



A VICTORY FOR HERITAGE

The City of Onkaparinga's inaugural Built Heritage Grant has helped return an iconic hotel to its former glory.

Publican Doug Govan has used the \$5,000 grant in his restoration of the Victory Hotel, which has overlooked Sellicks Beach since 1858.

The Victory was first constructed by locals, who named it after winning a fight to have a road built over the range.

After several alterations, including the unsympathetic enclosure of the front verandah in the 1960s, the original pub was barely recognisable.

Doug took over the pub 17 years ago, with plans to restore the building and make the most of its charm.

His career in hotels had started early. At 17, he got a job collecting empty glasses from tables to earn extra money.

"I also did a bit of bar work," he says, "and I loved it, so I just kept in it."

His family hadn't been involved with pubs before, although his father is a psychiatrist, a skill he notes can

come in handy when working behind a front bar.

Doug worked his way up to managing pubs and later bought and converted a warehouse into a nightclub.

A few years later he decided it was "time for some country air", bought the Victory and hasn't looked back.

It was a fitting return to a place he had known and loved since childhood.

"We used to holiday at Sellicks beach as kids - I fell in love with the area back then," Doug said.

He became interested in the Victory in later years and when the historic hotel finally came on the market, he snapped it up and the transformation began.

Doug revamped the hotel's menu, installing award-winning chefs in his kitchen and building the cuisine around the renowned, fresh produce of the Fleurieu Peninsula. He has gradually assembled one of the best wine lists around. Doug stocks the cream of the vintages from nearby McLaren Vale, alongside the best interstate and international wines.

He has received excellent reviews for the pub's food and drinks and the success of his venture meant more room was

needed in both the front bar and dining room.

However, Doug had an even bigger vision for the Victory. "I had in mind what I wanted to do," he said. "I just had to wait until I had the money."

After years of planning and working with a conservation architect, the redesign and restoration of the pub to make the most of its original features will be complete this month. The nostalgic transformation comes just in time to celebrate the hotel's 150th birthday.

The bar is now bigger and the dining area spills out into a garden with stunning views.

"The wall for the garden is made from the original front wall, which was removed 40 years ago when the verandah was closed in," Doug said. "When I moved in I found the stone down at the bottom of the cellar."

"We've been thrilled with what we've been able to achieve. We really wanted to be able to stand back and say 'this is what we have created'."

City of Onkaparinga Heritage Advisor, Andrew Stevens, described the task as a "complex project, on a magnificent site."

As one of the judges for the Built Heritage Grant, he noted



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that the work had struck a good balance between conserving the historic part of the hotel and allowing the pub to expand and function in the best way.

"That is after all what underpins the ongoing use of these buildings," he said. "The original pub was representative of early settlement and hotels in this area and it was also a staging post for transport into the hinterland of the Fleurieu."

"It has been very much a part of the local history of the area."

Doug's work will ensure that the Victory Hotel is an important part of the local community for many years to come.

2008 BUILT HERITAGE WINNERS

The City of Onkaparinga's Built Heritage Project Grant and Conservation Awards were presented for this first time in July, as part of Council's commitment to preserve our built heritage.

2008 BUILT HERITAGE GRANT
Winner of \$5,000 grant – Doug Govan, for his restoration of the Victory Hotel at Sellicks Hill.

HERITAGE STORIES CATEGORY
Winner – National Trust SA, for restoring the stables of Willunga's first police station, which now houses the Willunga Slate Museum.

FRIENDS OF HERITAGE CATEGORY
Winner – Reynell Business and Tourism Association, for their restoration of the 1840s Reynella Coach Horse Changing Station.

HERITAGE PLACES / ITEMS CATEGORY
Winner – Olivers Taranga Vineyards, for the restoration of

the 1850s workers cottage, which was converted into their McLaren Vale cellar door and museum.

Winner – Paxton Vineyards, for the restoration of farm cottages, ancillary buildings and cellar door at Landcross Farm, McLaren Vale.

