

Name of speaker	Andrew and Richard Buxton
Date of recording	27 November 1995
Place of recording	Council Chamber, Port Melbourne Town Hall Address to Port Melbourne Historical and Preservation Society monthly meeting
Title	'Converting the Historic Swallow and Ariell Complex to the Anchorage'
Dates	1994 to 1995
Abstract of talk	Andrew Buxton describes how the Buxton brothers approached the redevelopment of the Anchorage, focussing particularly on issues arising from the heritage listing on the buildings
Existence of transcript	Logged
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Subjects	Built Environment Swallow and Ariell

	Several members of the Buxton family involved
	Also developed the Port Melbourne electricity site in Stokes St (also Portview Square)
	Losing bidder on H M A S Lonsdale site
	Our family have been moved in Port /South area since middle of last (19 th century)
	Aim of talk: Overview of development from a developer's point of view
	How they have tackled the project
	1 st looked at site in September 1993 and again in 1996. Don't expect to be off the site until 1997
	Offered the site in 9/1993. Offered to other developers, Mirvac and Hudson Conway, and another unnamed developer
	Others hadn't viewed it as we had
	Their father who had been in real estate said 'you're mad'
	Deterrent that there was a historic designation on site – Historic Buildings Council and City of Port Melbourne. Put off other developers
	1993 plan to chop up existing heritage buildings for residential.
	Decided to sell them as shells – 47 residential units
	'That's what we started with that's what we finished with'. Developers and purchasers happy
	Arnotts not in favour of the heritage listing. We had to convince them, a multi-national out of Sydney that it could be done. We had to persuade them that it could be done.
01/1994	Rich(ard) had to set up a team of consultants - at least 15 different consulting groups
	Shows original Beach St elevation – not financially viable in original state
	Driven by views of Port Phillip Bay
	Elevations of Rouse St haven't changed
	Authorities had to deal with were City of Port Melbourne, Historic Buildings Council, National Trust, Major Projects Unit, Ministry of Planning
10/1994	Started demolishing buildings
	'We had good and bad experience with them' (City of Port Melbourne)
	CoPM not too sure what they wanted.
	On the whole, maintained the heritage fabric, except where it was in too poor condition to be salvaged
	Doing up historical buildings only a break-even situation
	Had to get new buildings on the site to make any money – that was the problem and the solution in the end
	Had one of the historic buildings de-listed
	Have to spend money up front in order to get money back
	'We took on something that was quite difficult that noone else was prepared to do'
	'I don't think this project would have got off the ground if it hadn't been for their involvement (Ministry of Planning)
	'we tried to get as much of this through prior to amalgamation so that they had signed off the things they wanted.

	CoPP adviser didn't want any doors opening out on to the street. That went on for weeks. New building would block the view of Mt Macedon! 'frustrated nit picking – you sometimes feel like giving up'
	CoPM and ourselves agreed in principle. Relatively amicable with CoPP though they send us backward and forward
	Next lot of problems in relation to building
	Circulated historical artifacts – a ledger, original prospectus of floating of the S & A business in 1888.
	<i>Q:</i> What about the safes that were upstairs dating from 1884? <i>A:</i> none that were there
	When we first went onto the site, we collected all artifacts – nearly a container load and whole lot was stolen.
	We have to provide a museum on the site – provide a graphic display
	Arnotts took out all the machinery. Only things left were old signs. Site had been vandalised while vacant.
	Arnotts have a historian
	When we took possession of site, evolution of buildings, layer on layer, architects changed as we went through it
	Walls are the original old walls, as well as the façade to Rouse St
	Discovered a lot of the tunnels when we were doing this work
	Tunnel between S&A to the counting house – still there, underneath, intact
	Pleased with restoration of old malthouse. Sandblasted it to get back to blue stone
	Agonising thing about the Swallow sign. Had to take it away and have it restored as it had concrete cancer
	Once you see it back up, it will be hard to tell the difference. A metre lower than it was originally
	Retained original basement areas for storage areas
Oct 94	Went to the market with fear and trepidation. Sold all the warehouse shells 'with a great deal of ease', to a range of age groups.
	Townhouses in Princes St sold exceptionally
	Since then gone to the market with apartments facing Port Phillip Bay
	Residential market has completely dried up – as opposed to late 1994. Market 'a bit of a slog'
	Great grand father Buxton came also in 1860 went into business with Buckhurst, and have been in the business through the ups and downs over a century
	Hughenden (now Danish Club) great grandfather's house, also built Rochester Terrace
<i>height</i>	Sold the top storey so we can't go any lower! (on Beach St at 8 storeys)
	Sold very high per cent of units that face the water, what we saw as the attraction of the site. Hadn't been taken advantage of.
	'we believe the building will be attractive to the whole City of Port Melbourne that everyone will be mighty proud of'
	'We feel the water deserves to be looked at' and height is the way to achieve that
	Fought fairly vigorously to have the building on cnr Beach and Stokes taken off the historic register. Didn't feel it did justice to anything. What we were going to do to the remaining historic buildings was our contribution. 'Had

	we not got that through, the rest of the project could have been put in jeopardy. That was certainly our attitude.'
	Since we put input into this there has been more activity in this area.
	(Without prejudice) if we were doing the Mirvac development we would do it differently.