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# VICTORIA HOUSE



VICTORIA HOUSE SOHE  
2008



1 victoria house portland front  
view jan1994

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## Location

7 TYERS STREET PORTLAND, GLENELG SHIRE

## Municipality

GLENELG SHIRE

## Level of significance

Registered

## Victorian Heritage Register (VHR) Number

H0236

## Heritage Overlay Numbers

HO83

## VHR Registration

October 9, 1974

## Heritage Listing

Victorian Heritage Register

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## Statement of Significance

## 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 site of Victoria House was purchased at the third Crown Land sales at Portland in 1847 by James Kittson. Before 1853 Kittson had constructed three buildings on the site, consisting of a small building in the yard, a stable and a stone building. The 1853 stone building which remains on the site was a two roomed structure, one room of which appears to have been a kitchen. In 1853, Kittson sold to John Harris who retained ownership only until 1854 when he disposed of the property to Kenneth McKenzie, the former licensee of Portland's Britannia Inn. McKenzie commenced construction of a large two storey building in 1855 and by February 1856, the building was nearing completion. The *Portland Guardian* reported that the new Private Family Hotel would be a great acquisition to the town where 'families will now be able to obtain accommodation in town in a respectable hotel where no bar is kept.' In December 1856 Kenneth McKenzie obtained a victualler's licence and in April 1858, called tenders for additions to McKenzie's Family Hotel. It is believed that the tenders were for the addition of the single storey portion of the building on Tyers St which abuts the 1855-56 two storey building. The single storey addition was constructed to house the establishment's bar and had no internal connection to the residential section. McKenzie sold the hotel to Donald Cameron who operated the business as the Royal Hotel from 1858 until 1862 when it became Lott's Family Hotel under the ownership of Charles Lott.

The building continued to be used as a hotel until the lapse of the licence in 1864 when the property was bought by John Huxley. The Huxley family owned the building for the next 54 years. In the early years of Huxley's ownership, the building was leased to a Mrs Tuckfield, who ran a school known as Portland House Ladies Seminary until its removal to other premises in 1868. The Colonial Government leased the building from 1868-71 as a residence for Hugh Ross Barclay, the Superintendent of Police. In the late 1870s or the early 1880s, the building appears to have become a guest house. The building was given the name Victoria House by the then owner Charlotte Huxley in 1880. *Where to Go* guides indicate that Victoria House was operated in 1915 by E Hutchinson with room for 50 guests but by 1926 under the proprietorship of Ethel Gorman, the capacity had been reduced to 26 beds. The capacity of the guest house remained at about 25 guests during the ownership of G Hale in the 1950s and 1960s. The building was renovated in the early 1990s and has operated as a guest house or bed and breakfast in recent years.

Victoria House consists of a two storey Colonial Georgian bluestone building of 1855-56, the attached single storey former bar building of 1858, and a c1853 single storey bluestone residential building at the rear which apparently originally stood as a separate entity. Each structure has corrugated iron hipped roofs. The single storey former bar portion of the former hotel and building at the rear each has a verandah facing the central garden. The facade of the 1855-56 two storey building and the 1858 attached bar room building are symmetrical about the central entrance doors. The street elevation of the building is finely-cut coursed bluestone while the side walls consist of rough hewn coursed bluestone blocks.

## How is it significant?

Victoria House is of architectural and historical significance to the State of Victoria.

## Why is it significant?

Victoria House is of architectural significance as an unusual example of a Colonial Georgian style hotel which exhibits a visible expression of the separation of its bar and residential functions. The position on the street alignment of the attached 1858 single storey bar portion and the set-back of the 1855-56 double storey residential building provides a distinct entrance to each, and reflects the early change of use of the building from a private hotel to a licensed premise. The 1855-56 two storey section is an intact and early example of private hotel [or guest house] accommodation in Victoria.

Victoria House is of historical significance for its association with the commercial development of Portland in a period when immigrant ships were being diverted to Portland and other outlying ports in attempt to deter further congestion of the already overcrowded Victorian goldfields.

[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        1855,  
Heritage Act Categories   Registered place,  
Hermes Number            953  
Property Number

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## History

Associated People: Tenant KENNETH MCKENZIE;

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

*Portland Guardian*, 27 Feb 1856 [courtesy Gwen Bennett]

*Portland Guardian*, 21 Apr 1858 [courtesy Gwen Bennett]

Gabrielle Moylan & Philippa Watt. *Holiday Guest Houses A State-wide Typological Survey* 1994

Gwen Bennett. *Portland; Now & Then...* 1993

Former owners Lex & Don Chalmers, personal communication 16 March 2005

Australian Heritage Commission. *Register of the National Estate*

## **Extent of Registration**

*Town of Portland*. No. 236. Victoria House, 5-7 Tyers 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/>*