

# I feel like a Tooheys ... or 22

Investigation into hotel after man was allowed to go on a six-hour drinking spree

EXCLUSIVE  
Linda Silmalis

An investigation is under way into a pub where a man drank 22 schooners of Tooheys New and a shot of spirits before collapsing multiple times and having to be carted out by mates. The epic drinking session is alleged to have occurred on March 6 in 2021 at the now closed Gladstone Hotel at Stockton.

The man – who goes by the nickname of “Little John” – is

alleged to have consumed his first beer at about 11am before consuming the equivalent of 35 standard drinks over the course of the next six hours until about 5.30pm. CCTV from the day is alleged to show the man so intoxicated that he collapses at least four times. Shortly before 5pm, the vision is understood to show him stumbling, and holding on to the bar before his friends rally around to move him outside. It is understood vision shows

friends “carrying a limb each” as they transport their inebriated mate to a vehicle outside before driving him to a hospital. While NSW independent Liquor & Gaming Authority (ILGA) refused to comment on the investigation, its website declared a discipline matter involving the hotel had been “determined” on March 20. It is not clear why the hotel has closed. “The NSW independent Liquor & Gaming Authority (ILGA) has not ordered the

closure of the Gladstone Hotel, Stockton,” an ILGA spokeswoman said. Shortly after the incident, ILGA dealt with a separate noise complaint involving the hotel. The December 2021 complaint lodged with ILGA included statements from neighbours who listed a raft of issues as the hotel, including “drunkenness, littering, fighting, property damage”, “threats and violence from patrons” and “patrons urinating on resi-

dents’ homes and cars”. “The complainant submits additional seating in the beer garden has increased the frequency of live music, jam sessions, happy hours and functions,” it said. ILGA dismissed the complaint, noting how the hotel had held its liquor licence “for approximately 66 years”. “It is reasonable to expect some level of disturbance will be generated from the normal operation of the hotel,” its report said.

Last week, the hotel was listed for sale with an advertisement describing it as “the ultimate venue for social gatherings, events and live music”. “Throughout the years, the Gladstone Hotel has served multiple purposes for the community, providing function space and hosting community events and public meetings for political and electoral events, often held from the balcony,” it said. The advertisement said the hotel had a “full hotel liquor licence”.

ISRAEL  
Aid worker's death probed  
Australian diplomats in Israel have been briefed by the country's military personnel regarding the death of an Australian aid worker. Australian chef Lalzawmi 'Zomi' Frankcom was among seven aid workers killed when three vehicles were struck by Israeli Defence Force drones while traversing Gaza. Israel Defence Force spokesman Lieutenant Colonel Peter Lerner said the Israeli government's probe had been completed.

HERITAGE ISSUE  
Climbers fear sites lock out  
Rock climbers fear they could be locked out of treasured climbing sites for good, as cultural heritage assessments leave a “dark cloud” over future access to one of Australia's most iconic mountain ranges. Western Victoria's Barengi Gadjin Land Council is assessing the Indigenous history of Mount Arapiles. Parks Victoria has already blocked access to large swathes of both rock face and the surrounding state park.

## The Michelangelo of turtle rescues



Senior zoo keeper Sarah Male with the loggerhead turtle at Taronga Zoo. Picture: Sam Ruttyn

**Mitch Fink**

This young turtle has been on an adventure so crazy, it just needed a talking rat with ninja skills, three wisecracking siblings and some pizza to complete it. He was picked up by a pair

of fishermen 60km off the coast and whisked back to Sydney after they spotted him floating on the surface and feared he was in trouble. They picked him up and contacted WIRES after returning ashore, with

volunteers collecting the turtle and dropping him off at the Taronga Wildlife Hospital in Mosman. As it turned out the turtle was fine but the fishermen “did the right thing” by bringing him to the hospital, according to Taronga senior

keeper Sarah Male. “We’ve given him a thorough looking-over and health check and he is 100 per cent okay to be released at least 100km from the coast,” she said. Which will give him quite the story to tell to his

friends, even if it doesn't involve a villain dressed like a cheese grater. And while bobbing on the surface is fine for hatchlings, who find food on seaweed “islands” there, being unable to dive it is a sign of distress in adult turtles.

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