



**SOME HISTORY OF THE
RED LION HOTEL**



Red Lion Hotel – July 2006.

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Some History of the Red Lion Hotel:

The first licensee and owner of the Red Lion hotel was George Gray who gave notice of his intent to apply for a license as early as the 24th August 1878¹. The application was up for a second hearing on the 9th October 1878², when it was deferred until the next sitting of the bench. Despite these early delays a license was granted in November of that year³ and the original building would probably date from that period.

George was a builder by trade, and had resided in Wagga Wagga from as early as 1856, having purchased land in February of that year (Allot.3, sect.35)⁴. Presumably he lived on the lot. George and his family later lived in a small slab & shingle cottage, on allotment 58 of section 74 (part of a subdivision belonging to William Love), certainly since 1873 and probably earlier⁵. The cottage adjoined the original Red Lion building (to the west), and stood until the erection of the Federal hotel in 1908. The original Red Lion stood on the same allotment as the cottage, and the area it occupied became the car park of the contemporary hotel - that area situated to the east of the latter.

The 1880 council rate books describe the hotel building as “brick” and valued it at £72 for rating purposes, which was the same as for the Farmer’s Home and Viaduct hotels. As a comparison the premier hotel of the time, the Union Club, was valued at £360. Horse posts were erected at the front of the hotel in late 1879⁶, and a watering trough was probably added at the same time. Street kerbing was installed in 1887⁷.

The Red Lion along with others such as the Viaduct hotel (no longer standing) and the Wagga Hotel (now known as the Astor) were erected to capitalise on the extension of the rail line to Wagga Wagga in 1879.

Photos of the hotel from that early era show it to be an unusual structure compared to most hotels of that period. Typically hotels were normally larger, wider structures featuring verandahs supported by posts, and consisting of many rooms.

By 1895 the building was described as “brick & timber” and an advertisement for the sale of the property in 1907 describes a brick hotel with a bar, and two sitting rooms, along with a dwelling built of wood with a dining room, nine bedrooms, a kitchen, a bathroom, and separate stables. Presumably the “dwelling” was to the rear of the hotel.

In 1884 George Gray died⁸ and his wife Elizabeth (nee Baker) assumed control of the hotel and retained ownership until 1906 when she too died. They were both declared to be “very old residents” of the district.

Following the death of George the license was transferred to W. J. Thorogood at the end of August 1884. Thorogood had previously been the licensee of the Old Rose Inn (in Baylis Street)⁹. Within two months Thorogood had sold the license of the Red Lion to Mr Patrick Canty from Bethungra¹⁰, and taken the license of the Doncaster Hotel at Harden¹¹. He had therefore held three different licenses within a four month period.

Canty held on for a couple of years before Elizabeth Gray took the license again in the latter part of 1886¹².

Elizabeth found a new tenant in January 1888, when she transferred the license to Michael Fitzgerald, late of Lithgow¹³. At the end of that year the local paper reported that Mr J. Inglis of the Terminus Hotel [now the William Farrer] was about to take over the Red Lion Hotel¹⁴. This was refuted by

¹ Wagga Wagga Advertiser. 24th August 1878, p2c8.

² Wagga Wagga Advertiser. 9th October 1878, p4c2.

³ Government Gazette. 1878, p4841.

⁴ Sherry Morris – Biographical Listings. George Gray.

⁵ Wagga Wagga Rate Books.

⁶ Wagga Wagga Advertiser. 9th August 1879, p6c2.

⁷ Wagga Wagga Advertiser. 5th April 1887, p3c4.

⁸ Wagga Wagga Advertiser. 2nd August 1884, p2c4.

⁹ Wagga Wagga Advertiser. 2nd September 1884, p2c5. 4th September 1884, p2c5.

¹⁰ Wagga Wagga Advertiser. 29th November 1884, p1c5.

¹¹ Wagga Wagga Advertiser. 11th November 1884, p2c5.

¹² Government Gazette. 1886, p5381.

¹³ Wagga Wagga Advertiser. 21st January 1888, p2c8. 11th February 1888, p1c4.

¹⁴ Wagga Wagga Advertiser. 10th December 1889, p2c3.

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Fitzgerald who denied having sold out, or to having given any instructions to sell¹⁵. Fitzgerald was suffering from poor health and at the relatively young age of forty three he passed away, on the evening of the 21st July 1891¹⁶. His wife Mary took over the license¹⁷ and continued to hold it until the latter part of 1895¹⁸. Like many other publicans' widows she went on to run a successful business, and raise a family at the same time. Her eldest son, Patrick, passed his preliminary examination in chemistry in 1894¹⁹.

In February 1895 Mary moved to the Farmers Home Hotel²⁰ (Wagga Wagga) and the Red Lion was once more in the hands of Elizabeth Gray²¹. About one year later Elizabeth transferred the license to her son-in-law, Ernest Albert Mumford²².

Mumford had been born and raised in Wagga Wagga, and was a clerk /book keeper for the brewery firm of Eaton & Tewkesbury who had married Elija Amelia Gray in October 1891²³. After relinquishing the license in August 1898 Ernest and his wife moved to Dubbo where they became prominent business owners and citizens.

Following on from Mumford the license changed hands several times in a relatively short space of time. First was James Johnson [or Johnstone?], a former railway employee, in August 1898²⁴, then Michael O'Donnell, lately of the Caledonian Hotel at Cartwrights Hill, in March 1899²⁵, then William Dall (previously licensee of the Squatters Hotel) in May 1899²⁶, then back to Michael O'Donnell in July 1899²⁷, then to John Fuller Foster Gray (youngest son of Elizabeth) in March 1900²⁸, and finally to Thomas Loughlin in September 1901²⁹.

John Gray had been forced to declare himself bankrupt, and at his hearing in October 1901 he explained that he had originally gone into the hotel with money advanced by his mother. He had paid £125 for the business, with stock. The hotel takings, during his time, were between £4 and £5 per week, but expenses were between £7 and £8 per week. He could not afford to pay the rent in the end. He owed money to various businesses around town including some £86 to W. S. Eaton & Co. He attributed his demise, in part, to horse racing – presumably betting on same³⁰.

Thomas Loughlin restored a semblance of continuity, holding on to the license for the next six years. His father, Martin, had been a well known publican in Wagga, and Thomas had worked for some years at the Albion Brewery before branching into the hotel business. His first license was for the Carrington [later known as the Great Southern], followed by the Red Lion³¹. His father was killed in an accident in 1899, and his mother, Elizabeth, took over the running of the All Nations Hotel, which she operated up until the time that Thomas entered the Red Lion Hotel.

A new Licensing Act came into force in 1906, and the first renewals under the Act, came before the court on 25th June of that year. The police objected to a renewal of the license for the Red Lion Hotel. The court was told that the lease of the current licensee, Thomas Loughlin, would expire on the 7th July, and that a new licensee would be taking over. Furthermore that contracts had been signed for works, as stipulated by the inspector, to be carried out. The inspector pointed out that the building was old and difficult to maintain. The yard was in a bad state and three of the bedrooms were unfit for human habitation. The officer stated that he "had been 'fooled' into believing repairs would be carried out for two or three years now."

The court noted that ample notice had been given for the repairs to be carried out but that nothing had been done, but granted an adjournment until the following Saturday³². Elizabeth (Gray) supported an

¹⁵ Wagga Wagga Advertiser. 14th December 1889, p2c4.

¹⁶ Wagga Wagga Advertiser. 23rd July 1891, p2c4.

¹⁷ Wagga Wagga Express. 14th January 1892, p2c3.

¹⁸ Government Gazettes. 1892-1895.

¹⁹ Wagga Wagga Express. 24th May 1894, p2c3.

²⁰ Wagga Wagga Advertiser. 23rd February 1895, p3c3.

²¹ Wagga Wagga Advertiser. 21st February 1895, p2c3. 23rd February 1895, p1c3.

²² Wagga Wagga Advertiser. 18th January 1896, p2c3. Wagga Wagga Express. 23rd April 1896, p3c6.

²³ Sherry Morris – Biographical Listings. Ernest Mumford.

²⁴ Wagga Wagga Advertiser. 2nd August 1898, p2c3 & p3c8.

²⁵ Wagga Wagga Advertiser. 28th March 1899, p2c2. 15th April 1899, p1c3.

²⁶ Wagga Wagga Express. 4th May 1899, p2c4.

²⁷ Wagga Wagga Advertiser. 6th July 1899, p2c4. 4th July 1899, p3c3.

²⁸ Wagga Wagga Advertiser. 10th March 1900, p2c3.

²⁹ Wagga Wagga Express. 16th September 1901, p2c4.

³⁰ Wagga Wagga Express. 10th October 1901, p2c8.

³¹ Sherry Morris – Biographical Listings. Thomas Loughlin.

³² Wagga Wagga Advertiser. 26th June 1906, p2c3. Wagga Wagga Express. 26th July 1906, p2c8-9.

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application to the court, for the renewal of the license, on Saturday 30th June, giving an assurance that the necessary works would be carried out. The bench declined to renew the license, but granted a further adjournment till the 14th July, in order that the designated works might be completed³³. The hotel was closed for this period, and when Loughlin again made application for the renewal of the license on the 14th the inspector argued that because the hotel had been closed, the license, in effect, had lapsed. The bench rejected this argument, and on the basis that the required works, including a new verandah, had been completed the renewal was granted, despite the protestations of the police³⁴. Before the month was out Thomas Loughlin had transferred the license to William Moffatt³⁵. The police had a poor opinion of Moffatt and his mother, and protested to the courts that William was just a front for his mother. This was refuted by William's legal representative, Mr Higgins, who conceded that Mrs Moffatt was assisting her son, but that he was "*going in in his own right*."³⁶

In October 1906, Elizabeth Gray passed away at the residence of her sister, Mrs Andrews, in Fox Street, aged seventy six years. She had suffered a stroke in March (past) and after recovering from that had gone to Melbourne to visit her sons. She had then returned to Wagga Wagga to live with her daughter, Mrs McGarry. She had been having a brief stay with her sister when she took ill, about a week before succumbing on the Sunday. She was one of the oldest residents of Wagga Wagga having arrived in 1848³⁷.

In June 1907 William Moffatt applied for the renewal of his license, but was refused on the grounds that he was not a fit person. The ruling arose as a consequence of the many assaults attributed to Moffatt against a number of his customers. Police testified that "*there were more complaints and trouble at the place than at any hotel in town*", and "*no complaints had been made about the hotel till the present licensee took it over*"³⁸. In July Moffatt's mother applied for the license to be transferred into her name, but the bench again refused the application. On that same day one J. R. Guymer was granted a transfer, but his application for a renewal was deferred until the 8th July³⁹. This meant that the hotel was closed from the 30th June, when the license expired.

At a subsequent sitting of the court, the application for renewal by Guymer was deferred on the grounds that the statutory ten days notice had not elapsed⁴⁰. Guymer next applied to transfer the license to Martin Grady, and this application was granted on 22nd July⁴¹. Guymer had held the license for twenty days. He worked for Eaton & Co.⁴² and was probably nominated by the brewer, in order to protect their interests.

Within a month Grady was before the courts charged with trading during prohibited hours. He was convicted and warned that "*the Red Lion had a reputation and if it was not conducted properly it would lose its license*."⁴³ Grady didn't last a year and in February 1908 the license was transferred to Thomas Davis⁴⁴.

In September 1907 the hotel was put up for auction but passed in at £910⁴⁵. Private negotiations continued and Dr Burgess was shortly the new owner. The latter subsequently submitted plans for a new hotel, to be erected in place of the old Red Lion Hotel, and these plans were approved by the court in April 1908⁴⁶.

Two months later, in June, Davis applied for, and was granted, permission to change the name of the hotel from the Red Lion to the Federal⁴⁷.

In another two months the local press was able to report that the new hotel was to open on the 22nd August (1908), and to describe it as follows:

³³ Wagga Wagga Advertiser. 3rd July 1906, p4c1.

³⁴ Wagga Wagga Advertiser. 17th July 1906, p2c3.

³⁵ Wagga Wagga Advertiser. 31st July 1906, p2c3. 7th August 1906, p3c5.

³⁶ Wagga Wagga Express. 31st July 1906, p2c4.

³⁷ Wagga Wagga Advertiser. 16th October 1906, p2c5. Wagga Wagga Express. 16th October 1906, p2c2.

³⁸ Wagga Wagga Express. 18th June 1907, p2c6. 25th June 1907, p4c3.

³⁹ Wagga Wagga Express. 2nd July 1907, p2c5.

⁴⁰ Wagga Wagga Express. 9th July 1907, p2c4.

⁴¹ Wagga Wagga Advertiser. 23rd July 1907, p2c3.

⁴² Sherry Morris - Biographical Listings. John Robert Guymer.

⁴³ Wagga Wagga Express. 20th August 1907, p2c5.

⁴⁴ Wagga Wagga Advertiser. 4th February 1908, p2c2.

⁴⁵ Wagga Wagga Express. 26th September 1907, p2c4.

⁴⁶ Wagga Wagga Advertiser. 28th April 1908, p2c3.

⁴⁷ Wagga Wagga Express. 16th June 1908, p2c4.

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“...situated on the site of the old Red Lion Hotel, at the corner of Edward and Flinders Sts, midway between the Railway Station and the Co-Operative Co's Flour Mill. The new structure is of brick, and contains fourteen rooms, exclusive of those for private use. The roof is of iron, the ceilings of steel; the halls are paved with fancy tiles, and the doors in the main entrance and also the fanlights are fitted with graphine, a new unbreakable window material. All the rooms are large and airy, and from the balcony, which surrounds two sides of the hotel, a splendid view of the park, the river, and all the prominent parts of the town may be seen. The bar is arranged on the American pattern. There are hot and cold water baths upstairs and downstairs, the kitchen, pantries and servery are conveniently situated, and the sanitary arrangements are in every way up-to-date.”⁴⁸”



The development had required the demolition of the old slab cottage, but the old Red Lion building still stood, and was to remain standing for many years.

Before the year was out, Davis transferred the license to Thomas Albert Strange, of Canterbury (Sydney). In granting the application for transfer, the Police Magistrate noted that Strange had excellent character references, but that he was not married. The PM suggested to counsel (for Strange) that he should “advise his client to remedy the defect as quickly as possible.”⁴⁹”

Left: A. J. Cambell advertises that he has taken over the Federal Hotel⁵⁰.

Some fourteen months later, in January 1910, Strange transferred the license to Ajsless J.Campbell⁵¹. The latter had previously been licensee of the Royal Hotel at Marrar⁵². This decision by Strange was almost certainly as a consequence of the death of his mother, Mrs Sarah Strange, who had been living



with him at the hotel. She had passed away on the 14th January at the age of eighty four years, and was subsequently buried in the Wagga Wagga cemetery⁵³.

Twenty months later, in September 1911, the Campbells were given a farewell presentation, on the eve of their departure from the hotel, the couple having decided to “go on the land.”⁵⁴”

The new licensee was John Pigot, who had formerly held the license for the Riverina Hotel at Germanton [Holbrook], and more recently had been in business in Albury⁵⁵.

Left: John Pigot advertises he has taken over the Federal Hotel⁵⁶.

In the following month Dr Burgess sought permission for “brick additions” to the hotel⁵⁷, and it can be assumed that these were the two storey brick extensions to the rear of the hotel facing into Flinders Street [these extensions can be seen in the 1922 photo].

In July 1912 the license was transferred from Pigot to Charles Herman Samuel Krause⁵⁸. There was excitement at the hotel in December when a young woman, who was employed at the hotel, left a note on the door of her room and then threw herself in the river, in an attempt to end her life. She was

⁴⁸ Wagga Wagga Advertiser. 22nd August 1908, p2c3.

⁴⁹ Wagga Wagga Express. 1st December 1908, p2c4.

⁵⁰ Wagga Wagga Advertiser. 18th January 1910, p3c3.

⁵¹ Wagga Wagga Express. 18th January 1910, p2c2. Wagga Wagga Advertiser. 18th January 1910, p3c3 & p4c4.

⁵² Government Gazette. 1907-1908.

⁵³ Wagga Wagga Advertiser. 15th January 1910, p2c1 & p2c4.

⁵⁴ Daily Advertiser. 2nd September 1911, p4c4.

⁵⁵ Daily Advertiser. 5th September 1911, p2c3 & p3c1.

⁵⁶ Daily Advertiser. 6th September 1911, p3c4.

⁵⁷ Wagga Wagga Express. 21st October 1911, p6c3.

⁵⁸ Daily Advertiser. 30th July 1912, p2c8.

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rescued by two men, George Siddell and Harry Harlow, who jumped in after her and brought her to safety⁵⁹.



Krause transferred the license to Thomas Buckley of Burrowa in June 1914⁶⁰.

Buckley had previously been the licensee of the Golden Grove Hotel at Darlington, Sydney⁶¹. The transfer to Buckley was conditional on the erection of external stairs and some other alterations⁶². Several other two storey hotels in Wagga had the same condition placed on them, it being a legal requirement that such premises have external staircases for fire and/or other emergencies.

Left: Thomas Buckley advertises that he has taken over the Federal Hotel⁶³.

Buckley only stayed one year and then transferred the license to John Pigot, who had previously held the license back in 1912. Pigot maintained the license up until 1918, when he transferred it to Charles Clegg. Pigot was the licensee again in 1919, but transferred it to Ernest L. Clout in November 1919. Clout had moved from the Boree Creek Hotel⁶⁴. Clout held the license for a number of years and purchased the freehold in January 1920⁶⁵. He transferred the license to Arthur Thomas Hodges in May 1922⁶⁶.

Licensees to follow Hodges, through to 1929 were⁶⁷:

1924, 29th September - Joseph Henry Ellison
1925, 16th February – Harold James Campbell
1926, 6th December – Mary Ellen McGlynn

During 1929 substantial alterations were completed which included extending the upstairs balcony to the extremities of both the western and northern facades and forward to the curb line. It was probably at this time that the two storey brick extensions on the eastern side of the hotel (facing Edward Street) were erected. [They are clearly evident in the 1931 photo of the hotel.] Several months later on the 19th August 1929, the name was changed to the Imperial hotel⁶⁸.

Licensees between 1929 and 1935 were⁶⁹:

1930, 3rd February – Phillip Arthur Waldmer Lehman
1931, 26th October – Richard Doherty
1932, 24th October – Leslie Joseph Long
1933, 22nd May – May Polyer (ex Macquarie View Hotel, Dubbo)
1934, 13th August – Darcy David Simpson
1934, 8th October – Alfred Hynard

In 1934 Tooths purchased the freehold of the hotel, and a series of improvements followed which included the following:

In 1936 the trading area was revamped with a new tiled counter with canopy, also external and internal tiling along with new entry doors.

In 1937 a new bar and tiling were completed, whilst in 1939 improvements included a new toilet block and hot water to the public bar⁷⁰.

⁵⁹Daily Advertiser. 2nd December 1912, p2c7.

⁶⁰Daily Advertiser. 18th June 1914, p2c2.

⁶¹Daily Advertiser. 24th June 1914, p2c3.

⁶²Wagga Wagga Express. 20th June 1914, p2c6.

⁶³Daily Advertiser. 24th June 1914, p3c5.

⁶⁴Government Gazette. 1915-1921. Wagga Wagga Express. 18th November 1919, p2c2.

⁶⁵NSW State Records. Index to Publican's Licenses 1920-1937.

⁶⁶Wagga Wagga Express. 5th May 1922, p2c2.

⁶⁷NSW State Records. Index to Publican's Licenses 1920-1937.

⁶⁸Tooths Records. Noel Butlin Archives of Business & Labour, ANU.

⁶⁹NSW State Records. Index to Publican's Licenses 1920-1937.

⁷⁰Tooths Records. Noel Butlin Archives of Business & Labour, ANU.

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Licensees from 1935 through till 1955 were⁷¹:

1938, 14th March – Leo G. Carter
1939, 6th February – Edward F. Saville (died 30th March 1939)
1939, 26th June - Thelma Saville
1940, 1st April – Michael Keane (ex Coolamon Hotel, Coolamon)
1940, 14th October – John P. Ford
1945, 22nd January – Edmund Montgomery
1945, 7th August – Nicholas Maxwell McBurney (ex Victory Hotel, Newtown [Sydney])
1946, 14th January – Albert Oliver Prosser
1946, 4th March – George H. Young
1949, 3rd October – Barry Royden James (ex Royal Hotel, Galong)

In 1946 the Wagga Wagga City Council gave notice that the balcony and supporting posts were to be removed by 31st December 1949, but it was not until the latter part of 1954 that the old verandahs were demolished and a new suspended awning erected along part of the façade⁷².

More improvements to the hotel included:

In 1949 a new first floor bathroom and w/c were installed.

In 1952 new refrigeration equipment installed.

In 1953 there were renovations to the kitchen and servery.

In 1954 there were substantial alterations made to the trading area. The renovations included the rendered finish to exterior walls.

Licensees from 1955 through till 1968 were⁷³:

1958, 4th November – Edwin Andrew Handley (ex Brighton Hotel, Oxford Street, Sydney)
1964, 3rd March – Rosslyn Frederick Tootell
1964, 3rd November – Bernard James Sullivan

Licensees from 1968 till 1989 were⁷⁴:

1973 - Ruth Jackson. The Jacksons purchased the freehold of the hotel in June 1977. Phil Jackson recalled that “*In those days the publicans, we had to get out there and have a drink with the people.*” He regretted the “*commercialization*” of hotels, which detracted from the “*friendly, personal nature*” that country pubs were renowned for. In Phil’s time the pub was home to the Lake Albert Cricket Club and the Wagga City Rugby Union Club, whose members livened things up on many occasions⁷⁵. Phil Jackson was one of the great Rugby League players produced by Great Britain. He represented that country twenty seven times, including nine times against Australia. He was named “*best and fairest*” in the 1957 Great Britain team, and captained the Test in 1958 when England defeated Australia to win the Ashes. A knee operation forced his early retirement at age twenty seven, but he had a second chance in 1960 when he was offered the position of player/coach with the Goulburn Workers Rugby League Club in country New South Wales. He accepted the position, moved to Australia, and stayed with the club until he turned thirty nine. He then took on his first hotel, the Imperial at Narromine, followed by the Pastoral (Wagga Wagga), and then the Imperial at Wagga Wagga. After leaving the Imperial he opened Jackson’s nightclub in Baylis Street.

In a letter to the editor in June 2012, Ken Pares, a life member of the Lake Albert Cricket Club, highlighted the significance of the Imperial hotel during the time of Sullivan, Jackson, and Summons. He recalled that:

“*The strength of the club was its social fabric, centered around the Imperial Hotel, with its Christmas Parties (including the Flinders Street dash), illegal Sunday drinks out the back with the blinds drawn, and individual characters.*”

He listed some of the famous sportsmen that frequented the Imperial, which included Geoff Lawson, Michael Slater, Steve Mortimer, and Mark Taylor⁷⁶.

⁷¹ Tooths Records. Noel Butlin Archives of Business & Labour, ANU.

⁷² Tooths Records. Noel Butlin Archives of Business & Labour, ANU.

⁷³ Tooths Records. Noel Butlin Archives of Business & Labour, ANU.

⁷⁴ Wagga Wagga Court House Records – Premises Cards.

⁷⁵ Daily Advertiser. 12th January 2012.

⁷⁶ Daily Advertiser. 27th June 2012, p19.

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A couple of weeks later Beth Smith wrote in support of Ken's comments and highlighted the involvement of the Ladies Auxiliary of the Lake Albert Cricket Club in the weekend activities. It read in part⁷⁷:

"Do you imagine we sheilas were not part of the post game sojourns?"

No way. We set ourselves up in the lounge area for a little of what we fancied.

Big Les Jerrick accused us of 'getting through more of a keg of Old Kent than the fellas.'

That Old Kent brew is still a legend. It was brewed in Sydney at the Old Kent Brewery and was sent down south, to counteract the stuff coming up from Melbourne. It sure tasted good."

1979 - Pamela Terese Summons. Pamela and her husband, Arthur James Summons purchased the freehold of the hotel in December 1979. Arthur was a former Australian Rugby League & Rugby Union International, and well known locally as the manager of the Wagga Wagga Leagues Club.

1982 - Peter Colin Beasley

1986 - Julie Rathmell

1988 - Pamela Terese Summons

1989 - Brian John Lawrence

In October 1988 the Daily Advertiser reported that the Imperial hotel in Edward Street was sold to a Sydney syndicate for \$725,000. The hotel, formerly owned by rugby league legend, and secretary/manager of the Wagga Wagga Leagues Club, Arthur Summons, had been auctioned on the previous Thursday⁷⁸.

The Advertiser subsequently reported in January 1989 that Wagga's Imperial hotel had been sold by the Summons family to a three man syndicate, which included the new coach of the Turvey Park Rugby League Club reserve grade side, Mr. Brian Lawrence, who had joined with former Wagga man, Colin Rockliffe, and Gordon Bevan to buy the hotel. Mr. Rockliffe (an architect), and Mr. Bevan (a solicitor) both lived in Sydney.

Mr. Summons said he would continue in his role as secretary/manager of the Leagues Club. His family bought the hotel nine years ago, but in recent years had leased it out. "Plans have been made for renovations, including painting and developing the beer garden," said Mr. Lawrence. It was hoped the work would be finished by the end of summer⁷⁹.

On 5th May 1995 the hotel, previously known as the Imperial hotel became the Red Lion, which coincided with the opening of new million dollar renovations. The latter included an upstairs night spot, a pool table and video machine area, and a new bistro. Co-owner Bill Ovington said the aim of the upgrade was to establish the hotel as a complete entertainment centre. The cost of the works to date was \$1.2 million. The hotel now claimed to have the biggest floor space of any hotel in Wagga Wagga, and it was planned to construct a 1,000 person auditorium on the adjoining Hartwigs' site within twelve months⁸⁰.

On 30th May 1996, the Advertiser reported that the Red Lion has ceased trading pending the transfer of the liquor license. The signs to this effect went up on the 28th without any explanation as to why. Wayne Sutherland who had purchased the hotel about 3½ years earlier confirmed that the ownership was being transferred. The article states that Mr. Sutherland had big plans when he bought the hotel, and several months after the purchase closed his successful nightclub, Coco's, in February 1993. Council gave the go ahead for a \$1.2 million development, including a 1,200 seat auditorium, which never came to fruition. Stage one worth \$0.5 million was completed⁸¹.

A second article in the Advertiser on the 1st June declared the Red Lion open again from the 31st May, under new licensee Steve Peters. Former part owners, Imperial Properties, have bought out the interests of Mr. Sutherland, and now have full ownership.

In March 1998 the press promoted the impending auction of the Red Lion hotel, to be held in Sydney on the 2nd April. The sale was for freehold with vacant possession. The building included a public bar,

⁷⁷ Daily Advertiser. 9th July 2012, p39.

⁷⁸ Daily Advertiser. 29th October 1988. [060616/22]

⁷⁹ Daily Advertiser. 12th January 1989. [060616/42]

⁸⁰ Daily Advertiser. 5th May 1995. [110696/11]

⁸¹ Daily Advertiser. 30th May 1996. [110696/2]

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a gaming room, a large bistro, and a poolroom. As well there was an upstairs nightclub area (the Lion's Den), and a beer garden out the back.

In recent years the hotel had *"been extensively renovated, extended and refurbished, including the electrical wiring and plumbing."*

The premises were licensed as a tavern, which meant guests were not permitted to stay. The nine guestrooms were described as being in poor condition. The old licensee's flat was not in use, and there was an office at the top of the stairs. The property was expected to sell for more than \$1 million dollars⁸².

On 30th October 2000, the Daily Advertiser carried a two page spread highlighting new renovations to the Red Lion hotel. These included a new TAB area, separate gaming and coffee lounge areas, along with a newly renovated stage and dance floor in the upstairs nightclub.

On the 3rd April 2001 licensee of the Red Lion, Dean Sutherland, recounted details of current renovations. He said the changes were designed to give the main bar a facelift, commenting, *"We wanted to bring the bar a bit closer to the centre of the hotel, with a more open plan."* The work was expected to be completed before Easter.

By 2004-2005 plans were being formulated for the development of the old Flour Mill site, and eventually the Red Lion Hotel site became part of the proposed development. It was around the end of this period that the Red Lion ceased trading and the doors were closed.

Certainly in July 2005 when Council considered the progress of the Flour Mill Site development application the Red Lion Hotel site was distinctly listed as not being part of that project⁸³.

By 2007 the Red Lion Hotel site and the Flour Mill site was now part of a single development project, with plans for refurbishment of the hotel and construction of a liquor store. This was approved by WWCC on 24th September 2007⁸⁴.



A newspaper report in August 2007 noted that *"the vacant" hotel was now part of a development application before council, which would see the floor area of the hotel reduced to one hundred and forty square metres, and include the addition of a nine hundred square metre liquor store at the rear of this.* The article also pointed out that the consortium behind the mill project did not have *"financial control of the Red Lion Project."*⁸⁵

Above: Artists impression mill site redevelopment. Courtesy Daily Advertiser (21st March 2012).

On the evening of Monday 14th May 2012 the hotel was demolished and by the following morning there was nothing left but a pile of rubble. A spokesman explained that all that the developers needed to start work now *"was the issuing of the construction certificate...and the finalisation of construction tender documents."* It was stated that the multi-million dollar development would eventually include sixty four apartments, twelve townhouses, a supermarket, a convention centre, retail stores, a restaurant, a wine bar, and offices, along with parking for three hundred vehicles⁸⁶. The development extended along Edward Street and included the old Flour Mill site.

⁸² Daily Advertiser. 14th March 1998, p48.

⁸³ WWCC. Business Paper. Policy & Strategy Meeting. Monday 11th July 2005.

⁸⁴ The Mill Wagga Wagga Masterplan. RPS Australia East Pty Ltd. [2011]

⁸⁵ Daily Advertiser. 8th August 2012, p5.

⁸⁶ Daily Advertiser. 15th May 2012, p1-2.

Some History of the Red Lion Hotel



Left: Red Lion Hotel.
19th February 2012



Left: Red Lion Hotel
demolished.
15th May 2012



Left: Red Lion Hotel Site.
8th June 2012

Some History of the Red Lion Hotel



Above: The Red Lion hotel & residential cottage - pre 1880.
Photo courtesy Graham & Margo Trimnel



Above: The Red Lion hotel & residential cottage – pre 1908 & post 1879.
Photo courtesy Wagga Wagga & District Historical Society

Some History of the Red Lion Hotel



Above: The Federal hotel – circa 1908.
Photo courtesy Wagga Wagga & District Historical Society



Above: The Federal hotel – circa 1922.
Photo courtesy Wagga Wagga & District Historical Society

Some History of the Red Lion Hotel

The Imperial – 1931



Photo courtesy Tooths Records. Noel Butlin Archives. ANU Canberra.

The Imperial – 1959



Photo courtesy Tooths Records. Noel Butlin Archives. ANU Canberra.

Some History of the Red Lion Hotel

The Imperial – circa 1990



The Imperial – July 2006.

