Statement of Heritage Impact

For E1 Pty Limited
Star Hotel Precinct Redevelopment
563-571 Hunter Street

Devonshire Lane
Newcastle West NSW

Date December 2003
Project No 6815
2.1 Introduction

The site under study is located on land in the west end of Hunter Street (formerly Blane Street) that was originally Lots 96, 95 and 38 Section A of the Australian Agricultural Company’s (A.A. Co.) Newcastle Estate. The Star Complex as it exists today comprises of a number of buildings that have been remodelled on numerous occasions. They include the Star Hotel rebuilt on Hunter Street in 1910 and extended to King Street in 1925, three terraces originally constructed in 1890 adjacent to the Star on the corner of Hunter and Devonshire Streets, and a group of houses erected in the late nineteenth century fronting Devonshire Street.

By far, the most historically significant section of the complex is that of the former hotel. Its chief significance is embedded in its social history which extends back to the mid 1850s. The Star provides a link to key aspects of Newcastle’s working, commercial and cultural past including its working communities and diverse social groups. “It has been a mirror of Newcastle’s history, life and culture from its emigrant pioneer beginnings and rural landscape to the city of the late 20th century.”

2.2 Early Development of the Honeysuckle Area

Town development was slow in the decade following the opening up of Newcastle to free settlement in the early 1820s and activity was centred to the east of Brown Street. However, during the 1830s and 1840s, people including Richard Furlong, Alexander Walker Scott, and Dr James Mitchell established farms and small industries on grants to the south east of the town and to the west of Throsby Creek as well as the north side of the harbour. Immigration into the town was increasing, bolstered by the opening of the A.A. Co’s coal mines. By 1841 the population of Newcastle totalled 1,377 and there were 193 houses in the town. Along with its mines, the A.A. Co. also developed a wharf, a coal loading system, engineering workshops and a salt works.  

1 The history of the Star Hotel has been researched and provided by Hunter History Consultants, Newcastle.
2 Both street names have been used throughout this study in keeping with historical context.
3 Newcastle Herald, 20 December, 1980.
In 1841 a one acre site for use as a Roman Catholic burial ground was secured near the former convict farm at Cottage Creek on the western outskirts of the township. The Government subsequently dedicated a further acre of land adjoining the Roman Catholic Burial Ground for use as a Presbyterian Burial Ground in 1845 and another acre further west (near the present Wickham Station) for a Wesleyan Methodist Burial Ground in 1846. At the time of their establishment these burial grounds were on the extreme western boundary of Newcastle. Cottage Creek was also the site of one of Australia’s first meat canning factories founded by the Dangar family in 1848.

In 1841 Dr James Mitchell secured land grants at Honeysuckle Point on behalf of a group of residents who wished to establish a private proprietary grammar school in the developing town. The land proved to be unsuitable for the purpose and was subsequently subdivided. By 1855 there were about 70 houses at Honeysuckle on what had become known as the Church Estate or the Bishop’s Settlement.

The A.A. Co’s 2,000 acres of land granted for the purpose of coal mining and known as the company’s Newcastle Estate, initially formed a barrier to westward expansion of the town, however, development of the western end of Newcastle hastened after 1853 when the A.A. Co. started to sell its land on the south side of Blance Street. A massive and ongoing programme of wharf construction, harbour dredging and foreshore reclamation was associated with the growth of Newcastle in the mid nineteenth century.

In the early 1850s, the route from Newcastle to Maitland was still nothing more than a dirt track. The decision made in 1853 to construct a railway between the two towns with a station at Honeysuckle Point (first located on the site of the present Civic Station) as the line’s terminus provided an impetus for the development of Blance Street. "As the population of Newcastle grew and its coal industry expanded rapidly after 1856, land near the railway became more and more valuable."

2.3 The Star Hotel

The original Star Hotel, built by Ewen Cameron and initially known as the Star Inn or Cameron’s Inn, was erected in 1855 on the south side of Blance Street near the corner of present day Devonshire Street. The inn was built on land purchased by Cameron in 1855 for £54 being formerly Lot 96, Section A of the A.A. Co’s Newcastle Estate. Lot 96 was bounded:

Towards the east by the west boundary line of lot 95 Two chains fifty links (2.50) Towards the south by the north boundary line of lot 39 one chain (1) Towards the west by the east boundary line of lot 97 Two chains

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6 Elaine Sheehan, (ed.), Newcastle West New South Wales: Wesleyan Methodist Burial Ground 1858-1881, Family History Society Inc., Lambton, 1999, p.3. All three Newcastle West cemeteries were closed in 1881 after the opening of Sandgate Cemetery.

7 Turner, 'Honeysuckle...', p. 56.


10 Turner, 'Honeysuckle...', pp.45-46; Doring, 'Honeysuckle Project...', p.11.

11 Turner, 'Honeysuckle...', p.46.

12 Conveyance Registration No. 634, Book No. 488, NSW Land and Property Information (hereinafter referred to as LP); Newcastle Morning Herald, 10 March, 1910.
fifty links (2.50) And towards the north by the south side line of Blane Street with a frontage of One chain (1) and containing Forty perches (40).13

In the mid 1850s, Cameron's land was still regarded as being on the western outskirts of the Newcastle township. In an account of the appearance of the town in the late 1850s, the Newcastle Morning Herald noted that west beyond the A.A. Co.'s Bridge across Hunter Street (near the corner of Crown Street), "the traveller was almost at once in the bush, Hunter-street West ... being but a forest track."14 However, by the time Cameron had bought his land, construction on the rail line between Newcastle and Maitland had already commenced. The Star was one of the earliest hotels erected in Hunter Street West but Cameron was not the only developer who saw the potential in building a public house in close proximity to the new rail line and its Honeysuckle terminus. The Empire Hotel (originally named, the Railway Hotel) and the Black Diamond Hotel were also strategically located to take advantage of the trade that the Great Northern Railway (officially opened on the 30 March, 185715) would bring.16

Born in Scotland, Ewen Cameron, the first owner of the Star, was descended from a Highlander family driven from their native village in western Argyle to the Isle of Mull by the Highland clearances. In 1838 Ewen was one of approximately 50 members of the Cameron clan who arrived in Sydney. Before moving to Newcastle, Ewen, like many other family members, took up farming along the Hunter River near Hexham. However, the Camerons soon made influential connections in the district. Married to notable businessman, James Hannel, Mary Cameron was Newcastle's first mayoress in 1859. Ewen's own sister Mary, was married to Peter Fleming, another prominent Newcastle businessman who also served as an alderman for Honeysuckle Ward in Newcastle's first borough council.17

Ewen built the Star and purchased the land on which it was erected with money he had made at the Rockhampton goldrush.18 He was the first of the Camerons to enter the Newcastle hotel trade but was soon followed by his eldest son James. James held the first publican's licence in the inner suburb of Hamilton where he opened the Queen's Arms in 1859 and later built the Cameron's Family Hotel in 1885 on the corner of Hunter and Steel Streets, a block away from his father's Star. All of these hotels remained in the hands of the Cameron family for many decades. The main form of business income for these early hotels was accommodation rather than the liquor trade.19

The earliest Australian inns were often private residences belonging to people who had obtained licences to sell liquor from their own homes. In such inns, guests and the publicans' families generally shared the same facilities. However, by the 1830s legislative requirements meant that the distinction between the licensee's living quarters and accommodation for guests had become more formalised.20 The Liquor Act of 1830 stipulated that:

Every house which shall be licensed under this Act shall contain at least two sleeping rooms for public accommodation, independent of the apartments occupied by the family of the publican, and if any licensed house upon any line of road in the colony shall without reasonable cause refuse a traveller or guest, the Licensee shall pay a sum of not less than five pounds not more than twenty pounds.21

Given its location in relation to the Honeysuckle terminus and Newcastle harbour, the Star was well positioned to cater to travellers. The earliest found description of the hotel is that provided in the first

13 Conveyance Registration No. 634, Book No. 488, LPI.
14 Newcastle Morning Herald, 7 June, 1909.
15 Turner, 'Honeysuckle...', p.45.
18 Newcastle Morning Herald, 21 October, 1921.
19 Newcastle Herald, 20 December, 1980; Newcastle Morning Herald, 30 August, 1907.
21 Cited in Catherine Foggo, Inns and Hotels 1825-1900, NSW Branch of the Australians Hotels Association, 1989, p.2.
council rate books for Newcastle in 1860-1861. Therein, the Star is described as a single storey, wooden, public house containing nine rooms with a shingled roof and valued at £110.22 It’s large stables located at the rear of the hotel were a feature of the property.

During the first 25 years after the Star was erected, the Cameron family, whilst retaining freehold, did not always hold the hotel licence.23 An 1870 advertisement placed by the new publican, John Hopes, claimed that the “hotel has been newly decorated and put into a thorough state of repair, and the Accommodation for visitors is of a superior order. Excellent Stabling on the premises.”24 Publican, Francis Lynch, who became licensee in 1873 found a new use for the stables. “He was a racing enthusiast who kept his own racehorses and he began that long association with racing that made the racing fraternity such a large part of the Star’s clientele.”25

2.3.1 Hugh Cameron and the Star

In the early 1880s one of Ewen’s sons, Hugh Cameron, took over the licence of the Star. Hugh and his wife Ethie brought new life to the Star. Despite the large stables, there was still considerable land at the back of the hotel and Ethie had a fernery built, planted a rose garden and erected a large aviary where she kept parrots and canaries. Ewen had previously erected some wooden cottages on the grassy expanse at the rear of the hotel where cows and fowls also grazed. These dwellings “were usually occupied by Cameron relatives for the family retained its clan traditions and still spoke Gaelic among themselves.”26

In 1878 Hugh purchased Lot 3 of the subdivision of Lots 95A and 38A for £390, providing Devonshire Street access to the hotel. This land with a 20 foot frontage on Devonshire Street shared its western boundary with the south east corner of the Cameron property on which the Star was situated. A brick house containing 5 rooms was erected on Lot 3 at No. 6 Devonshire Street during the same year that the land was purchased.27 By 1887 Hugh had bought the adjoining Lot 4 and erected two brick terraces each containing 5 rooms at Nos. 8 and 10 Devonshire Street.28

Until his death in 1921, Hugh was the person best remembered in connection with the original Star. “Hugh’s life revolved around the hotel and the racecourse”.29 Together with his brother James who owned the nearby Cameron’s Family Hotel, and nephew J.G. Cameron, Hugh played a leading role in the foundation of the Newcastle Jockey Club. The Cameron Handicap was named in their honour.30

The 1880s were prosperous years for the Star. Commercial development of the Railways Department land to the west of the Honeysuckle Railway Workshops began after the opening of the second Honeysuckle Point Station in 1872, 35 chains west of the original. Although the Railways Department kept a tight hold on its land, leases were issued to private enterprises keen to be located close to the railway line and station.31 Business in this section of Hunter Street was doing well and the Star “was frequented by [horse] owners, trainers and jockeys and had a big dormitory for apprentices.”32 Amongst the colourful clientele was Professor Godfrey and his Monkey Circus. Unfortunately, the ‘Professor’s’ annual visits to the Star came to an end one year when the monkeys managed to partly demolish the stables. The stables were rebuilt and in

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22 Honeysuckle Assessment Book 1860-1861, AB5419.
23 Index to Liquor Licences in the Hunter Region 1865-1921, Newcastle Region Library.
24 Newcastle Morning Herald, undated clipping c. 1870.
26 Ibid.
27 Conveyance Registration No. 315, Book No. 182, LPi; Newcastle City Council Rate Books, Newcastle Region Library (hereafter referred to as NCC Rates), 1878, AB5375.
28 NCC 1887, AB5384.
29 Newcastle Herald, 20 December, 1980.
30 Ibid; Newcastle Morning Herald 30 August, 1907.
31 Turner, ‘Honeysuckle…’, pp.63-64.
1888 Hugh placed an advertisement in the *Newcastle Morning Herald*, "The Star Stables. Are noted for having reliable saddle and harness horses, single or double-seated buggies at reasonable charges. Horses stabled by the month, week, day or hour. Best forage. Civil grooms." The man in charge of the stables was known as 'Big Mac', the former coachman to coal baron John Brown who owned the nearby Black Diamond Hotel. "Hugh had a lifelong dislike of John Brown who was a Lowland Scot. When Brown dismissed Mac for dishonesty over a trifling sum, Hugh immediately hired him."

The Cameron’s Family Hotel built by James Cameron and from 1890 owned by his son, J.G. Cameron, enjoyed just as colourful reputation as that of the Star. The original Newcastle Trades Hall was built on the northern side of Hunter Street opposite the Star and many of its members frequented both the Star and the Cameron’s Family Hotel. The Camerons had a reputation for being generous and helping those in need. During the 1909-1910 coal strike, the executive of the miners’ union withdrew all of the union’s funds from the bank fearing they would be seized by the government. The money as well as that donated throughout the strike to support the miners was given to J.G. Cameron for safe keeping who distributed it to the miners as needed via cheques referred to as being written on the 'Bank of Cameron’. According to Hugh Cameron’s great granddaughter, Laurie Nilsen, Hugh was responsible for providing the bail money for union president Peter Bowling, his neighbour and fellow Scotsman, on the night that Bowling was arrested in December, 1909. As a result of such deeds, the Camerons were regarded highly by the miners’ union.

![Figure 2](image_url)

**Figure 2**
Hunter Street West c1900-1909. On right School of Mines, first Trades Hall, and Newcastle West Post Office. source: Newcastle Region Library, Jack Sullivan Collection

### 2.3.2 1910: Demolition and Rebuilding

During the second half of the nineteenth century, hotels increasingly served as centres for civic, community and political life. As hotels continued to evolve as social institutions they often required additional rooms to meet the needs of various communal purposes. By the beginning of the twentieth century the Star had become a rabbit warren of rooms, passages and sheds that had been added to and altered over the last 50 years as the need arose. Even by 1890 the Star had expanded from its original nine rooms to 14 rooms. The kitchen still remained detached from the main building and food had to be carried across the yard to the dining room.

Following the death of Ewen in 1890, Hugh finally purchased the Star from his father's estate in 1891 for £3,750 and in 1910 he decided to demolish the original hotel and rebuild. A new two storey, brick hotel was...

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32 *Newcastle Herald*, 20 December, 1980.
34 Weight, *Of Public Houses...*, p.64.
36 *Newcastle Herald*, 20 December, 1980; NCC Rates, 1890, AB5387.
erected on the site late 1910. Rebuilding of the Star was undertaken by contractor, Mr. T. Everett but unfortunately, no photos or detailed descriptions of the hotel at the time of its construction have been located. It is known that the new hotel consisted of bars, parlors, dining room and kitchen block on the ground floor and bedrooms on the first floor.\textsuperscript{39}

2.3.3 Lena Campbell

Hugh’s wife died in 1901 and his youngest daughter Aimee took over the running of the household and as Hugh entered into retirement his son Percy was given the management of the bar trade. However, Percy died in 1919 and with Hugh no longer well enough to run the operation his eldest daughter Lena took control of the business.\textsuperscript{40}

Lena had married George Campbell in 1894 but at only 28 years of age she became a widow with three young children to support when George died of pneumonia in 1903. With her father’s support she took over the licence of the Centennial Hotel in Hunter Street which she held for 15 years. Lena purchased the Star from her father for £6,000 in 1920, a year before Hugh’s death.\textsuperscript{41}

\begin{figure}[h]
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\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{lena_campbell.png}
\caption{Lena Campbell.}
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source: Newcastle Herald, 20 Dec 1980
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Assisted by her son-in-law, Charles Parker, who later became Mayor of Newcastle, Lena shrewdly began to purchase adjacent property. The family already owned 6-10 Devonshire Street and in 1921 Lena purchased Lot 5 (forming part of the resubdivision of Lots 38 and 95) and the house at No. 12 Devonshire Street for £460 from James Mathieson as well as Lot 6 and the house at No. 14 Devonshire Street for £375 from the Newcastle Building and Investment Company Limited. Martin Doherty, the owner of Lot 7 and the house at No. 16 Devonshire Street, held out for a higher price before selling to Lena in 1922 for £670. Between the southern boundary of Lot 7 and King Street the Newcastle City Council owned a narrow strip of vacant

\textsuperscript{39} Conveyance Registration No. 72, Book No. 481, LPI; Newcastle Morning Herald, 10 March, 1910; Pender and Porter Architects to C. Parker, 20 September, 1923, Tooth & Company Ltd, Star Hotel Correspondence 1924-1929, A1344, Newcastle Region Library (hereinafter referred to as Tooth Correspondence).

\textsuperscript{40} Newcastle Herald, 20 December, 1980; Newcastle Morning Herald, 21 October, 1921.

\textsuperscript{41} Conveyance Registration No. 668, Book No. 1190, LPI; Newcastle Herald, 20 December, 1980.
land which Lena acquired in 1924 for £50. She also attempted to buy land directly to the south of Lot 96A but the owners, the *Newcastle Morning Herald*, refused to sell.42

2.3.4 The New Star: 1925 Expansion

At the time that the Star was established in the mid 1850s, Newcastle imported all its beer from Sydney but in 1876 a local brewery was established at the far west end of Hunter Street by brothers John and Joseph Wood, agents for the Castlemaine Brewery Company. Hugh had entered into an agreement with the company in 1900, however, in 1921 Tooth and Company Limited took over the Wood Brothers’ operation in Newcastle.43 When the ownership of the Star was transferred to Lena she decided to retain the freehold but lease the premises to Tooth’s who would then sublease the hotel to publicans. By 1923 Lena was negotiating a new lease with Tooth’s and had plans prepared for alterations and additions to the Star which included the erection of a new bar facing King Street.44

One of the major influences affecting hotel structural design in the post World War One era, and in particular the public bar, was the introduction of six o’clock closing in 1916. “The long and unrelenting work of the dedicated temperance forces, the increasingly effective influence of the churches...and the memory of the depression, had prepared a lot of the common people...to accept 6 o’clock closing of hotels as a progressive and desirable step”45 especially during wartime. By 1920 it was estimated that 90 percent of the beer consumed in hotels was done so between the hours of 5pm and 6pm in what would become known as the ‘six o’clock swill.’ Thirsty men crowded into hotels at the end of the working day trying to drink their fill before closing time.46

To meet the crisis, hotel after hotel knocked out walls to extend the small, corner-entranced public bar. The normal encircling passage and the adjacent parlour were thrown into public bar space. Every possible area that could be spared and still receive the approval of the licensing courts was converted to bar space, either public, private, or saloon. In the larger hotels, one of the first victims was the billiard room.47

Few of the old hotels escaped the change that occurred in the 1920s moving from buildings in which bars were only a small physical part of the whole operation to where they formed a far greater part and focus.48 With early closing came not only a transformation of physical space but also a change in pub culture. Whereas hotels had traditionally served as centres for social gathering and communal meetings they became, according to J.M. Freeland, “no more than high-pressure drinking houses.”49 However, whilst hotel owners clearly wanted to increase bar space, to meet the requirements of the licensing authorities new extensions had to include both sleeping and dining accommodation.50 Accommodation was not overlooked in the new design for the Star that incorporated a total of 39 bedrooms.

43 *Newcastle Herald*, 20 December; Conveyance Registration No. 401, Book No. 1239, LPH; Conveyance Registration No. 776, Book No. 1241, LPH; Conveyance Registration No. 693, Book No. 1281, LPH; Conveyance Registration No. 808, Book No. 1348, LPH.
45 Pender and Porter Architects to C. Parker, 20 September, 1923; C. Parker to Branch Manager, 20 November, 1923; Tooth Correspondence.
47 Ibid., p.175.
48 Ibid., p.175.
49 Ibid., pp.175-176.
50 Ibid., p. 178.
51 Ibid., p. 177.
The plans for the new hotel fronting King Street provided "for Public & Saloon Bar, two Parlors, Cellar, Store room, & Lavatory accommodation on the ground floor & Four Bedrooms, Dining room, Kitchen & appointments, Bath room & W.C. on the first floor." Alterations and the erection of a new wing to the existing Star fronting Hunter Street provided for:

The removal of existing internal walls of Store & Parlors & erection of new Bar Counter & Fitments. Existing Dining room & Bedrooms over & Kitchen block to be demolished and new wing erected having, Cellar, Saloon Bar, one Parlor, Store, Stair Hall, Office, Kitchen, Pantry & Lavatory accommodation on the ground floor and Dining room, Lounge & two Bedrooms over. The conversion of existing Saloon Bar into Shop with Lavatory. The main Building to be extended back to include Six Showrooms 35ft. x 14ft. with Servery, Pantry, Housemaids room, Six Bedrooms 16ft. x 14ft, Six Bedrooms 12 ft. x 10ft., two Bathrooms & W.Cs. over Showrooms. Walls of all Bars, inside & outside to be Tiled to height of 5ft., and Bar Counters to be Tiled. New Laundry Etc. in yard...and the existing Building to Hunter Street, to be renovated.\footnote{52}

In February 1924 the Licensing Court refused Lena's application for alterations, additions and extensions to King Street. However, she appealed and finally received approval in June of the same year provided some changes to the design were made.\footnote{51} The original designs had been prepared by Newcastle architect, Wallace L. Porter, who was at the time working in conjunction with Pender's, a well-known architectural firm based in Maitland. Revised plans were prepared by Walter Harold Pender.\footnote{54}
Wallace Porter was a Newcastle born architect who had served his articles with the office of E.G. Yeomans before moving to the firm of Menkens and Castleden in 1908. He set up his own business in 1915 and was for a time architect to Tooth’s for the northern district. Other hotels designed by Porter included the Oriental at Carrington, the Sunnyside at Georgetown, and the Grand Junction at The Junction. Porter died prematurely at the age of 38 in 1924. Walter Harold Pender was a second generation architect in his father’s firm established in Maitland in 1863. Walter became head of the firm in 1909 and opened a second office in Newcastle with Gordon Lee in 1925. He also had considerable experience in hotel design including the Hotel Ellalong at Ellalong, the Hotel Paxton at Paxton, as well as the Hotel Australia, United Services Hotel and the Hotel Wentworth all at Cessnock.55

Three houses at 12-16 Devonshire were demolished to make way for the extension of the Star to King Street. Builder, A. Young’s tender to complete the work for £17,500 was accepted on 18 September 1924 and the work was carried out under the supervision of architect, Theo Chiplin. The new King Street bar was opened on the 14 May, 1925.56 (A copy of the specification of goods required for the opening of the new Star is attached.)

The new and renovated premises consisted of a two storey brick building running right through from Hunter to King Street. Accommodation consisting of 39 bedrooms was provided for on the first floor along with dining room, servery, lounge room, linen room, bathrooms, lavatories and shower rooms. On the ground floor, public and saloon bars were provided for on both the Hunter Street and King Street frontages as well as cellars, kitchen, office, parlour and lavatories. Five shops were included on the ground floor, the entrance being through an Arcade from Hunter Street on the western side of the Star, and one shop facing Hunter Street and adjoining the Public Bar.

Charles Parker negotiated the new lease between Lena Campbell and Tooth’s Brewery. Lena agreed to accept £40 per week for the first five years on the new Star excluding the shop in Hunter Street, the five showrooms and a garage with Devonshire Street access. Tooth’s made a loan of £18,000 to Lena for the cost of the new Star, the interest on which was paid back in monthly installments.57 The new licensee of the Star was publican Mervyn Atkins who signed a five year lease with Tooth’s in July, 1925. Lena and her family, together with her sister Aimee and brother Herbert moved out of the Star into their new home at New Lambton.58

2.3.5 Tough Times

The reverberations of the financial collapse of Wall Street at the end of the 1920s had a devastating impact on the Australian hotel industry. “In common with other business, the stresses of the time sent many of them to the wall. In the depth of the depression, 1932, nearly 5 per cent of them shut their doors for the last time without any help from the licensing boards.”59

The licence of the Star changed hands several times before the eve of the Great Depression when publican Roy Stanley had just taken over as licensee. By October, 1929 trade had fallen off in common with other hotels in the district and Stanley was requesting a reduction in his rent as he had made no profit in the time since he had become licensee.60 But the brewery was still confident that business would improve, claiming, “The hotel is in a very good position having frontage to the two main thoroughfares, King and Hunter

56 Newcastle Herald, 20 December, 1980; Unsigned memorandum, 1924, Tooth Correspondence.
57 General Manager to Branch Manager, 17 September, 1924, Unsigned memorandum, 1924, Tooth Correspondence.
58 General Manager to Bray, Cohen & Cragg Solicitors, Tooth Correspondence; Newcastle Herald, 20 December, 1980.
59 Freeland, The Australian Pub, p. 179.
60 Correspondence 1926-1928, Stanley to Branch Manager, 30 October, 1929, Tooth Correspondence.
Streets and is well patronised both for the Bar and accommodation, and with the return to normal times, should be one of the best hotels in Newcastle.\textsuperscript{61}

However, by the end of 1930, trade at the Star had still not picked up and Stanley owed almost £800 in arrears and Tooth’s offered to reduce his rent to £20 per week.\textsuperscript{62} Stanley’s financial concerns were not the only bone of contention he had with the brewery. One of his complaints concerned the use of the garage fronting Devonshire Street and next to the Star’s King Street section. The garage was rented by a wicker worker and used as a small factory and Stanley wanted Tooth’s to take control of the garage. Stanley complained that:

For two years or more the Garage has been a Factory, and the noise at night is always a nuisance, and reacts against making a favourable impression to guests immediately overhead. Just recently it has been serving the dual purpose of Factory and Dwelling place for three people or more, and their nightly habits include hilarious parties, loud singing, drunken brawls and hearty banging of doors at all hours of the morning to the perfect annoyance of everyone.\textsuperscript{63}

Unfortunately, for Stanley the wicker factory remained. In 1934 Stanley transferred the license for the Star to his brother-in-law Harold Morton who had previously served as publican in 1928.\textsuperscript{64}

The only documentation found in relation to renovations carried out at the Star during the depression years is the 1930 demolition of the existing 53 foot long balcony facing Hunter which was bricked up and the doorway converted to a window. A new 53 foot long steel awning was erected in its place according to council requirements.\textsuperscript{65} This was necessitated due to a recently passed ordinance by Newcastle City Council requiring all existing balconies in Hunter Street to be replaced by suspended awnings. Similar legislation had first been enacted in the early 1920s by building authorities in Sydney and Melbourne and afterwards by most local governments. “Using light steel framework hung on steel tension rods anchored back to the brickwork, flat verandah canopies, lined on the underside with pressed metal sheets and above with corrugated iron, were added as protection on one pub after another.”\textsuperscript{66}

2.3.6 1934: Sale of the Star Hotel

The Cameron family had been in possession of the Star for almost 80 years when in 1934 Lena Campbell agreed to sell the property to Tooth and Company Limited.

As usual, Lena’s representative in the sale negotiations was Charles Parker. Tooth’s had first raised the issue of taking over the freehold with Mr Parker in August, 1934. The following month Lena, aged 59 and in poor health, agreed to sell the property for £29,000. At the time of sale, the Star property consisted of the hotel, one shop in Hunter Street for which the sum of £4 per week was received, five small shops in the lane at the side of the hotel (known as the Star Arcade) each let at 15 shillings per week, and one garage in Devonshire Street let at 10 shillings per week. These buildings were spread across the land referred to as Lot 96A and Lots 5, 6 and 7 of the resubdivision of Allotments 38 and 95, as well as the strip of land between the northern boundary of King Street and the southern boundary of Lot 7.\textsuperscript{67}

\textsuperscript{61} Branch Manager to General Manager, 29 May, 1930, Tooth Correspondence.
\textsuperscript{62} Stanley to Branch Manager, November, 1930, Branch Manager to General Manager, July 1931, Tooth Correspondence.
\textsuperscript{63} Stanley to C. Cohen, Solicitor, 6 October, 1931, Tooth Correspondence.
\textsuperscript{64} Branch Manager to General Manager, 27 February, 1928, Stanley to Branch Manager, 21 May, 1934, General Manager to Branch Manager, 6 March, 1935, Tooth Correspondence.
\textsuperscript{65} A.E. Hall to Branch Manager, 29 January, 1930, Branch Manager to General Manager, 4 February, 1930, Tooth Correspondence.
\textsuperscript{66} Friedland, \textit{The Australian Pub}, p. 176.
\textsuperscript{67} Newcastle Herald, 20 December, 1980; Branch Manager to General Manager, 22 August, 1934, Branch Manager to General Manager, 30 August, 1934, Parker to Branch Manager, 30 August, 1934, Tooth Correspondence; Conveyance Registration No. 794, Book No. 1706, LPI.
During the sale negotiations it was discovered that the King Street section of the Star encroached by approximately 16 square feet on the corner of King and Devonshire Streets. Newcastle City Council consented to the realignment of King and Devonshire Streets to conform to the existing occupation and vested the area excluded from the streets to Lena who then conveyed the area to Tooth's. The Governor's approval was required in order to execute the conveyance.68

2.3.7 1938: Renovations

In Australia, the worst of the Depression was over by 1936 and building was the cheapest it had been for sixty years. Those who were in a position to do so, namely the breweries, took advantage of the situation to erect new hotels and carry out renovations.69

In July 1937 an inspection report for Tooth's on the Star concluded:

The hotel is a good sound structure and on the top floor quite satisfactory from this point of view, with the exception of the small Lounge Room and old-fashioned Bathrooms and Lavatories. The Bars and Lavatory accommodation on the Ground Floor are quite unsatisfactory, and consideration should be given to a scheme of remodelling. The hotel is situated in Hunter Street West, opposite the Technical College and handy to the cargo shipping centre at Lee Wharf, and is also close to the local Sports Ground, only one hotel being between that area and the 'Star' Hotel. This is the 'Commonwealth' Hotel, Cook's Hill. A scheme of remodelling embodying the Tobacconist shop in Hunter Street by using this as a Saloon Bar and doing away with the necessity of patrons using the Arcade, could be considered.70

In January, 1938 the licence of the Star was transferred from Moran to Mrs Wilkinson, former licensee of the Maitland and Morpeth Hotel.71 A further inspection was conducted by J.G. Dalziel for Tooth's. His findings are reported below:

After making an inspection of this property, I find that the building, which is a two storied one, is solidly and well constructed, in sound repair and capable of being converted into a reasonably good house without a great deal of demolition. The building extends from Hunter St. through to King St., and is built upon a site very irregular in shape. A large area of the ground floor is occupied with Showrooms, Shops and Workrooms that cannot, at the present time, be advantageously occupied by the Hotel.

The parts which I consider require attention, are:-

In Hunter St., the front of the building should be re-designed, re-tiled and made to present a more attractive appearance. The Public Bar, Saloon Bar, Parlour and Office should be remodelled, retiled and generally brought up-to-date. The walls, floors and ceilings are all in excellent condition, but the fittings are old-fashioned and unattractive. The Private Entrance Hall is very dark, necessitating a light burning all day long. The Kitchen is very dark and should be removed from its present position into the Showroom on the other side of the yard entrance, to enable it to get light from the right-of-way and from the yard.

With regard to the Bar at the King St. end, there is plenty of room and, I think, the Bars are ample in size. I suggest that the whole of the fittings behind the Public Bar counter be removed, that more space be given to the Staff for working, and the Bars re-tiled, both inside and outside and the fittings generally modernised. The walls of the Men’s Lavatory should be tiled and the Lavatories brought up-to-date.

The yards should be paved, and the gates renewed. Skylights should be fixed in the awning which covers portion of the right-of-way, and prevents a good deal of light from entering the present Saloon Bar. On the first floor the whole of the existing Bathrooms and Lavatories should be tiled. The whole of the stumped steel partitions forming the front and rear Bedrooms of the Hunter St. section, should be replaced with solid partitions. Skylights should be inserted in the ceilings of the long corridors, which are at present very dark.

68 Brayce Cragg & Cohen, Solicitors to General Manager, 12 December, 1934, Brayce Cragg & Cohen, Solicitors to General Manager, 18 September, 1935, Tooth Correspondence.
69 Freeland, The Australian Pub, p. 179.
70 Inspection Report, 27 July, 1937, Tooth Correspondence.
71 General Manager to Branch Manager, 20 January, 1938, Tooth Correspondence.
The whole of the Bedrooms and Corridors should have the woodwork and ceilings painted cream and the walls papered. The walls of the Servery should be tiled, and possible alterations made to the Kitchen below. More light should be put into the Commercial Room by inserting skylight in the roof of the balcony at the rear.\textsuperscript{72}

Newcastle architects, Pitt and Merewether, who were employed to carry out work on Tooth’s hotels in the Newcastle district, were asked to draw up renovation plans incorporating Dalziel’s suggestions.\textsuperscript{73} Nigel Pitt and Edward Merewether set up the practice of Pitt and Merewether in Newcastle in 1913 and became one of the most productive architectural firms in the city. By the early 1920s they had built up a considerable reputation with works that included Tyrrell House, Telford Street, Newcastle (1921). Following the death in 1924 of Wallace Porter, the architect for Tooth & Co.’s northern work, Pitt and Merewether were given Tooth’s expanding hotel work. In the period up to 1943 they designed 29 new hotels (including the Crown & Anchor (1924), the Orient (1925), the Burwood Inn (1929) and the Station (1937)) and renovated a further 31 of Tooth’s hotels. Other major works designed during this time included the Classical styled office buildings for Stewarts & Lloyds, Port Waratah (1934), the Australian Wire Rope Works, Mayfield (1935), and Nesca House (1937, in conjunction with Emil Sodersteen).\textsuperscript{74}

A. Bates’ tender for £9,797 to undertake the renovations was accepted in September, 1938. The alterations, which were mainly focussed on the Hunter Street portion of the Star and the first floor, included the bringing forward of the dining room and changes to the kitchen, installation of skylights in the main hall, new tiled bathrooms and lavatories, new sitting room and the renovation of all bedrooms and corridors. Both Hunter and King Street public and saloon bars were remodelled and a new balcony erected over the Hunter Street entrance. The alterations were completed in May, 1939 and a new licensee, Henry Bonomini was also in place.\textsuperscript{75}

A report by Tooth’s Newcastle Branch Manager to the Property Officer at the end of October, 1939, stated that the Star property consisted of the hotel, four lock up shops in the arcade, one tobacconist shop in Hunter Street and one garage occupied by a wicker worker in Devonshire Street.\textsuperscript{76}

\begin{figure}
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{figure5.png}
\caption{Hunter Street West c1950s. Star Hotel marked by ‘star’.}
\end{figure}

\textsuperscript{72} Report Star Hotel, 11 March, 1938, Tooth Correspondence.
\textsuperscript{73} General Manager to Branch Manager, 25 March, 1938.
\textsuperscript{74} Reedman, ‘Architects of Newcastle...’.
\textsuperscript{75} General Manager to Branch Manager, 21 September, 1938, Branch Manager to General Manager, 5 April, 1939, General Manager to Branch Manager, 12 April, 1939, Tooth Correspondence; \textit{Newcastle Morning Herald}, 12 October, 1938.
\textsuperscript{76} Branch Manager to Property Officer, 31 October, 1939.
2.3.8  A Change in Clientele

For many years the Star was a popular haunt for seamen visiting the port of Newcastle but in the late 1960s the King Street bar, known as the Star’s back bar, was opened to a gay and lesbian clientele; it was the beginning of one of the most colourful eras in the social history of the Star.

From the mid 1950s, the Orient Hotel had become a focal point for Newcastle’s gay and lesbian community to meet and socialise, however, with a change in licensee at the end of the 1960s they were no longer welcome. At the time, business at the Star was slow and patronage declining. It is claimed that local police helped to negotiate a meeting between the married couple who licensed the Star and some of the former patrons of the Orient. “After their initial shock, the licensees decided, in the words of the immortal Stella (the drag performer who came to symbolise the Star) ‘to give the back bar over to the queens’.”

The drag shows and all-male revues performed at the Star breathed new life into the old hotel. The shows were such a success that a bigger stage was built in what became known as the ‘middle bar’. “About 200 men and women stand shoulder to shoulder in the hotel’s ‘centre bar’ to watch them perform each week.”

As can be gleaned from the following description of the Star written in 1973, the hotel had been allowed to run down over the years, however, this was of little concern to the new crowds that made the Star one of Newcastle’s most well-known and popular hotels throughout the 1970s.

> It is the biggest pub in Newcastle and currently the most popular. No description could do justice to the Star, it has to be seen to be believed – an immense, crumbling ruin of a place that exudes the seaminess and rough life one expects of a seaport. Four bars, in various stages of decay, and a beer garden courtyard make up the drinking area. The paint has peeled off the ceiling in places and plaster is chipped off the walls...The only attraction is its atmosphere, and of that there is plenty....The drinkers in the Star are a diverse lot. Depending on the hour and day any one of the bars could be crowded with business men, seamen, students or steelworkers.

The Star’s new and diverse clientele earned it a considerable notoriety. Whilst some members of the community regarded it as a den of iniquity, for others, “the Star was the place.” When Newcastle entrepreneur, Lloyd Moffatt, took over management of the Star in October 1971, he claimed that he “simply lifted it to a respectable degree of decadence.”

The front bar, on Hunter Street, was traditionally a seamen’s bar, and, decked out with fishing nets, it continued to attract its clientele from visiting merchant and naval vessels, as well as from the biking and surfing fraternities. The back bar became a live music venue, with performances by local rock and jazz bands (at one point it employed eight Newcastle bands and provided ten gigs for them each week), and a youthful hedonistic clientele. Upstairs there was an art gallery and a function room. The legendary drag performers of this period, such as Stella, Glenda and Dianne, served at the different bars, and did special shows in the function room as well as regular shows in the middle bar, with numerous guest artists. There was considerable movement between the three bars, and many of the patrons from the other two bars came to the middle bar at show time.

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78 Ibid., p.100.
80 Interview with Stella in Wafer, ‘Uncle Doreen’s...’, p. 113.
82 Wafer, ‘Uncle Doreen’s...’, p. 100.
From 1973 to 1979 the Star’s main attraction for the city’s youth, and university students was the live music. Don Graham took over from Moffatt as licensee in December 1973 and revamped the Star’s entertainment scene by introducing live rock and roll bands six nights a week, drawing attendances of up to 1000 on Friday and Saturday nights. “At one stage, there was a different band in every bar including a gay libber show in the middle bar, all on the same night.” The Star soon became the ‘most sought after gig in town’ and whilst many famous bands passed through the hotel, the biggest drawcard and the band most closely associated with the Star was Benny and the Jets. For many young people, the Star Hotel was the only place where, for six nights a week, one could listen to good bands for free…it was, because of the social variety characteristic of its clientele, an interesting and exciting place to go. For them the Star was: the very hub of our entertainment in the city. It is here that we flock in our hundreds to listen to the best of bands, enjoy good company and just simply relax from the hassles of the daily rat race…To us it is part of Newcastle, an essential part of ‘our town’ that has a very real place in our daily lives.

According to Jim Wafer, it was the diversity of the Star’s clientele and the relaxed amicability between the various social groups that gathered there that made the hotel “famous well beyond the confines of the city.” The popular ABC TV rock show, G TK, featured a film about the Star and referred to the Star as “the most exciting place in Australia.” The Star had already become known throughout the world’s seafaring communities as a meeting place for sailors and when Star Hotel t-shirts were distributed in the mid 1970s they were “spotted in places like Iran and remote South American villages.”

However, at the beginning of 1979, in a move that appeared to go against the diversity of the clientele and the Star’s unique ambiance, Graham banned homosexuals from entering the Star. There was an outcry from the gay and lesbian community who picketed the hotel but the size and fervour of the protest was eclipsed by the riot at the hotel eight months later upon the announcement of the closure of the Star.

2.3.9 1979: The Star Riot

It is believed that Ewen Cameron named the original Star after Scotland’s, Glasgow Star, a favourite haunt of Highland soldiers and the place where a mutiny of the Scottish regiments commenced. It is a quirky
coincidence that Cameron’s own Star would one day acquire notoriety for insurrection. On the 12 September, 1979, Tooth’s commercial manager, George Spencer, announced the decision to close the Star at the end of trading on the night of 19 September. Mr Spencer said he was aware of the unique part the Star had played in the hotel life of Newcastle but the decision to close was made on purely economic grounds. The hotel had been in a state of disrepair for many years and Tooth’s claimed it would be more economical to demolish the building rather than bring it up to the standard demanded by the licensing authorities. Given only a week’s notice of the closure, patrons mobilised against the decision. A demolition protest petition attracted 10,000 signatures but Tooth’s remained unrelenting. Licensee Don Graham promised that “We’ll have the biggest wake the city has seen” but instead the city experienced the biggest riot in its history.

According to a report by Newcastle City Council Alderman, Paul Dunn, the sequence of events culminating in the riot began with people gathering at the Star early in the afternoon of the closing date. Free beer was supplied for an hour between 5pm and 6pm and the crowd grew to approximately 5,000 during the evening, overflowing into King Street and blocking traffic. At 10pm the police entered the back bar and requested the band to stop playing and the serving of beer ceased. The band played one more song and a car in King Street tried to drive through the crowd. A police van arrived and beer cans were thrown before police made some arrests and moved on. A highway patrol car then tried to move through the crowd and hit one person, infuriating the crowd. The crowd resisted the police attempt to clear the road and further arrests were made before violence broke out culminating in a brawl at approximately 10.35pm.93

![Figure 7](image)

Images from the 1979 Star Hotel Riot.
source: Newcastle Herald, 20 Sept 1989

Other reports estimated a crowd of up to 7,000 people. More than 20 people were taken to hospital, two police cars were burnt out and 45 people finally charged.94 Initially, many in the community viewed the riot with outrage. The then Premier of New South Wales, Neville Wran, referred to it as “a shocking, disgraceful episode.”95 The editorial in the Newcastle Morning Herald on the Friday after the riot was headed

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92 Newcastle Sun, 12 September, 1979.
93 Dunn, Star Hotel...
95 Ibid.
'Newcastle’s Shame'. The riot attracted not only headlines around Australia but also received coverage around the world. In later years the riot has been portrayed as a protest against the discrimination shown towards the city's counter-culture as opposed to a “disgusting exhibition of moronic behaviour”. A legacy of the riot is that the Star has enjoyed iconic status amongst sections of the community. A musical play based on the history of the Star was commissioned by the Hunter Valley Theatre Company in 1980. Called 'The Star Show: Tonite Heroes – Tomorrow Forgotten' it featured songs including 'The Drag Song' and 'The Gay Song'. Renowned Australian band, Cold Chisel, who never appeared at the Star, recorded a song called 'The Star Hotel' which appeared on their 'Greatest Hits' album in the early 1980s. On the tenth anniversary of the riot former licensee, Don Graham, commented, "you know, even today people come up to me and say, 'Don the Star was the most fabulous hotel that ever was'. And it was. There'll never be another Star.

2.3.10 Star Complex Redevelopment

Following the closure of the Star on 19 September, 1979, Tooth's did not demolish the building but sold it at auction to Newcastle property developer, Kurt Piccardi. Piccardi was a leader in the initiative to redevelop Newcastle's West End in the early 1980s. His designs were influenced by his philosophy that, where feasible, old buildings should be recycled rather than demolished. Some of the many Newcastle buildings that received the Piccardi recycling touch were the former Ireland's Bond Store in King Street, the old Mackies Furniture Store, the Theatre Royal and the David George Warehouse.

By September, 1980, Piccardi had prepared plans for the large scale redevelopment of the Star site which included the former Macey's furniture store on the corner of Devonshire and King Streets and the houses originally built by the Cameron family at Nos. 6-10 Devonshire Street which had also been acquired by Piccardi. The initial design (see below) incorporated the restoration of the Star's King Street bar to its original condition for use as a tavern, bar and restaurant. It also included the redesign of the Hunter Street section of the Star. The Newcastle Herald reported:

> With upgrading of some of the existing shops and development of more retail facilities there will be 22 shops on the site when the project is completed. Perhaps the most unusual feature of the plan is a proposed rock pool which will be about 11m by 8m...The entire site will be extensively landscaped and benches and covered walkways will predominate the outdoor areas.

Work on the redevelopment commenced in 1981 and was undertaken in several stages. Piccardi also purchased the old terraces at 563-567 Hunter Street between the corner of Devonshire Street and the former Hunter Street section of the Star which were also incorporated into the Star Complex redevelopment.

96 Newcastle Morning Herald, 21 September, 1979.
98 Ibid., pp. 101, 108.
99 Ibid., p. 102.
101 Transfer No. S365011, LPI; Newcastle Herald, 9 September, 1980.
103 Newcastle Herald, 9 September, 1980; Certificate of Title Vol. 7608, Fol. 26, LPI.
104 Newcastle Herald, 9 September, 1980.
105 Information supplied by Newcastle City Council, Plan Room, 24 October, 2003; Transfer Nos. T234702, T315175, S829244, LPI.
2.3.11 **Recent Changes**

Over the last 20 years the doors to the Star have opened and closed several times as the property changed hands and various alterations and modifications undertaken. In recent years changes in management have brought variations in usage and seen the Star linked with some intriguing identities including notorious former detective, Roger Rogerson, who claimed a stake in the hotel.106

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In 1986 ownership of the entire site was transferred from Piccardi to the State Authorities Superannuation Board who undertook restaurant alterations before transferring ownership to Ryner Pty Ltd in 1990. In the early 1990s the Star was resurrected as a musical venue but suffered another setback in 1995 when a rock and roll fire-breathing act accidentally set part of the building alight.

When new licensee, Mark Henderson, took over management of the Star in 1997 about $250,000 was spent on renovations. He tried a more upmarket approach, with the hotel operating as the Acoustic Café and Star Motel. Attractions included a restaurant, conference centre, recording studio, gaming room and music publishing arm.

By early 2000 the Star Complex consisted of the tavern in the former King Street section, 19 motel rooms, 10 shops and offices. Yet again under new management, plans to refurbish the hotel at a cost of $200,000 were prepared. A spectacular reopening of the Star went ahead on the night of 15 December, 2000 despite last minute problems with building and entertainment permits. Publican Ken Blackwell, told the Newcastle Herald, "the full impact of what we were doing in rebirthing this icon of the city did not sink home with me until we started getting calls from media outside the region...within days we were getting calls from members of the public as far afield as Darwin."

The Star was embroiled in management problems in 2001 and in August of the same year the Star complex was sold to E-Lawnet.com.au Pty Ltd. Two months later, the Newcastle Herald, announced that under new management, the Star was about to be reborn one more time with an entirely new image. Renovations were still underway but, "Gone are the strippers, bikie gangs, table dancers and dim interior. They have been replaced by a bright décor and a Grecian Grill eatery." By August, 2003 the Star had once again closed its doors.

2.4 Lots 95 and 38, Section A

Lots 95 and 38 Section A were originally part of the A.A.Co.'s Newcastle Estate. In total they contained one rood and 24 perches of land, bounded on the north by the southern side of present day Hunter Street, on the south by the northern side of present day King Street, on the east by the western side of present day Devonshire Street and on the west by Lots 96 and 39.

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107 Transfer Nos. WS70838, Z076720, LPI.
109 Ibid; Information supplied by Newcastle City Council.
114 Conveyance Registration No. 162, Book No. 120, LPI.
In 1858, Newcastle property investor and businessman, George Tully, purchased Lots 95 and 38 Section A from the A.A. Co. Tully did not build on the land and transferred the lots to the first Bishop of Newcastle, William Tyrrell and to William Sparke. In 1870 the land was purchased by Alfred Atkinson Tighe for £400. \(^{115}\) Tighe promptly subdivided the land into eight separate allotments; two larger blocks with Blane Street frontage and six narrow blocks fronting Devonshire Street.

Tighe, who lent his name to the inner Newcastle suburb of Tighe's Hill, was a well-known and successful businessman and politician in the district. Tighe ran a successful auctioning business and had considerable land holdings especially in the suburb of Waratah where he once served as police magistrate. He was an alderman on the inaugural Newcastle City Council formed in 1859 and represented the district in the New South Wales Legislative Assembly between 1862 and 1882. \(^{116}\)

2.4.1 Hunter (Blane) Street Frontage

Lots 1 and 2 fronting Blane Street remained vacant until the mid 1880s. \(^{117}\) The 1886 Mahlstedt and Gee Survey Map depicts a small single storey building on the north western corner of the property being leased by A.B. Cox and Co., Ironmongers. The council rate book for 1886 describes the building as a two roomed store with stables. \(^{118}\) In 1889 the ironmonger's store and stables were demolished and in 1900 three, two storeyed brick terraces each containing nine rooms are erected on the site (see Survey Map of Newcastle Suburbs, 1896). \(^{119}\) According to the council rate books these buildings consisted of leased shops on the ground floor and rental flats on the upper floor. During the 1890s, grocery, drapery and music businesses were operating out of the shops. \(^{120}\)

\(^{115}\) Ibid.


\(^{117}\) NCC Rates 1860-1885.

\(^{118}\) Mahlstedt and Gee Survey Map, January, 1886, Newcastle Region Library; NCC Rates 1886, AB5383.

\(^{119}\) NCC Rates, 1889, AB5386, 1890, AB5387.

\(^{120}\) Ibid., 1890-1899.
In 1898 Tighe divided his vast real estate holdings amongst his large family. He transferred Lots 1 & 2 and the properties thereon to one of his daughters Ada Angus. The Angus family resided in Sydney and continued to rent the properties, which were used for both commercial and residential purposes. The three terraces at 563-567 Hunter Street, remained in the hands of the Angus family until 1950 when they were sold to Coo-ee Clothing Limited.\footnote{Convenance Registration No. 321, Book No. 624, Conveyance Registration No. 831, Book No. 2141, LPI.}

![Figure 12](image)
**Figure 12**
Mahlstedt and Gee Survey Map, January 1886.
source: Newcastle Region Library

In 1946, architects Pitt and Merewether prepared three new designs for the properties.\footnote{Pitt and Merewether Architects, Angus Estate, Proposed Shops and Flats—Hunter Street and Devonshire Lane, Newcastle, September, 1946, Newcastle Region Library, AM-A2000/80.} The plan which most closely resembles the outline of the current buildings is ‘9463C’ (see attached). However, rate book searches do not indicate that the buildings were completely demolished in order to implement the new design, and the outline of the terraces remains constant on 1896, 1922, and 1957 survey maps.\footnote{Survey Map of Newcastle Suburbs, 1896 (NSW Dept of Lands), Newcastle Region Library; Liverpool and London Globe Insurance Company, Detailed Survey Map of the City of Newcastle 1922, Newcastle Region Library; City of Newcastle Plan of subdivision of land in C.T. Vol. 6847 Fol. 79, April, 1957, LPI.} Indeed, the outline of the buildings today (although they have been incorporated into the Star complex redevelopment post 1981) still resembles that depicted on the 1896 map.

![Figure 13](image)
**Figure 13**
Outline of terraces cnr Hunter and Devonshire streets.
source: Survey Map of Newcastle Suburbs, 1896
(NSW Dept of Lands), Newcastle Region Library
2.4.2 Devonshire Street Frontage

Measuring only 20 feet in width, Devonshire Street had the appearance more of a lane than a street. The first buildings on the western side of the street were erected in 1871. Tighe had sold Lot 6 to accountant, Alexander Farthing and his wife Harriet for £80 and Lot 5 to engine driver, William Mathieson for £70.\textsuperscript{124} A single storey, five roomed wooden house was erected by Farthing at No. 14 and next door at No. 12, Mathieson built a brick house containing six rooms.\textsuperscript{125} In the same year, Tighe sold Lot 7 to William Collins who made a quick sale to Edwin Harris for £65.\textsuperscript{126} Harris erected a single storey, six roomed brick house at No. 16 in 1872.\textsuperscript{127} All three of these properties remained standing until they were demolished by Lena Campbell in the early 1920s to make way for the construction of the Star’s King Street bar. The 1886 and

\textsuperscript{124} Conveyance Registration No. 793, Book No. 150, Conveyance Registration No. 394, Book No. 123, LPI.

\textsuperscript{125} NCC Rates, 1871, AB5369.

\textsuperscript{126} Conveyance Registration No. 940, Book No. 123, Conveyance Registration No. 405, Book No. 126, LPI.

\textsuperscript{127} NCC Rates, 1872, AB5370.
1896 Survey Maps also depict a house at No. 18 which does not appear in the council rate books but was obviously demolished before Campbell took over the Star.

Owners of the Star, the Cameron family, purchased Lots 3 and 4 and in 1878 erected a two storey, brick house containing five rooms at No. 6. Two adjacent double storey brick houses, each containing five rooms, at Nos. 8 and 10 were also erected by Hugh Cameron in 1887. By the time that the Star's King Street bar was built in 1925, these three properties were the only remaining houses fronting the western side of Devonshire Street. Two wooden cottages at Nos. 2 and 4 were erected by Tighe in 1885 but these houses were demolished in 1890 to make way for the terraces built on the corner of Hunter and Devonshire in the same year.

![Figure 16](image-url)

**Figure 16**
Mahlstedt and Gee Survey Map, January 1886. 
source: Newcastle Region Library

From the end of the 1860s to the early 1900s, the A.A. Co. leased the land behind the Gasworks at the southern end of Steel Street to Chinese market gardeners. During this time other Chinese immigrants established market gardens throughout the Newcastle district and many set up businesses including produce stores and residences in Newcastle in the areas bound by Steel Street and nearby Devonshire Street. Beginning in the early twentieth century, the council rate books show members of the Chinese community leasing houses in Devonshire Street. In 1904 the Presbyterian Chinese Church was built on the eastern side of Devonshire Street and operated until 1939. However, according to Hugh Cameron's great grand daughter, one of the houses owned by the Cameron family opposite the church, was used by the Chinese

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132 NCC Rates, 1901-1913.
133 *Newcastle Morning Herald*, 18 April, 1939.
tenants as a 'Joss House'. This information is supported by the recollections of Astley Pulver who knew of a 'Joss House' (a place where Chinese deities were worshipped in idol form) operating in a side street near Union Street when he was a boy.

Following the death of Hugh Cameron in 1921 the houses at Nos. 610 were owned by his daughters Aimee Cameron and Florence Myra Caston who held the properties for over 20 years until they were transferred to Frederick Fryer then on to Coo-ee Clothing Limited in 1950.

2.4.3 Re-subdivision early 1950s

Following Coo-ee Clothing Limited's 1950 acquisition of 563-567 Hunter Street and 610 Devonshire Street, the land on which the properties stood was once again subdivided. As can be seen from the 1957 survey map, the land fronting Hunter Street was divided into three lots, namely Lot A of Part 95A at No. 567, Lot B of Part 95A at No. 565 and Lot C of Part 95A at No. 563. Nos. 6-10 Devonshire Street became part of Lot D of Part 95A.

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**Figure 17**

City of Newcastle plan of subdivision of land in CT Vol. 6847 Fol. 79, April 1957.

source: LPI

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135 A.P. Pulver, 'After Coal', unpublished manuscript, Newcastle, 1979, Newcastle Region Library.
136 Conveyance Registration No. 315, Book No. 182, Conveyance Registration No. 97, Book No. 1902, Conveyance Registration No. 21, Book No. 2154, Application to Bring Lands Under the Protection of the Real Property Act, 1900, No. 37938, LPI.
137 City of Newcastle Plan of subdivision of land in C.T. Vol. 6847 Fol. 79, April, 1957, LPI.
By the early 1980s, all of the properties had changed hands before being acquired by Kurt Piccardi. Given Piccardi’s preference for recycling buildings in favour of demolishing, it is likely that these premises, which were incorporated into the Star complex redevelopment in the 1980s, were not demolished but simply remodelled. However, given the numerous alterations and remodelling that the buildings have undergone since their construction in the late nineteenth century, there is likely to be little remnants of their original Victorian features.

![Figure 18](image)

In 1986 the entire re-subdivision was transferred to the State Superannuation Authorities Board, then to Ryner Pty Ltd in 1990 before being conveyed to the present owners E-Lawnet.com.au Pty Ltd in 2001.

2.5 Conclusion

The history of the site can be linked to a number of NSW Heritage Council themes including Leisure, Commerce and Significant Persons. The original Star built in 1855 was one of the earliest hotels in Hunter Street West. Owned by the well-known Cameron family for 80 years, the Star has been rebuilt, extended and remodelled as circumstances required. However, it has become part of, as well as a reflection of, the Newcastle cultural landscape. The changing diversification of its clientele across the years from seamen, miners and steel workers to drag queens, surfies and rock ‘n’ rollers has mirrored the changing face and environment of the city. It has enjoyed a colourful history and its notoriety throughout the 1970s when it became a melting pot of various social groups placed Newcastle in headlines around the world. Few, if any other, Newcastle hotel could claim to be the subject of documentaries, academic research, plays, songs and verse. It is the hotel most readily identifiable with the city.

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138 Transfer Nos. T234702, T315175, S829244, S881030, LPI.
159 Transfer Nos. T250150, W570838, Z076720, 7876841K, LPI.