

City of Port Phillip Heritage Review

Place name: Greyhound Hotel
Other names: The Greyhound, GH

Citation No:
2391



Address: 1 Brighton Road, St Kilda

Heritage Precinct: None

Category: Commercial: Hotel

Heritage Overlay: HO500

Style: Interwar: Moderne/Art Deco

Graded as: Significant

Constructed: 1853, 1936-37

Victorian Heritage Register: No

Designer: Robert McIntyre (1936-37)

Amendment: C147

Comment: New citation

Significance

What is significant?

The Greyhound Hotel at 1 Brighton Road, St Kilda, on the corner of Blessington Street, first opened in 1853 by the first licensee John Broad, and remodelled in 1936-37 to a design by architect Robert McIntyre, is significant.

The current building is a two storey corner hotel, still retaining the Moderne/Art Deco expression from the 1930s refurbishment. It has a characteristic streamlined façade with horizontal emphasis.

How is it significant?

The Greyhound Hotel is of local historic and social significance to the City of Port Phillip.

Why is it significant?

The Greyhound Hotel is historically significant as one of a few remaining buildings in the City of Port Phillip that reflect the changing fortunes of St Kilda, and specifically, the history of the LGBTIQ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex, Queer or Questioning) community in Victoria. The Greyhound Hotel has been associated with St Kilda's evolving LGBTIQ community for over two decades, being one of several well-known 'gay venues' in St Kilda and one of the most popular drag venues in Melbourne. This historical significance is closely related to the Hotel's contemporary social significance. (Criterion A)

The Greyhound Hotel has social significance for its strong and special associations with the St Kilda community and the local and broader LGBTIQ community. The St Kilda community values the Greyhound

as an historic landmark that has had a long and continuous local presence as a public meeting place. The local community also values it as a long standing LGBTIQ community meeting place and entertainment venue which reflects St Kilda's welcoming and multifaceted community. The local and broader Melbourne LGBTIQ community specifically has strong associations with the Greyhound Hotel, valuing it as a home, a venue for entertainment and a place that represents this community's identity, in particular its openness, inclusiveness and creativity. (Criterion G)

Thematic context

Victoria's framework of historical themes

The Greyhound Hotel is associated with the following themes in Victoria's Framework of Historical Themes:

- 2. Peopling Victoria's places and landscapes, 2.4 Arriving in a new land
- 5. Building Victoria's industries and workforce, 5.6 Entertaining and socialising
- 6. Building towns cities and the garden state, 6.3 Shaping the suburbs
- 9. Shaping cultural and creative lives, 9.2 Nurturing a vibrant arts scene

Port Phillip thematic environmental history

The Greyhound Hotel is associated with the following themes in the *Port Phillip Heritage Review* Thematic Environmental History:

- 2. Migration
- 3. Transport
- 5. Settlement: Growth and Change
- 8. Ways of Life.

History

St Kilda and its LGBTIQ history

St Kilda began life as a seaside village, settled from the 1840s onwards by professional men and their families, pastoralists from the country. With the establishment of the railway in 1857, St Kilda evolved into a commuter suburb. The professional middle-class continued to live in large houses on the high ground, but tourists started to arrive in ever-increasing numbers and, to cater for them, hotels, sea baths and entertainment venues were built. Resident and visitor numbers increased with the arrival of trams in 1888. With the tourist economy at its peak from 1888 to 1929, amenities for day and weekend visitors expanded rapidly. In the early twentieth century some of St Kilda's most prominent sites were opened: Luna Park in 1912, the Palais de Danse in 1913, the Palais Theatre in 1927, and sea baths including the present Moorish-style baths in 1928 (Willett nd:6).

However, St Kilda also underwent two major declines, as historian Dr Graham Willett describes:

As a result of the Great Depression of the 1890s... [m]any of the well-to-do were wiped out by the bank crashes and the drying up of demand for their professional services. Many of the grand houses were sold up and divided into boarding houses or holiday apartments. Boarding houses offered a degree of privacy for working class people...

With the next Great Depression, which descended upon Australia after 1929, things took another turn for the worse in St Kilda. What little prosperity there had been evaporated as the professional class and the

working class was plunged again into unemployment, and the entertainment industry followed them down (Willett nd:7).

Willett expands on the significant LGBTIQ history associated with St Kilda in his paper written for the City of Port Phillip titled 'The very queer history of St Kilda: People, places and events':

St Kilda became the 'haunt', in the language of the time, of the down-and-out. More and more women, and some men, resorted to prostitution... Cheap accommodation, a corrupt police force, a council that could not control the city's streets, the opening of cafe and restaurants willing to allow a dodgier class of customers to gather all contributed to what was called the 'gritty streets of St Kilda'. The city came to be seen as — and indeed was — a place where sex work, crime, drunkenness, drugs and juvenile delinquency were rife... The criminalised, vilified and marginalised life of homosexuals made St Kilda a natural place of resort for many during this period...

In the 1920s, Melbourne developers embraced the worldwide craze for flats... Purpose built, self-contained with bathrooms and kitchens, reasonably affordable, and comfortable, flats were a real alternative to the pattern of living at home until marriage. And flat living was fashionable enough to allay the suspicions of family as to why one might choose to be living alone, or sharing with a friend (or 'friend'). Camp women and men took to them enthusiastically.

In the 1960s, St Kilda's affordable housing attracted Melbourne's [migrant] and burgeoning student population as well as artists and writers of various kinds. Live music venues were set up in decaying pubs. Crowds of visitors started to appear again...

[In addition], [b]eginning in the 1960s, new ideas began to develop about homosexuality — ideas that were in general more sympathetic, and inclined to the view that laws against homosexuality were undesirable and should be repealed or, at the very least, amended. These ideas were the work of modernising liberals who hoped to reform and revitalise Australia, in part by eradicating old-fashioned ideas and laws on a whole range of issues, including the laws criminalising homosexuality... [B]y the early 1970s, the new liberal ideas were effectively mainstream and were more and more often being voiced within political parties. The major opposition to the reform of these laws came from conservative churches... and the police, both of whom campaigned heavily to resist the tide of reform.

Although community attitudes towards homosexuality had begun to change during the 1970s, gay culture was not widely accepted, drag venues were not allowed to publicly advertise, and performances took place mostly underground (Nette 2015). In 1980, the Hamer Liberal government repealed the state's sodomy law, and in 1981 homosexuality was decriminalised in Victoria, leading to a wider social acceptability of drag performances and other gay venues (Willett nd:5-6). St Kilda's identity was also changing during the late 1980s:

After the late 1980s, there was an explosion in house and apartment prices in St Kilda and the nature of the resident population began to shift again towards wealthier and better educated demographics. New thinking about urban life took off among councillors and council staff. There was an emphasis on cosmopolitanism, diversity, the arts, and even gay communities as attractors for the 'creative class', which was said to be the motor of progress and economic development. A new St Kilda started to welcome its gay populace. (Willett nd:5-8).

After the release of the incredibly successful 1994 film *The Adventures of Priscilla, Queen of the Desert* the drag scene exploded, the movie made drag fashionable, and introduced the art to a wider audience. This development was also reflected in an increase of gay venues. Known LGBTIQ venues in St Kilda include (as identified by D. Helms, pers. comm. 19 January 2017 and Aizen 2017. May not include all LGBTIQ venues):

- Prince of Wales Hotel: Reputedly a gay bar since the 1930s (possibly the oldest gay bar in Melbourne), and from the 1970s onwards the venue for Pennies, a lesbian bar, and Pokeys, a legendary drag show as well as a first floor piano bar where patrons would gather to sing show tunes. Following a change of ownership and subsequent redevelopment in the mid-1990s Pokeys ceased, but the ground floor saloon bar continued as a (predominantly) gay bar, while the band room was used regularly for lesbian (Girl

Bar) or gay friendly clubs. Around this time the Greyhound also emerged as a venue for the LGBTIQ community.

- Ritz Hotel (now the Elephant and Wheelbarrow): Famous as the first drag venue in Melbourne. Les Girls later moved to the Bojangles Nightclub, which was located in the old St Kilda Sea Baths (since demolished and replaced with the current building).
- Mandate nightclub: Began as Sweethearts and ran from 1980 to 1989. It was one of a number of bars and clubs opened in Melbourne at the time of gay law reform. It was situated on the first floor above the shops at 21-29 Carlisle Street opposite the National Theatre. The building is still there, but the upstairs section has been converted to apartments.
- Greyhound Hotel: A change of management in the 1990's led to the Greyhound becoming a gay venue. Around the same time the Prince of Wales was being redeveloped and most of the old Prince of Wales staff were either let go or left, with some transferring to the Greyhound, taking their clientele with them'. Drag shows commenced at the Greyhound, initially led by 'Tootsie' who had been a regular at the Prince of Wales.
- Newmarket Hotel: A group of drag queens led by 'Tootsie' moved to this venue in the mid-1990s, after being 'let go' by the Greyhound Hotel managers. Tootsie's show did not survive long, but it did become a gay venue with other drag shows, most notably a drag version of the Sound of Music (later toured to the Edinburgh Festival) by Amanda Monroe and her troupe that included Jessica James and Roxy Bullwinkle (amongst others).
- The Duke and The Precinct: In the mid-1990s after selling the Market Hotel (a gay venue in Commercial Road, Prahran) a group of gay businessmen including Ken Payne (who had previously opened Mandate nightclub) created a gay 'precinct' within several buildings in Martin Street, St Kilda including the former Duke of Edinburgh Hotel at the corner of St Kilda Road. The Duke was a bar, and a large complex of buildings on the south side of Martin Street housed a sauna and nightclub. Payne wanted it to be a 'men-only' venue and in order to do so had to obtain a special exemption from the Equal Opportunity Commission, which was granted. The scheme was ambitious and the sauna and nightclub complex soon closed (and has since been converted to apartments and offices). The Duke Bar, however, continued as a gay venue for a few years.
- Beaconsfield Hotel: A mixed gay venue briefly over one or two summers in the mid to late 1990s.

While the 1990s were a 'golden era' for drag, the following decade saw it wane. The flipside of widespread social acceptability was that drag had lost its ability to shock so audiences declined. The gentrification of the city also had an effect and some venues, like the Prince of Wales, stopped hosting drag shows (Nette 2015).

Drag shows are now generally viewed in the same way as other theatre and performance genres. Shows such as 'Briefs' at the Art Centre Melbourne (2016) and similar high production shows moving into mainstream performance venues are testament to that change. In particular, the television show 'Ru Paul's Drag Race' has in recent years increased the popularity of drag among a wider community.

St Kilda's hotel history

From the 1850s until the early 20th century, the modest corner pub played a significant role in the history of local communities, particularly in the social life of working communities. As townships and suburbs developed in Victoria, hotels were often built on prominent corner locations on main thoroughfares to attract passing foot traffic en route between industrial establishments and nearby residential neighbourhoods.

The role of the hotel as a provider of accommodation for travellers and as an entertainment venue and meeting place for local community organisations diminished over time. Betty Malone, for instance, describes how, between 1890 and 1940, the typical pub had become 'much less a community centre and more a male dominated drinking house' (Malone 1988:30).



Falling hotel standards and pressure from the temperance movement prompted the state government to reduce the number of liquor licences. A Liquor Licences Reduction Board was appointed in 1906 to begin the process of de-licensing hotels throughout Victoria. Many hotel buildings were demolished or adapted to different uses; other hotel owners upgraded and refurbished their buildings from this period through to the 1920s and 1930s in order to meet the new licensing conditions (Stonnington 2011). Along with the addition of large-scale (usually two storey) additions, one of the most typical alterations made by hotelkeepers to their buildings was the remodelling of the exterior.

In 1966, the lifting of restrictions on hotel operating hours (previously limited to six o'clock closing) revived the local hospitality industry. Many new restaurants, bars and nightclubs opened; some occupied early hotels but adopted a change of name, image and style of service to appeal to a new generation of residents and visitors (Stonnington 2011).

Hotels in St Kilda have followed a similar trajectory, as described by Melbourne historian Becky Aizen in the introduction to her book 'Pots, Punks and Punters', A History of Hotels in St Kilda and South Melbourne:

Despite the closure of many hotels, the Melbourne 'pub scene' still flourishes in places like St Kilda and South Melbourne...Both suburbs have given birth to a variety of hotels with rich cultural histories and, in some cases, extraordinary longevity...

Many...hotels in St Kilda and South Melbourne have also been operating as licensed venues for over a century. The names may have changed, the interiors altered, yet they remain a vital part of our history. Today, there are still fifteen hotels remaining from the thirty-four hotels that once existed in St Kilda...

Given their centrality to our nation's social character, hotels have come to represent a tangible, physical site on which our cultural identity can be located, and as such, a key entry point into an examination of the social and communal aspects of our local history...

In the current era hotels are seen primarily as social venues, however prior to the erection of town halls, community buildings and other spacious interiors, only pubs provided enough space for large gatherings. The term 'pub' itself is an abbreviation of 'public house', an allusion to its earliest function as a place where the public could meet, although it is important to remember that the reference to 'public' was limited to men. Women were denied access to public bars until 1966, the same year that ten o'clock closing was introduced.

The first meeting of the St Kilda Council was held at a room in the Junction Hotel in 1857. Even an early Church of England meeting is recorded as being held at the Grosvenor Hotel on Brighton Road. Several hotels were at times used as morgues...Far from only serving drinks, meals and providing entertainment, all nineteenth century hotels offered accommodation...A few hotels however have surpassed the tradition of the humble hotel lodgings: the Wales Hotel established in Fitzroy Street in 1862, opened a 40-room luxury boutique hotel 'The Prince' in September 1999 (Aizen 2004).

Aizen goes on to note that hotels reflected the changing patterns of prosperity and leisure in the local community, for example becoming the haunts of bushrangers in certain areas such as Brighton Road in the mid-nineteenth century and then also capturing successive waves of affluent holiday makers with seaside resorts such as the Esplanade Hotel and the George Hotel. She also notes that St Kilda's hotels often celebrated popular sports, citing the Greyhound Hotel and the Hare and Hounds Hotel as examples.

St Kilda's hotels were also significantly shaped and sustained over the course of the 20th century by a vibrant local music scene, from jazz and ragtime in the 1920s and Second World War period to the emergence of punk and Rock'n'Roll in the 1970s to alternative music in the 1990s (Aizen 2004).

Aizen also notes the impact of gentrification on St Kilda's hotels, in words that resonate with the Greyhound Hotel's situation today:

Changes to licensing laws and the growth of alternative venues to consume alcohol have...changed the traditional role of the pub. The gentrification of St Kilda and South Melbourne has meant new residents with different needs. Several hotels, including those on Fitzroy Street, have become 'up-market' venues with

more expensive wine lists, catering to younger and more affluent drinkers... The commercial modern developments that accompany this gentrification may threaten heritage buildings or places that have important social associations that the community wants to preserve. The vociferous campaigns against the proposed changes to the Esplanade and Victoria hotels over the past decade reflect the strong community concerns about these changes... (Aizen 2004).

Greyhound Hotel

Greyhound racing was a popular sport in St Kilda in the mid-nineteenth century. Consequently, the Greyhound Hotel, which opened in 1853, was named after the sport by its first licensee, John Broad, an enthusiastic promoter of greyhound holiday race meetings. The Greyhound Hotel was the second hotel in St Kilda to feature a painting of two greyhounds coursing a hare (the first was the Hare and the Hounds in Barkly Street) (Aizen 2004). It appears on the Vardy maps, which are the original plans of the Borough of St Kilda surveyed and compiled under the direction of the Borough Council by J.E.S. Vardy, surveyor in 1873. It is marked as a brick building, located on the corner of Brighton Road and Blessington Street.

The licensees for the Greyhound Hotel (see *Historical images, Figure 1*) changed frequently in the first decades of operation until the mid-1880s. According to the *Robert K Cole Index of Victorian Hotels*, the publicans who held the licence for the Greyhound Hotel over that period included: Samuel Broad in 1855 and George Dunnett in 1858 to 1863. For the rate period of 1863-64, Dunnett was rated 200 pounds for the then 10 roomed brick hotel (RB 1863-64, No. in rate 981). Following Dunnett, the licence was Caroline Fraser in 1865-67; WB Murphy in 1869; J O'Rourke in 1872; Edward Cook in 1876; MW Hills in 1877; Mrs. MA Hills in 1879; John Foley in 1880; and William Smitham in 1886 (Cole 2000), who held the licence until 1893 (*Argus* 30 August 1893:5). The MMBW plan shows the footprint of the Greyhound Hotel in 1897 (See *Historical maps & plans, Figure 6*).

Before community facilities were constructed, the Greyhound Hotel, like hotels elsewhere, functioned as a meeting place for a number of purposes: livestock sales were conducted from the hotel's sale yards in the 1860s (*Argus* 3 June 1868:2); public meetings were held there through to the 1880s (*Age* 17 January 1857:5; *Argus*, 23 August 1887:5); and inquests were conducted through to the 1890s (*Weekly Times* 11 March 1871:11; *Argus* 27 March 1890:11).

The hotel also provided accommodation to holidaymakers in St Kilda. Caroline Fraser, who held the licence for the Greyhound Hotel from 1865 until 1867, advertised the hotel in April 1867:

to LET, this hotel contains the largest and best ventilated rooms of any hotel in St. Kilda and affords the best sea-side accommodation to families from the country; with stabling (Argus 6 April 1867:8).

Fraser applied to transfer the licence of the Greyhound Hotel to the Inverness Castle, which she had purchased immediately opposite the Greyhound and subsequently auctioned off the Greyhound Hotel on 28 August 1867. The hotel was auctioned again on 18 October 1871, with furniture fittings and billiard table included (Aizen 2004).

In 1886, former St Kilda councillor and publican James Mason is said to have persuaded the St Kilda Council to build its new town hall opposite the Greyhound Hotel with a £1000 donation towards a new organ for the hall building (Aizen 2004).

The Greyhound Hotel was owned by Solis Cantor in 1916 and purchased by Jane O'Connor in 1919. Joseph William Ryan became the proprietor of the hotel in 1925. Ryan came from a family of hoteliers. He, with his wife, Elizabeth Ryan, owned the Alexandra Hotel in the 1920s and moved from the Club Hotel in Dandenong in 1934 to become publicans of the Greyhound (*Alexandra and Yea Standard* 16 June 1944:2; *Dandenong Journal* 30 August 1934:4). In 1925, tenders were invited by architects, Gibbs, Finlay and Morsby, for new bar fittings and tiling at the Greyhound Hotel (*Age* 7 November 1925:1).

The building can be seen in an aerial photograph taken of the St. Kilda area dated c.1925-1938 (see *Historical images, Figure 3*). Additions have been made to the original form. The single storey wing fronting Blessington Street has become double storey, and it appears that the building has been extended along the both the Blessington and Brighton Street frontages. This photograph also shows the proximity of the

Greyhound Hotel to the Town Hall site. Located on the opposite side of Brighton Rd, at this important St Kilda junction, the hotel presents as a landmark building with significant visual and historic links to the Town Hall site.

Owner and licensee of the Greyhound Hotel, JW Ryan, extensively renovated the building in 1936-37 to a design by architect Robert H McIntyre, at a cost of £12000. Renovations included the construction of a second storey and the addition of cement rendered brickwork and tiles to the exterior, which are still evident today (*Herald Sun* 26 January 1938). Building permits associated with this major renovation were issued by the City of St Kilda for signage (1936), alterations and additions by builder AE Zunke (1937) and construction of a garage by builder CF Bardwell (1938) (BP 55299, BP 55575 and BP 55806). The alterations to the Greyhound also involved the acquisition of neighbouring land to extend the hotel site (Age 26 January 1938: 2). The renovation is discussed in greater detail under the heading 'History of built fabric'.

Like the renovation of many hotels across Victoria in the 1920s and 1930s, the reconstruction of the Greyhound Hotel was likely in response to the new licensing conditions introduced by the Liquor Licences Reduction Board appointed in 1906 that required hotels to have adequate accommodation. Other contributing factors to the Greyhound renovation may have been to meet the new standards introduced by classy upmarket hotels in St Kilda, like the Prince of Wales and the George, and to cater for the residents of new apartment blocks built in Blessington Street (Aizen 2004).

Aizen states that the seamy post-war reputation of St Kilda clung particularly to the Greyhound Hotel, given its proximity to the most prominent zone for sex workers (Aizen 2004). In 1955, Ryan's Hotels Pty Ltd owned the hotel (CT:V03945 F881). The Ryan family continued to own the Greyhound through until JW Ryan's death at the hotel in 1964 (Age 7 July 1964:3).

In the 1980s, two chefs at the Greyhound advertised on the building's facade that theirs was the greatest pub fare in Melbourne. The kitchen closed, but the Greyhound became a popular venue for live music during the 1980s and 1990s. In 1995 the place was bought by Laurie Dunstan and drag shows were staged on Saturday nights in the hotel's back room (Aizen 2004; de Jonk 2011).

The venue changed to gay owners in 2004, being bought by Wil van der Linden who also owned well-known gay saunas in Melbourne. Plans were made to open a gay sauna upstairs but, after community outcry, were not realised (de Jonk 2011).

In 2010, the Greyhound Hotel was renamed the GH, and in 2011, was renovated. Although it still boasted drag shows, long gone were the beer soaked carpet and a stage made with two pallets, a piece of ply and a garden flood lights for spotlights (Nette 2015). Instead, the venue boasted a substantial stage, a LCD screen, two entertainment levels, a large dance floor, private booth seating, VIP areas and a lounge area. In addition to local drag shows, international drag shows were a feature from this time (Arcuri 2017).

Developments at the Greyhound Hotel chart the fortunes of the LGBTIQ community and drag elsewhere in Australia, where drag moved from low-key underground entertainment influenced by the illegality of homosexuality, to big production shows. As Ricky Beirao, a well-known drag queen and curator states:

Throughout the '70s, '80s and '90s people really got together. To meet other like-minded people they had to gather at gay clubs and bars. Nowadays with applications like Grindr and Growlr, it's so much easier for them to just get on their phone and meet someone (cited in Nette 2015).

The GH (Greyhound Hotel) closed in January 2017, when the owners decided to cease operations due to 'unforeseen circumstances' (Age 6 January 2017). The Greyhound's LGBTIQ history reflects a general history of LGBTIQ venues in Victoria, where the law reform of the 1980s allowed for a boom in venues around the mid-1990s, when the Greyhound Hotel was established as a gay venue. In recent years, many of these venues have closed, as Nette suggests due to various factors, among them the effects of dating apps.

History of built fabric

Victorian building

The Greyhound Hotel was originally constructed in the 1850s. An early photograph (dated sometime 1886-1893) shows the building situated on the corner of Brighton Road and Blessington Street (see *Historical images, Figure 1*). An entry door sits diagonally across the corner of the building. Squared window openings run around both street frontages, with three openings to both the ground floor and the first floor on each façade. A single storey addition at the rear of the building has an additional two squared openings facing Blessington Street. The building was rendered on the exterior with simple cornicing and signage around the roof line and a string course midway up the façade. A hipped roof form is evident above the cornice. The name of the hotel is clearly displayed around the top of the building and the name of the publican, W. Smitham, is written above the corner diagonal.

Remodelling 1936-37

A photograph dated c1938 shows the building after alterations were made in 1936-37 (see *Historical images, Figure 4*) that resulted in considerable to the appearance of the building. All references to the Victorian era façade were removed and the building took on characteristics associated with the Art Deco/Moderne style. Buildings of this style typically emphasised clean lines with streamlined horizontal banding and contrasting vertical elements.

The photograph shows a crisp, clean stucco façade with a tiled dado and parallel lines etched into the surface between window openings to create horizontal bands that wrap around the building on both the ground floor and the upper floor. The parapet has been smoothed and finished with simple horizontal lines around the top edge. A curved balcony cantilevers over the Brighton Road footpath, and simple but functional horizontal hoods have been added above door openings. Simple stylised elements have been around the façade and create a contrast between horizontal and vertical that is typical of the Moderne style: steel ribbon lettering spells out the hotel name and incorporates horizontal lines, vertical 'poles' painted in a contrasting colour are located around the upper facade, and tall narrow windows have been added over the Blessington St entry door. An elongated brick fin sits over the entry door and is finished with rendered horizontal bands. A clock and lettering on the fin contribute to the Moderne appearance of the building.

The building was positively reviewed in the journal *Decoration and Glass*, in June 1938, a bi-monthly journal published in NSW. The article describes the changes made to the building and emphasises the consideration that went into the external colour scheme. The scheme is described as 'a blend of cream cement work, biscuit tiles, red metal letters and orange and red neon signs give the hotel a distinctive and colourful appearance.' (*Decoration & Glass* 1938:34-36). The article notes that the deliberate use of colour was common in European hotel design at the time and was being taken up in Victoria more so than other states in Australia.

Robert McIntyre

Robert McIntyre was a successful commercial architect in the interwar and post-war periods who specialised in hotel design until his death in 1966 (Goat 2012:443-444). McIntyre began as an engineer, but after returning from serving in World War I, he studied architecture and building at the Melbourne Technical College. In the 1920s he founded the architecture practice Joy & McIntyre, but in the 1930s had a sole practice (Allom Lovell 2003:38). It was during this period that McIntyre designed many new or remodelled hotels; Prospect Hill Hotel, Kew (1936); Hotel Max, Prahran (c1937); alterations and additions to Alpine Hotel, Bright (1938); alterations and additions to Cumberland Hotel, Castlemaine (1938); Railway Hotel, Yarraville (1938); reconstruction of City Club Hotel, Collins Street, Melbourne (1938); alterations to Toorak Hotel, Toorak (1938), and remodelling of the Palace Hotel, Racecourse Road, Flemington (1939) (Raworth PL 2010).

In the City of Port Phillip, Robert McIntyre was responsible for the Prince of Wales Hotel, St Kilda (1936) and the additions to the Elsternwick Hotel, Elwood (1938).



In 1961 Robert McIntyre formed a practice, RH McIntyre & Associates, with his brother, daughter-in-law and his son Peter. Peter McIntyre went on to become one of the most prominent post-war architects in Victoria (Allom Lovell 2003:38).

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Interviews

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'Local Resident 2', 20 February 2017, phone interview with consultant Evelina Ericsson.

'National Trust of Victoria', 17 February 2017, phone interview with consultants Emma Russell and Evelina Ericsson.

'Frequent Patron', 17 February 2017, phone interview with consultants Emma Russell and Evelina Ericsson.

Description

The Greyhound Hotel occupies a prominent corner site at the junction where St. Kilda Road becomes Brighton Road, Carlisle Street crosses the main arterial and Blessington Street intersects on a diagonal. The St. Kilda Town Hall and Town Hall Reserve occupy a large site on the opposite side of the junction to the Greyhound Hotel. St. Kilda Road/Brighton Road is a major thoroughfare heading south from the city to the bayside suburbs of Melbourne and beyond. It dissects the suburb of St. Kilda, and marks the division between 'beachside' St. Kilda and 'suburban' St. Kilda.

The building was first built in the mid nineteenth century, extended c.1920 and rebuilt in 1936-37. Most of the Victorian era features have now been replaced although the original two storey form with splayed corner entry and the pattern of upper storey fenestration remain is still evident. The hipped roof form of the Victorian era also remains – now obscured by a parapet it is visible from aerial photographs. Window openings on the upper floor remain largely consistent, while openings on the ground floor have been widened. The diagonal entry is retained, with a window added on the upper level. It appears the building has been extended further along the Brighton Road frontage.

The smooth rendered façade has been retained although the tiling at ground level has been removed. The building retains a number of features characteristic of the Moderne/Art Deco style including the parapet detailing and the strong sense of horizontality created by the pattern of fenestration and associated parallel lines on the upper level, and the curved cantilevered balcony with steel balustrade. The entry door facing Blessington St still has curved steps, simple horizontal door canopy and an intact flagpole above. The tall vertical fin over the entry door remains but it has been truncated and the face brick has been rendered. The clock and signage has been removed. Other stylized vertical decorative elements remain around the façade, but the steel ribbon lettering spelling out the hotel name has been removed. Windows have been replaced with non-sympathetic modern windows.

The interior at both ground and first floor levels has undergone substantial changes and very few original features remain.

Comparative analysis

Architectural & Aesthetic values

There are several hotels in St Kilda and in the wider Port Phillip area that serve as useful comparisons to the Greyhound Hotel. Inter-war remodelling works were undertaken to the Hotel Barkly at 109 Barkly St, St Kilda, the Post Office Club Hotel at 306 St Kilda Rd, St Kilda, and the Swallows Hotel, 192 Station St, Port Melbourne. The Prince of Wales Hotel, 29 Fitzroy St, St Kilda was built to replace a nineteenth century hotel that was demolished. All four hotels are included in precinct wide Heritage Overlays.

The Prince of Wales at 29 Fitzroy St (HO5, PPHR Citation no. 1473) is an intact example of a hotel built in the interwar period in the Moderne/Art Deco style. Like the Greyhound Hotel, the Prince of Wales is attributed to architects Robert McIntyre and Associates. Completed in 1937, the hotel is built to an asymmetrical square plan. While it is sited on a corner, the main orientation is towards Fitzroy St. A number of elements of the 1930s styling remain intact, including the streamlined smooth rendered façade and the strong sense of horizontality demonstrated through the cantilevered curved balconies, bands of

windows, and the parallel lines around the façade and to the parapet, and the flagpole over a tower located to one side of the building. An updated tiled dado runs around the street frontages. (Significant within HO5 St Kilda Hill precinct)

The Hotel Barkly is a two storey Victorian hotel remodelled during interwar period. In recent years the addition of several storeys over the hotel building have resulted in an unsympathetic outcome for the building. (Significant within HO5 St Kilda Hill precinct). Like the Greyhound Hotel, The Post Office Hotel occupies a significant corner site on St Kilda Road and Inkerman St, St Kilda. It is a two storey Victorian hotel that was remodelled in the interwar period and is relatively intact. (Significant within HO6 St Kilda East precinct). The Swallows Hotel is a two storey hotel building, remodelled in the 1930s with a high curved parapet detail over the corner entry door. It remains relatively intact. (Contributory within HO1 Port Melbourne precinct).

The comparative analysis concludes there are more intact and better representatives of the Moderne/Art Deco style hotel in St Kilda, where the Prince of Wales in particular is directly comparable as a more intact example of the works of architect Robert McIntyre.

Historic values

Within St Kilda, there are several Hotels and public meeting places that are comparable to the Greyhound Hotel, either because of their association with LGBTIQ culture and history, or because they were similarly impacted by key developmental phases in St Kilda.

Places representing the LGBTIQ history of St Kilda

Many places mentioned in the history under *St Kilda and its LGBTIQ history*, were either relatively short-lived (e.g. Beaconsfield Hotel, Newmarket and Duke of Edinburgh) or no longer exist (e.g. Mandate). The most direct comparison for the Greyhound Hotel, representing the LGBTIQ history of St Kilda is the Prince of Wales Hotel. Built in 1937, the Prince of Wales hotel holds a connection since the 1930s with the LGBTIQ community, when it first appeared as a gay bar. This connection continues to the present day, still being a gay bar. Drag shows were staged at the hotel from the 1970s to the 1990s, after which the hotel complex was extensively renovated in 1996 and many popular drag performances moved to the Greyhound Hotel.

Compared to the Prince of Wales, the Greyhound Hotel represents a more recent history of LGBTIQ culture in St Kilda. Together, the hotels tell a cohesive story of St Kilda's gay venues and drag culture, where shows were staged at underground clubs during the 1930s-1970s, the subsequent boom in drag venues following the impact of the law reform of the 1980s, and the popularity of drag increasing from the 1990s onwards. Where the Prince of Wales represents the early days of drag, the Greyhound represents the subsequent boom. Several of these venues have today closed.

As a full time gay venue, the Greyhound Hotel also reflects how LGBTIQ venues took on an essential community support role for the LGBTIQ community, during the 1990s and 2000s, especially amongst the youth. Several support groups and organisations have been associated with the Greyhound Hotel historically.

Hotels in St Kilda with a similar developmental pattern:

- The Barkly Hotel: Established 1853 and remodelled during the interwar period. Although still retaining its original corner location, its expression as a two storey corner hotel has been affected by an upper storey extension.
- St Kilda Hotel (HO5): Established 1851, it is the oldest surviving hotel structure in St Kilda. Is since been converted to apartments.
- Post Office Club Hotel: Established c20 years after the Greyhound during the 1870s and remodelled during the interwar period. Intact corner setting and relatively unaltered.



- The Esplanade (HO117, PPHR Citation no.): A hotel has been established on the site since 1857. The Victorian building was remodelled during the interwar period. The venue has a long history associated with live music in St Kilda.
- The Grosvenor Hotel (HO7, PPHR Citation no.): Established in 1860, remodelled during the interwar period.

In summary, the Greyhound Hotel compares well to the above-mentioned examples and meets the local threshold for historical significance. It represents the LGBTIQ history of St Kilda in a suburb where several of the early gay venues have been either lost or remodelled. Together with the Prince of Wales, the Greyhound tells a cohesive history of LGBTIQ venues in St Kilda, and reflects the historical development of drag culture. Its longevity of use as one of the oldest hotel sites in St Kilda compares well to the above mentioned examples, where it was still (until recently) utilised as a meeting and gathering place for the community.

Social values

The Greyhound Hotel holds a range of strongly felt community values for both the local community and for the LGBTIQ community. The social research conducted as part of the Greyhound Hotel's assessment explored comparisons with places that people valued in similar ways. A recent assessment of the London Hotel, 92 Beach Street Port Melbourne also provides a useful comparison for helping to determine the social significance of the Greyhound Hotel.

Hotels in St Kilda

In the online survey and interviews for the Greyhound Hotel's assessment, respondents were asked to name other hotels in St Kilda to which they felt strongly connected and to further describe this connection. Approximately half of the respondents felt there was no hotel in St Kilda that was comparable to the Greyhound, while others mentioned a number of St Kilda hotels, which they valued for similar reasons. The most frequently mentioned hotels were The Esplanade Hotel, The Prince of Wales Hotel, The George and The Village Belle.

The meanings or associations that were noted as comparable or similarly important to respondents in respect to these hotels were as follows:

- The Esplanade: A connection to St Kilda's history, rich in heritage, a welcoming place of meeting, iconic for and an epicentre of the live music scene, part of St Kilda's heart and identity, adds to the vibrancy and culture of our community, a symbol of diversity and character, hold similar values to the Greyhound – but for a different audience, unique.
- The Prince of Wales: Adds to the vibrancy and culture of the community, was once a well preserved historic pub, rich in heritage and history, unique, a place of meeting, comparable as a drag show venue, strong sense of belonging for LGBTIQ community and acceptance by the wider community, part of the live music scene, a cultural icon.
- The George (HO706, VHR H): A connection to St Kilda's history, rich in heritage, a place of meeting, traditional St Kilda venue representing the character of area, contribution to public culture and St Kilda's identity, rich and fascinating history, part of the live music scene.
- The Village Belle (HO7, PPHR Citation no.): Traditional St Kilda venue, a great 'watering hole', a landmark that attracts diverse communities, contribution to public culture, valued history and established character, contributes to St Kilda's identity, welcoming and warm.

Several of the values and connections noted by respondents in relation to these hotels are similar to the strong values identified in relation to the Greyhound Hotel (for the full research refer to *Greyhound Hotel cultural heritage values assessment*, Context Pty Ltd 2017), notably that the hotels in some way represent St Kilda's welcoming and multifaceted community, St Kilda's evolving built history and St Kilda's changing entertainment.

In relation to the importance of the Greyhound as representing St Kilda's changing entertainment, the community clearly indicated that they valued the Greyhound as one of few remaining venues for live performance.

In contrast to these similarities, none of these other Hotels were identified in the interviews or surveys as representing home or family for the LGBTIQ community as strongly as the Greyhound Hotel. While the historical research and comments from local observers noted the importance of the Prince of Wales in the evolution of St Kilda's LGBTIQ culture and identity, the social research indicated that the Greyhound has held these values more strongly in recent times and for a broader LGBTIQ and local community. This is also supported by statements emerging from the community consultation regarding the loss of the Greyhound, which indicated a strong feeling of there being 'no place like the Greyhound', where the connection was felt to be unique and incomparable, so leaving a 'void when it was closed'.

The values invested in the place by the LGBTIQ community are very strong. The comments made in relation to the Greyhound Hotel suggested 'the Greyhound is the main venue with a long history of welcoming and supportive space for the LGBTI community', 'the stage is like no other' and 'it was by far the highest quality gay club in Melbourne and the only one with such a great performing space', 'there are few places as integral to drag culture in Melbourne as the Greyhound' and 'this is the only safe place'. Based on the comparative questions, the Prince of Wales emerged as the closest comparable example based on social values. The LGBTIQ community appears to feel a strong connection to the Prince of Wales as a venue with a long drag and gay history. However, amongst the younger generation of the LGBTIQ community, the Greyhound Hotel appears to be the most well-known and prominent drag venue in St Kilda.

The London Hotel, Port Melbourne

A recent Heritage Assessment of the London Hotel, 92 Beach Street, Port Melbourne (Context Pty Ltd 2016), proves a valuable comparison for Social Significance (Criteria G). The London Hotel, which was found to meet the criteria for social significance at a local level.

The assessment of the London Hotel (Context 2016:34) found that 'the London Hotel holds a range of values for the local community that may be similar to other hotels – and in fact, other place types – in Port Melbourne, which are as yet untested' Respondents considered the London Hotel compared well with the Clare Castle Hotel, the Sandridge Hotel and the Hibernian Hotel, all in Port Melbourne, because they, like the London, represented similar themes of working and industrial history through their clientele. However, the community still felt the London was unique because it represented these qualities and attachments better than the other Port Melbourne hotels. While the Greyhound has different social values from the London as noted in this report, it compares well to the London Hotel on the basis of social significance.

Summary

In summary, the Greyhound Hotel compares well to The Esplanade, the Prince of Wales and the London Hotel and meets the local threshold for social significance. Together with the Prince of Wales it holds strong connections and associations with the local LGBTIQ community and together with the Esplanade Hotel also, it represents the vitality of St Kilda's live music culture. Like the London Hotel, it represents a long standing community meeting place, much valued by its local neighbourhood community.

Assessment

This place has been assessed in accordance with the processes and guidelines outlined in the Australia ICOMOS *Charter for Places of Cultural Heritage Significance* (The Burra Charter) 2013, using the Hercon criteria.

Recommendations

Recommended for a Heritage Overlay.

Conservation guidelines

- Retaining the corner location (zero lot setback on two streets and the two storey scale and façade) is important in maintaining the Greyhound Hotel's contribution to St Kilda's urban form.
- Retaining the two storey scale of the Greyhound Hotel as a contrast to its immediate surroundings is important. Additional development of a moderate scale that is located sensitively so as not to overwhelm the scale of the Greyhound Hotel may be considered.
- The Art Deco styling to the exterior is valued in relation to its surroundings and should be maintained. Any further changes to the exterior should respect and preferably enhance this architectural character.
- Views to the Greyhound Hotel in relation to surrounding Brighton Road/St Kilda Road are valued so that changes to the wider setting should consider the impacts on these views.
- Public access to and use of the Greyhound Hotel as a social meeting place should be maintained into the future.
- The shared history, including the LGBTIQ history, of the Greyhound Hotel should be interpreted and promoted in ways that the City of Port Phillip and the community view as appropriate. This could take various forms including heritage interpretation in the form of design of the external building design, place/building naming, inclusion of public or entertainment uses within the building, documentation and publication of significant stories of the Hotel.

Primary heritage study

Context Pty Ltd, 2017, *Greyhound Hotel cultural heritage values assessment*, City of Port Phillip.

Other heritage studies

Not applicable

Other images

Historical images



Figure 1. William Smitham outside his Greyhound Hotel with two of his children. Smitham's name on the hotel would indicate the photo was taken between 1886 and 1893. Source Ancestry.com.



Figure 2. 'Carlisle Street and Brighton Road Junction' c.1899. Source: Port Phillip City Collection Art and Heritage database



Figure 3. The Greyhound Hotel within its context, shown on an aerial of St Kilda dated between 1925-38. The two storey hotel building can be seen opposite Town Hall. Source: SLV. Photographer: Raymond Garrett.



Figure 4. The photograph above shows the building after alterations and additions were made in 1936-37 to the design prepared by architect Robert McIntyre. Source: SLV. Photographer: Lyle Fowler.

Historical maps & plans

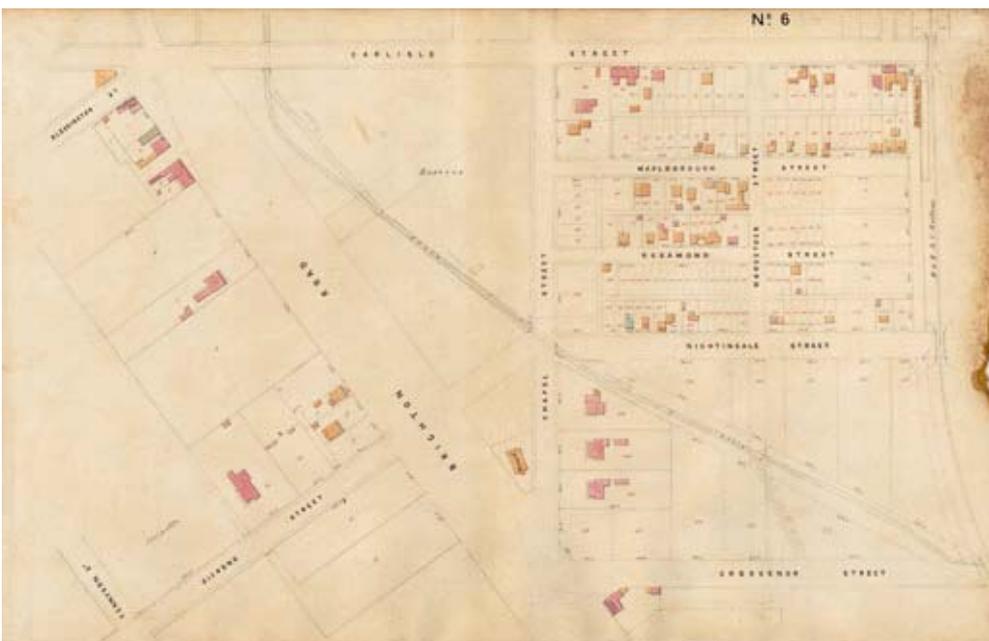


Figure 5. Plan of the Borough of St Kilda": Map No. 6 of Brighton Road, dated 1873. the Greyhound Hotel is located in the left corner of the plan. Source: COPP.

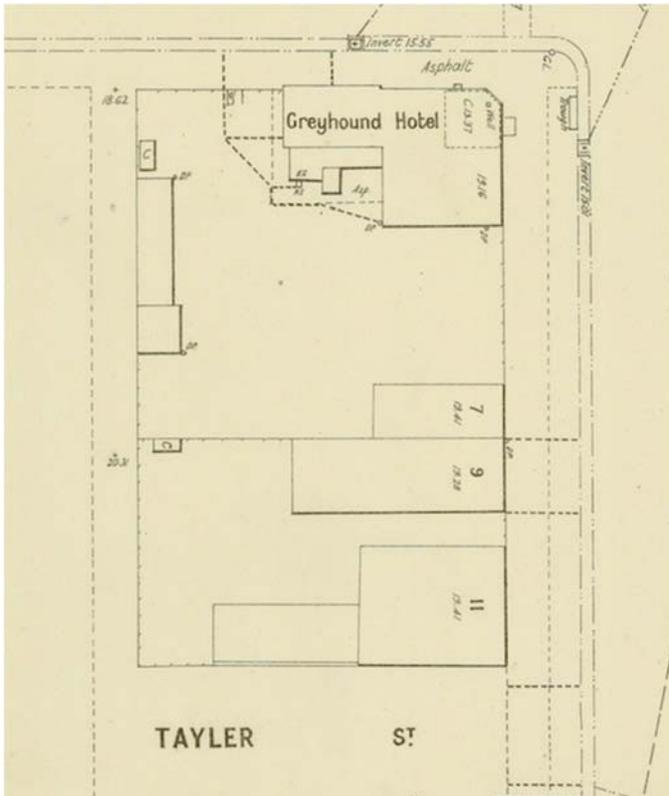


Figure 6. Excerpt from a Melbourne and Metropolitan Board of Works plan showing the Greyhound Hotel at the corner of Brighton Road and Blessington Street, 1897. Source MMBW Detail Plan no. 1382, dated 1897.