

Limerick Hotel, formerly **Limerick Arms Hotel 1855** -
364 Clarendon Street, corner Park Street, South Melbourne
MEL: 2K D3

In 1841 an Irish farm servant Matthew Toohey, his wife Honora and their young son John left Limerick to build a new life in Melbourne. After several years raising beef in the Victorian cattle country, Matthew became the first publican of the Limerick Arms Hotel in 1855. Toohey would later establish the Great Britain Hotel, also in Clarendon Street. After property prices slumped, the Tooheys moved to Sydney, where in 1872, John Toohey and his younger brother James would launch the Darling Brewery, and its famous successor Tooheys Standard Brewery that remains a famous and powerful company today.

The Limerick Arms was the site of the first cabstands gazetted in Emerald Hill, which were in use until the 1880s. Joseph Glaysher, licensee in 1865, was formerly of the Volunteer Arms Hotel in Montague Street.

The Emerald Hill branch of the Australian Natives Association was established at James Laing's Limerick Arms in September 1874. Laing held the license between 1870 and 1880. In 1873, architects Powell and Whitaker called for tenders for painting and the addition of a billiard room. Further alterations took place in 1883 according to the designs of architects Wilson and Beswicke.



Limerick Arms Hotel, c.1870

In 1926, in response to the large-scale closure of hotels, owners knew they had to show evidence of workable proposals to upgrade bedrooms, kitchens and dining rooms or to rebuild altogether. That year, the Limerick Arms was rebuilt, and licensee Peter Lacey's name and the rebuilding year were both incorporated into the façade of the new Limerick Arms. When Peter Lacey was taken fatally ill, his wife was so upset that she died just before him. The Limerick was left in trust, with the rent going to seven orphanages around Melbourne.

The Limerick was once a wharfies' stronghold, and only got its first ladies' toilet in 1967. The current management undertook a renovation of the three-storeyed hotel at the end of 2002, which involved polishing the floorboards and knocking down walls to create a lighter and brighter environment. At the same time, they changed its name from the Limerick Arms Hotel to the Limerick Hotel.



Leaving the Limerick Arms Hotel for a picnic in furniture vans, c.1950



Limerick Hotel, 2004