

Rylands

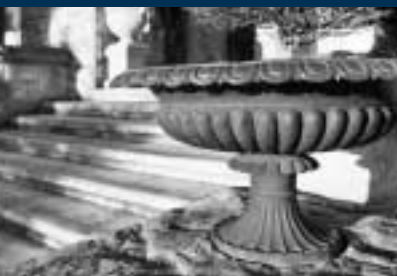
Brighton • Kew

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The original Victorian mansion.



Capturing 19th century splendour

The original two-storey Victorian mansion that will be refurbished to form the communal areas of the Rylands of Kew development was built during the 1880s as a residence for Henry Hedderwick, a former Mayor of Kew. The imposing brick structure and tower with slate roof was situated on a large allotment that stretched to the bank of what is now the Yarra River. Ownership was later transferred to the Catholic Church, which renamed the mansion St Josephs and used it for a variety of purposes until fairly recent times.

Although the exterior of the building will remain largely untouched, the interior fittings – many of which were modified over the years – have been stripped to make way for the restoration of what will become the dining room, theatre, library, bar and lounge of Rylands of Kew.

Architect Edgard Pirrotta says a minimal number of walls will be removed as part of the refurbishment program in order to preserve the original character of the classical building.

“We have consulted extensively with Grogan Richards, the engineering consultants for the project, to determine exactly what is feasible structurally so that we could develop a design that is not only practical but also aesthetically pleasing to the eye.”

Every existing pipe and wire has been replaced in preparation for the connection of services and when the site office that is currently housed in the mansion is moved, work will commence on the fit-out. The interior detailing is to be restored to its original splendour and will feature high ceilings that replicate 19th century detailing in every respect.

“Inside the mansion will look exactly like it did when it was built more than 120 years ago but the quality of both the materials and workmanship will be superior.” Edgard added.

Never a dull moment

Life at Rylands can be as busy or as laid back as you want it to be. But if Rylands of Brighton is any indication, most owners enjoy being in the swim of things. The in-house social calendar is comprehensive and has something for everyone from trivia nights and twice-weekly film screenings to special events for the AFL Grand Final, Melbourne Cup and Christmas Eve. There are also frequent excursions to a variety of events, shows and venues including Jazz at the Zoo, the Tulip Festival, the theatre, National Gallery of Victoria, the Mornington Races and wineries. On top of this, the management team arranges performances by jazz, county or rock musicians and every so often invites different retailers in to make goods available to residents. But while there is an extensive entertainment program available to residents, much of the social activity is spontaneous and informal. Rylands of Brighton manager Kim Wetton says the owners are a terrific bunch of people who often arrange impromptu social activities such as the Friday night barbecue, which has now become a permanent fixture each week.

“It’s a really well organised event and they have even bought their own gas patio heater for chilly nights. They organise everything from setting the tables and doing the cooking to cleaning up.” Kim and her staff are frequently invited to join in, which they do whenever they can.

“It’s great being able to relax and enjoy the company of our residents in such an informal atmosphere.”

A few of the ladies regularly walk together and it’s quite common to see groups of four or five people relaxing over coffee in the restaurant. But as one resident put it, “The most appealing aspect of life at Rylands is you have complete autonomy, if you want to join in you can but if you prefer to do your own thing sometimes it’s entirely up to you.”

Cover photos show various aspects of Rylands of Brighton



Changing attitudes to residential living

Historically Melburnians have had a preference for a family home with ample front and rear garden space but attitudes are starting to change and demand is growing for alternate types of accommodation. Over the past three years research conducted by the Buxton Group – both in Melbourne and other capital cities – has revealed that people are becoming far more amenable to the concept of denser living. It was inevitable that increasing petrol prices, limitations on public transport and the significant infrastructure costs associated with new land developments would one day impact on Melbourne's urban sprawl. But the change in demand for housing is being driven by a number of other factors as well. People are working longer hours and consequently many are seeking smaller properties in the inner suburbs to reduce commuting time to work and minimise the amount of time spent on household maintenance. Many established suburbs within 10 to 20 kilometres of the CBD are undergoing significant change as older homes with substantial land are snapped up by developers and converted into multi-townhouse complexes to cater for the demand for this type of property from empty nesters.

There is also rapidly growing demand for quality apartment accommodation – particularly in the quality inner eastern and southern suburbs – from retirees who are attracted by the comfort, security and range of facilities offered by larger developments such as Rylands. Although this sector of the market is in its infancy at the moment, it will gain enormous momentum 10 or 15 years from now as demand from baby boomers for this style of living grows. There will always be a place for traditional homes but there are unmistakable signs that certain demographic groups are turning to alternate styles of residential living.

Independence is the keystone of life at Rylands

The Rylands philosophy is anchored by a clear understanding that residents attach significant importance to independence and security. It is also our view that being well located and close to local community and family members is integral to enjoying life. "Our primary objective is for residents to feel completely relaxed and regard their apartment at Rylands as their own home" Bill McDonald, Rylands Management Pty Ltd general manager operations said.

According to Bill, Rylands offers an environment where people have the option of maintaining a completely autonomous lifestyle if they wish or taking advantage of all or some of the many amenities available in-house.

"We provide a range of services which include personal care, home care and social activities as you would expect in a community such as ours, but consider the essence of a great home environment revolves around freedom of choice."

Residents' family and friends are welcome to enjoy the facilities or just relax and chat in one of the beautifully appointed communal areas.

"Above all, we want residents to feel comfortable and completely at home so they can be themselves."

Rylands Management Pty Ltd takes great care selecting staff and provides the level of support to enable them to deliver a standard of highly personalised service to residents and their guests.

The construction site at Rylands of Kew.

Architect, Edgard Pirrotta.



On Site

Although construction of Rylands of Kew only commenced in mid-July, significant progress has been made with the 69-apartment development. At present between 40 and 50 workers representing a number of trades are on the site at any one time but this number will progressively increase as construction proceeds to the next stages. The existing two-storey mansion and tower on the site has been stripped out, leaving a basic shell that will be refurbished later on in the project. The massive task of excavating the 5,700 square-metre site – which involved removal of soil to a depth of up to 3.6 metres below the street level – was completed several weeks ago and a series of concrete bored piers installed for the retention of the mansion.

At the time of going to print, much of the concrete pour has been completed including the basement, two-lane swimming pool, ground floor slabs to the eastern and western wings, and the level one slab to the western wing. Formwork for the northern wing ground floor and the eastern wing first floor has commenced.

Buxton Construction's project manager Craig Appleby says the development is a fascinating project because it involves restoration of the historic 120-year-old mansion coupled with construction of a new three-storey residential development.

"The original two-storey building with its stately tower was superbly built and will meld with the newly constructed areas of Rylands to provide residents with a product that reflects the quality Buxton Construction has become renowned for."

Quiz Answers:

- 1 November 1989
- 2 Jorn Utzon
- 3 1970
- 4 1964
- 5 Appendicectomy
- 6 1957
- 7 The Reverend W Awdry
- 8 Kieran Perkins
- 9 4 March 2002
- 10 Bart Cummings

Meet the architect

The man behind the design of Rylands, Edgard Pirrotta, migrated to Australia from Milan at the age of 18 in 1963. Edgard's first priority was to learn the language of his adopted country then, after working for appliance manufacturers Craig and Sealey, he found his niche designing and manufacturing glass mosaics.

But it was architecture that captured Edgard's imagination and he enrolled at the University of Melbourne in 1965. While studying for his degree he worked in a small practice run by Stuart Warmington where he gained broad experience in residential design. Later, he was appointed senior design architect with Meldrum and Partners – a role that afforded him the right of private practice. Now a veteran of more than 40 years in the industry, Edgard is highly regarded for his work in all facets of design from residential developments through to a spread of commercial projects. Edgard met Buxton Group managing director Richard Buxton at University in 1965 and over the years has worked with both Richard and his father on a variety of projects.

"Richard and I have always shared a commitment to good design that embodies all the elements required by the individual regardless of the price range of the particular building."

Edgard has been involved with a number of highly successful projects with the Buxton Group including prestigious St Ninians in Brighton which, at the time it was constructed, was the most expensive residential development sold in Australia on a cost per square-metre basis. When he was appointed to design Rylands of Brighton Edgard's prime objective was to provide residents with spacious, quality apartments where they could feel completely at home.

"Although externally Rylands of Kew is not identical with Brighton, the same exacting design standards have been employed to ensure the apartments deliver quality and meet the every need of residents."

Left and Centre, garden areas at Rylands of Brighton.

Dining area at Rylands of Brighton.



Test your memory

See how many of these brainteasers you can get right?
The answers are on page 4

When was the 45-kilometre Berlin wall thrown open, allowing East Germans to leave the country?

What is the name of the Danish architect who designed the Sydney Opera House?

In what year did Carlton legend Alex Jesualenko take the now famous "screamer" over Collingwood's Graeme Jenkin in a VFL Grand Final?

In what year did Melbourne's third television station ATVO – now Channel 10 – commence transmission?

What is the medical term for removal of the appendix?

When did Graham Kennedy's In Melbourne Tonight commence on television?

Who was the creator of Thomas the Tank Engine?

Who won the 1500 metres gold medal at the 1992 Olympic Games?

When did Ansett Airlines cease operating?

Who trained 1996 Melbourne Cup winner Saintly?



How property values have changed

We would all be mindful that property prices have risen dramatically over the years but probably no one would be aware of just how much they've escalated. We came across these two properties – one in Brighton, the other in Kew – that appeared in the classified section of the now defunct Argus newspaper on Saturday 19 January 1957. At the time they were sold they were certainly at different ends of the price spectrum consequently no comparisons could be drawn between the two properties; nevertheless each advertisement makes interesting reading!

Brighton – 44 Bay Street – over the road from the Buxton family home at 47 Bay Street

Lovely contemporary residence, designed and erected under leading architect. 8 rooms, internal laundry, 2 bathrooms, 3 WCs, electric hot water, central heating, quality imported Wilton carpet, dish washer, central heating, double garage. \$37,000 – deposit \$10,000.

J R Buxton Pty Ltd. 443 Collins St, MB 2367

Kew

\$1,500 deposit or \$6,000 cash. Single-fronted weatherboard convenient position, 6 room, sink heater, rotary clothes line, land approximately 36X169. For inspection contact:

G C Clarke RES. 197 Denmark St, Kew Junction, WM 9874

Acknowledgement for early Kew residents

Communal areas at Rylands of Kew are to bear the name of prominent former local citizens, with the exception of the Athenaeum Library which derived its name from a 19th century library of the same name in Walpole Street. Names for the other areas are:

Hedderwick Lounge – Henry Hedderwick, a former Mayor of Kew and the original owner of the existing mansion at Rylands.

John Hodgson Room – the first recorded settlement in Kew occurred when John Hodgson took out a squatting licence over Studley Park in 1840.

Cowell Dining Room – John Cowell built the first home in Kew around 1846: the home of considerable proportion with huge cellars reflected Cowell's background as a wealthy hotelier.

Foster-Stawell Courtyard – one of Melbourne's most prominent men of the 1800s, Chief Justice Sir William Foster-Stawell chose to make his home in Kew in an old Irish manor house built of solid bluestone.



Simple, but stylish

King prawns and smoked salmon on a base of fresh mango and avocado with tangy seafood sauce

Here's a simple dish that is perfect for a summer lunch on the patio with a glass of chilled white wine or as an entrée for a dinner party.

12 king prawns

150 grams smoked salmon

1 large or two small avocados

2 mangoes

4 sprigs of parsley

Sauce

60 mls tomato sauce

10 mls Worcestershire sauce

10 mls brandy

60 mls fresh cream

Peel avocado and mangoes, slice thinly. Assemble base by placing equal amounts of sliced avocado and mango on individual plates – an egg ring or small pastry cutter will enable you to form a perfect circle – then add smoked salmon and top with prawns. Drizzle tangy seafood sauce over the top, garnish with parsley and serve. Serves four.

Here's a tip. If preparing the dish in advance, make sure you pour a small amount of lemon juice over the avocado otherwise it will turn an unsightly brown colour.