

History and archaeology

What do we know about the White Hart Inn?

The land was purchased in the 1820s by William Cox Esquire, who likely ordered the building of the inn. Opened for business by 1830, the White Hart Inn passed to William Cox Jr. Publicans' records indicate it was used as a licenced premise until at least the late 1850s.

PUBLICANS OF THE WHITE HART INN

William Cross	1830-1831
Sarah Tighe	1832-1833
Daniel Caulton or Colson	1834 -1839
Hugh McRoberts	1841 -1843
John Allen	1848
William Anderson	1853 -1854
William Brown	1855 -1858

An auction notice for the White Hart Hotel was published in 1881, with a description of the property.

Valuable Country Property,
Windsor Road,
About 9 Miles from Parramatta,
The Old White Hart Hotel,
TUESDAY, 22nd MARCH

John Taylor

Has been instructed to sell by public auction at his sale-rooms, Church-street, Parramatta, on TUESDAY, 22nd March, at 11 o'clock,—

ALL THAT VALUABLE PROPERTY as well and favorably known as the White Hart Hotel, situate on the Windsor Road, adjoining the properties and orchards of Messrs. Pearce, Strange, and others.

110 ACRES OF GOOD LAND, comprising orchard, garden grounds, and cultivated and grazing paddocks.

THE BUILDINGS are two story, brick, on stone foundations, and very commodious.

THE LAND possesses a never failing and extensive supply of excellent water.

Title good.

B. COLEY, Esq.,
Solicitor for the Vendors,
Windsor.

N.B.—To capitalists or agriculturists a convenient opportunity presents itself for a profitable investment.

White Hart Inn auction notice.



Front of the inn.

The inn then becomes difficult to trace in historical records. Perhaps the site was used as a family home, before being demolished.

Sydney Metro

Sydney Metro is the largest public transport infrastructure project currently under construction in Australia.



The skytrain over Windsor Road at Rouse Hill

Work on Sydney Metro Northwest has uncovered the ruins of an early 19th century Sydney inn – but mystery still surrounds exactly what happened to the White Hart Inn at Kellyville.

Its foundations were uncovered by archaeologists near the intersection of Old Windsor and Windsor roads at Kellyville during heritage work for the skytrain section of Sydney Metro Northwest.

This important site is protected, with construction of Sydney Metro Northwest modified as a result.

Setting the scene – the history of the Kellyville area in colonial Sydney

Europeans were not the first people to inhabit the Hills Shire. Aboriginal groups have been living in this area for thousands of years before white settlement. The group in this area is called the Darug. The Kellyville area was set aside as a government farm before being opened for private settlement in the early 1800s. It grew slowly and for many years Kellyville remained a place to pass through on a journey to somewhere else such as Windsor or the Hawkesbury and was not a place where people lived. Houses were scattered along the main roads, such as Windsor and Old Windsor roads, but there were no distinct towns or villages between Castle Hill and Windsor. Kellyville was often referred to as 'there or nowhere', 'nowhere here' or 'there and nowhere else'.



1881 resurvey of Windsor Road.



Archaeologists working at the White Hart Inn.

Why excavate?

Relics are protected by law in NSW. Approval is required to remove a significant site. Excavation of the White Hart Inn was necessary under the project approval to understand the archaeological potential of identified sites, including the White Hart Inn.

What's next?

The White Hart Inn will be conserved and protected during construction of Sydney Metro Northwest.

The NSW Government has committed to conserving the site, and discussions will take place during the construction phase of Sydney Metro Northwest on how this will happen.

A strategy will be put in place to determine what happens to the site and its artefacts in the long term.

Get involved

Sydney Metro's education program, FastTracking the Future, includes lessons on the uncovering of White Hart Inn for years K to 10. If you're interested in getting your school involved in FastTracking the Future, or to organise a closer inspection of the White Hart Inn artefacts, go to www.sydneymetro.info/education or email education@metronorthwest.com.au.

www.sydneymetro.info
info@metronorthwest.com.au
 1800 019 989
www.facebook.com/SydneyMetro



Artist's impression of the White Hart Inn (circa 1840's)

Hidden Heart
 The unfolding mystery of
 Kellyville's White Hart Inn

Artefacts – a tangible link to our past

Artefacts teach us about the everyday lives of the people who lived in the past. More than 2,000 objects were recovered during the excavations of the White Hart Inn, typical of what would be found in a colonial inn and included: small glass salad oil bottles, ceramic and enamel plates and serving dishes which show the efforts publicans went to ensure their guests were entertained and well fed.

They used patterns and styles which were common and conservative, but which could be used over and over again without going out of style.

Other finds include a salt cellar and complete ceramic toothpaste container, and coins from 1813 and 1853. Children's toys, a doll's leg, buttons and numerous fragments of pipe stems have also been recovered during the test excavation.



A toothpaste canister lid.



Coins that are almost 200 years old.



Gravy tureen



A doll's leg.



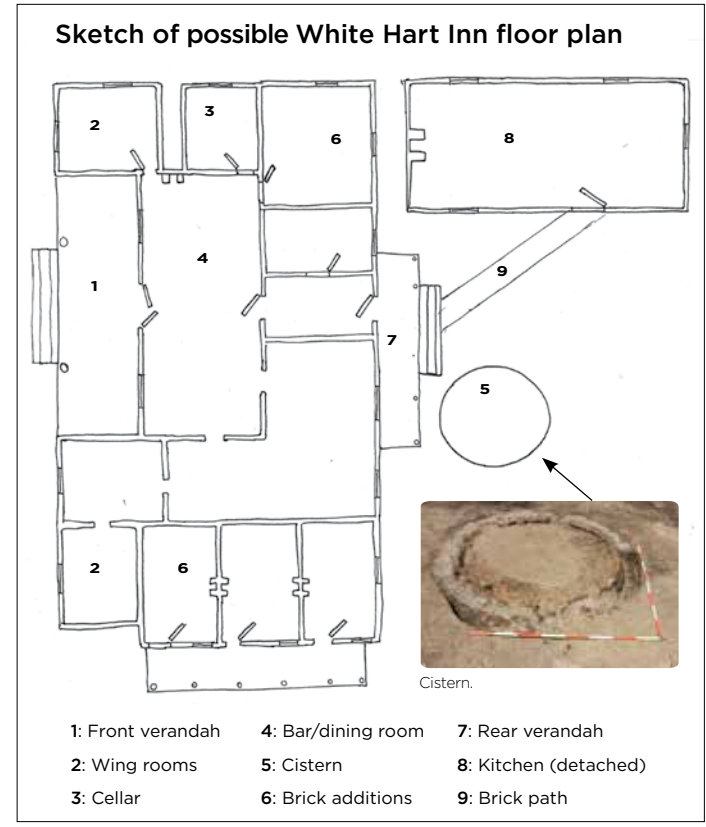
Key found on site.



Vinegar bottle

Archaeological test excavations – revealing the White Hart Inn

The archaeological test excavations uncovered sandstone footings of a building approximately 20m wide and 15m long, which are the remains of the inn building.



Made of sandstone and sandstock bricks, the building is in the shape of a typical colonial inn with a long verandah and front room and bar with smaller rooms, or wings, to the side as well as rooms to the rear. The building is orientated to face the road to the west.

A large room with a fireplace is directly behind the long front room. Other rooms, defined by brick footings, have emerged along the southern side of the complex.

A possible cellar was partially excavated and yielded a number of artefacts. The property had a cistern in the back and a separate kitchen building to the north east.

History of inns and inn keeping in Sydney

Inns and inn keeping have a long history in Australia and quickly followed farmers and explorers in opening up the colony.

Along major roads such as Windsor and Old Windsor Roads, inns provided important and well known rest stops, food and accommodation on long journeys around the colony.

Governor Macquarie encouraged the establishment of many inns, known as wayside inns, along roads and travel routes, by granting land with the stipulation that a wayside inn be built on the property.

Very early inns were designed as single storey dwellings only one room wide.

Every room had an entrance from the veranda and there may have been additional facilities for special guests. In addition to the inn building there was likely to have been stable and shed buildings, more than likely of timber slab construction.

The main users of the inn were coach runs operating between large settlements. Coach routes ran along Windsor and Old Windsor Roads and may have stopped at various inns along the way.

The Royal Oak Inn (now the Mean Fiddler) was constructed in the late 1820s specifically as a Cobb and Co coach inn, which ran a route from Parramatta to Windsor.



Artist's impression of the White Hart Inn (circa 1840).

By the 1840s the amount of wayside inns had increased considerably and competition between the various inns was high.

As the colony became more established, the design of inns changed to two-storey buildings constructed of brick or stone. Many inns had developed to include coffee rooms, parlours, full stables and undercover coach parking .



Artist's impression of the White Hart Inn (circa 1840).

By the 1860s the introduction of railway travel was having an impact on coaching routes.

The railway line from Sydney to Richmond was operating by 1864 with a stop to Windsor established soon after.

Many inns in the rest of the colony were closed as a result of the growing railway network and the subsequent reduction in demand for coaching.

However, the railway did not come into Rogans Hill to the south until the 1930s and both Windsor and Old Windsor Roads would have remained major travel routes through the nineteenth century.



Rogans Hill Railway Station (circa 1930).

As such the inns along these roads may have lasted until the advent of the car and the faster travel times that would have resulted.