

---

# LONDON INN



LONDON INN SOHE 2008



LONDON INN SOHE 2008



1 london inn portland external view

---

## Location

91 BENTINCK STREET AND 93A BENTINCK STREET AND 93B BENTINCK STREET AND 1-1R JULIA STREET PORTLAND, GLENELG SHIRE

## Municipality

GLENELG SHIRE

## Level of significance

Registered

## Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

H0237

## Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO66

## VHR Registration

October 9, 1974

## Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Register

---

## Statement of Significance

Last updated on - May 31, 1999

What is significant?

In December 1800, Lieutenant James Grant on board the *Lady Nelson* sighted a wide bay which he named Portland Bay after a Secretary of State, the Duke of Portland. The bay had an abundance of seals and whales and by the early 1830s, sealers and whalers had established a whaling station and trading port on the bay. As the richness of the pastoral hinterland became apparent, other settlers, led by the pioneering Henty brothers, took up land in the area. It became apparent that the combination of fine grazing land, the substantial numbers of whales and seals and a good sheltered harbour made the location an outstanding prospect for a permanent township. On the favourable advice of Foster Fyans, the Police Magistrate for Geelong, the government commenced the set out of a new township in 1840.

The London Inn has long been considered a landmark in the town. The current building comprises the two-storey corner building [possibly originally single storey in the mid 1840s but in this form before 1853], a former billiard room on Bentinck Street [1855], and the former assembly rooms on Julia Street [1862].

The London Inn occupies a corner site that was an important meeting spot from an early period in the town's development. One of Portland's prominent early settlers, Stephen G. Henty, purchased the site from the Crown in October 1840 for £1100 and built a single storey building on it in 1844. Henty sold the property to publican John Wiggins who transferred his license to this site from an earlier London Inn in Gawler Street. The hotel became a favoured place for shipping passengers staying in Portland and also became a favourite meeting place for sporting clubs. In an October 1854 advertisement, William Douglass stated that he had now completed 'an addition to his bed room accommodation' at the London Inn. In November 1855, Douglass announced his intention to erect a billiard room adjacent to the hotel in Bentinck Street to house a billiard table purchased from the estate of the licensee of the Portland Inn. In 1856, the London Inn served as the venue for the first meeting of the Portland municipal council. In 1862, licensee John Pilven added a large two storey London Assembly Rooms with a dining room on the ground floor and assembly rooms on the upper floor was added adjacent to the hotel on the Julia Street frontage. A carriageway at street level gave entry to the hotel yard. The designer of the assembly room building was Daniel Nicholson, an architect of whom little is known. The assembly rooms building opened on New Years Night 1863 with a ball held under the patronage of the Forester's Lodge. The construction of the building reflected a period of continuing prosperous trading activity at Portland and became an important meeting place for merchants, traders and local organizations.

The hotel, sometime later known as the London Hotel, passed through a number of ownerships and occupancies before the license was terminated by the Licenses Reduction Board in 1922. The building became a guest house (operating as the London Guest House), benefiting from Portland's popularity as a popular seaside holiday destination. The building was converted to commercial use sometime after the 1960s.

How is it significant?

The London Inn at Portland is of historical and architectural significance to the State of Victoria.

Why is it significant?

The London Inn is of historical significance for its associations with the early history of Portland and for its important contribution to the large collection of historic buildings in this early seaport town. The hotel has been, since the first years of Victorian settlement, a favourite meeting place in Portland. The hotel has significant historical associations with early Portland as the venue for the first meeting on 5 February 1856 of the newly-constituted Portland Municipal Council. The construction of the Assembly Rooms building in 1862 is a reflection of the confidence shown in the continuing commercial growth of Portland

The London Inn, Portland, is of architectural significance as a representative example of a Victorian Georgian style hotel. Georgian styles remained strong in Portland into the 1850s owing to the dominance of architectural influences from Tasmania, where the majority of early settlers had originated.

[Online data upgrade project 2005]

## Permit Exemptions

## General Exemptions:

General exemptions apply to all places and objects included in the Victorian Heritage Register (VHR). General exemptions have been designed to allow everyday activities, maintenance and changes to your property, which don't harm its cultural heritage significance, to proceed without the need to obtain approvals under the Heritage Act 2017.

**Places of worship:** In some circumstances, you can alter a place of worship to accommodate religious practices without a permit, but you must **notify** the Executive Director of Heritage Victoria before you start the works or activities at least 20 business days before the works or activities are to commence.

**Subdivision/consolidation:** Permit exemptions exist for some subdivisions and consolidations. If the subdivision or consolidation is in accordance with a planning permit granted under Part 4 of the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* and the application for the planning permit was referred to the Executive Director of Heritage Victoria as a determining referral authority, a permit is not required.

Specific exemptions may also apply to your registered place or object. If applicable, these are listed below. Specific exemptions are tailored to the conservation and management needs of an individual registered place or object and set out works and activities that are exempt from the requirements of a permit. Specific exemptions prevail if they conflict with general exemptions.

Find out more about heritage permit exemptions [here](#).

## Specific Exemptions:

**General Conditions:** 1. All exempted alterations are to be planned and carried out in a manner which prevents damage to the fabric of the registered place or object. **General Conditions:** 2. Should it become apparent during further inspection or the carrying out of works that original or previously hidden or inaccessible details of the place or object are revealed which relate to the significance of the place or object, then the exemption covering such works shall cease and Heritage Victoria shall be notified as soon as possible. **Note:** All archaeological places have the potential to contain significant sub-surface artefacts and other remains. In most cases it will be necessary to obtain approval from the Executive Director, Heritage Victoria before the undertaking any works that have a significant sub-surface component.

**General Conditions:** 3. If there is a conservation policy and plan all works shall be in accordance with it. **Note:** A Conservation Management Plan or a Heritage Action Plan provides guidance for the management of the heritage values associated with the site. It may not be necessary to obtain a heritage permit for certain works specified in the management plan.

**General Conditions:** 4. Nothing in this determination prevents the Executive Director from amending or rescinding all or any of the permit exemptions. **General Conditions:** 5. Nothing in this determination exempts owners or their agents from the responsibility to seek relevant planning or building permits from the responsible authorities where applicable. **Minor Works :** **Note:** Any Minor Works that in the opinion of the Executive Director will not adversely affect the heritage significance of the place may be exempt from the permit requirements of the Heritage Act. A person proposing to undertake minor works must submit a proposal to the Executive Director. If the Executive Director is satisfied that the proposed works will not adversely affect the heritage values of the site, the applicant may be exempted from the requirement to obtain a heritage permit. If an applicant is uncertain whether a heritage permit is required, it is recommended that the permits co-ordinator be contacted.

Construction dates      1842, 1853, 1862,

Architect/Designer      Nicholson, Daniel,

Heritage Act Categories   Registered place,

## History

In December 1800, Lieutenant James Grant on board the *Lady Nelson* sighted a wide bay which he named Portland Bay after a Secretary of State, the Duke of Portland. The bay had an abundance of seals and whales and by the early 1830s, sealers and whalers had established a whaling station and trading port on the bay. As the richness of the pastoral hinterland became apparent, other settlers, led by the pioneering Henty brothers, took up land in the area. It became apparent that the combination of fine grazing land, the substantial numbers of whales and seals and a good sheltered harbour made the location an outstanding prospect for a permanent township. On the favourable advice of Foster Fyans, the Police Magistrate for Geelong, the government commenced the set out of a new township in 1840.

The London Inn has long been considered a landmark in the town. The current building comprises the two-storey corner building [possibly originally single storey in the mid 1840s but in this form before 1853], a former billiard room on Bentinck Street [1855], and the former assembly rooms on Julia Street [1862].

The London Inn occupies a corner site that was an important meeting spot from an early period in the town's development. One of Portland's prominent early settlers, Stephen G. Henty, purchased the site from the Crown in October 1840 for £1100 and built a single storey building on it in 1844. Henty sold the property to publican John Wiggins who transferred his license to this site from an earlier London Inn in Gawler Street. The hotel became a favoured place for shipping passengers staying in Portland and also became a favourite meeting place for sporting clubs. In an October 1854 advertisement, William Douglass stated that he had now completed 'an addition to his bed room accommodation' at the London Inn. In November 1855, Douglass announced his intention to erect a billiard room adjacent to the hotel in Bentinck Street to house a billiard table purchased from the estate of the licensee of the Portland Inn. In 1856, the London Inn served as the venue for the first meeting of the Portland municipal council. In 1862, licensee John Pilven added a large two storey London Assembly Rooms with a dining room on the ground floor and assembly rooms on the upper floor was added adjacent to the hotel on the Julia Street frontage. A carriageway at street level gave entry to the hotel yard. The designer of the assembly room building was Daniel Nicholson, an architect of whom little is known. The assembly rooms building opened on New Years Night 1863 with a ball held under the patronage of the Forester's Lodge. The construction of the building reflected a period of continuing prosperous trading activity at Portland and became an important meeting place for merchants, traders and local organizations.

The hotel, sometime later known as the London Hotel, passed through a number of ownerships and occupancies before the license was terminated by the Licenses Reduction Board in 1922. The building became a guest house (operating as the London Guest House), benefiting from Portland's popularity as a popular seaside holiday destination. The building was converted to commercial use sometime after the 1960s.

### **The draft statement of significance and the above history were produced as part of an Online Date Upgrade Project 2005. Sources were as follows:**

Allom Lovell, 'Pre-1851 Structures in Victoria Survey', prepared for HV, vol. 3, p. 211-18.

Gwen Bennett, *Old Watering Holes of the West*, pp. 62-63.

Gwen Bennett. *Portland: Now and Then*, 1993, p. 24.

*Portland Observer*, 18 October 1876 [1976?], on file.

National Trust of Australia (Vic.), file no. 3059.

Helen Doyle, 'Portland Inn, 4 Percy Street, Portland', report prepared for HV, 2004.

## Extent of Registration

*Town of Portland*. No. 237. London Inn, 93 Bentinck Street, Portland.

[*Victoria Government Gazette* No 100 Wednesday, October 9 1974 p.3649]

*This place/object may be included in the Victorian Heritage Register pursuant to the Heritage Act 2017. Check the Victorian Heritage Database, selecting 'Heritage Victoria' as the place source.*

*For further details about Heritage Overlay places, contact the relevant local council or go to Planning Schemes Online <http://planningschemes.dpcd.vic.gov.au/>*