Investigating the Enduring Fascination with Dublin's Victorian Pubs

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Counter Intelligences: A seminar of current research into Irish Pubs, their designs and social life.

Dublin’s Victorian Pubs


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Presentation Overview

1. Introduction.
2. Study objectives.
5. Emerging - worthy of further exploration and investigation.
6. People
7. Place and architecture
8. Importance of Pubs
1. Introduction

Victorian pubs of Dublin have played an integral role in the social, cultural and economic history of Ireland’s capital from their early development in the front rooms and parlours of Dublin homes they are one of the most iconic elements of Irish culture (O’Connor, cited in LVA 2017).

These pubs have always been a strange mixture of tradition and curiosity which forms an integral part of the rich tapestry of Dublin life dating back to their creation nearly 200 years ago.

A proud brewing and distilling tradition of these pubs combined with their natural hospitality and sociability, have all contributed to making the pubs of Dublin a focal point for local communities (O’Keeffe, 2017)

The majority of Dublin’s pubs of historic architectural merit were built in the Victorian era which stretched from 1837 to 1901.

There are now less than twenty authentic Victorian pubs in Dublin which still retain the majority of their original fixtures and their Victorian characteristics (Fell cited in Kearns, 1996)

Barich (2009) classifies these establishments as ‘curated trophy pubs’ adding that these pubs can be counted on in Dublin’s city centre for a taste of unspoiled tradition.

Eighty percent of all tourists chose the Irish Pub as their number one reason which influenced their decision to holiday in Ireland, adding that the older the pub is the better. (ITIC, 2014),
2. Study Objectives

This study will investigate the enduring fascination of locals, visitors and publicans with Dublin’s remaining Victorian pubs, why they are worth preserving and why they are part of Dublin’s rich heritage.

Objectives

• To conduct and document a comprehensive review of the key literature on Dublin’s Victorian Pubs.

• To develop a comprehensive research design towards investigating the enduring fascination of Dublin’s Victorian Pubs.

• To collect and document the oral histories and folklore of publicans, locals and visitors of Dublin’s Victorian Pubs.

• To examine and analyse the oral histories and folklore of publicans, locals and visitors of Dublin’s Victorian Pubs.

• To explore the enduring fascination of publicans, locals and visitors with Dublin’s Victorian Pubs.
3.0 Research Design

Theoretical and Methodological approach

Research title: Investigating the enduring fascination of Dublin’s Victorian Pubs

A comprehensive literature review will also be undertaken which was used to explain the variables affecting the research question.

Interpretative research study - employing qualitative approach (inductive, focusing meanings and complexities of situation – Creswell, 2007) incorporating oral discourse.

- recorded interviews, accounts and personal interpretations of past and current publicans and customers, these stories, lay buried within their own memories.

- emerging questions and procedures, data typically collected in the participants setting,

- data analysis inductively building from particulars to general themes and the researcher making interpretations of the meaning of this data.

- The use of oral history has long been advocated by key researchers to ‘demoncratise history’ (Thompson, 1984), Professor Seamus O’Cathain (1980) maintains that ‘ordinary people have been largely written out of history in the city of Dublin’, Mac Con Iomaire (2010, 2011b) also adds that one of the main reasons for using oral history is the lack of available written material.
4.0 Literature  (Pubs)

Irish Pubs Books

Dublin Pub Books

William Phipps (1825) – 1st Handbook for licensed trade (Molloy).


Pol O'Conghaile (2007) Bar Secrets Dublin (Deck of Secrets), Shopping Secrets P/L.


4.0 Literature (Victorian Pubs & Buildings)

Books of Victorian and Dublin History

Resource identification
- Pictures of Dublin Pubs (Gallery): http://www.dublincity.ie/image-galleries/dublin-pubs
- Irish Indo Archive (Gallery) / Irish Times (archive): http://landing.irishnewsarchive.com/irish-independent/
- Licensed Vintners Association (LVA Library): publications, records.
- National Archive / Kings Inn: records, titles and deeds registered.
5. Emerging areas  (towards the research)

- People
- Place and architecture
- Culture and Heritage
- Entertainment
- Products and Practices
- Trade Bodies
- Legislation
Emerging - worthy of further investigation

**People**  
(staff, customers and owners)

- **Pub as therapy.**
- **Professions:** tradesmen, jarvey’s, Dockers, market people, street dealers, literati - writers & poets.
- **Publicans:** pillars of community, traditional and generational publican.
- **Bartenders:** grocers assistant, securing loyalty of customers (i.e. Val Burke, Long Hall 40 years).
- **Customers, locals:** embodiment of traditional virtues (kind, gentle, polite, good humoured, devotion to the spoken word in all its base and exalted forms).
- **The pintmen:** devotee of solemn rite, hollow legs, Paddy Losty.
- **Round system:** deeply entrenched with lower classes-Victorian period.
- **Pub characters:** measure of pubs uniqueness.
Place and architecture

Dublin's Victorian Pubs

[Frank Fell & experienced publicans-i.e. Michael Hedigan]

**Victorian Pubs (18): 3-4%**
- The Palace Bar, Fleet St, **D2** RPS:2921
- Toner’s, Baggot St, **D4** RPS: 433.
- Doheny & Nesbitt, Baggot St, **D4** RPS:334
- The Swan, York St, **D2** RPS:8665
- The Long Hall, Georges St, **D2** RPS: 3228.
- Slattery’s, Capel Street. RPS: 1212.
- The Stags Head, Dame Lane, **D2** RPS :2098.
- Ryan’s Parkgate St, D8 RPS: 6315.
- International Bar, Wicklow St, **D2** RPS: 8557
- Gaffneys, 5 Fairview Strand, **D3** No RPS
- The Hut, Phibsboro, **D9** RPS: 6734.
- Bowes, Fleet St, **D2**. RPS: 2925.
- Kehoes, South Anne St, **D2** RPS: 182.
- Cassidy’s, 42 Camden St, **D2** RPS: 1149. 3 storey building single story frontage.
- The Norseman, 28E Essex St East **D2** No 29=RPS: 2645.
- Conways, Parnell Street, **D1** [Not Trading] RPS: 6423.
- Regan’s, Tara St, **D2**. [Gone] Ruin Bar
- Finnegans, 1 Sorento House, Dalkey Co. Dublin. No RPS

**Historic Architectural Merit (34)**
- The Palace Bar, Fleet St, **D2**
- Toner’s, Baggot St, **D4**
- Doheny & Nesbitt, Baggot St, **D4**
- The Swan, Aungier Street, **D2**
- The Long Hall, Georges St, **D2**
- The Stags Head, Dame Lane, **D2**
- Ryan’s Parkgate St, D8. RPS
- International Bar, Wicklow St, **D2**
- Gaffneys, Fairview, **D3**
- The Hut, Phibsboro, **D9**
- Bowes, Fleet St, **D2**.
- Kehoes, South Anne St, **D2**
- Cassidy’s, Camden St, **D2**
- Conway’s, Parnell Street, **D1** [Not Trading]
- Regan’s, Tara St, **D2**. [gone]
- Finnegans, Sorento House, Dalkey
- Mulligans Poolbeg street, **D2**.
- Mulligans Stoneybatter, **D7**
- The Lord Edward Christchurch, **D8**
- Nealon’s, Capel St, **D1**.
- Alfie Byrne’s, Chancery Place **D7**
- Kavanagh’s, Aughrim Street, **D7**
- Hanlon’s, Hanlon’s Corner, NCR, **D7**
- Heian’s, Prospect Road, Glasnevin, **D9**.
- Kavanagh’s, Prospect Road, **D9**
- The Brazen Head, Bridge St, **D8**
- O’Neill’s, Suffolk St, **D2**
- McDaid’s, Harry St, **D2**
- Neary’s, Chatham St, **D2**
- Bambrick’s, South Richmond Rd, **D2**
- The Portbello, Richmond St, **D2**.
- Searson’s, Baggot St, **D4**
- Slattery’s, Rathmines Road Lower, **D6**
- Sandyford House, Sandyford Co. Dublin [Not Protected]

**Characteristics of Victorian age, not classically Victorian (11)**
- Mulligans Poolbeg street, **D2**.
- Mulligans Stoneybatter, **D7**
- The Lord Edward Christchurch, **D8**
- Kavanagh’s, Aughrim Street, **D7**
- Hanlon’s, Hanlon’s Corner, NCR, **D7**
- The Brazen Head, Bridge St, **D8**
- McDaid’s Harry St, **D2**
- The Portbello, Richmond St, **D2**.
- Searson’s, Baggot St, **D4**
- Slattery’s, Rathmines Road Lower, **D6**
- Sandyford House, Sandyford Co. Dublin [Not Protected]

Source: Dublin Pub Life and Lore, Kevin C Kearns, 1996
RPS: Record Protected Structure number (Dublin County Council).

Source: Story of the Irish Pub, C. Molloy, 2002
Dublin’s Victorian Pubs

Place and architecture

[‘Handcrafted curated trophies’, Barich, 2009]
Dublin’s Victorian Pubs

**Place and architecture**

[‘Handcrafted curated trophies’, Barich, 2009]
Dublin's Victorian Pubs

Place and architecture

Handcrafted curated trophies, Barich, 2009
Place and architecture: Stags Head
Patrick Conway’s, 70 Parnell Street (First licensed 1745, oldest pub North of the city, a 250 year old masterpiece in mahogany).
Dublin’s Victorian Pubs

Importance of Pubs

Ray Oldenburgh: American urban sociologist, author ‘The Great Good Place’

✓ A good pub, can be the epicentre of community interaction and conviviality, where you can meet other locals and friends, access the news, and discuss national and international issues of the day.

✓ ‘Basic motivation, that draws people back time and again is fun, enjoying pleasurable hours, the purpose of association, the solidarity of kin or friendship groups, acceptance of individual as a man among men. ‘

✓ Informality, inclusiveness, novelty, diversity and a neutral space where young and old can interact, a forum for political and intellectual discourses and of possible a degree of social care for its patrons.’
QUESTIONS - THANK YOU