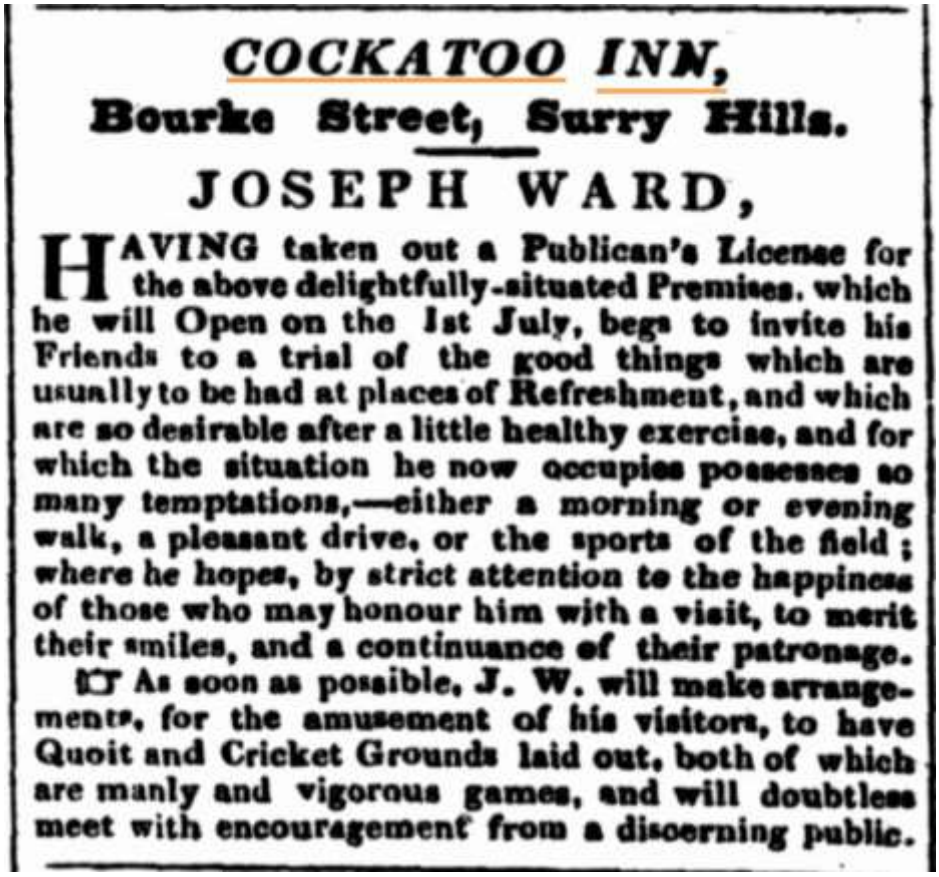


Figure 1 Original and present hotel locations

Figure 2 Metro Automotives

In a newspaper advertisement in June 1839[2], Joseph Ward invited his friends to a trial of the refreshments on offer at his new public house, which would open for business the following month. The advertisement is reproduced here as an example of the quaint language of the day, and to show how pubs and sport have been closely linked from the early days of the colony:



COCKATOO INN,

Bourke Street, Surry Hills.

JOSEPH WARD,

HAVING taken out a Publican's License for the above delightfully-situated Premises, which he will Open on the 1st July, begs to invite his Friends to a trial of the good things which are usually to be had at places of Refreshment, and which are so desirable after a little healthy exercise, and for which the situation he now occupies possesses so many temptations,—either a morning or evening walk, a pleasant drive, or the sports of the field; where he hopes, by strict attention to the happiness of those who may honour him with a visit, to merit their smiles, and a continuance of their patronage.

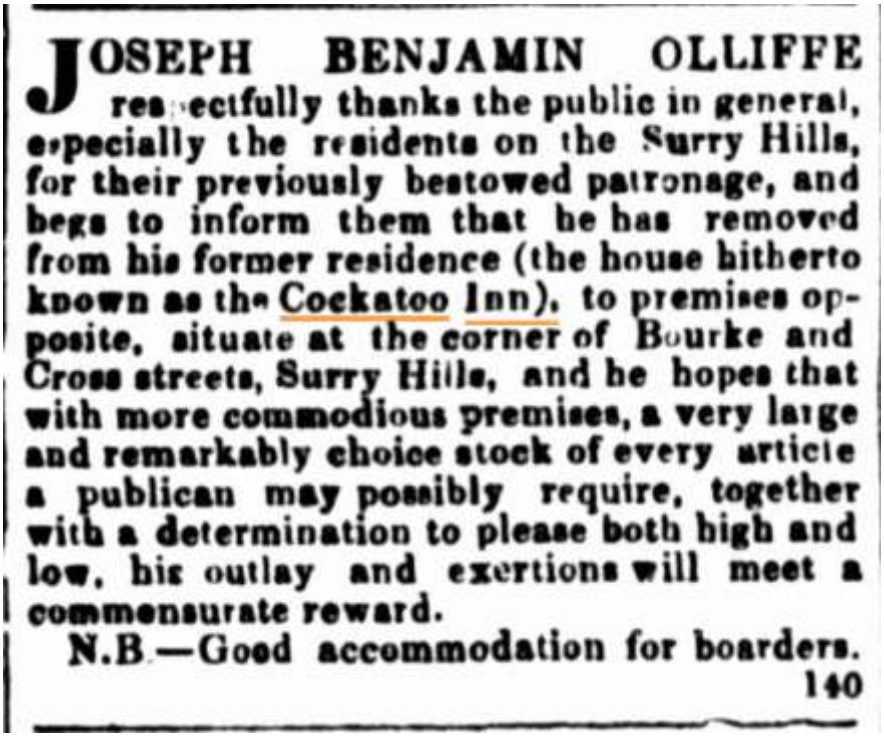
☞ As soon as possible, J. W. will make arrangements, for the amusement of his visitors, to have Quoit and Cricket Grounds laid out, both of which are manly and vigorous games, and will doubtless meet with encouragement from a discerning public.

Figure 3 Ad for the original pub in 1839

In September 1840, the licence of the Cockatoo Inn was transferred from Joseph Ward to Joseph Benjamin Olliffe, who retained the license until May 1859. Convict transportation to New South Wales ceased in 1840, and this coincided with the start of a severe economic depression triggered by a drought starting in 1839. This caused a collapse in the price of Australian wool, wheat and livestock. But the economy slowly recovered, and by 1847 the depression was officially over.

The current location at 416 Bourke Street

In July 1845, Peter Plomer advertised for builders and contractors to erect a new house and out-buildings on the Bourke Street side of his land on Fitzroy Street[3]. This would become the Hopetoun Hotel in its original design as a Georgian brick building with the main entrance on the corner. Then in July 1846, Joseph Olliffe notified that he had moved the Cockatoo Inn to larger premises on the corner of Bourke and Cross (now Fitzroy) Streets, and invited patrons to the new place[4]. The advertisement is reproduced for its elaborate language, and for the reference to different classes ("both high and low"), at a time when class was probably a bigger part of Australian society than today:



JOSEPH BENJAMIN OLLIFFE respectfully thanks the public in general, especially the residents on the Surry Hills, for their previously bestowed patronage, and begs to inform them that he has removed from his former residence (the house hitherto known as the Cockatoo Inn), to premises opposite, situate at the corner of Bourke and Cross streets, Surry Hills, and he hopes that with more commodious premises, a very large and remarkably choice stock of every article a publican may possibly require, together with a determination to please both high and low, his outlay and exertions will meet a commensurate reward.

N.B.—Good accommodation for boarders.

140

Figure 4 Ad for the pub after moving in 1846

The original site reopens

In July 1847, the former Cockatoo Inn at 471B Bourke Street was reopened by the new proprietor Mrs Mary Pearce, who changed the name to the Curriers' Home, evidently trying to attract workers from the tanning industry in Surry Hills. In March 1848, the licence was transferred to Daniel Hickey, and then in March 1850 to James Cavanagh.

In February 1851, the name was changed to the Green Isle Inn, after the licence was transferred yet again to George Francis Baker. In April 1852, George Baker applied for a publican's licence at the Golden Fleece Hotel in Castlereagh Street, Sydney. There is no mention of the Green Isle Inn in the licence renewal notices in May 1852 or afterwards, so the pub must have ceased trading at this time.

Figure 5 Currier's Home Hotel (A) and W. H. Sawyer's block (B)

Because the original hotel was demolished long ago, some detective work was required to find its exact location. The first piece of information was a Supreme Court notice in September 1845[5] of the sale of the insolvent estate of W. H. Sawyer. The boundary of this six-sided parcel of land is described in detail, and it defines the present site of 473 Bourke Street (in the north-west corner with Fitzroy Street), and the frontages along Fitzroy Street of the present houses 56 to 72A Fitzroy Street.

The second piece of the jigsaw puzzle is a Supreme Court notice in August 1848[6] of the sale of the Curriers' Home in Bourke Street. The hotel is described as being bounded on the east by Bourke Street, and bounded on the south by the land formerly belonging to W. H. Sawyer. This wedge-shaped block fits neatly into the north-east corner of W. H. Sawyer's block, and corresponds to the present site of 471B Bourke Street.

Name changes until 1901

When Francis Phillips became the licensee in May 1861, the Cockatoo Inn was renamed to the Sportsman's Arms, a popular hotel name at the time. In fact, the historic list of Publicans' Licences lists nine hotels with this name in New South Wales in 1858, including four in Sydney[7]. This name was used until October 1873, when the licence was transferred to Margaret Conlon, who gave it the Irish name Kilkenny Inn. Mrs Conlon was the widow of John Conlon, an innkeeper in Liverpool until his death in 1871, and was the daughter of John McCabe, a native of country Carlow in Ireland, who died in August 1879.

Kilkenny and Carlow are about 30 kilometres apart, and the new name shows a sentimental attachment to Mrs Conlon's homeland. There were many pubs in Sydney with Irish names, some even in Gaelic, such as the Erin go Bragh Hotel (meaning "Ireland Forever") in York Street in the city.

Figure 6 Fitzroy Street, 1875

The figure above shows Fitzroy Street, looking west with Moore Park on the left. The Hopetoun Hotel is highlighted in red[8].

In September 1878, an advertisement appeared in the newspaper for the auction sale of the hotel by the estate trustees of the late Peter Plomer. It was referred to as being of cemented brick construction, containing a large bar, two bar parlours, a private parlour, four bedrooms, kitchen, cellar and large yards[9]. Then in 1882 the hotel was sold to James Brierley, a builder, for £1,630[10]. The licensee was John Dempsey, and the address was 416 Bourke Street. The building was then enlarged, as it was described as having 13 rooms.

In May 1885, James Brierley sold the hotel to the licensed publican Gustave Thomas Buckham for £3,515[11]. The doubling of the hotel's purchase price in three years was indicative of the land boom of the 1880s. A speculative mania swept through the colony at this time, as many workers invested their money in high-returning financial institutions like new banks. Investment returns, wages and profits became higher and higher. During this decade there was a great expansion in the number of small and large businesses, and in building activity. Surry Hills was almost completely built by the end of this decade.

The hotel underwent renovations in 1885, including the shingled roof being replaced by iron, and was renamed to the Great Western Hotel. Changes of the hotel's licensees occurred very often in this period, sometimes after only a few months. In September 1889, the hotel was advertised for

sale again. This time it was described as a substantial premises of brick, cemented, on a stone foundation, containing a bar, cellar, nine rooms, kitchen and wash-house.

Gustave Buckham died at the beginning of the Depression, in March 1893. Then in June 1900, the trustees of Buckham's estate leased the hotel to Tooth & Co. By this time, many of the smaller breweries and distilleries established by wealthy landowners had closed up, leaving Tooth's, Toohey's and Resch's as the dominant brewers. When Buckham's widow Frances died in December 1901, Tooth & Co. bought the hotel at auction for £4,500. The hotel was renamed to the Hopetoun Hotel in 1901 in honour of Lord Hopetoun, the first Governor-General of Australia after Federation.

So the Hopetoun Hotel saw out the turbulent nineteenth century, a time of economic booms and busts, when the local area grew from undeveloped scrubland to a fully populated inner-city suburb. The hotel had experienced many different owners, but had not been greatly renovated, so it must have been ready for a major facelift to ensure its survival. The new owners were ready to provide this.

Conflicting early street plans

The colony of Port Jackson was initially populated by convicts and the people looking after them. There were no farmers, tradesmen or anyone else who might be useful in building a community, except any convicts who may have had experience in these fields. The Governors gave large land grants to army officers and senior officials in the hope that they would develop them into farms with cattle and crops to feed the colony.

These land grants were made before any roads were thought of, except the rough tracks that people used to get around their properties and into the town. Only much later were any attempts made to devise a road system. The acute angled footprint of the Hopetoun Hotel on the corner of Bourke and Fitzroy Streets is the result of the overlay of two conflicting street plans.

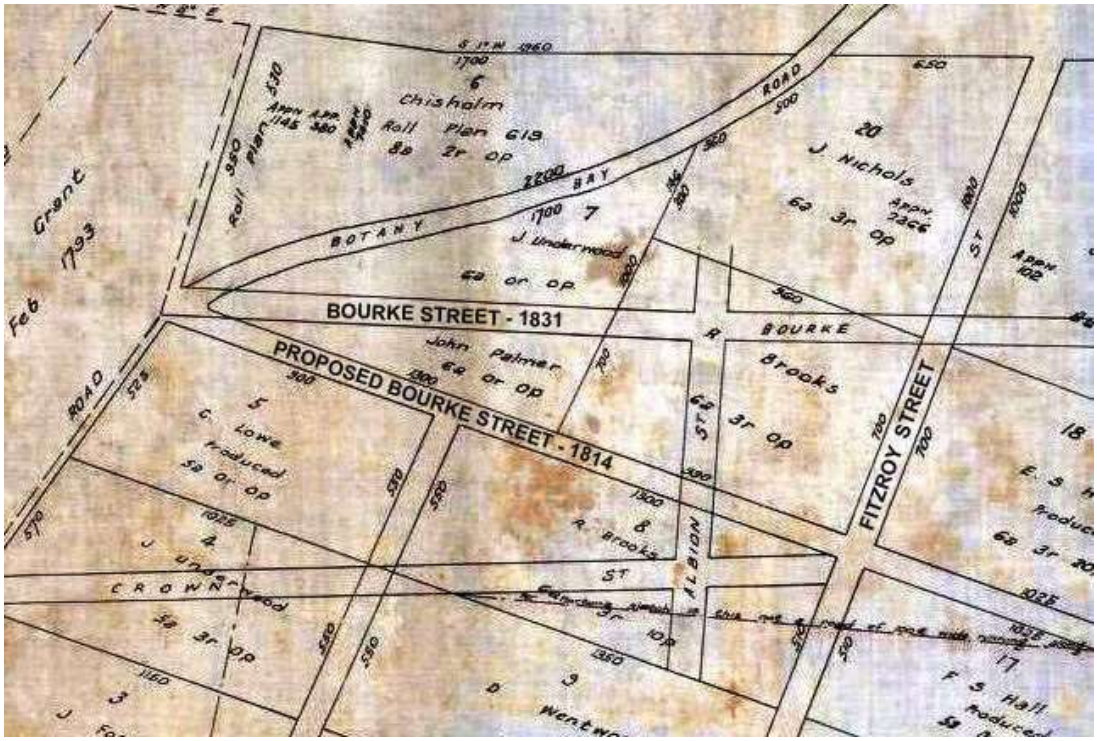


Figure 7 Land grants and street plans in Surry Hills

James Meehan's street plan in 1814

When the government surveyor James Meehan drew up a subdivision of John Palmer's Surry Hills Estate in 1814, he used South Head Road (now Oxford Street) as the basis for aligning the new allotments in a grid pattern. He also proposed a number of streets to separate the allotments into groups, all following the same grid.

The proposed streets were 50 feet wide, and included a street running south from the present Taylor Square at the intersection of South Head Road and Botany Road (now Flinders Street). This was the intended alignment of Bourke Street, and would have crossed Fitzroy Street at right angles. However, Meehan's streets were never proclaimed by the government to make them public rights of way, so builders later encroached on Meehan's intended roads without fear of prosecution[12].

Thomas Mitchell's contradictory plan in 1831

The next major attempt to organise the development of Surry Hills was by Surveyor-General Thomas Mitchell in 1831. Mitchell's idea was to align the roads based on Elizabeth Street. He proceeded to directly contradict the roads and pattern of land ownership of Meehan's 1814 plan based on South Head Road. Mitchell's streets cut right through private property, and his grand plan of squaring off the land was under pressure by subdivision and the sale of allotments which had already started. The alignment of Bourke Street was changed to be parallel to Elizabeth Street, crossing Fitzroy Street at the present acute angle[13].

In 1829, the wealthy solicitor and merchant Frederick Unwin had large subdivisions on the boundary between Surry Hills and Redfern. He was given 20 convicts to form two roads to his land, which would become Bourke Street and Cleveland Street (although he did not complete the construction of Bourke Street). But after objections from adjacent landowners, he was forced to deviate from Mitchell's plan. Even worse for Mitchell, the Colonial Secretary Alexander McLeay declared in 1829 that the government couldn't tell the owners how to lay out their land. This meant that Mitchell was powerless to force co-operation from land owners, leaving Bourke Street and Cleveland Street with puzzling changes of direction to this day.

Mitchell's planned roads were proclaimed as rights of way in 1834, and he was soon besieged with demands for compensation by land owners, as his roads went through many of their allotments. A government committee decided that because the value of all the allotments had already risen greatly in the current economic boom, the government would not pay compensation. In no time fences and houses were built across Mitchell's proposed roads.

The Great Obstruction

One of these encroachment problems illustrates the chaotic early development of Surry Hills, and the powerlessness of the inexperienced and underfunded Sydney Council in dealing with it. It is the story of a protracted dispute right next door to the current Hopetoun Hotel site that was widely reported in the press in the mid-1840s.

Charles Morris buys into Bourke Street

By 1844, Charles Morris was the owner of the portion of Thomas Jones's land that included part of the future Bourke Street, immediately to the west of the present Hopetoun Hotel. In October 1844, Morris petitioned the Council for compensation for a road that would be built through his land. He offered to give up all claim to the right of the land for adequate compensation from the Council[14]. The Council members couldn't agree on whether compensation already paid to the previous owner (Richard Brooks) also extended to Charles Morris, and the matter was dropped[15].

Bourke Street is fortified

By March 1845, Charles Morris had erected a fence around his land, extending across Bourke Street. The District Surveyor and the City Solicitor recommended court proceedings against him for erecting an obstruction across a proclaimed (but not yet formed) street. Morris submitted a second petition to Council requesting compensation if the Council opened the street[16]. The Council remained unwilling, and rejected the petition. By coincidence, in November 1845, the Council was considering the propriety of appointing an Inspector of Nuisances for the City of Sydney[17]!.

In April 1846, Charles Morris placed an advertisement in the *Morning Chronicle* offering to sell by the allotment[18]. Mr Morris whimsically suggested that the new owner might like to be immortalised by donating it to the Council:

THE GREAT OBSTRUCTION,
BOURKE STREET,
ADJOINING MR. PLOMER'S NEW HOUSE,
SURRY HILLS

> **Mr. Stubbs is instructed by the proprietor Mr. Charles Morris to sell by public auction...All that Extraordinary Allotment of Land in Bourke-Street, which has so long excited the public authorities.**
>
> **It is now to be sold to the highest bidder, and some wealthy citizen, who would appreciate the honour of having his name immortalised in the Archives of the City Council, ought really to come forward and make the City a present of it.**

By June 1846, the *Sydney Morning Herald*[19] reported in detail on the state of the dispute, in which there had been no progress. It was mentioned that there had been censure of the District Surveyor, much correspondence to and from the City Solicitor, and an appearance or two by Mr Morris in the Police Office. By this time, Mr Morris had started to further improve his land (and the Obstruction)

by erecting a stone wall across Bourke Street, and claimed that the Government or Council must pay him for this as well if they want to put a road through his land.

The *Herald* suggested that this encroachment might have passed unnoticed for years more if not for the rapid spread of buildings, and for the erection of one building in particular, which was to be opened as a public house on the 1st of July that year, to be called the Cockatoo Inn. By then Mr. Morris's stone wall approached within 18 inches of the Bourke Street frontage of Mr. Olliffe's intended new public house. Also, the fence which surrounds the allotment, in connection with this stone wall, took up what would be the centre of the street.

The *Herald* concluded its report by saying that there had been an extraordinary lack of decision displayed throughout the whole matter, except by Mr Morris himself, who seemed to be very decisive indeed by first putting up a fence, and then a stone wall!

What use is the City Council?

Two years later in May 1848[20], *The Australian* summarised the widespread dissatisfaction with the Council in an article headed "Of what use is the City Council?" The paper claimed that 90% of the Council's expenditure went to simply running itself, with hardly any spent on improvement and good management of the city, such as repairing the streets, improving drainage, lighting, paving and other problems.

The paper wrote that by 1848 nothing had changed: the expenses had not been economised, the streets were in the same scandalous state, and the nuisances had increased. The paper planned to publish detailed accounts showing the many failings of Council, and case number one was the Great Obstruction in Bourke Street. The paper reminded readers that in numerous proclamations published in the *Government Gazette* between 1833 and 1845, the opening of the streets of Surry Hills, and in particular Bourke Street, were notified and defined.

The landowners in the path of proposed streets had avoided building in the proclaimed roadways until, to the Council's surprise, a new claimant appeared, and instead of requesting compensation in the normal way, built a stout fence and a wall alongside a handsome inn, which was nearly finished. The paper compared Mr. Morris's handiwork to a "pah", a Maori fortified settlement surrounded by palisades and defensive terraces. So it must have been an impenetrable barrier to traffic.

The District Surveyor didn't think the Council had the power to act on Mr. Morris, and that the Bench of Magistrates should be involved. However, this august body declined to interfere, leaving the matter to flounder under a mounting pile of correspondence between the District Surveyor, the Town Clerk and the City Solicitor. The matter lapsed, and the barrier remained unpenetrated to that day. *The Australian's* report concluded by thundering that the Council was useless and incompetent for allowing such a nuisance to exist for four years.

Parliament brings in the big guns

At last, the *Sydney Morning Herald* was able to report in June 1848[21] that the Attorney-General had brought in a Bill to the Legislative Council for the removal of the Great Obstruction from Bourke Street. This was the *Bourke Street Sydney Obstructions Act*[22]. The Surveyor-General was duly authorised to take possession of as much of Mr. Morris's land as was needed to continue Bourke

Street to its terminus further south, and to invite Mr. Morris to claim compensation within two months. So after four years of indecision, it took an Act of Parliament to extend Bourke Street past the Hopetoun Hotel!

Evolution of pubs and liquor licences

By the time of English settlement of Australia, England had been brewing, distilling and selling alcohol for centuries, and had developed a system of public houses with well-defined roles for the different classes of society and their needs. But Australia was very different from England: there was a much smaller population, the distances between settlements were great with no hostels for travellers to stay or eat, and there were no meeting places for sporting or other community groups. This environment gave hotels a crucial role in providing these facilities in the early days of the colony.

English pub tradition arrives in the colony

In England, different terms denoted different establishments: inns provided accommodation, food and liquor to wealthier travellers**.** Taverns provided only liquor (wine and spirits) to the local neighbourhood**.** Alehouses sold only beer to a poorer clientele. In eighteenth century England, men, women and children all drank, either at the premises or by filling a jug to take home.

The development of gin shops in England in the nineteenth century changed the traditional relationship between the owner and the guest. Previously, customers were served by staff as if they were guests in the owner's home. But the gin shops introduced the bar, a counter over which bottles of gin were sold. Soon this bar was being built in other public houses as well. In Australia, the large single tap room of England was soon split into different rooms for different clientele, and the single service counter, or bar, separated the staff from the customers. The various terms public house, hotel, alehouse, tavern, porterhouse and inn were all used in Australia but without the formal distinction used in England[23].

Further regulations in the nineteenth century stipulated that licensed houses had to provide accommodation, and that retailing of other household items was separated from alcohol. From then on, the pubs catered for both locals and travellers by providing refreshments and accommodation as required. The United Licensed Victuallers Association was the forerunner of the Australian Hotels Association, and its name was chosen to emphasise the respectable food and accommodation aspects of hotelkeeping, in the face of accusations by temperance organisations of unsavoury liquor retailing.

Licensees and lounges

There is confusion in the terminology used for those who run hotels: a hotelkeeper or innkeeper refers to a person living in and doing the daily work of running the premises. A licensee holds the licence, but is not necessarily the hotelkeeper, or even the owner. A publican is the same as the licensee, and generally referred to the man who ran the pub and usually served behind the bar. Some hotels were individually owned (called freeholds), but many were owned by (and tied to) breweries.

In Australia, there is a strong link between the pub, beer and national identity. Statistically, we are more a nation of tea drinkers, but it is hard to imagine Slim Dusty singing about "A Home with No Tea", rather than "A Pub with no Beer"! Up to the 1960s, the different rooms in pubs were: the lounge, which provided comfortable chairs and tables for groups of both men and women. The ladies lounge, which was usually very small and catered exclusively for women. The saloon bar, with stools and higher prices. The public bar, which was open to the street, and where drinkers stood up and were exclusively men. Beer was the normal drink in the public bar, and women were forbidden to enter.

Over time, the pub's fortunes have mirrored the times. From the earliest colonial days, pubs have been at the heart of Australian social history. They have been important for social activity, sporting events, entertainment, and as venues for political meetings, clubs and organisations. Historians writing social histories of Australia have found how involved the pub has been in every aspect of Australian life: politics, religion, arts, transport, work, trade, and education.

Early colonial liquor licenses

The first recorded licences for Australian public houses were issued in 1796, but taverns, porterhouses and alehouses were operating before then, much to the annoyance of authorities, who referred to running unlicensed pub as "keeping a riotous and disorderly house". Governor John Hunter issued the first publican's licences to "a few persons of good character", in order to try and control the rise of illegal stills and home brewing, after several well-publicised incidents of excessive drinking in public.

The first pubs were usually in private houses, and well into the nineteenth century a public house was interchangeable with a private residence. A house could be a pub one year, and then revert to a private house the next. The placing of a sign over the door transformed a house into a pub. By the 1820s, the original wattle-and-daub structures had been replaced by shingle roofs, timber, stone and brick buildings. Two-storey establishments, some with verandahs, dotted the landscape. Some pubs were called "commodious", reflecting the licensee's ambition and the social needs of an expanding colony.

Melbourne starts out as a pub

If Sydney, Hobart and Brisbane were all established as prison sites, then Melbourne was established as a pub. John Pascoe Fawkner, licensee of Launceston's Cornwall Hotel, together with a group of Tasmanian merchants moved their stock and goods across Bass Strait. A few months later, Fawkner opened a sly grog shop near the fresh water of the Yarra River, and the town of Melbourne was born. Fawkner's precedent of a hotel preceding settlement was followed many times afterwards in the country. Pubs provided food, rest, accommodation and sociability for weary travellers, stabling and water for their horses, and became community centres for far-flung settlements[24].

Licensing Act of 1830

The 1830 Licensing Act[25] in New South Wales set out the ground rules for the operation of public houses. Licensed premises had to provide accommodation and public sitting rooms in addition to the supply of alcohol. They were required to hang a shingle outside advertising their name, and to keep

a lamp burning during the night, thus providing street lighting at a time when public utilities were not well developed.

In May 1873, the licensee of the Hopetoun Hotel, Francis Phillips, was relieved of 20/- with 5/6 costs at the Water Police Court for neglecting to keep a light burning over the door of the hotel from sundown to sunrise[26].

This Act effectively rolled into one the English distinctions between alehouses, taverns and inns. The accommodation stipulation would have included stabling facilities for travellers' horses. It would also have been expected that there would be dining facilities for travellers. Taverns and alehouses, which had only sold alcohol, had to adapt to the new regulations, or go out of business if they could not.

The requirement to provide accommodation meant that well into the mid-twentieth century, suburban local pubs all had bedrooms and dining rooms whether they were used or not. In addition, the publican was legally required to live on the premises, reinforcing the domestic character of the pub.

The pub as a social leveler

In the convict era, social divisions were very sharp, with a military caste at the top, the convicts at the bottom, and currency lads and lasses (those born in the colony) somewhere in the middle. Pubs provided areas for all classes: rooms where soldiers and officials could carouse upstairs. At the other end of the scale, there might be a cellar with chains and locks where travelling road gangs were shut up at night. Apart from this, pubs were places where all classes could meet, and where the class structure broke down to some extent.

Brewing in Australia

Drunkenness was rampant in the early years of the colony due to the widespread availability of rum and other spirits. This was due partly to a long naval tradition, but also because colony lacked coinage and rum became the de facto currency for some time. The early Governors, such as Arthur Phillip, John Hunter and Philip Gidley King supported the development of a local brewing industry, as a better alternative to the much more alcoholic spirits. The Governors also believed that beer could be produced in the colony and sold at prices lower than imported ales.

With government support, the ex-convict James Squire founded Australia's first commercial brewery in 1798 using imported barley and hops, and is credited with the first successful cultivation of hops in the colony in about 1805. John Boston began brewing a form of beer two years before James Squire in 1796, made from maize and mixed with leaves and stalks of the Cape gooseberry in lieu of hops[27].

A hard way to make a living

But for the first 100 years of the colony, brewing was a very precarious occupation. There is a bewildering record of changes of ownership, insolvencies and bankruptcies during this time. All sorts of things could go wrong in the brewing process, so poor quality and waste predominated. It was much easier to be a brickmaker, carpenter or candle-maker, where the outcome of the finished product was predictable. Much like the gold digger, the outcome of the brewer's efforts was very much a matter of chance. Colonial beer had a bad reputation for generations.

Brewers did not know why beer production was so unreliable. There was little understanding of the causes of why beer would vary so much from batch to batch, producing so much wastage. There were no scientific guidelines to follow, no real technical understanding of yeast and fermentation, or bacterial infections. Breweries had no electricity, and only candles and lanterns were used in cellars and workplaces.

Breweries always had a terrible smell, mostly stale beer, but also the smell of hops and yeast. The aroma was almost unbearable in summer as it wafted on the breeze through the neighbourhood. The brewers received constant complaints from neighbours and councils. Temperance groups were also loud in their condemnation of the offensive smells that were "the product of the devil's kitchen".

The main problem was that British brewing methods, transported to Australia, were not suitable for the climate here. The top fermentation process used in Britain suited cooler climates, where beer was ideally fermented at 7°C. There were also problems in the early colony with transporting beer from the breweries to the pubs. Beer had to be sent out in sweltering heat on horse-drawn carriages, often over bumpy roads and dirt tracks. It often deteriorated under these conditions, and was returned to the brewer by the publican.

Some struggling brewers would try additives to improve the taste of a bad batch of beer: a dash of sulphuric acid, potash, lime, tobacco, or strychnine. Honey, liquorice, treacle, ginger, chillies and burnt sugar were tried[28]. This was very much trial and error, and the consequences of illness and sometimes death were rarely considered.

In June 1851, Joseph Olliffe, the licensee of the Hopetoun Hotel, wrote an indignant letter to the *Sydney Morning Herald*[29] pointing out that it was not in his hotel that a Mr Farrell drank a poisonous glass of ale, but at the Green Isle Inn opposite him (the previous site of the hotel, in fact). Mr Olliffe obviously didn't want his customers to think he was selling dodgy adulterated beer!

In a desperate effort to improve its image and sales, colonial beer was advertised in glowing terms by the brewers. Terms like "superior ale and porter, brewed from the best malt and hops", "good and wholesome", "first-class" and "the best in the colony, better by far than any imports" were favourites. The more outrageous claims could be easily challenged today as false advertising. However, there were almost as many advertisements for breweries for sale or lease as there were for their "splendid and finest" ales and porter.

Lager rescues the brewers

By the 1850s and 1860s, a change in drinking preferences started to emerge, especially in the United States and Germany. People began to favour a new style of beer called lager: it was lighter, less intoxicating, more gaseous and better-conditioned than ales and porters.

Lager was a beer that was much more suited to Australian conditions where, in hot weather, men often wanted a long drink rather than a strong one. The *Australian Brewers' Journal* in the January 1886 edition referred to lager as the beer of the future: they predicted that in this hot country, people will prefer their beer cold, full of gas and a long drink for their money. They pointed out that to achieve this, the beer must be packed in ice and the temperature kept down from the start of fermentation until it is handed to the thirsty customer.

But lager was slow to gain acceptance, and it was only when the Foster brothers arrived in Melbourne from New York and started production of Foster's Lager in November 1888 that it took off. They built an ultra-modern lager brewery in Collingwood, installing lager brewing machinery and an ice-making plant, all imported from the United States. The product was an instant success: the drinking public liked it and the quality was consistently good. Their success inspired other breweries to start making lager.

Louis Pasteur studied the French beer industry in the 1870s and discovered that the yeast contained bacteria and this was turning the beer sour at times. He suggested that a heat process he had developed for the wine industry would kill most of impurities and improve the reliability of beer making. Part of the secret of Fosters Lager's success was the pasteurisation process of immersing the beer in hot water after it was bottled. Since the 1930s, virtually all beer produced in Australia has been lager, so the predictions in the *Australian Brewers' Journal* have come about.

The rise of the big breweries

The number of breweries in Australia peaked in 1890 at 294, having steadily risen for 100 years. But there were only ten left by 1993[30]. Part of this decline was caused by the severe Depression in the 1890s, when much of the workforce was out of work and out of pocket. Before this, the large city breweries were putting pressure on small breweries with the tied-house system, buying them up to secure outlets for their beer. By the early twentieth century, 80% of Sydney hotels were tied to a particular brewery.

In was clear by the beginning of the twentieth century that the future prosperity of the brewing industry lay in the economies of scale, with fewer but larger and professionally managed companies. The days of the small brewer disappeared along with the horse and cart.

Figure 8 Patriotic Vegemite advertisement, World War II

Vegemite was invented in 1922 as a by-product of spent yeast, and was a local version of English Marmite, supplies of which had been interrupted by World War I. It took a while to become popular, but was eventually marketed successfully as a health food for children, containing many vitamins. But a study in 1959 found that most children already had sufficient of the vitamins in Vegemite. On the other hand, the alcoholics created by the beer produced from the yeast would have been more likely to gain from the vitamins in this brewing waste product.

Local breweries

Before Tooth & Co. bought the Hopetoun Hotel in 1901, it is not known where the hotel obtained its beer. But early colonial beer did not travel well, so the Hopetoun probably bought beer from a nearby brewery. There were two notable breweries in the area in the nineteenth century.

Albion Brewery (1827 – 1852)

Samuel Terry was a former convict who did very well for himself. He was a stonemason by trade, and during his sentence he supervised the building of the Parramatta gaol. After finishing his sentence, he became a storekeeper, publican and substantial land and property owner, owning almost 20,000 acres at one time. He had earlier been in partnership with Daniel Cooper at the Australian Brewery in George Street, and in 1827 he started his own brewery. This was the Albion Brewery in Elizabeth Street on the corner of Albion Street. The location was chosen because of a stream of fresh water that flowed into Darling Harbour. The Albion Brewery was the largest in Sydney for a time, and produced London porter and English ale.

Figure 9 Albion Brewery

Samuel Terry died in 1838, and after his nephew took over the brewery it went into serious decline. Brewing ceased completely in 1852, and by the mid-1850s the company was trading as the Albion Steam Flour Mills, then from the late 1850s as the Albion Soap and Paper works. The buildings burned down in the 1860s and the site remained vacant until the Toohey brothers purchased the site in 1873. The Tooheys opened the Standard Brewery on the site in 1875, operating until 1980.

Figure 10 Standard Brewery, 1875

Paddington Brewery (1857 – 1911)

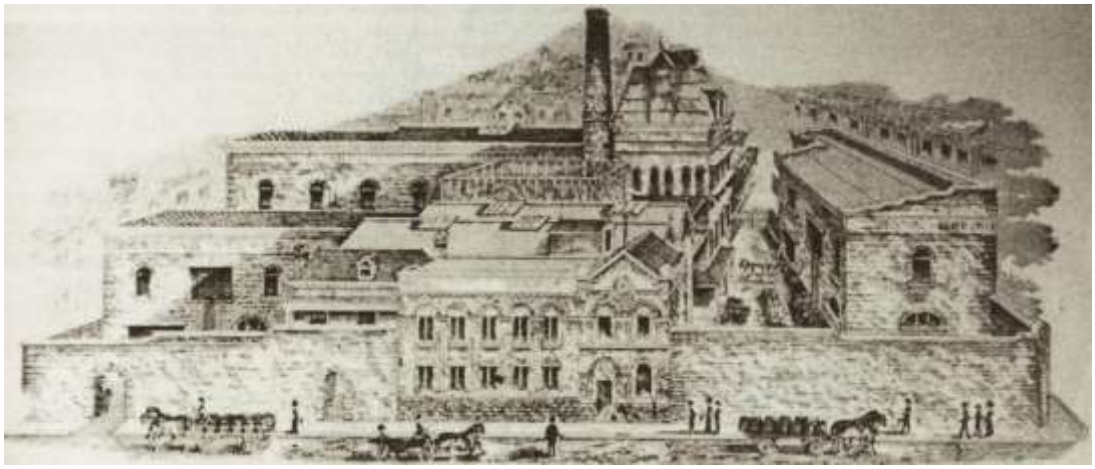


Figure 11 Marshall's Paddington Brewery

This operated on the corner of Oxford and Dowling Streets. Yorkshireman Joseph Marshall landed in South Australia in 1840. He was a distiller for a few years, then moved to Sydney and set up a business as a chemist. He experimented in making his own beer as a hobby, initially only making enough for his own use, but his brew became well known and sought after. He bought land in Paddington and built a house for himself and his family. Then he added a small brewery and supplied beer to his friends and a few families.

He was soon selling his home brew to hotels and taverns, and his business expanded rapidly, mainly because of the excellent quality of his brew. A number of prizes were awarded at agricultural shows for his draught beer, bottled ale and porter. He won first prize at the Intercolonial Exhibition of 1876. When Joseph Marshall died in 1880, his brewery was one of the largest in Sydney. His sons, Joseph and James, kept the business going. It became a vast complex of buildings, including the brewery, granary, cellars, malt house and stables.

In 1909, the family accepted an offer to buy the property on which the brewery stood, and in 1910 the operation moved Short Street, Leichhardt. This location was previously the site of the Sydney Co-Operative Brewing Co. Ltd, and before that the Centennial Brewery. But not long after opening at the new location, the brewery was purchased by Tooth & Co, and closed the following year.

The original brewery site in Paddington was reopened in December 1911 as West's Olympia Theatre with 2,500 seats on two levels[31]. By 1919, it was advertising pictorial, musical and dramatic entertainment: motion pictures five nights a week and vaudeville on one night a week[32]. In 1920, the theatre was taken over by Union Cinemas and claimed to be the first cinema in Sydney to show "talkies".

The history of this brewery is a microcosm of the times. By the time it was relocated to Leichhardt in 1909, it enjoyed a strong following at a time when word-of-mouth advertising counted for everything, and was supplying several hotels in the neighbourhood. But Tooths weren't interested in the award-winning Marshall beers, only their hotel outlets, so when they bought the brewery out in 1910, they promptly closed it down[33].

Early industries in Surry Hills

Surry Hills was expanding rapidly at the time the Hopetoun Hotel was established. The end of convict transportation in 1840 meant that New South Wales was no longer a penal colony but a free society, and an attractive place to live, far from the poverty of Britain. Industries started up and grew, drawing a workforce from the local population. Some pubs even sought to entice particular industries or sporting groups by the names they used.

Builders drive the economy

Much of the economy in the period after the Hopetoun Hotel was established was driven by the building trade, which provided employment, however intermittent, to a wide range of associated trades and labouring jobs. The Bourke Street quarry and Ewart's Brickyards on Cleveland Street helped supply the materials. There was also Goodlet and Smith's Pottery in Riley Street south, which transformed the greater part of Strawberry Hills into drainpipes, chimney pots and ornamental bricks for the houses of Surry Hills[34].

Tanning makes its presence felt in the area

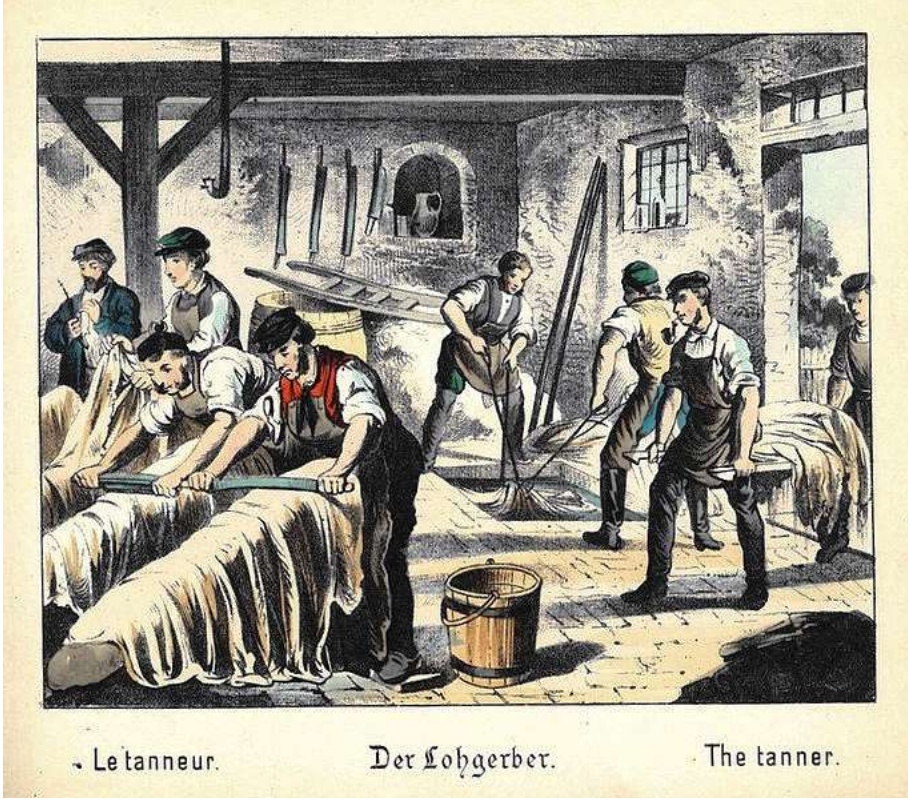


Figure 12 Tannery workers in 1880

The trades of tanning and currying (leather curing) were common in Surry Hills. The strong odour and noxious runoff flowed unhindered for years from William Pawley's Tannery in the Bourke Street end of Devonshire Street[35]. Pawley was the son of Third Fleet convicts John Pawley and Hannah Murphy. By 1823, he was a tanner and leather dresser with convict mechanic assigned to him. He lost his left hand feeding the bark mill at this tannery.

Government legislation in 1848 banned the heavily polluting industries from the city proper, so tanneries moved out to areas like Surry Hills. The largest in the neighbourhood was William Alderson and Sons, located to the south of Cleveland Street near Maddison Street. This was both a major employer and polluter from the 1850s.

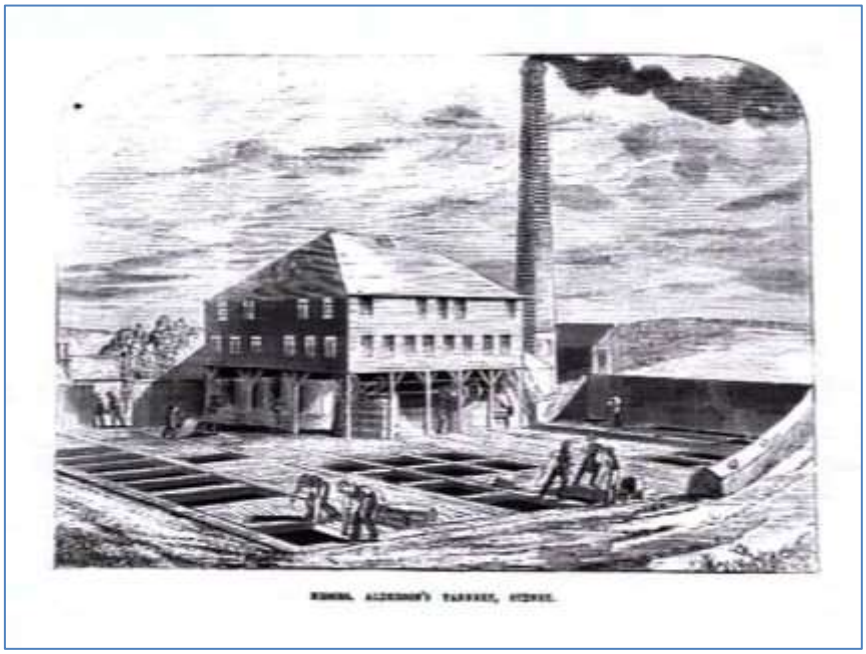


Figure 13 Alderson's Tannery, 1867

In the 1870s, the narrow lanes of Surry Hills hummed with sewing machines late in to the night as women ran up workers' garments for Dawson's of Brickfield Hill or Cohen Brothers of Goulburn Street.

Pubs cater for industries and sports

It was common for pubs to be named after prominent local trades or sporting activities, to try and establish a clientele from those groups. The pubs near the Hopetoun Hotel were no exception to this.

The Carrington Hotel was named after the former Carrington Athletic Grounds athletic field which ran from Bourke Street to South Dowling Street opposite the hotel, and where the publican organised popular quoits competitions in the 1880s. The former Athletic Club Hotel (corner of Arthur and Alexander Streets) probably catered for sportspeople from the same athletic field from 1886 onwards. The Cricketers' Arms hoped to attract cricket fans visiting Moore Park and the Sydney Cricket Ground nearby.

The Rifleman's Arms and the Rifle Butts Hotel (a former name of the Flinders Hotel for some years after 1870) celebrated the popularity of rifle shooting. The Rifle Butts was the local term for the Paddington Rifle Range, built for the British Army in 1851 and turned over to the Centennial Parklands in about 1890 to extend Moore Park. The Captain Cook Hotel was just beyond the 1000 yard target area. The Hunt Club Hotel (the name used by the old Pine Apple Hotel between 1883 and 1891) catered for followers of equestrian pursuits. Randwick racecourse was only a couple of miles

down the road, and in fact an advertisement for the sale of the Flinders Hotel wrote that on race days it was “the first refreshment house from, and the last to, the course”[36].

The original Cockatoo Inn in Bourke Street became the Curriers’ Home after the licensee moved to the current Hopetoun Hotel site, recognising the large number of tannery workers in Surry Hills at the time. In March 1848, Jeremiah Green, a tanner and currier living or working next door to the Curriers’ Home, advertised for a currier, and wanted to buy green wattle bark[37].

There was a Brickmakers’ Arms in Surry Hills from 1834 until 1840. The same licensee, Dominick Poppillari, unsuccessfully applied for a licence for a Cabinetmakers’ Arms in Botany Road (now Flinders Street) Surry Hills in 1840.

Neighbouring pubs

The Hopetoun Hotel competed with many other pubs in the neighbourhood, even from its earliest days. Some of these buildings have survived as hotels, some as other businesses, and some have disappeared altogether. One common feature is that they were all built before the 1880s.

Figure 14 Neighbouring pubs

Hotels shown in the above diagram:

1. Queen's Arms
2. Pelican Hotel
3. Beresford Hotel
4. Flinders Hotel
5. Dolphin Hotel
6. Original Hopetoun hotel (as the Cockatoo Inn)
7. Austral Hotel
8. Hopetoun Hotel
9. Yorkshireman's Retreat
10. Pine Apple Hotel
11. Rifleman's Arms
12. Cricketers' Arms

Pine Apple Hotel, 84 Fitzroy Street (1845 – 1891)

This former hotel was first licensed in 1845 on the corner of Fitzroy and Nichols Street. An advertisement for its sale in January 1852[38] calls it a stone-built hotel with eight rooms, four cellars, and a three-stall stable. After being sold again in 1878, the new owner Lloyd Williams changed the name to Williams' Hotel in November 1879[39]. The significance of the name is that the pineapple was traditionally an emblem of welcome and hospitality in the Caribbean, North America and Europe up to the nineteenth century.

The hotel was bought by James Francis Cosgrove in 1885 and renamed to the Hunt Club Hotel. It must have had larger stables than usual for the area, as they were called the Hunt Club Stables when horses were advertised for sale. One notice in December 1885[40] advertised that the Hunt Club Stables were carrying out livery, training, bait and the breaking of horses ("wildest colts tamed in three days"), by Cosgrove and Strange, agents.

The hotel's association with horses continued with a court case in March 1889[41]. A jockey named William English had been refused a publican's licence when he bought the lease and goodwill in 1887 because he was only nineteen at the time, and he was suing the hotel broker to get his £50 deposit back.

The hotel closed in June 1891 after its license renewal application was refused[42]. The application had been opposed by Inspector Bremner because the house was unsuitable, did not afford proper accommodation, and there were already five public houses in the vicinity. This was despite the hotel being owned by Mr Marshall of Marshall's Paddington Brewery, who stated that he would have the hotel furnished to the satisfaction of the inspector. The building must have been demolished and rebuilt after this, because it looks like a late Victorian brick terrace house now. In 1971 it was used as the office of the Excelsior Publishing Pty Ltd.

Yorkshireman's Retreat, 67 Fitzroy Street (1866 – 1873)

This former hotel was established in 1866 by David Whitehead[43]. In March 1867, there is an advertisement for dancing at D. Whitehead's Yorkshireman's Retreat, Fitzroy St, Surry Hills, every Saturday night[44]. Then in December 1872, David Whitehead was fined 20/- for "unlawfully permitting music in his licensed public-house, the Yorkshire Retreat"[45]. He deserves some credit for trying to entertain his customers, at least!

The hotel last appeared in *Sands Directory* in 1873, and it seems to have closed then. From 1876, David Whitehead, stonemason was at 207 ½ Fitzroy Street (part of the same building). The building has since been rebuilt, is presently the office of the Whirlwind Print Company on level one.

Rifleman's Arms, 75 Fitzroy Street (1872 – 1922)

This former hotel was first mentioned in the newspaper in January 1872, when the publican was John Dimond[46]. He previously operated the site as a grocery and bootmaker's shop. The Rifleman's Arms operated until 1922, when the Licences Reduction Board withdrew its licence, with compensation of £1,750 paid to the owner and £470 to the licensee[47].

Figure 15 Former Rifleman's Arms

By 1975, the ground floor was a doctor's surgery operated by Dr J. Verge, and the first floor was residential[48]. A variety of businesses have operated since then. The original pub building is still intact, and the name and year can just be made out above the door.

Cricketers' Arms, 106-108 Fitzroy Street (1879 –)

This pub was established in 1879, when the licensee was J. F. Williams[49]. The hotel was remodelled by the owners Tooth & Co in the second half of 1921[50], including new facades and enlargement of the public bar. The alterations, which were approved by the Licensing Court, were to be completed by 31 March 1922, which would make them in time to avoid the purge conducted by the Licences Reduction Board later that year.

Figure 16 Cricketers' Arms

The Cricketers' Arms was one of the first gay and lesbian pubs in Surry Hills in the 1970s. It survives today as a quaint local pub with local beers and a bistro.

Austral Hotel, corner of Bourke & Foveaux Streets (1882 – 1922)

This former hotel was first called Freeman's Family Hotel in 1882[51]. By 1893, it was renamed the Austral Hotel[52]. The licence was taken away by the Licenses Reduction Board in December 1922, and it seems to have closed as a hotel, although the building was still called the Austral Hotel in council photos in the 1930s.

In the early 1940s, the council resumed (took back) this building for the proposed widening of

Figure 17 Austral Hotel, behind the Hopetoun

Fitzroy Street, and it was demolished in 1942[53]. The site is currently a small park.

Beresford Hotel, 354 Bourke Street (1870 –)

This hotel was opened in 1870 as the Albion Inn, and later called the Albion Hotel. In 1894, it was called Crowther's Family Hotel. Then in 1897 it was renamed the Beresford Hotel and rebuilt in the Victorian Italianate style at about this time.

In 1924, Tooth & Co bought the hotel and adjacent cottage, demolished the cottage and extended the hotel into the site. Now it is a three storey building with inter-war remodelling with rendered brick and parapeted roof. In 1985, the hotel was sold after Tooth & Co were taken over by Carlton United Brewery, and there have been a number of owners since then.

Figure 18 Beresford Hotel

Pelican Hotel, 409-411 Bourke Street (1853 – 1922)

This former hotel was first licensed in 1853, when it was called the Emerald Isle Hotel. It became the Pelican Hotel in 1861, and then the Gulgong Hotel by 1876.

It was one of the many pubs to have its license taken away in 1922 by the Licenses Reduction Board. Compensation of £1,120 was paid to the owner, and £1,850 to the licensee. The building was eventually put up for sale in 1929[54], and was described as a three storey building of brick and stone, with an iron roof, about ten rooms, cellar, kitchen, bathroom and outbuildings.

The building survives today as a rare example of mid-Victorian Georgian style sandstone structure. It operated from 1992 to 1999 as Riberries bush tucker restaurant, and from 2006 has operated as Le Pelican French bistro.

Figure 19 Former Pelican Hotel

Dolphin Hotel, 412-414 Crown Street (1856 –)

This hotel was first licensed in 1856. At this time, the licence was transferred from J. G. Hand's Dolphin Hotel in Bridge Street to Christopher Richardson, after the Bridge Street hotel was sold. In 1922, it was purchased by Tooth & Co. then remodelled in the Inter-war Free Classical style. It is the oldest surviving hotel in the immediate area to retain its original name (the Cricketers' Arms being the other).

Figure 20 Dolphin Hotel

Carrington Hotel, 563-5 Bourke Street (1877 –)

This hotel was opened in 1877 as the Criterion, when the first publican was Thomas Whitty. In 1885 it was renamed to Thompson's Family Hotel, after Nat Thompson, the new owner. The proprietor ran a quoits tournament at the Metropolitan Quoit Ground across the road.

Figure 21 Carrington Hotel

In June 1886, Tip carters were invited to tender for filling and levelling the Carrington Athletic Grounds, opposite the hotel[55]. By June 1887, the pub had been renamed to the Carrington Hotel[56], presumably after the athletic grounds, which had been named in honour of Charles Carrington, Governor of New South Wales from 1885 to 1890.

In 1924, Tooth & Co bought the hotel, and undertook renovations, including the replacement of the original Victorian tiles[57]. At present it operates as a licensed Spanish restaurant and bar.

Nearby heritage buildings

When the Hopetoun opened in the 1840s, Surry Hills was dotted with the mansions of wealthy gentry who had made the most of the business opportunities in the rapidly growing colony. Only a few of the early buildings have survived, but they exist to remind us of the grandness of life in the early colony for the few who did well out of it.

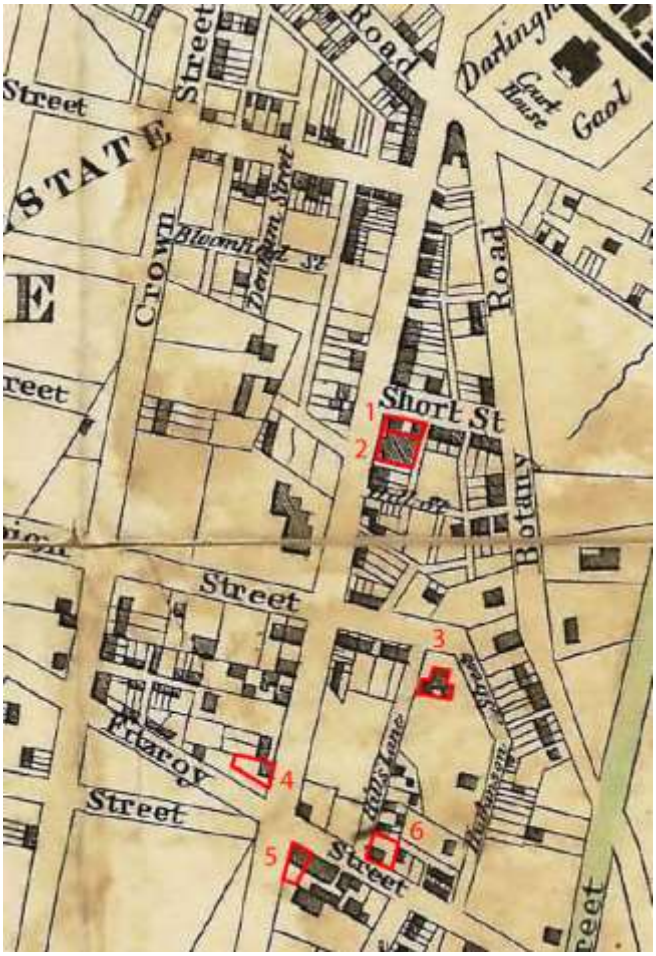


Figure 22 Woollcott & Clark map, 1854

Buildings in the above diagram, from Woollcott & Clark's map, 1854:

1. Surry Hills Academy and Seminary
2. Wesleyan Chapel
3. Durham Hall
4. Original Hopetoun Hotel (as the Cockatoo Inn)
5. Hopetoun Hotel
6. Pine Apple Hotel

Durham Hall, 207 Albion Street.

This is a two storey Colonial Georgian brick mansion, built for George Hill in about 1835. George Hill was born of convict parents at Parramatta in 1802. He became a butcher, innkeeper and merchant, amassing a fortune through his ownership of an abattoir and several inns and by accumulating real estate in Surry Hills and the Murrumbidgee district[58].

Figure 23 Durham Hall, 1835

He was Lord Mayor of Sydney in 1850, and in 1856 was elected to the first Legislative Council, resigning in 1861. He lived at Durham Hall until his death in 1883 when his buggy collided with a tram.

Figure 24 George Hill

Former Wesleyan Chapel, 348A Bourke Street.

This sandstone chapel is a fine and rare example of an early Wesleyan Chapel of Classic Revival design, with a virtually intact interior, built in 1846-7. Lancelot Iredale constructed the chapel at his own expense on a portion of his Bourke Street estate and gave it to the Wesleyan church. A tower was added to the eastern part of the site in the late 1970s or early 1980s, and the building currently houses the Edward Eagar Lodge, run by the Wesley

Figure 25 Wesleyan Chapel in 1871

Mission to provide emergency accommodation[59].

Lancelot Iredale was an ironmonger who arrived as a convict in 1816 and built up a large hardware business. His hardware company Iredale & Co became Nock & Kirby, then BBC Hardware, then Bunnings Hardware. He lived in the former Auburn Cottage, a villa constructed in 1834 on the corner of Albion and Bourke Streets with extensive gardens and a summer house. He died in 1848.

Figure 26 Lancelot Iredale

Surry Hills Academy and Seminary, 346-348 Bourke Street and 8 Short Street.

This consists of two two-storied Victorian Regency styled terraces facing Bourke Street (Seminary is No 346, Boarding School is No 348), and a former picturesque Gothic style Academy hall facing Short Street. The Short Street building was the boys' grammar school, built between 1845 and 1847. The Bourke Street building was the girls' seminary (secondary school), built between 1847 and 1849.

This is a rare surviving example of a place that catered for the gentry's custom of educating their children in small private schools in an urban setting[60].

Figure 27 Surry Hills Academy & Seminary, 1845-9

Sports and games

The early colony was populated by British settlers who brought with them a tradition of playing sports and games, but who found no organised facilities for these activities here. Pubs stepped into the void, providing playing areas and equipment for both indoor and outdoor pursuits. In time, sporting groups developed into self-sufficient organisations with their own facilities, and the pubs responded by changing the type of entertainment they offered.

Quoits and cricket at the Hopetoun

When the Hopetoun Hotel opened in 1839, the publican Joseph Ward advertised that he would be laying out Quoit and Cricket Grounds[61]. Further down Bourke Street at the Carrington Hotel, the publican Nat Thompson was running handicap quoits matches on Saturdays at the Metropolitan Quoit Ground in the paddock nearby in 1886[62]. The hotel was renamed in 1892 to the Carrington Grounds Hotel, after the athletic field that was established across Bourke Street to the south of Arthur Street[63].

Figure 28 Indoor quoits

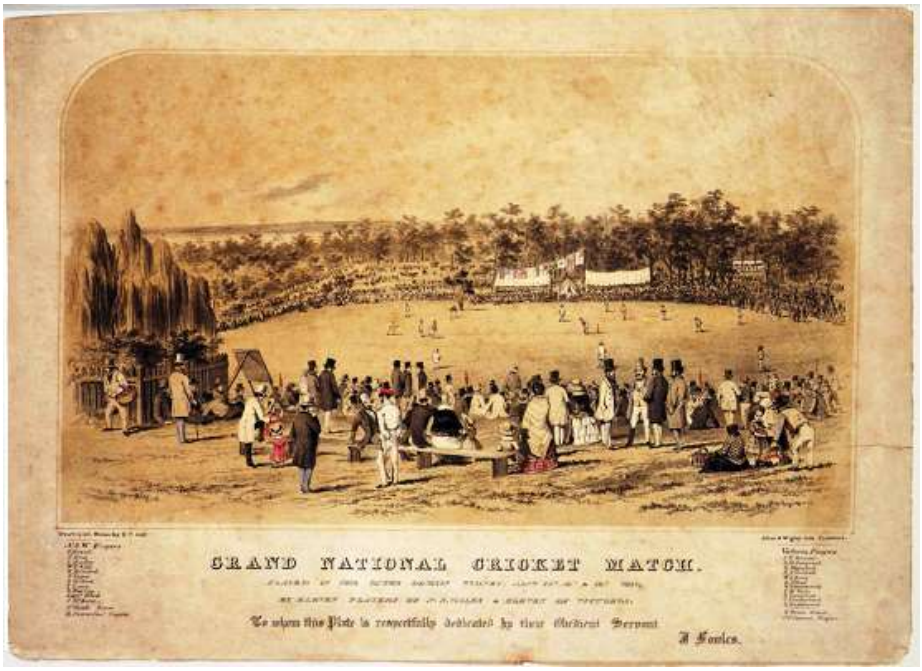


Figure 29 Cricket in the Domain, 1857

Games for young and old in pubs

Entertainment and hotels have always gone hand in hand, and entertainment was often the drawcard for patrons. Games, sports and any number of live acts were included: nineteenth century pub games included climbing a greasy pole, catching greased pigs and bobbing for apples. More

sedate games included cards, bagatelle (a game that evolved into pinball), darts and billiards. Few pubs were without a billiards room. Boxing matches were popular, either staged or impromptu fisticuffs. Skittles were popular, and many pubs had a bowling alley. These activities mainly involved men, who were the bulk of the customers[64].

Sport becomes more organized

These entertainments diminished in pubs by the late nineteenth century, as mechanics' institutes, church halls, and concert and dance halls were built and operated as more respectable establishments than hotels. From this time, the distinction between high and popular culture was more pronounced. Also, the rise of organised sport, such as football, tennis, lawn bowls at purpose-built venues reduced the importance of pubs as places to watch and play sport. All the same, pub entertainment continued, and free music or theatre and a congenial atmosphere were still drawcards for the poor.

Coronial inquests

Hotels required to host inquests

One of the conditions of the licence for a public house was that it should take in dead bodies as necessary, pending an inquest. Inquests were held if the cause of death was not immediately known, or was not from natural causes, or if the person was unidentified. Newspapers reported that fifteen inquests were held at the Hopetoun Hotel between 1840 and 1860. The first one was in August 1840[65]:

> **INQUEST. – A Coroner's inquest was held on Tuesday last at the Cockatoo Inn, Surry Hills, on the body of a man named George Savory, formerly in the employ of Messrs. Macdermott and Dixon, wine merchants, who had expired suddenly on the previous day. Verdict – Died by the visitation of God.**

A "visitation from God" was a popular way to die in the nineteenth century, according to historical records.

The inquests were usually held in a hotel that was close to the place of death. The Coroner gathered a jury of twelve eligible men to determine the cause of death and whether it was as a result of crime. The body was stored in an outhouse at the hotel, and the inquest was held on the day of death or the day after. This tradition came from Britain, from the time when there was no dedicated morgue to store bodies awaiting inquests.

But not in my local pub

However, by the middle of the nineteenth century, there were complaints about keeping dead bodies in public houses, the fear of disease and the need to provide a central place for the identification of the unknown dead. In Melbourne, bodies were taken to a morgue from at least 1858, although the one proposed for a prominent site near Princes Bridge in 1854 was not used until 1871 because of public opposition to having the dead in such a central position.

The first reported use of a morgue in Sydney was the South Sydney Morgue, from October 1881, although on this occasion the inquest was held at the Commercial Hotel in Elizabeth Street[66].

Accommodation

The pub as the main place of accommodation

Accommodation was a vital fact of Australian pub operation, and in fact the registered business type of “Hotel” referred to a place providing accommodation. Before the advent of the motel (and indeed the widespread use of motor cars), country hotels were crucial to travellers. In fact, licensing laws often required a minimum level of accommodation to be provided. For single people, pubs offered an alternative to boarding houses or rental housing, with many pubs renting rooms long-term to tenants who lived and ate at the pub, sometimes for decades.

Long-term rental for city locals

An inner-city corner pub like the Hopetoun would attract few travellers, and in any case there is no sign that stables were ever added. There were occasional advertisements in the paper for single gentlemen to rent one of the rooms, such as in February 1880[67], when the going rate was £1 1s per week. The upstairs rooms ceased to be accommodation during the 1970s, and became an administration office and a dining room.

Women in pubs

Pub work was divided into front of house (serving food and drinks to customers in the bar and dining room) and back of house (cooking, laundering and cleaning the residential accommodation). Women were attractive as employees, because much of the work was domestic, and men were unwilling to do the housework during quiet times in the bar.

Throughout the nineteenth century, domestic service in private homes was the main paid employment that women could get. Live-in pub workers endured poor conditions: sharing rooms with a number of other women and not having anywhere to socialise. Despite this, bar work was popular as it paid better than other work (such as factories), gave women better hours and more independence than domestic service, and gave the chance of becoming licensees (often by marrying and then outliving the publican). By the end of the nineteenth century, pub work for women had evolved from the status of a servant to that of employee with award wages and maximum working hours[68].

Pub food

Like all pubs, the Hopetoun Hotel served meals to residents and other patrons. But because it was a small pub, there was no separate restaurant until accommodation ceased in the 1970s. Food would have been eaten in the bar or parlours.

The importance of food in pubs was partly an inherited English tradition and partly a function of local conditions. Inns in England catered for the needs of travellers, mostly merchants or professionals. A fixed-price set meal was offered at noon at a communal table that required interaction between diners. This was different from restaurants, which offered high quality food cooked by qualified chefs at a time convenient to the diner, providing different menu items to select. The diners ate at more intimate tables.

The alehouse model of pub dining

The English model of the inn was captured in Australian colonial licensing laws, but it was the alehouse model of home cooking that was transported here and modified for local needs. As industrialisation increased in England, alehouses began to sell more food, because most workers were no longer agricultural workers who carried their own food to the fields. They were factory workers living in boarding houses who needed somewhere to eat and meet. Eating at alehouses was very simple, and was providing only sustenance[69].

This was the time when the Australian colonies were being founded. Workers moved around and expected to be able to eat in the local public house. English pubs were central to the social lives of the new industrial working class, and Australian pubs were the same. As wages grew in the mid-twentieth century, leisure time increased and eating out in the pub became a recreational activity rather than purely functional as it was originally. Gradually, pub dining became more like restaurant dining.

Up to the second half of the twentieth century, dining out was unusual for most Australians. When they did, it was usually to the dining room of the local hotel. In country towns, this would usually be the only place serving meals. Few pubs saw good cooking or even providing meals at all as profitable. Most licensees regarded food service as a chore to be avoided if possible, and merely the means to the end of selling beer. But what pubs did well was catering for cheaper meals, sold over the bar counter and often eaten there. This became very popular for workers alone or in groups at lunchtime.

The free lunch – too good to last

In colonial days, pubs took to providing free food, usually a range of cold meats, sandwiches and biscuits, as well as basic bread and cheese. By the 1880s, the practice of providing free food was universal in the colony, with pubs in the most competitive districts having to provide huge plates of all kinds of meats and salads, all free to lunchtime customers. Overseas visitors were surprised to go into pubs and be charged for beer but not for food. A similar practice was followed in New York.

The availability of relatively cheap meat in both Australia and the United States made this practice feasible, while this wouldn't have been the case in Europe. However, it was only the customers who

were happy with the provision of free food in pubs. Publicans found the costs were not good for trade. Also, restaurants complained that the practice was unfair and they could not compete.

Reduced trading hours during World War I finally saw the end of the free lunch. Profits went down when the pubs had to close at 6pm after 1916, and by 1918 the hotel keepers sent a deputation to complain to the powerful brewers. The result was that the brewers announced they would not supply beer to any pub that persisted with free lunches. The practice was abandoned in all states by 1918. Counter lunches continued, but not for free. Pubs simply imposed a small charge to cover the costs of the food.

The coming of the bistro

When the counter lunch returned after World War II, pubs set about transforming the meal trade. Hotels were encouraged to cultivate the lunchtime business trade by offering a wider variety of dishes, with daily specials to capture the public imagination. A more informal bistro-style of pub dining evolved. Snack bars and buffets appeared, catering for quick eating but with greater variety than before.

A change in the nation's food and eating-out culture was evident only a few years after the end of World War II. Journalists reported by 1949 that pubs were remodelling their premises, adding flair to the menus, and hiring chefs just off the migrant ships from top restaurants in Britain. It was clear that the country would benefit from the arrival of waves of immigrants escaping the ravages of war in Europe. Cafes and restaurants started serving more interesting food in more stylish surroundings, and pubs had to respond to this trend.

Pub dining goes back to the future

Figure 30 Rider Restaurant, Hopetoun Hotel, 2007

At the end of the twentieth century, the pub had returned from the mid-century low of a boozing-den to its original nineteenth century purpose of a provider of food, refreshment and entertainment to locals and travellers alike. However, the difference was in the style of food being provided in pubs – pubs had developed their own style of international fare, with a wide range of Asian, Mediterranean and Pacific Island influences, blended with older-style northern European dishes to exploit local products.

Out-of-hours trading

Never on Sunday

Through the nineteenth and twentieth centuries until 1979, pubs operated from early morning to late in the evening (or until six o'clock from 1916), six days a week. Sunday drinking was not allowed, except in some cases for bone fide travellers or residents. While Sunday was traditionally regarded as the day of rest from all activities, the problem was that people were just as thirsty on Sunday as they were on other days. This paradox (that a person could drink when they weren't thirsty but not necessarily when they were) led to illegal drinking, which became almost a national pastime.

A policeman's thankless lot

In the second half of the nineteenth century, the unruly world of pubs and their social networks was restructured to some extent by attempts by colonial police forces to carry out regular inspections of hotels. In all Australian colonies, police were called upon to try and control the sly grog trade. Sly grogging normally meant pubs trading out of hours, especially on Sundays. The police had the thankless task of attempting to enforce unpopular regulations on an unsupportive public. Over time, sly grogging proved to be the least threatening but an extremely popular law-breaking activity in pubs (the other main ones being gambling and prostitution).

They said they were travellers, your honour

A publican in a country Victorian town in 1902 successfully pleaded in court that he always checked that his Sunday patrons were bona fide travellers, and even employed a man at the door to ask everyone about how far they had travelled. Despite the police protesting that this was a sham because they knew most of the patrons and they were actually locals, the case was dismissed[70]. Other raids by police on country and inner-suburban hotels proved equally pointless.

The Victorian Police Commissioner complained to a Royal Commission on one occasion that nearly the whole country was against them: the publicans, the drinkers, and even the Bench. Magistrates in Petty Sessions hearings seemed to show their disdain for liquor laws and the police enforcement of them by giving the benefit of any doubt to publicans over police prosecutors.

Tasmanian police were quick to identify one immediate consequence of the six o'clock closing law during World War I – the almost universal disregard for it. Pubs just outside the metropolitan fringe blithely played around with the definition of a traveller every weekend.

It's a raid!

The Hopetoun Hotel saw its share of raids by the hotel inspectors. The licensee John Dempsey was fined at least twice in 1882 for refusing entry to Sergeant Bell, a licensing officer, presumably because he knew his customers were drinking illegally inside[71]. Dempsey was fined again that year for keeping his hotel open on Sunday, along with numerous others in Surry Hills: the Garrick's Head Hotel at 381 Crown Street (now the White Horse Hotel), the Hand of Friendship Hotel at 19 Marshall Street, the Golden Fleece Hotel at 532 Crown Street (now Gnome Cafe) and the Dolphin Hotel.

In the first case heard that day, the landlord of the Cheshire Cheese Hotel in Kent Street must have been desperate to avoid a fine because he claimed that the person allegedly drinking beer was in fact drinking tonic water, and that the prosecutor did not know what beer tasted like! The prosecutor, the redoubtable Senior-Sergeant Atwill asserted that he had full knowledge of the taste of beer and many other types of liquor besides[72].

In December 1898, the licensee of the Hopetoun Hotel, Vincent Palesi appeared in court, charged with selling liquor on a Sunday. When the police entered the hotel at 11:30am, the drinkers had all been bundled down into the cellar and locked in. Palesi had been the licensee for only three weeks, and claimed to have suffered continual annoyance from a rival in the business. He had in fact been obliged to use firearms to defend his premises at 2:30am on the morning in question. Despite this unusual but irrelevant defence, and the sworn testimony of other witnesses that they saw no liquor being consumed in the hotel, the Magistrate fined him £3 plus costs[73].

There were two other fines to the Hopetoun's licensees during the 1890s for illegal Sunday trading. Clearly, out-of-hours drinking was widely practised. The money to be made from the sly grog trade was worth the occasional trip down to the Water Police Court at Circular Quay to pay a fine following a raid.

Part Two – the Twentieth Century

The Hopetoun Hotel in the twentieth century

The new century brought with it a desire to avoid the economic and class problems of the previous decades by combining the states into a Federation in 1901, creating the Commonwealth of Australia. The first Governor-General of a united Australia was Lord Hopetoun, who served until 1903. The end of the last century also saw the Victorian style of architecture replaced by the Federation style.

Stability comes to the Hopetoun

It is rare for a pub as old as the Hopetoun to keep the same name to the present day, but to have five different names in sixty years might be a record. After all the name changes, as well as a number of different owners and countless licensees, the pub entered a long period of stability after the purchase by Tooth & Co. The new owners proceeded to improve the image of the hotel by extensively renovating it in the style of the day, the Federation Boom style. The quality of brick detailing and proportioning above the awning make the pub a good example of this style.

Figure 31 KB Lager label

A new facebrick facade was wrapped around the existing building with contrasting bands of sandstone at window sill height, topped by a detailed parapet. The new facade meant that the hotel now protrudes onto the footpath by nine inches (the length of a brick) from the nineteenth century building line. The splayed north-west corner allowed a pediment in the parapet with the hotel name, and the old corner entry became a show window. The building was almost doubled in size, incorporating a new private lobby and stair from Bourke Street. Finally, a verandah awning with cast-iron posts extended on both sides, out to near the end of the pavement[74].

Despite the extensive redevelopment, some original features remain. The eastern wall of the public bar is stripped of render, exposing much earlier bricks, possibly from the 1840s. The cellar bar still has the original 1846 sandstone walls along the Bourke and Fitzroy Street sides.

After the Liquor (Amendment) Act was enacted in 1905, and by popular demand, 12% of New South Wales hotels were closed over the following six years. Then during the 1920s, State licensing bodies set about further reducing the number of hotels. However, Tooth & Co. maintained their hotels to the stringent licensing requirements to retain their licences.

Always one more Act to comply with

From the 1920s, new hotels were banned from using posts under verandahs, and overhanging awnings had to be suspended from the facade above. In 1935, the awning posts of the Hopetoun were removed to conform to this trend.

In 1940, the Council notified building owners that it wanted to widen Fitzroy Street from Bourke Street to Dowling Street, in order to extend Foveaux Street to Moore Park. The Council then resumed numbers 475 and 477 Bourke Street (including the delicensed Austral Hotel opposite the Hopetoun), and declared that the properties on the hotel's side of Fitzroy Street would also be resumed at some point. This was very alarming news, but fortunately for the Hopetoun, World War II held up the Fitzroy Street resumption scheme.

In 1941, the Council declared the hotel a health hazard under the Public Health Act of 1902, due to issues with dampness, plasterwork, painting and papering, WC cisterns and pans, waste pipes, water supply, drainage and flooring and the reconstruction of the gents toilet (this was outside the pub and accessed from Bourke Street, and was very small and poorly ventilated with a low roof). This was all to be fixed in 14 days! Tooth came to a compromise arrangement with the Council about fixing some of the problems. So in the early 1940s, the owners had the expense of compliance as well as the uncertainty of resumption if the road widening went ahead.

Figure 32 Tooth's Stout poster

In May 1971, Under the Traffic Safety (Light and Hoardings) Act, Tooth were notified that the awning must be at least two feet inside the kerb, because of the inconvenience and danger from increased traffic, and a number of collisions between high vehicles and awnings. In the 1970s, a deck was constructed in the back to provide a small beer garden, as was fashionable from the 1960s.

The cellar became a small lounge. It was well over a century old by then, with the original 1846 stone walls still visible. The upstairs rooms ceased to be used for accommodation, and were converted to administration offices and a dining room. In 1987, a restaurant opened on the first floor, and by 2007 Rider Restaurant was serving Mexican food.

Pub music rocks the Hopetoun

In the 1970s, Australian rock music was starting to find its feet, after domination by foreign bands until then. The hotel provided a venue for this music after closing times were extended. The bands included country bands from 1980, rockabilly on Sundays from 1982, rock and roll and soul three nights a week. After that there were original local bands four or five nights a week to 1985.

From 1985, the original bands included the Cockroaches, Paul Kelly and the Coloured Girls, Michael Hutchence (INXS), Angry Anderson and Jenny Morris. In 1990 they included Tim Freedman (from the Whitlams), the Hoodoo Gurus, Mental as Anything, You Am I, Rat Cat and the Clouds. Through the 1990s, the hotel maintained this service as part of its cultural identity when many venues ceased live music after pressure from nearby residents, and after local Councils took over the authority of the Licensing Police.

From 1997, the owners have been Evangelos Patakos and Associates.

Closure in 2009

In September 2009, the Hopetoun suddenly closed its doors and has not reopened since. This was so unexpected that staff, ticket-holders and artists were all caught by surprise. Even the operators of the upstairs restaurant did not know the pub had closed until they turned up for work the next day.

The owners have told the press that that an accumulation of fines from police and onerous directives from Sydney City Council to upgrade the building are to blame for the closure. In particular, the pub needed to install sprinklers, wheelchair-accessible toilets and a sound limiter on the public address system. However, the council was reported as saying[75] that there were no current directives to the venue to upgrade its facilities, and that only one noise complaint had been received lately, which had been resolved.

History of Tooth & Co.

Ownership of the Hopetoun Hotel by Tooth & Co. through much of the twentieth century has probably ensured its survival, both as a building and as a licensed pub. The company made its mark on the hotel industry in New South Wales for 150 years by acquiring hundreds of pubs and then renovating and decorating them in the distinctive styles of the day.

The Kent Brewery is established

John Tooth immigrated to Australia from Kent in June 1828. He traded as a general merchant, and then with his brother-in-law John Newnham he opened a brewery in 1835, located on Parramatta Street near Blackwattle Creek (now the area of the Broadway, Sydney). He named it the Kent Brewery.

Figure 33 Tooth's rower wall art

The Tooth family had other commercial interests in banking, agriculture and real estate, and could afford to support the brewery through the turbulent late nineteenth century. This made Tooth & Co the dominant beer maker going into the twentieth century. The company logo and trademark of the white horse rampant was based on the battle standard of two Saxon Chiefs, who invaded Britain, landing at Kent in 449 AD. The white horse became the emblem of the county of Kent after this.

Tooth's hotels were tied, that is the licensees were bound to sell only Tooth beers. This practice was outlawed under the Trade Practices Act in 1974. In 1983, Carlton and United Brewery acquired Tooth & Co. After this, Foster's, VB, and Cascade Light were brewed at the Kent Brewery. The Kent Brewery was closed by Carlton United in early 2005, and all of their beers were then made in Queensland and Victoria. The brewery was demolished and is being developed into housing, except the heritage chimney and gate. Only two of their many original beers remain on the market: KB Lager and Kent Old Brown.

Tooth & Co. eventually owned hundreds of hotels in New South Wales. Their willingness to renovate and maintain their vast network of hotels as licensing requirements changed was a significant factor in the survival of many corner pubs such as the Hopetoun Hotel.

Pub wall art

Between the 1930s and 1960s, Tooth & Co commissioned around 6,000 beer advertisements painted on glass and hung outside their pubs. This was unique to New South Wales, and almost exclusive to Tooth. They were an effort to try and modernise the pubs and also to associate their products with sport, health and cultural sophistication. The paintings portrayed both men and women enjoying leisure pursuits at a time when the image of pubs was of men's watering holes.

Figure 34 Tooth diners wall art

At the time, Tooth decorated a great many of their pubs with these paintings. The few surviving examples are highly sought as souvenirs of the era. They were painted by applying paint and gold leaf to the back of glass. They were also hung on interior hotel walls.

The temperance movement and early closing

The excessive use of alcohol was a major social problem in the early days of the colony. Rum and spirits caused mayhem until beer provided a lower-alcohol alternative and authorities began to crack down on the more disreputable drinking dens. As the free-spirited Georgian era gave way to the puritanical Victorian era, anti-alcohol sentiment coalesced into a number of temperance groups.

Temperance and Victorian morality

Temperance associations became more outspoken about the evils of alcohol during the 1870s. Along with a steady improvement in the conditions of life in the colony came the growing feeling that the moral and social life needed reforming. This went along with temperance thinking, as maintaining the sobriety of society was seen as a part of Victorian middle class ideals.

The main temperance group was the Woman's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU), founded in 1873 in the United States. Its logo was a white ribbon in the form of a bow, symbolising purity[76]. At this time, most pubs were typically open from 6am to 11pm, Monday to Saturday. They were closed on Sundays (except to bona-fide travellers, in some cases) until the Liquor Act of 1912 was changed in 1979 in New South Wales to allow trading from noon to 10pm on Sundays.

Figure 35 WCTU logo

The struggle between the temperance movement and the drinking public continued through the 1880s and 1890s, although at a fairly low key. Most of the exchanges were verbal, waged in the papers and in parliament. The liquor trade argued that banning drinking would simply force it underground, but there was still a widespread feeling that most pubs were not respectable places, and represented the worst face of society.

Six o'clock closing is achieved

The temperance campaign was increased at the outbreak of World War I, with the argument that the war would be prosecuted more successfully if the homes were well-ordered and morally upright (that is, if men were at home and not out getting drunk after work). A referendum was held in December 1913, which returned a vote in favour of retaining 11pm closing.

Figure 36 Nine o'clock closing poster, 1916

However, the greatest success of the temperance movement came in June 1916 when another referendum on early closing was won by the six o'clock option. The result in New South Wales was influenced by a drunken riot by soldiers from Casula army base in February 1916. A subsequent Act of Parliament to close all bars at six o'clock came into law at the end of 1916.

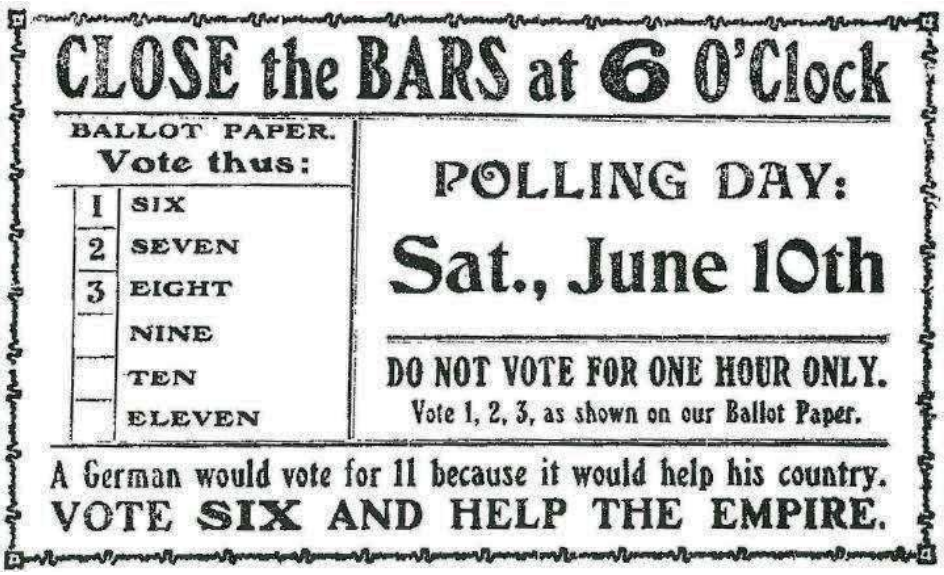


Figure 37 Patriotic How to Vote card, 1916

However, early closing did not apply to licensed sports clubs or working men's clubs, which were regarded as private bars and could still sell alcohol in the evening. The legislation also stated that all

bars must close on the arrival of a troopship. Early closing was meant to be temporary, but the law was extended a number of times in New South Wales, and in 1923 was made permanent.

The temperance movement continued to push for total abolition of the sale of alcohol. One argument against prohibition was that, unlike American saloons which were just drinking dens. Australian hotels were also residential and so provided more amenities than just a bar. But abolitionist pressure through the 1920s was not successful in Australia. This may have been because the situation in the United States, where organised crime grew dramatically during prohibition (from 1920 to 1933), did not encourage a similar course of action here[77].

By this time, the advent of the eight-hour day meant that most blue-collar workers finished work at 5pm. Early closing was meant to reduce alcohol consumption, but its main impact was to instigate speed drinking, when men drank as much as they could in the frenzied hour between end of work and closing time at 6pm. Pubs adapted to this intense period of drinking by extending the bars and removing all furniture, to rapidly serve as many
drinkers as possible.

World War II and the six o'clock swill

Commentators during World War II wrote that war seemed to exaggerate the fast standing-up drinking caused by early closing. The rushed public bar conditions became associated with wartime shortages. By 1944, press reports were referring to a hoggish swilling of beer or a swill of liquor, as the short drinking time was combined with the possibility of the pub running dry in the middle of it[78].

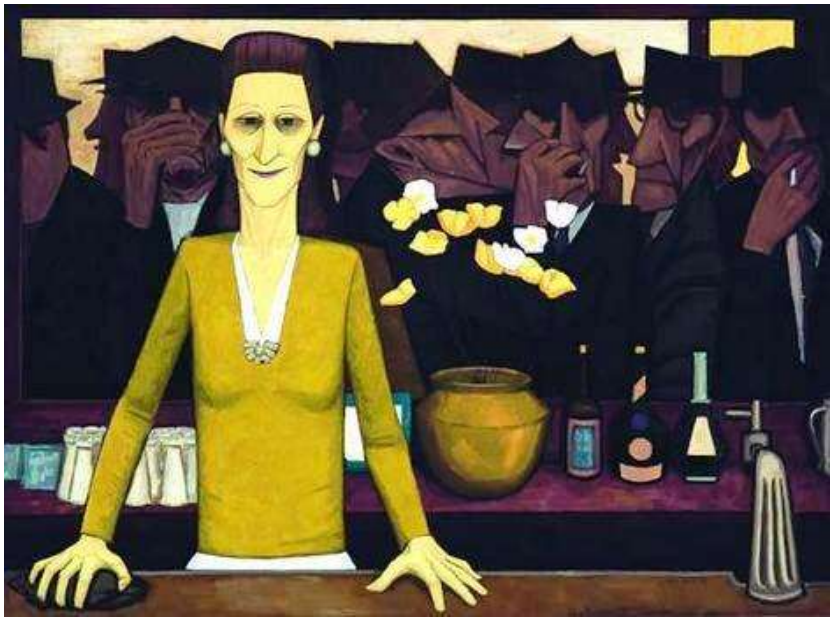


Figure 38 The Bar, by John Brack, 1954

An increasingly-insistent debate was raging across the nation that the drinking conditions were detrimental to the war effort, rather than helping it. Someone wrote plaintively to a newspaper

asking why it was that the pubs were open when he was at work and couldn't drink, but closed when he was off work and could drink, and what use was that to him?

In 1947, the bar walls of the Hopetoun Hotel were tiled. This was a practice encouraged by the Tooth & Co. architect at the time to cope with the rigours of the six o'clock swill. Also at around this time, the public bar was enlarged by combining it with one of the public parlours[79].

Normal service is restored

By 1945, there were increasing calls for more civilised drinking hours and practices. By then, pubs had been heavily modified to cope with the six o'clock swill and were no longer the social centres for quiet drinking and recreation that they had been. Anything that interfered with the fast service of alcohol had been removed from the front bar, such as billiard tables, dart boards, even chairs and tables. These were the very things that gave the corner pub a homely feel, and as a result they had become sterile drinking dens devoid of any community spirit.

Drinkers in the states that continued with early closing were frequently reminded by those from Brisbane and Perth (where closing time was 9pm or later) that drinkers in these cities no longer had to fight for a beer just before closing time, and that their pubs had assumed almost normal appearance since the start of the war. Beer rationing was lifted in March 1946, although shortages continued for several years.

After World War II, the issue of ending early closing was voted upon in referendums. It was first voted down in New South Wales in 1947, but then narrowly upheld in 1954. The Liquor Amendment Act in 1954 extended closing time to 10pm. Other states followed later: Victoria in February 1966, and lastly South Australia in 1967. The six o'clock swill was consigned to history.

Licences Reduction Board

The Licences Reduction Board must have struck fear into the hearts of the owners of the seedier drinking houses, as its intention was obvious from its name. The Board was constituted in 1919 under the Liquor (Amendment) Act, and was charged with reducing the number of publicans' licences in New South Wales by selecting the public houses to be closed and fixing compensation payments. Those deemed to be below the required standard were invited to show cause why they shouldn't have their licences torn up, and the Board subsequently delicensed 47 Sydney hotels in 1922[80].

The Hopetoun Hotel survived this purge, due to the efforts by Tooth & Co. to remain compliant, but several of its neighbours were stripped of their licences, which seemed to be the end of the line for them. Those delicensed were:

- The Athletic Club Hotel, corner of Arthur and Alexander Streets (this was converted to apartments).
- The Austral Hotel, opposite the Hopetoun on the corner of Bourke and Foveaux Streets (this was demolished in 1942 by the Council, and is now a small park).
- The Gulgong Hotel, Bourke Street (the former Pelican Hotel, it is now Le Pelican French restaurant).
- The Mount View Hotel, corner of Riley and Foveaux Streets (this has been various shops since).
- Queen's Arms, corner of Bourke and Campbell Streets (this has been demolished and the Belgenny apartment block stands on this corner now).
- Rifleman's Arms, corner of Fitzroy and Marshall Streets (this has been various shops since).

A total of £102,350 in compensation was paid to the owners and licensees of the closed hotels[81].

There were certainly a large number of pubs in parts of Sydney, especially in the city. In the book *A Small Hotel*, a story of growing up in the Surrey Hotel on the corner of King and Castlereagh Streets, Bill Boldiston writes that in the 1880s there were 35 hotels in King Street alone. On the corner where the Surrey was located, there was a pub on all four corners, and three more alongside his[82].

Illegal gambling in pubs

Like the sale of alcohol, gambling remained largely unregulated until late in the nineteenth century, much of it going on around pubs. When gambling occurred in streets and back alleys, gamblers could be arrested as vagrants, so it moved indoors to the pubs. Horse racing was by far the most popular form of gambling by the end of the nineteenth century. Before World War I, off-course punters gathered near pubs, but after the war starting price (SP) gambling became popular. This is a system where the odds were clear before the start of the race, as opposed to totalisator gambling in which the returns to the punter could vary wildly as race time approached.

Radio creates the SP bookie

Once the publicans could get the results of races quickly (after radio broadcasts of horse races commenced in 1926), the SP bookie appeared in the public bar, seated at a corner table, laying odds with gamblers in other nearby shops, which were then networked back to the pub. Race tracks tried to restrict the broadcasts of races, knowing the danger posed by illegal bookmakers, but the radio stations went to great trouble to find places just outside the tracks where they could still see the races, and brought accurate details to the public in general and bar-room bookies in particular.

By the 1930s, radio broadcasting, a fascination with champion horses such as Phar Lap and an expanding telephone network meant that a widespread culture of illegal gambling became concentrated in the pubs. Licensing police found that they were moving from licensing duties to enforcing anti-gambling laws, which were only slightly less detested by the public than the laws governing liquor sales[83].

Government blames its own for pub gambling

State authorities had great trouble cracking down on illegal gambling in pubs at this time. Instead of blaming the punters (as religious organisations had been doing), governments decided to blame the new technologies, in particular the Post Master General's Department (PMG) which operated the telephone system and much of the broadcasting system. However, a lack of co-operation from the PMG, a lack of interest from police in chasing the elusive SP operators, and a tendency by magistrates to accept the explanations of the publicans, bookies and gamblers meant that illegal gambling flourished for decades.

By the outbreak of World War II, gambling was moving from being barely regulated to being tightly controlled, and the only legal way to bet was to go to a race track or buy a lottery ticket. Authorities started to crack down in illegal gambling during and after World War II, partly because there were plans for government-run off-course totalisators in an effort to get rid of the SP bookies[84].

Pubs become betting rings

Reporters from the Sydney *Sun-Herald* in 1954 visited city pubs on race days, and found in one that more than 600 bets were written in one day alone. By closing time the bar resembled the betting ring of a race track, with excited crowds waving winning slips or tearing up losing ones, and the floor was ankle-deep with discarded betting slips. By 1960, illegal gambling had become a massive

industry. The Fitzgerald Inquiry in Queensland in 1987 exposed the staggering extent of official corruption among police and politicians that had sustained the illegal gambling industry for so long.

World War II restrictions and beer quotas

From 1942, and especially when the United States Army arrived in Australia, alcohol and drinking practices were a focus of government regulation and moral concern from temperance groups, religious leaders, and government and military authorities. Governments imposed stricter alcohol control, and federal legislation was designed to decrease alcohol consumption to underline the importance of the war economy. Prime Minister John Curtin, a former alcoholic, advocated austerity.

In March 1942, alcohol production was cut by a third, and hotel hours were restricted to seven hours per day. Most bottled beer produced by the breweries during World War II was destined for the armed forces, and pubs only received a few cases per week[85]. In August 1942, Curtin convinced the states to cut opening hours to six a day, ban women from public bars and ban drinking in public places. But reducing beer production did not reduce the demand for it. In fact, beer consumption increased, as many people turned to home brewing. Pubs often ran dry during the war: on one Saturday in March 1943, 60% of Melbourne hotels closed because they had no beer[86].

In April 1944, Mrs Williams, the licensee of the Hopetoun Hotel, asked Tooth & Co. to increase the pub's beer quota to cope with the demands of soldiers employed in the No. 1 Issuing Point for Army Canteen Services, opposite the hotel. At the time, beer was available in the Hopetoun from Monday to Thursday between 2pm and 6pm each week[87].

End of gender separation

Possibly the most striking difference between Australian pubs and overseas drinking places has been the strict segregation along gender and racial lines for most of their history in this country. The main bar in most pubs, and usually the largest, is the public bar. The name was a misnomer because until the 1970s only half the public (the male half) were permitted to drink there. This restriction has never been legislated, except briefly in wartime, but for a long time there was a nationwide belief (among men) that this discriminatory custom was justified.

Most pubs had ladies lounges, with chairs and tables, where men and women could drink together. But many pubs only allowed women into the ladies lounge if accompanied by a man. Also, it was common that women could not buy drinks for themselves.

Gender segregation only broke down in the 1970s after women's rights activists publicly challenged the convention, often by chaining themselves to the bar railing. These protests resulted in widespread publicity, causing great embarrassment to the hotel industry, which realised it had no legal right to refuse service to women. Within a few years, this convention had disappeared, and women's rights were enforced by anti-discrimination legislation. Historians have found, however, that the gender segregation in Australian pubs was not universal, and that there were some country and inner-city pubs where women and men mixed and drank together in public bars.

After the separation of men and women into different parlours was no longer required, internal walls in the Hopetoun Hotel were removed so that original setup of a public bar, two public parlours and a private parlour on the ground floor became just a public bar on the ground floor and a small bar in the cellar. Despite these changes, the hotel retains a domestic and intimate character.

The pub rock music scene

End of early closing heralds pub rock

The end of six o'clock closing in the 1960s in Victoria and South Australia coincided with the coming of age of the baby boomers and full employment, which meant that young drinkers had disposable income to spend on new forms of leisure. What took off around the country, but especially in the capital cities, was live rock music in pubs. The pubs that suited the new music scene were cavernous and loud.

Billy Thorpe is credited with starting the pub rock phenomenon, after he approached his local pub in Melbourne and suggested that if the proprietor built a small stage in a corner of the bar and installed a couple of power points, his band would attract patrons. Midnight Oil had a long residency at the Royal Antler Hotel in Narrabeen in the 1970s. INXS also played the pub circuit. Some overseas bands, such as the English group The Cure, first toured Australia on the pub circuit. Cold Chisel, AC/DC and The Angels learned their craft at the Largs Pier Hotel in Adelaide in the early 1970s.

The pub environment influenced the style of music: drinking patrons wanted to hear songs with simple lyrics, a strong drum rhythm and no long guitar solos. Pubs were very testing places for groups, who had to become proficient very quickly in the rough-and-ready atmosphere, or be given short shrift by the uninhibited drinkers.

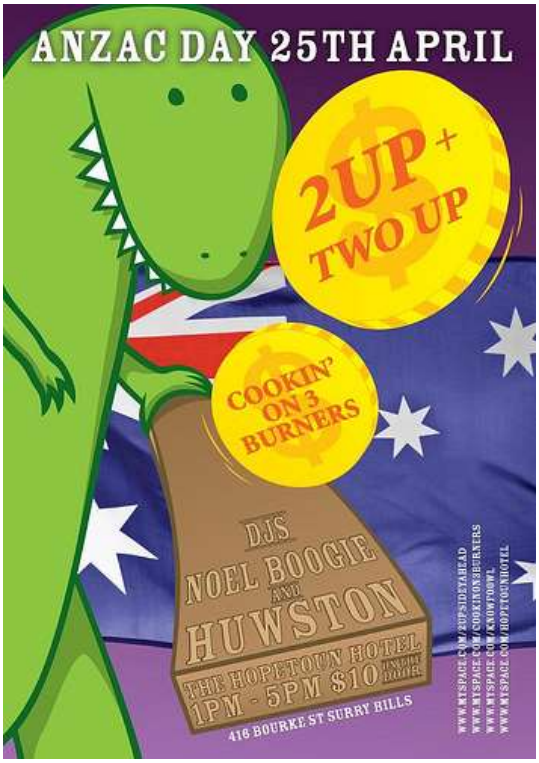


Figure 39 Concert poster, Hopetoun Hotel

However, there was a downside: the noise was a nuisance to neighbours, and not all hotels paid award wages to musicians. One positive effect was that the live music scene turned the music pubs from workingmen's drinking holes to a mixed scene, and helped to liberate the pub. Pub music was easy and cheap for publicans to set up and the patrons consumed a fair amount of alcohol, generating quick profits for the pub.

Poker machines replace live music

The heyday of pub rock was the 1980s. But the live music scene faded in the 1990s when State governments legislated to allow pubs to bring in poker machines. These delivered even greater and quicker profits than the bands. In addition, rising housing prices made corner pubs attractive to developers, turning many inner city pubs into boutique hotels or blocks of apartments.

Figure 40 Band schedule, Hopetoun Hotel

The survival of pubs has depended on their ability to adapt to new forms of entertainment. Nowadays, wide screen TVs attract patrons who come to eat and drink while watching football and other live sports on cable television.

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Glossary

Acre: An old unit of area approximately equal to 0.405 hectares, or 4,047 square metres.

Ale: This is beer made by the top-fermentation process, usually with less hops than other beers. Ale was the traditional Australian beer of the nineteenth century.

Alignment: When referring to a road, this is the ground plan showing the position and direction of the roadway.

Barrel: A wooden vessel of a rounded cylindrical shape, made of wooden staves bounded by hoops. Almost all beer barrels are now made of stainless steel, and are referred to as kegs. The sizes are:

- Firkin – 9 gallons (41 litres)
- Barrel – 36 gallons (164 litres)
- Hogshead – 54 gallons (245 litres).

Beer: This is a fermented liquor brewed from malt (or a mixture of malt and malt substitutes) and flavoured with hops or other bitters. In Australia, beer is used very generally to refer to ale, lager, pilsener, bitter, draught, stout and others.

Bitter: This is a beer that has been well hopped to give it a bitter flavour.

Bottom fermentation: This method of fermentation produces lager-style beer. During fermentation the yeast sinks to the bottom of the vat.

Cooper: This is a person who makes or repairs wooden vessels made from staves and hoops, such as casks, barrels and tubs.

Currier: A person skilled at curing hides prior to tanning. Salt is used to dehydrate the hides and reduce bacteria spoilage while waiting for the tanning process.

Draught beer: This refers to beer that is served directly from a barrel. It is generally drawn from the barrel under pressure, through pipes to a tap at the bar. Until the 1960s and 1970s, draught beer was only available in barrels, but today it has become a style of beer that is also sold in bottles and cans.

Federation architecture: This is a style that was used in Australia between 1890 and 1915, named after the Federation of Australia on 1 January 1901. Verandahs became popular, local flora and fauna motifs were used. Contrasting bands of stone and brick topped with high pediments were also typical of pubs in this era.

Fermentation: This is the action of yeast on sugar, which causes a conversion to alcohol and carbon dioxide.

Georgian architecture: This is the name given to the architectural styles current between 1720 and 1840. The eponymous Georges I to IV reigned in succession from 1714 to 1830. Georgian buildings were typically simple, symmetrical, and heavy in appearance.

Hop: This is a perennial climbing plant which grows best in a cooler climate. The flowers, called hops, are used to give beer a bitter flavour.

Lager: This is beer made by the bottom-fermentation process, then stored for conditioning at cold temperatures. Lagering is a medieval term for cold storage of beer, such as in caves.

Malt: Grain, generally barley, is softened with water until it begins to germinate, producing sugar and enzymes. It is then heated in a kiln, stopping the germination, and then ground. Rice and other grains are sometimes used, and more recently some boutique brewers use wheat instead of barley.

Perch: An old unit of area equal to 1/40 rood, or approximately 25.29 square metres.

Pilsener: This is a light-coloured bottom-fermented lager-style beer, named after the Czech town of Pilsen, where it was first brewed.

Porter: This is a heavy dark brown beer that was originally a mixture of ale and stout. Its name comes from its popularity with hardworking market porters in early England.

Resumption: This is the council practice of taking over buildings, usually for replacement of slum housing or street widening. Oxford, William and Wentworth Streets have all been widened after resumption (and then demolition) of all the buildings on one side.

Rood: An old unit of area equal ¼ acre, or approximately 0.1 hectare, or 1,011 square metres.

Stout: This is a dark beer, sometimes top-fermented, made with highly roasted malt. It has much the same strength as regular beers.

Tanner: A person skilled at tanning hides to produce leather. After curing, tannin from wattle bark is coated over the hides to make them water-resistant, bacteria-resistant and flexible.

Top fermentation: This is a traditional method of fermentation where the yeast rises to the top during the process.

Vegemite: This is a dark brown food paste made from brewers' yeast extract, a by-product of beer-making. Various vegetables, wheat and spice additives are added to the yeast.

Victorian architecture: This refers to several building styles used between the middle and late nineteenth century, named after the queen who reigned from 1837 to 1901. Detailing became more elaborate towards the end of the century, as revivals of Gothic, Italianate and Grecian styles became popular.

Villa: In eighteenth century Britain, this referred to an English country house, a large mansion that was the home of the landed gentry. By the nineteenth century, it was extended to any large free-standing suburban house in a landscaped plot of land.

Wheat beer: This is a beer made from malted barley with a percentage of wheat, although rarely all wheat. It has a characteristic flavour that is different from beers made from barley malt.

Yeast: This is a single-cell micro-organism that causes fermentation, producing alcohol, carbon dioxide and flavour components.

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