

**Beach House Hotel, formerly Bleak House Hotel 1883 -**  
95 Beaconsfield Parade, corner Victoria Avenue, Albert Park  
MEL: 2J H9



Victoria Avenue, with Bleak House at right, 1905



Beaconsfield Parade, with Bleak House, 1905

In 1883 Jeremiah O'Brien, who was from a pioneering family of the Nar Nar Goon district of Victoria, became the first licensee of the Bleak House Hotel. It is believed that the Dickensian name O'Brien chose for his hotel was influenced by his schoolteacher Mr Ahern, a well-regarded educator. O'Brien's sister Mary married JR Buxton, who is likely to have been a backer of the hotel as he had an address next door. Mrs O'Brien was thanked by the Albert Park Ladies' Swimming Club for free use of the hotel's reception room where the 1904 swimming carnival prizes were presented. O'Brien held the license until 1913, an unusually long period in the hotel industry.

Private Edward Leonski of New York City was stationed in Melbourne when he was found guilty of murdering three women. He was hanged for the crimes on 9 November 1942. His first victim, Ivy McLeod, was found in a doorway in Albert

Park; Leonski had apparently strangled her after drinking whisky all morning and afternoon at the Bleak House Hotel. Its reputation was not improved by the fact it was referred to for a time as 'Vinegar House' by punters unimpressed with the quality of the beer. It was transformed into the sunnier sounding Beach House in 1998.



Bleak House Hotel, c.1940



Beach House Hotel, 2003