



Deepwater Point in the foreground

1886
The Grand Hotel at Deepwater Point, Labrador

1946
Parts of the hotel caught fire and threatened to destroy the main hotel. The building was saved by staff and locals, and wet blankets were strung across the back of the hotel to prevent scorching

1950
A stylish ballroom is added to the Grand Hotel

1956
The Grand Hotel is refurbished and sections of the hotel are reconstructed to incorporate a beer garden, one of the first of its kind

1959
The Grand Hotel was sold to New Yorker Stan Elson, who introduced cabaret shows and cut-price takeaway liquor sales

1975
The Grand Hotel burns to the ground and is rebuilt as the Grand Tavern

1987
The Grand Tavern is demolished to make way for redevelopment

2001
The modern Grand Hotel and Grand Apartments open



Above: The grandeur of the hotel as it looked in the 1920s
Right: Today's visitors are greeted by a modern interior



Grand history

WHEN the Grand Hotel, Labrador, was opened 120 years ago, it was considered to be one of the finest hotels in Australia, and many regulars today still consider it to be the best.

This is an opinion shared by the Queensland Hotels Association, which has presented the Grand Hotel with a number of awards, including Best New Tavern and Best Bar Presentation and Service.

The Grand Apartments high rise and a new Grand Hotel facing the Broadwater were built on the site of the original Grand Hotel, and opened in 2001.

Following its glory days, the new Grand Hotel has established a reputation as a popular eating, drinking and entertainment venue with a new generation of customers.

The Grand Hotel provides a range of services and facilities, modern bars, restaurant, gaming and PubTab facilities and Grand Liquorstore, all of which are family owned and operated.

Built in 1886, the first Grand Hotel was aptly named as it was one of the largest and most impressive hotels in Australia at the time.

Locals, however, disparagingly referred to it as 'Palace of the Mosquito Swamp'. The jetty across the road from the hotel, built originally as a wharf for loading

timber logs, became known as the Grand Jetty and provided easy access for visitors arriving by ferry or yacht from Brisbane and beyond.

The waterfront hotel, with its lavish dining room and accommodation, was a favourite playground for the rich.

Over the years, other features were added such as the famous ballroom and cabaret, and a beer garden, which was one of the first of its kind in an Australian hotel.

In 1975 the old timber Grand Hotel burnt to the ground and in its place a new complex was built and renamed the Grand Tavern.

This later building was demolished in 1987 and the site remained vacant while the owners of the Grand litigated with a Japanese company for 10 years.

"A legal precedent was created in that a Japanese parent company guarantee was tested in the Japanese courts by Australia and was successful," said one of the hotel's owners, Jason O'Neill.

"The Japanese parent company wound up and minimum proceeds were received."

Mr O'Neill said the reopening of the hotel was one of the events that helped kick-start the popularity in the once-sleepy suburb of Labrador.

"In 1998, one of the foremost real estate agents on the Gold Coast referred to the Labrador site as being a 'grave-

yard where elephants go to die', and this comment inhibited the development of Labrador for many years," he said.

"Only when the Grand Hotel, as it stands now, was developed, was there any interest expressed in the strip."

Since its reopening, the hotel has picked up the popularity left by the original hotel.

The 55m timber bar, with Broadwater views from surrounding balconies, 14 beers on tap, as well as a range of bottled beers, wines and spirits, was one of the features that won the hotel its Queensland Hotels Association's Best Bar Presentation and Service Award for 2005.

"Kokonut Willy's restaurant won the People's Choice Awards Best Casual Dining in 2004 and has established a brilliant reputation for quality food, exceptional value for money and an extensive menu," Mr O'Neill said.

"The Grand has a wonderful, rich history, catering for a new generation of customers who enjoy the exciting new facilities."

For more information go to the website at www.thegrandhotel.com.au or call 5528 6442.

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