

GRAPEVINE CUTTINGS (June 2002)

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THE BREWERIES OF BENDIGO

More breweries have operated in Bendigo than any other country town in Australia. No fewer than twenty-five having been in business here since 1853. The diggers must have had an insatiable thirst.

All these breweries, except one, at some stage or other, were subject to takeover or closure. At the risk of becoming a bit tedious, the following is a listing of these breweries in order of commencing operations.

- 1853** Albion Brewery - Lethebys Road, Eaglehawk. Closed in 1912 after takeover.
- 1853** Edinburgh Brewery - Bridge Street, Bendigo. Closed in 1866.
- 1853** Liverpool Brewery - New Street, White Hills. Became known as the White Hills Brewery the following year. Closed in 1858.
- 1854** London Brewery - High Street, Golden Square. Closed in 1894.
- 1854** Refreshment Tent and Brewery - Long Gully. Probably closed in the same year.
- 1854** Union Brewery - High Street, Golden Square. Closed in 1858
- 1855** Adelaide Brewery - 111 Lucan Street, Bendigo. Became known as Pritchard and Chamberlain in 1878. Closed in 1918.
- 1855** Vine Street Brewery - Moved to High Street in **1858** and became the Phoenix Brewery. Closed in 1872.
- 1856** Burton Brewery - Myrtle Street, Bendigo. Became the Liverpool Brewery (1860) and then the Bendigo Brewery (1866). Closed in 1877.
- 1856** Sandhurst Brewery - Lucan Street, Bendigo. Became the Lucan Street Brewery (1863). Closed in 1879.
- 1856** Slattery's Brewery - McCrae Street, Bendigo. Closed in 1869.
- 1856** Norfolk Brewery - Bridge Street, Bendigo. Closed in 1874.
- 1858** Victoria Brewery Co. Ltd. - Bridge Street, Bendigo. Sold to Carlton and United Breweries Ltd. in 1925 and beer production ceased.
- 1859** Murphy's Brewery - Kangaroo Flat. Closed in 1862.
- 1860** High Street Brewery - High Street, Bendigo. Closed in 1867.
- 1860** Dublin Brewery - High Street, Bendigo. Closure date not known.
- 1862** Manchester Brewery - Location and closure date not known.
- 1862** Hindmarsh Brewery - High Street, Bendigo. Closure date not known.
- 1864** William Bruce's Brewery - Bridge Street, Bendigo. Closed in 1894.
- 1866** Anchor Brewery - High Street, Golden Square. Became the City Brewery (1871) and then the City Brewery Co. (1893). Taken over in 1907.
- 1870** Kent Brewery - Cnr McCrae and Chapel Streets, Bendigo. Taken over in 1913.
- 1905** Alpine Brewery and Cordial Co. - Eaglehawk Road. Closed in 1915.
- 1907** Bendigo and Northern District Co-operative Brewing Co. Ltd was formed and purchased the City Brewery Co. The Albion Brewery was taken over in 1912 followed by the Kent Brewery in 1913. Name changed to Bendigo United Co-operative Breweries Ltd and again to Bendigo United Breweries Pty Ltd in 1920. Carlton and United Breweries purchased and closed the brewery in 1947. And so ended the brewing industry in Bendigo until 1988.
- 1988** Rifle Brigade Pub Brewery - View Street, Bendigo. Still in business.

Wherever townships developed along the roads to the goldfields you would find a brewery as one of the first industries to be established. Take the road from Melbourne to Bendigo for example. Breweries were established at the following locations, the dates in brackets indicating the commencement and closure of such operations.

Gisborne (1854-1861), Woodend (c.1862), Kyneton (1857-1916), Malmsbury (1855-1859), Taradale (1860), Chewton (1873-1884) and Castlemaine (1855-1925).

Castlemaine became second only to Bendigo for the number of breweries to operate in any country town in Australia (ie. 20). The main one being Fitzgerald's Brewing and Malting Co. generally referred to as The Castlemaine Brewery. It ultimately met the same fate as The Bendigo United Breweries when in 1925 it was taken over by Carlton and United Breweries and closed down.

The brewery that had the longest survival record in Bendigo of 67 years was the Victoria Brewery, established by the Cohn Brothers. More about them later.

Reference: The Breweries of Australia, a History by Keith M. Deutscher.
