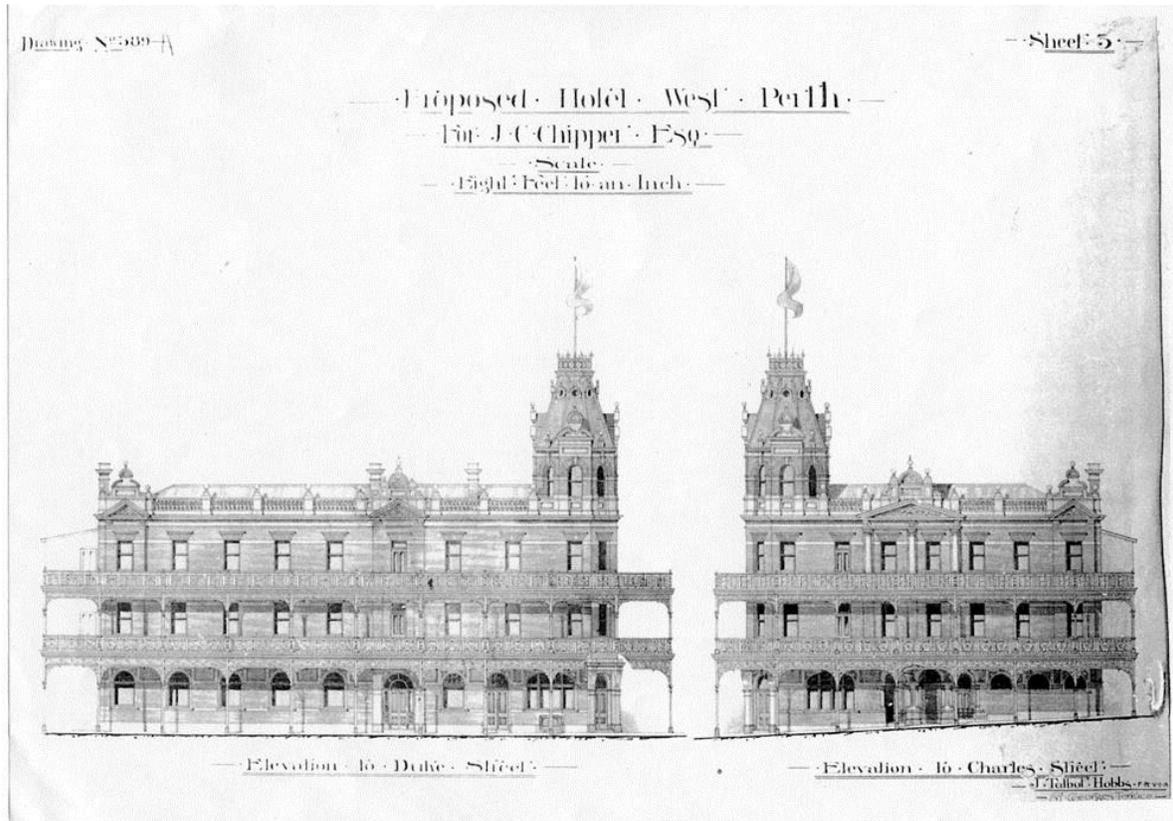


TOWER HOTEL (originally The Club Hotel) CHARLES STREET, WEST PERTH



Designed by Sir J J Talbot Hobbs for John Charles Chipper in 1896. The Club Hotel was constructed on the corner of Duke, Charles and Aberdeen streets, West Perth. (This land is just south of Newcastle Street and now under the Mitchell Freeway.) A beautiful building, the hotel stood at three levels with many features from the era including a tower, verandas and an entrance door facing the street corner.

Prior to construction, an application made for a provisional certificate stated there would be 58 rooms. The frontage to Duke Street would be 111ft, and the frontage to Charles Street 60ft. There would be also provision for a tennis court. One complainant stated that the site was unsuitable as Duke Street was only 40ft wide, another objection came from the Rev T C Hewson, but the site was eventually granted permission due to a rapid increase in population creating a demand for this type of accommodation. At an estimated cost of 8,000 pounds, this would have been an expensive building for the time.

The builder and first proprietor, John C Chipper, was born in Perth in 1847 (the son of John Chipper, the first paid police constable in Perth). John C Chipper had previously been the owner of the John Bull Inn (later named the Criterion Hotel in Howick [Hay] Street, Perth) from the early 1870s, where he had installed electric lights; the first hotel in Perth. He remained publican at the Criterion Hotel until October 1887, when he sailed to England for health reasons. Before he departed the Sons of Australia Benefit Society presented him with a gold pendant "*for our esteem and appreciation of the services rendered by you on behalf our Society, the success of which is largely owing to your attention ever since your connection with its affairs as hon. treasurer extending over a period of nine years*".

Western Mail, 8 October 1887, p.19

J C Chipper opened The Club Hotel in 1898.

A financial document entitled *In the matter of J C Chipper, Club Hotel West Perth: Statement of Affairs, March 11th 1899*, reveals that John C Chipper owned Lots 60 and 61 with the hotel premises on Charles Street, valued at 14,00 pounds 'subject to loan to Western Australian Bank of 11,000 and Caveat Lodged by Swan Brewery Company'. He also owned other properties in Perth and Geraldton.

A summary of Chipper's assets was included:

Assets

<i>Freehold properties</i>	18,550	
<i>Less encumbrances</i>	<u>13,670</u>	
	4,680	
<i>Unencumbered properties</i>	110	4,790
<i>Hotel furniture and fittings</i>	5,000	
<i>Stock in trade</i>	<u>100</u>	
	5,100	
<i>Subject to Bill of Sales to Swan Brewery Co</i>	<u>3,900</u>	
		1,200
<i>Total assets</i>		5,990 pounds

THE CLUB HOTEL,
Corner of Duke, Charles, and Aberdeen
Streets, West Perth.

J. C. CHIPPER,
Proprietor.

This New Three-storied Hotel is, Without
Exception, the
**FINEST RESIDENTIAL HOTEL
IN PERTH.**
Easy Communication with the City by 'Bus
and Rail.

Three Lines of Omnibusses converge close
to the Hotel, and it is also Close to the West
Perth Railway Station.

Two Magnificent Balconies Around two
Sides of the Large Buildings.

BEAUTIFUL VIEWS.
Superb Fittings and Furniture.
Every Form of

EXCELLENT ACCOMMODATION
For Boarders and Families.

Electric Light Throughout.
Cuisine of the Highest Class.

WINES, SPIRITS, and LIQUORS
Unexcelled and Unrivalled.

J. C. CHIPPER,
Proprietor.

The West Australian, 18 September 1898

John C Chipper married three times and had twelve children, seven of whom died between birth and two years of age. Only two of his children, Charles and George, survived to adulthood.

In 1894, his daughter Victoria Hilda Chipper died in an unfortunate incident while out crabbing with her brothers on the William Street Jetty, Perth. An altercation occurred between Hilda and her brother Charles when she threw a jelly fish, hitting him in the face. Charles responded by hitting Hilda and she fell into the river and subsequently drowned. A court case ensued with the sad event played out in public. Her brother, aged 15/16, was charged with manslaughter and sentenced to three years imprisonment in Rottnest Island Reformatory. (Charles Ernest King Solomon Chipper (labourer) later married Christiana Maria Prosser at St Matthias Church, London, on 30th October 1902, he served in the British Army in WWI and did not return to Australia.)

On leaving the Club Hotel, which had become known colloquially as 'Chipper's Club Hotel', J C Chipper moved to the hills of Mundaring as the publican at the Mundaring Hotel. This does not appear to have been a happy period in his life, as in 1905 he and his third wife, Elizabeth were in the divorce courts, with Chipper filing for the dissolution of the marriage and custody of the children on the grounds of adultery. The judge found them as adulterous as each other and dismissed the petition. In the course of proceedings Chipper was found to have committed acts of cruelty upon his wife.

Over the following years there were numerous licensees/ proprietors at the Club Hotel, some of whom only stayed for one year and others who stayed for ten years or more. There was also a name change to the Tower Hotel from December 1912.

2 June 1899: an inventory was prepared for George Nayton Oram to take possession of the hotel.

The original hand written ten page document, signed by George Nayton Oram, is in the Local History Collection. Each room and its contents is listed, including: 41 bedrooms, two dining rooms, kitchen, bar, two parlour bars, top floor sitting room, three servants bedrooms, two billiard rooms and an office. All furnishing belonged to The Swan Brewery and he signed to receive and keep them in the same good order and condition, allowing for wear and tear.

A list of stocks of beer, wine and spirits was also made on 2 June 1899, valued at 37 pounds. There are also valuation documents dated 23 June 1899 for furniture and which was removed to The Stirling Arms (Guildford).

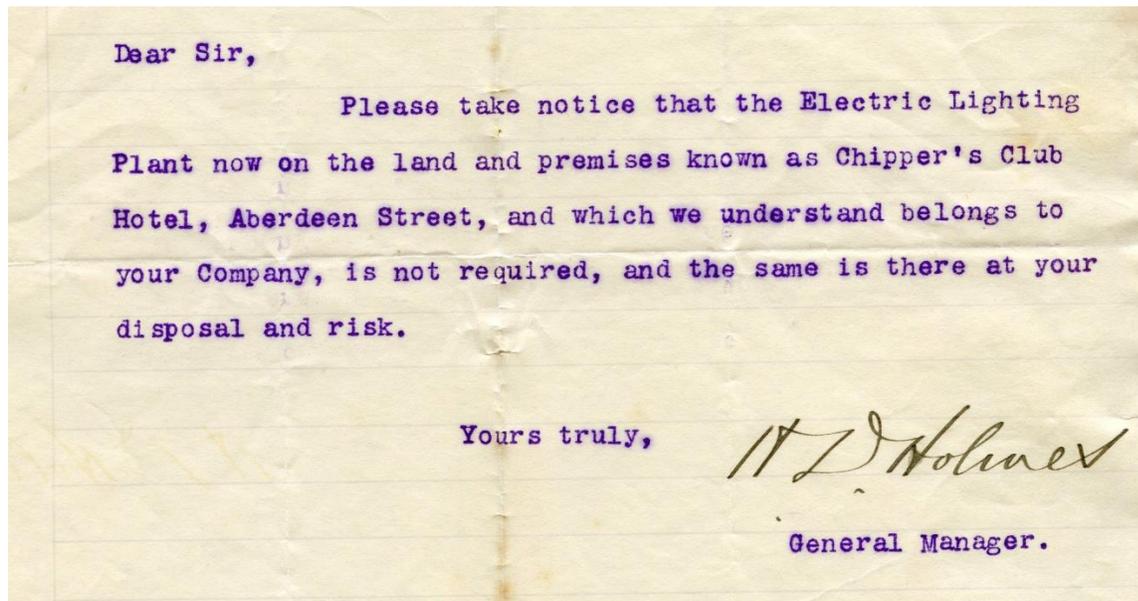
September 1899: A transfer of licence was agreed by the licencing board from J C Chipper to G N Oram.

George Oram had previously lived in Coolgardie and married in 1896.

The marriage of Mr G Naylor Oram the secretary of the Coolgardie Club, and the youngest son of Mr W Skelton Oram, Somerset England, and Miss Edith M Stoneham the oldest stepdaughter of Mr W J Stoneham of Coolgardie and London, is announced July 22. The ceremony to take place at the Anglican Church Coolgardie. (Western Mail, July 1896)

They had a son called George Leslie Charlie Oram, born in 1898 in Coolgardie.

The hotel was advertised as being very up-to-date with electric lights throughout. However, in the documents in our possession there is a puzzling letter from the Western Australian Bank dated 11 December 1899 requesting that the Swan Brewery remove the electric lighting plant. It reads;



Dear Sir,

Please take notice that the Electric Lighting Plant now on the land and premises known as Chipper's Club Hotel, Aberdeen Street, and which we understand belongs to your Company, is not required, and the same is there at your disposal and risk.

Yours truly,

H. J. Holmes

General Manager.

Following on from this there is a letter dated 29 December 1899 to the Manager of the Swan Brewery from Splatt, Wall & Co:

Dear Sir,

As per your request our Mr Wall has inspected the electric light installation at the Club Hotel, Aberdeen Street, Perth.

We have removed the dynamo, which is of the older pattern "Manchester" type, of 200 light capacity, and we would estimate the same to be worth in its present condition £75.

We have also removed the switchboard which contains one voltmeter and ammeter, two main switches and small switches. Also some small portions of cable from the engine room, all of which are at present on our premises.

We have inspected the building throughout and the removable portion of the fittings. It is usual in cases where tenants have placed the electric light installation in buildings during their occupancy, on their removal all they are entitled to remove is the external portion suspended from the ceilings and the whole of the brackets when fixed on walls.

We find that there are 156 lights installed in all, 81 of which are plain drop lights, the balance being more or less elaborated with fittings, chiefly of the black iron type.

We have carefully gone into the matter and would value the fittings, that is the portion that could be removed, at £70. This together with the switchboard, dynamo, cable, &c would make a total of £155 : 2 : 0.

Remaining at your service for any further particulars,

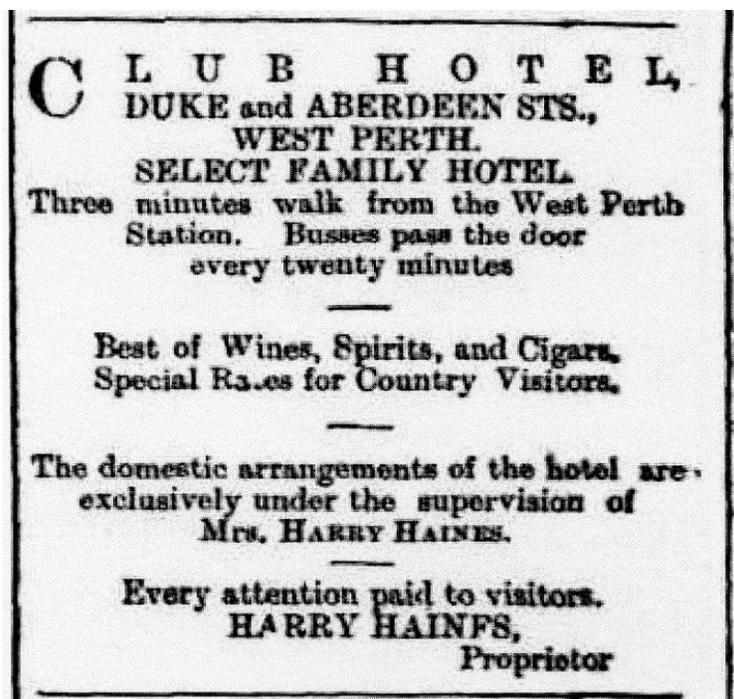
We are,

Yours faithfully,
SPLATT, WALL & Co.
W. Wall CEE

March/April 1900: George N Oram left the Club Hotel, having been the proprietor for less than one year. He was later described as a traveller and journalist, then worked as a publisher in 1909 at 152 Royal Street, Perth.

10 April 1900: An application was made for the transfer of the Club Hotel, West Perth, from George Naylor Oram to Henry Haines at the Perth Licencing branch. The Application was accepted.

A rental agreement (in our collection) between the Swan Brewery and Harry Haines signed on 5 May 1900 backdates his taking possession to 2 April 1900. He paid a weekly rental of one pound ten shillings for the furniture and effects.



The West Australian Sunday Times, July 1900

Harry Haines had previously been in partnership in a cigar and hairdressing business in St Georges Terrace.

Charles WATSON and Harry HAINES of Melbourne beg to notify the public that they have started business in St George's Terrace under the new stock exchange. A first class Cigar, Divan, Hairdressing and Shaving Saloon. C. Watson and H Haines are members of the Principles Racing Clubs of the World, and will undertake to execute commissions on all sporting events throughout the colonies.

C. Watson and H. Haines 263 St Georges Terrace Perth.

The West Australian, January 1897

Harry Haines became the publican of the Club Hotel, with his wife overseeing the domestics, but again was there less than one year, due to his death on 22 December 1900,

Mr Harry Haines, a sportsman of Australian reputation, died at the Club Hotel after an illness lasting about a fortnight. His death will be greatly regretted by sportsmen throughout Australia, for he was not only well known, but was respected and admired. He was a genuine sportsman- a term that covers many virtues. Mr Haines was born at Cheltenham, England and was educated for the bar. During Victorian Gold Rush he came to Australia and sought fortune at the diggings. Later he turned his attention to the turf, and became a first class amateur rider, and also owned and trained horses. At the same time he made a book, and belonged to a class known as a gentleman bookmakers. Lately he took over the lease of the Club Hotel. He died of congestion of the liver and gastritis at the age of 63. (He had taken ill on his birthday and died two weeks later.)

Inquirer and Commercial News, 28th December 1900

The newspaper report also mentioned that Harry was known to have survived the 1880 Cootamundra Railway Incident, from which he was able to escape and swim away, having three weeks earlier learned to

swim. Many victims drowned as they were swept away in the river and some drowned due to entrapment in the train.

The *Western Mail*, in an article entitled, ***An Appreciation of a veteran turfite*** on 29th December 1900 reported that,

His funeral was largely attended and the cortege was fully half a mile in length, representative sportsmen being among those following. Mr Harry Haines (nephew) and J Silbert (nephew) were the chief mourners. Others in attendance were F Monger MLA, A G Jenkins MLC, friends and family, with wreathes from Swan Brewery, Club Hotel staff, Boulder City Racing Club, friends in Sydney and Melbourne, and many others.

1901: Perth rate book records Mrs H Haines as the publican and the owner as the Western Australian Bank.

A building fire insurance policy taken out by the Swan Brewery Company Ltd on 23 March 1901 cites Marian Haines as the occupier. The construction of the building is listed as brick with an iron roof, brick partitions with plaster linings, lath and plaster ceilings and wood floors. The sum insured was 208 pounds.

1905: Marion Haines (widow) remains the occupier of the hotel which is now owned by the Swan Brewery. Marion's maiden and full name was Marion Hriwhane Inuel (in her obituary 1913, she was also referred to as Mary and Aunt Polly).

1907: Marion Haines remains the proprietor. By 1908 she has moved premises to become the publican of The Brisbane Hotel in Beaufort Street. This establishment was noted to have a shop.

1907: George William Auburn is the proprietor of the Club Hotel, with his wife Elizabeth Ellen (nee Owen). They had one son George Henry (born 1902) and then on 29 October 1910 there is a birth announcement: *at the Chippers Club Hotel, West Perth, to Mr and Mrs G Auburn, a son. Both well.*

CHIPPER'S CLUB HOTEL

West Perth is the locale is this fine house, which under the management of George Auburn is rapidly making its way to public favour. Nothing is wanting here to conduce to the comfort of visitors. There is electricity throughout the house, no less than eight bathrooms with hot and cold water available. Spacious and lofty bedrooms. Attention of the proprietor. Families are catered for under a special tariff. And the heart of a man can want but little more that will be found here.

The West Australian, 22 December 1907



OLDSMOBILE (8-10 H.P., 1cyl.) the property of GEO. AUBURN, Esq.

The Club Hotel is in the background with the name George Auburn over the door as the proprietor.

Courtesy State Library of Western Australia, 3045-104

December 1912: The Club Hotel has a name change to the Tower Hotel.

The proprietor claims that the very best of wines, beers and spirits are stocked. Old and new friends welcome. (Truth, 14 December 1912, p.15)

November 1913: The publican's general licence held by George Auburn of the Tower Hotel, Charles Street, West Perth is passed to Ernest Patrick McGrade.

George Auburn and his wife are later hotel keepers at the Bedford Hotel, Murray Street, Perth.

Daily News: 12 November 1913, p.4

THE TOWER HOTEL

One of the most thriving hostelries in the metropolis is the Tower Hotel, Charles street West Perth, the proprietor is Ernie Mc Grade. As a residential hotel, the Tower cannot be excelled. It is centrally situated and there are a number of first class double and single balcony bedrooms board being optional. There is a splendid billiard room. Liquors with the best brands are stocked and served true to label. Gold fielders when in town should take trip to the Tower and see their old friend.

Truth: 20 December 1913, p.14

In 1919 the Spanish Influenza global epidemic (pandemic) following WW1 struck Western Australia. The War claimed an estimated 16 million lives, with the unexpected highly infectious illness from 1918 to 1919 taking an estimated 50 million people. One article acclaimed that, '*the Influenza took more lives in one year than Black Death bubonic plague in 1347 over four years*'. (Molly Billings, *The Influenza Pandemic of 1918*, June 1997).

In a letter to the Editor of *The West Australian* on 8 August 1919, E P Mc Grade expressed his deep sense of gratitude for the excellent care to his brother, sister and other patients at the Blackboy Hill Quarantine Camp, with the dreaded sickness of influenza. With limited staff and a daily increase in more patients, he commended the professionalism of the staff, '*whose attentive practises have been untiring and unremitting*'. He went on to say that his brother, after being dangerously ill, had rallied wonderfully, giving Ernest a feeling of extreme consolation and happiness. His sister was not so ill.

Unfortunately the *W.A Record* on 23 August 1919 contained a report that:

The funeral of the Late Mr Arthur Leslie Mc Grade of the Tower Hotel West Perth took place; there being a large attendance of relatives and friends.

Born in St Lawrence Queensland, he was to later to go into business with his brother at the Tower Hotel, where he remained till his death after a three week illness, succumbing to influenza. He had four sisters one attending the Abbotsford Convent Victoria, and a sister at the Sacred Heart Convent in Highgate, who had moved to the Busselton Convent, Eileen also a Sister, Vera McGrade a teacher. In 1904 he had gone into business with his brother Mr Ernest Mc Grade.

The Chief mourners were his four brothers Percy, Ernest, Herbert and Harold.

In March 1920 Ernest Mc Grade appeared in Court for Licensing Prosecution. He pleaded guilty to having kept his premises open for the sale of liquor on Sunday March 21st. As there were nine other convictions, an application was made to forfeit his licence. The judge decided to apply a maximum fine of 100 pounds, in default of six months prison, with an added warning of cancellation of licence should this action be repeated.

Ernie McGrade appeared in the newspapers in a more pleasant light soon after this, with the headline:

WHO WELCOMED THE PRINCE!

Everyone who flocked to see the Prince of Wales during his visit to W.A. There were only a few who didn't flock. Thousands pushed, shoved, squeezed to see the Royal Visitor. But did those thousands give the Prince the sort of welcome he could enjoy? FORSOOTH! He'd rather be stunting or jumping. At least he'd enjoy watching either or both. He's built that way. It was therefore a pleasant surprise for him to be treated to aerial stunts on his way from Midland to PERTH. Of course, Major Brearley was responsible, but he was not the only one in the air bus. ERNIE McGRADE of the TOWER Hotel, Leederville, was one of two who accompanied the Major. Truly then, did E McG welcome the Prince to the Princes own liking.

W A Record. 17 July 1920, p.4

(It was also noted that on the same tour the Prince of Wales was involved in a train derailment travelling from Albany to Perth, where some carriages overturned. As the train was travelling at a low speed, The Princes had no injuries.)

In October 1922 Ernest Mc Grade applied for a lease of a Hotel Tammin, having the licence accepted for Patrick O' Shanassy as Manager until his business in Perth was executed. There were objections from the Police over eleven previous convictions while holding a licence for the Tower Hotel, Perth. Mr McGrade's application was refused with all costs.

Daily News, 23 October 1922

The following year, "A pretty wedding was celebrated at St Brigid's church to solemnise the marriage Edith Marion of Midland Junction to Ernest Mc Grade of Tammin".

Swan Express, 19 January 1923

1923 to 1926: Edward J Bonnett is the publican of the Tower Hotel.

A death notice appeared in the newspaper announcing that on 29 July 1926 E J Bonnett died at his residence the Tower Hotel, Aberdeen Street, West Perth.

Edward John (Ted) Beloved husband of Mrs Elizabeth Bonnett, fond father of Jack and Frank and fond loving son of Mr Edward H Bonnett of Nedlands. Aged 54 years.

Western Mail 5 August 1926

11 October 1926: An application was placed on to ask for transfer of the rights and privileges of the Publicans General Licence from Edward John Bonner, now deceased, to the executor of the will, Francis James Bonnett. However, the application was almost rejected, as the following newspaper article relates:

ACCOMODATION LYING IDLE

This is the hotel which is conducted for bar trade only, and I am not satisfied that the present applicant who is only 21 years of age, is suitable to run such a big establishment, said Inspector O'Halloran, referring to the applicant, Frances James Bonnett, for a publicans licence for the Tower Hotel, Aberdeen street. The inspector said that he had formally opposed the application, as although the hotel had 26 rooms, the applicant, when he applied for the transfer to himself, had hinted that he did not want lodgers.

Mr Blankinsee, for the applicant, said his client had gone away to get married, but he had no doubt that on his return with his wife, the matter of accommodation would be improved.

The Chairman said the applicant's father who had previously conducted the hotel had told members of the Court that he did encourage lodgers. The building was a fine one. The top floor had not been used for five years and no one ever dwelt on the second, which had 32 rooms. The licensee admitted that he never advertised and the staff employed were quite inadequate to conduct a hotel of those dimensions.

The fact that the hotel was being conducted for bar trade only was unfair to other hotelkeepers who had to incur expense and provide staff to cater for the public. The licence was granted for six months to afford the application an opportunity to provide accommodation and to enable the police to make a further report.

The West Australian, 7 December 1926

8 January 1927: Francis James Bonnett applied to transfer the licence for the Tower Hotel from himself to Charles Burton Teague.

With congestion and lack of accommodation in Perth, made worse when many US Service men came to town, some hotels were ordered to make available more rooms for accommodation and to also provide meals. Mrs Keane of the Tower hotel, was asked by Mr Cahill (Licencing Court Chairman) to do something about making use of 20 vacant rooms in her hotel.

Daily News, December 1944

In response to the request regarding a lack of hotel rooms Mrs Keane replied that she would use the vacant accommodation for the US Service men if assistance was given in providing furniture. Her Licence was then renewed and the Chairman said he would consult with the Naval Authorities to see what could be done.

West Australian, Dec 1944:

In 1946 it was reported that the Tower Hotel (and five others) were given a six month licence and requested that they needed to provide a standard of accommodation that the Licencing Act contemplated and to which the public was entitled. At the same time they did notice that the effect of the wartime conditions was now disappearing.

West Australian, December 1946

Dorothy Keane remained in residence at the Tower Hotel as the proprietor for at least ten years, although it is difficult to determine the proprietors after 1949.

1950: New additions were planned for the Hotel. These included a new boiler room, new toilet facilities, reconstruction of roof and general repairs.



Tower Hotel between 1965 and 1969

Courtesy State Library of Western Australia 144275PD

1970-1973



Initial Mitchell Freeway overpass at Wellington Street leading to the Narrows Bridge, prior to the demolition of the Tower Hotel, which is in the background, 1973.

Courtesy State Library of Western Australia, BA1530/5618

The construction of the Mitchell Freeway, meant major alterations to Charles Street were implemented to provide traffic access to the freeway to travel north and south.



This 1972 aerial view shows the freeway construction in progress with the Tower Hotel still visible.

The land was resumed south of Newcastle Street to the railway line with the demolition of the existing buildings following.

The Tower Hotel was one of the casualties as Perth's road system expanded into the future.

City of Vincent Local History Collection

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