

THOSE WERE THE DAYS

NEWSLETTER OF THE UPPER CLUTHA HISTORICAL RECORDS SOCIETY INC.

(Upper Clutha includes Cardrona, Albert Town, Luggate, Queensberry, Tarras, Hawea, Makarora, Wanaka and Lakes Wanaka and Hawea)

SUMMER 2023 - VOLUME TWENTY- FOUR

DECEMBER 2023

SEASON GREETINGS

Another year has almost passed us by and hopefully for you all, next year will be a good one and everyone will enjoy good health. I hope the Christmas and New Year period will bring you together with your families and that you have an enjoyable time. Roll on 2024!

UCHRS HISTORY PRIZE

This year the prize-winner at Mount Aspiring School for the award the Society makes annually went to Thomas Benson. Congratulations Thomas and we wish you well with your future endeavours.

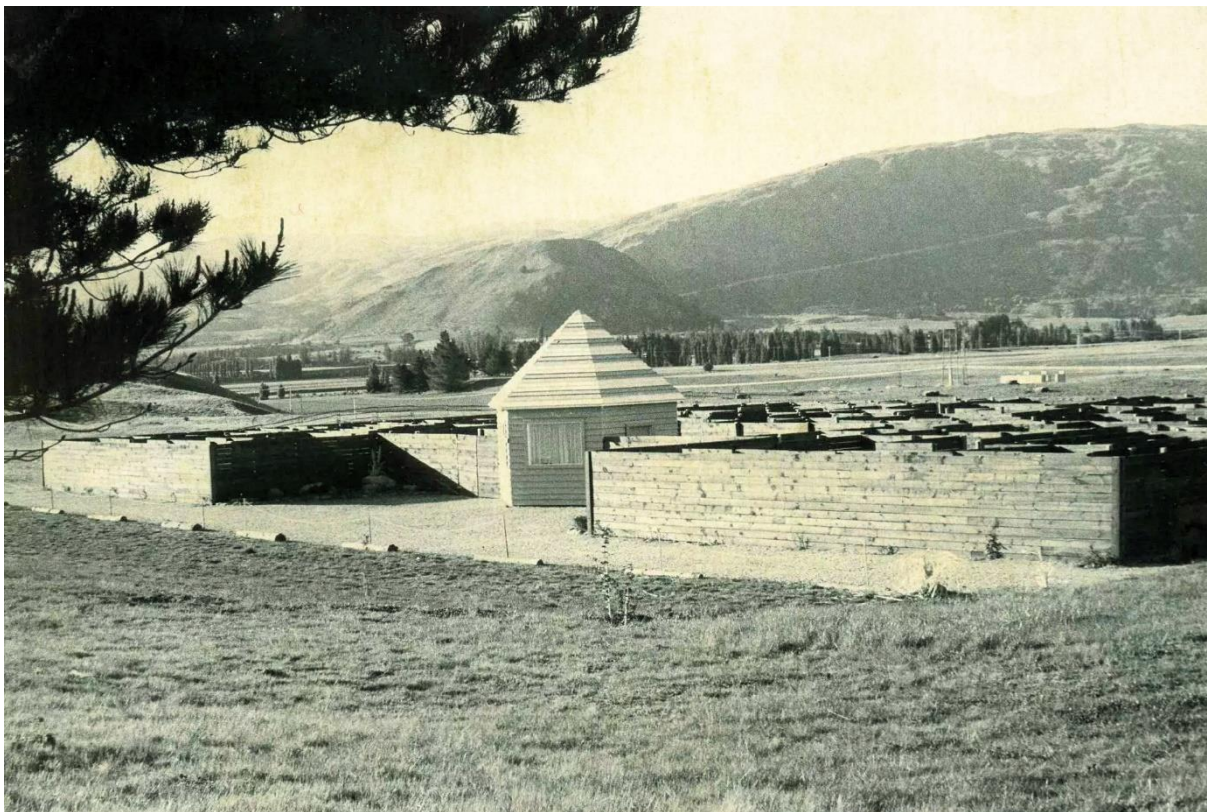
WORLD FAMOUS IN WANAKA – PUZZLING WORLD

Puzzling World is an iconic tourist attraction in Wanaka and perhaps it is hard to believe that but on 22 December, it will be the 50th Anniversary of the opening of Puzzling World.

Stuart and Jan Landsborough were a newly-married couple when they moved to Wanaka to work in the THC Wanaka Hotel. Very soon they realised that they wanted a business of their own – something in tourism.

It took a few months to decide on the idea and location (Wanaka), sold their own home to finance it (In Stuart's words "No financier would look at such a crackpot idea") and they purchased the barren, dry briar covered 2.5 hectares of land beside the main highway.

Construction took about 6 weeks of their own labour, 600 posts driven into the ground and over twenty thousand nails, just in time for the all-important Christmas holiday tourist season. It proved to be a success and over the years they added other facilities and extended the maze. In 1983 Stuart and Jan were rewarded with the Travel Enterprise Award. But it did not stop there as in 2000 Puzzling World was awarded the medium to large tourism section of the Westpac Trust 2000 Spirit of Dunedin Business Award. Other awards have been presented over the years.



Puzzling World Maze in 1973 – 50 years ago

As the word travelled around the world, Stuart became a consultant and designer of mazes in Japan and the USA as well as receiving enquiries from countries as diverse as Australia, Israel, Egypt, UK and India. But Stuart's concept of "puzzling eccentricity" was largely saved for Puzzling World that keeps people visiting from all over the world.

Stuart and Jan retired in 2004 and handed over management of Puzzling World to their daughter Heidi and her husband Duncan.¹

¹ Most of the above information originates from Stuart's own notes held by the Society.



Puzzling World - 2023

An abbreviated timeline:

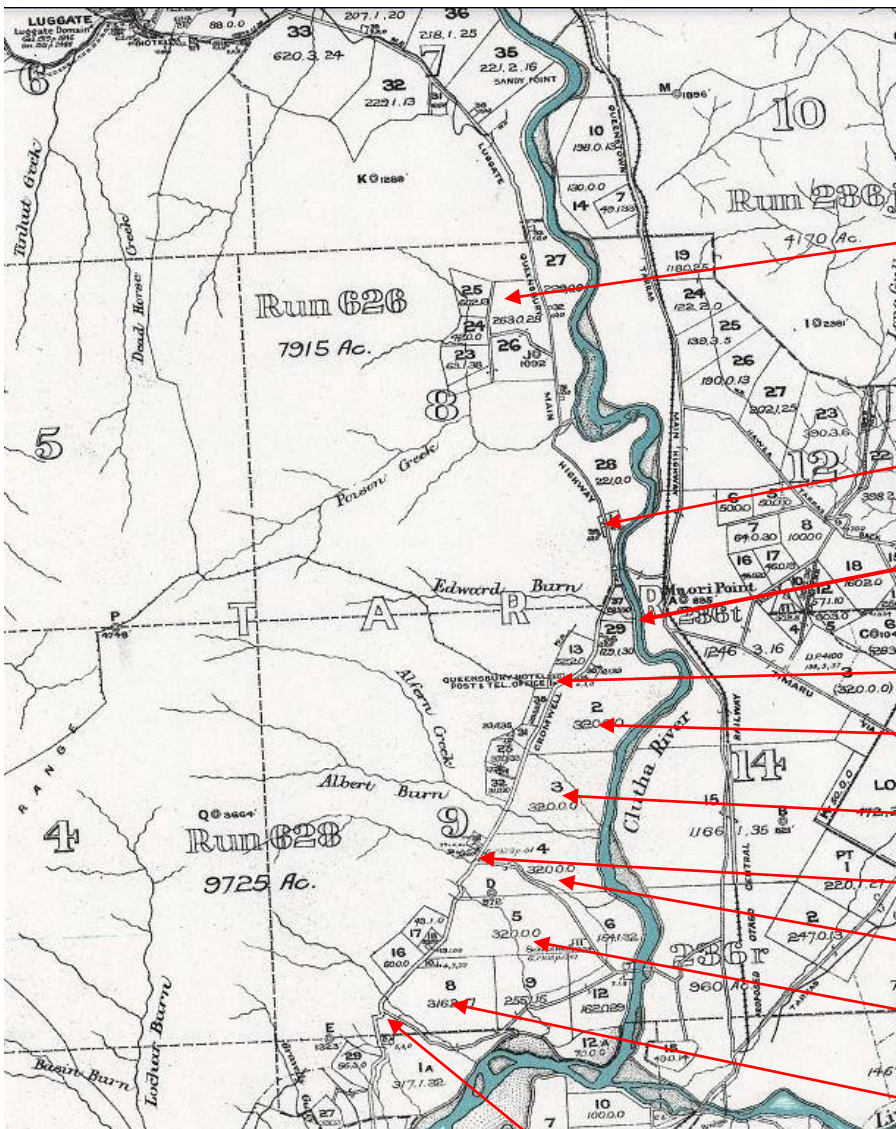
- **1973** 1km Wanaka maze built
- **1983** 500m of over-bridges added making it the world's first 3D maze
- **1985** Over 3 years Stuart designs 25 "Super Mazes" in Japan, Australia, USA and Auckland
- **1993** Tilted house and tumbling tower added
- **1999** Leaning Tower of Wanaka added on the front lawn
- **2004** Stuart and Jan retire and hand over to daughter Heidi and her husband Duncan
- **2007** 2 millionth customer
- **2010** Puzzling World makes the top 10 of the "world's weirdest attractions".
- **2013** 3 millionth customer

THE QUEENSBERRY INN

Where is Queensberry?

There is no town or village – Queensberry is an area, that of recent times has become larger, with the area now known as Queensberry Hills to the Wanaka side of the Queensberry Inn becoming developed as a residential area.

Luggate



Queensberry Hills area

John Anderson's farm "The Gums"

"The Chair" crossing (wire rope)

Queensberry Inn

Queensberry Farm - Section 2 – 320 acres

Section 3 – 320 acres

School

Section 4 – 320 acres

Section 5 – 320 or 316 acres

Section 8 – 316 acres

Kidds Gully/Creek - Tom Anderson's Way-Side Inn, Robert Kidd's Halfway House and the Woodhouse's Liverpool Arms Hotel

Referring to the map , to the left of the Cromwell–Luggate Road was the Wanaka Station (part of 4 original large Runs) before it was broken up into smaller Runs. Looking at the area from the Queensberry Inn down to Kidds Gully/Creek, to the right of the road and down to the Clutha River, are smaller properties that commenced as Deferred Payment Licences of no greater than 320 acres (no person with a DPL could have total property area greater than 320-acres). Over time, some smaller lots were approved that were ‘broken off’ the Runs, e.g., land for the Queensberry School.

Note that this is from an early map and the Wanaka–Cromwell Road has subsequently been re-aligned in places and some tracks/roads no longer exist.

Queensberry Inn – a History of the Early Owners

Tom Anderson built the Queensberry Inn and associated outbuildings. According to the family records and memories, he opened it about 1867. It was set up to provide accommodation and as a changeover point for horses and bullocks. Stables, sheds and staff accommodation were built as well as the Inn that had seven rooms plus the Dining Room, Kitchen and Bar. There was a stone cottage built that had “two bedrooms and a parlour” but it is not known when it was constructed.² There has been a suggestion that Henry Tobin, the next owner, may have built it in 1881 but it is doubtful that Thomas could have accommodated himself and his young family after 1872 in the Inn building and still leave sufficient rooms for guests.

This stone building, known in later years as the Post Office, is thought to have been incorporated, in more recent years, into the existing house which is an addition from the last few decades. It probably was converted to the Post Office and Telephone Station circa 1895-1900.

The Inn has had many owners but as an accommodation inn, it closed in 1925. A Bed & Breakfast operates from the site nowadays.

Whilst Tom was operating the Inn, he was also farming on Section 2 of 320 acres across the road and he had an interest in standing stallions, an arrangement having been made with the Normans at the Albert Town Hotel. Presumably Tom gained a DPL early in the 1870s, but certainly in 1877 Tom applied for, and was granted approval, to create a water race and take water from 19 Mile Creek about half a mile along the road, to service the farm property. That strongly suggests he already had a legal interest in that land.

² This is the building that was used as the Post Office and Telephone Station post c1900



Queensberry Inn 19 April 1907 – Visit by the Governor for lunch

Then on 1 Feb 1879 he applied to have his one-acre property that the Inn operated from, increased to six acres. He already had the consent of the Runholder and it was approved.³

When his brother John arrived in the area, Tom assisted him and they perhaps operated John's farm (known as "the Gums") in a partnership for a while. Tom also worked with others in various projects that led up to him selling the Inn and Section 2 to a Henry Tobin in early 1881. Tom and a friend, Peter McIntosh entered a partnership to build a new flour mill at Luggate after local farmers could not get that project established. On 18 July 1881, Tom and Peter McIntosh applied to the Land Board to "purchase 10 acres of land on the northside of Luggate Creek to build a flour mill". The Mill building was a great success and still stands in the yard of Upper Clutha Transport Ltd. It is an impressive building.

In February 1899, The Mill was advertised for sale.⁴ Tom continued farming at Luggate on an area of 1013 acres that he acquired as a Lease in Perpetuity in November 1900. In 1903 the Mill was sold to a consortium of farmers.

The Otago Witness reported on 2 March 1903 that Tom bought the Dunrobin Homestead farm of 800 acres near Mossburn. His health deteriorated and he and the family then moved to Wyllies Crossing (near Mosgiel).

Tom passed away in 1917 in Dunedin, and Jane in 1923.⁵

³ The Otago Witness, 1 February 1879, Tarras District.

⁴ Otago Witness, 9 February 1899.

⁵ Information, in part, has been resourced from "They came from Dumfries in 1859", Thomas Maginness, 2013

Henry Tobin

Henry was someone who came from a different background from Tom Anderson, who had come from a farm labouring background. Henry was a single man who had come from England as a “remittance man”. Remittance men were sent out to New Zealand by their family with all expenses paid, and sometimes, if they were lucky, some capital. Graham Tobin, Henry’s grandson, told me that his family were from around Liverpool and were relatively wealthy⁶. That is born out as very likely after undertaking some cursory online research.

It appears from electoral rolls that he was in the Cromwell District where his earliest mention is in 1876/77. His qualification for the Electoral Roll was “paid rates in Cromwell” so it is likely he owned/had an interest in some land.

During his sojourn at the Queensberry Inn, Henry did have some other income interests apart from the Inn and the farm. There are indications he had previously entered a partnership with G W Goodger which may not have been successful (Goodger was adjudged bankrupt at one stage) and he maybe had an interest in a nearby gold claim that also came to little.

On 19 January 1886 Henry married Isabella Underwood in Queenstown. Isabella was born in Stafford, England in 1856 (Henry was born at Liscard, Cheshire, England, on 13 December 1843). Isabella came out to New Zealand on the *Pleione*, departing London on 22 August 1880 and arriving in Wellington on 28 November 1880⁷. It is not known why Isabella had come to New Zealand although referring to newspaper articles after the arrival in port, there is a good chance Isabella was an assisted emigrant amongst the 100 single women trans-shipped to Port Chalmers. She was listed as a nurse. The descendants have no knowledge of how Henry and Isabella met.

Is it a coincidence? Emily Elliott wrote that “Mrs Tobin was a relative of the de Bettencors”? William Scheib who was the proprietor of the Queensberry Inn from 1900 to 1907, married Inez Rosa de Bettencor in 1896. The de Bettencors were a well-known Cromwell family. Maybe Isabella lived and worked in Cromwell after arriving in New Zealand in 1880?

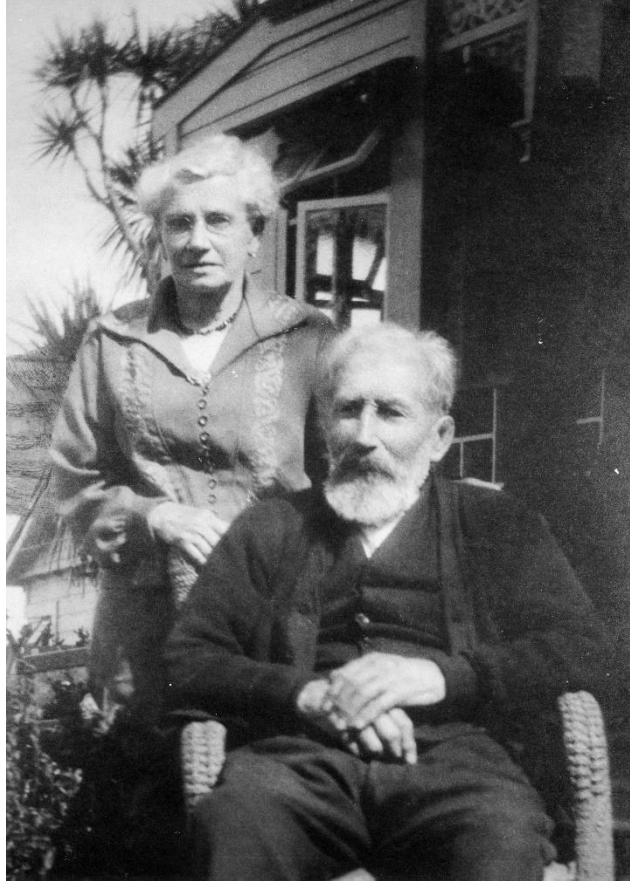
In 1887, Henry was granted the authority to open a Post Office at Queensberry Inn. This was operated out of the Inn building itself. Later in his life, whilst in Wellington, Henry became employed as a postmaster for a while.

Something happened before he got to Wellington though! In June 1889, Henry was adjudged bankrupt. This meant that all his assets became available to the Official Assignee (less those secured to creditors). The outcome was that Henry lost control of the Inn and the farm. They came under the control of the Official Assignee - the Inn (land, buildings, contents, stock etc and Section 2 of 320 acres across the road). Henry knew this was likely to happen as he had been advertising the business and property for sale for months prior, but to no avail. The Official Assignee put them up for sale by auction yet again they failed to achieve a satisfactory price. The end result of the failed auction was that the mortgagee, the Bank of New Zealand, became mortgagee in possession and after other attempts to sell the property, they granted Charles Holden a lease. Charles Holden arrived in October 1889 from Clyde where he had

⁶ Source: Graham Tobin, his grandson. Phone call Ken Allan/Graham Tobin, March 2022

⁷ http://settlersdb.huttcity.govt.nz/Voyages.aspx?vv_id=1456

previously lived for about 25 Years. All the necessary licences were transferred to him. Where Henry and his family moved to is not clear, but it is believed it may have been a house between 19 Mile Creek and the Inn, situated directly opposite or on Section 3 for which he had been previously granted a DPL on.



Henry and Isabella probably c1920s

The next momentous occasion came in June 1890 – Henry was released from bankruptcy. This means that the creditors (except for the Bank of New Zealand who were owed some £700) were either repaid in full or Henry and his solicitors managed to reach an agreement with the other creditors in respect of a part repayment or a delayed repayment. Henry’s history points to the probability that his family back in England remitted sufficient funds to repay the creditors. What is not understood is that Henry also held a DPL over Section 3 (next door to Queensberry Farm) of 320 acres. The history is that on 4 Nov 1880 he applied for a DPL for Section 3 but was declined as he already held 320 acres under the DPL for Section 2, but Tom Anderson had converted the Section to an Agricultural Lease in August. Magically, he was granted a DPL in March 1881 (though over what property is not identified in the newspapers). That aside, the rule was supposed to be “maximum 320 acres owned for a DPL”⁸.

The subsequent history of Section 3 was that in 1895, Henry converted the DPL to a Lease in Perpetuity which was a new policy that had recently been announced by the Land Board.

⁸ I have observed this also occurring with Robert Kidd. Both were well respected men. Kidd was an ex-councillor, (as was Henry sometime later) so maybe some influence was “brought to bear”.

Henry, Isabella and their family moved to Wellington about 1901 and in 1903, Section 3 was put up for auction and sold.



Henry and Isabella with their children, all born in the Upper Clutha, - about 1917

As previously indicated, during the period 1890 to 1901, it is possible that Henry and his family rented a property on the other side of the road from Section 3 or even on Section 3. Emma Elliott, in her recollections that follow later, recalled the Tobins living about halfway between 19 Mile Creek and the Queensberry Inn during the period in question. In another record of Emily's memories, it is recorded that the Tobin family lived at Ned Smith's house which was on Section 4. No date was mentioned. It is noted that in 1898, Isabella Tobin "of Queensberry" was the beneficiary of a transfer of Occupational Licence No. 14 from a Thomas Heron, a hotelkeeper of Cromwell, to her. Unfortunately the newspaper did not identify where the property was, but it was probably closer to Cromwell.

Charles Henry Holden

Charles was born 10 April 1841 in Bolton, Lancashire, England and he married Esther Taylor on 12 October 1861. They emigrated from England in 1863 and came to Clyde (Dunstan) where they raised 11 children. He had several employment jobs over the years including:

- 1883 proprietor of Port Phillip Hotel, Clyde
- 1900 proprietor of The Bridge Hotel, Cromwell
- 1904, Cromwell Town Clerk,
- 1917 proprietor of Temperance Hotel and still Town Clerk

With his experience, it is perhaps little wonder he was asked to come and look after the Queensberry Inn in October 1889. The Lodge Court Star of the Dunstan A.O.F. members and others held a function at the Vincent County Hotel to farewell Charles and his family. He

returned to Clyde and Cromwell in 1895. This was when the Bank of New Zealand made other attempts to sell the Inn and land by auction. It was purchased by “Miss Jessie Telford” – but see the following narrative on her.

Charles died in 1920.⁹

George Mason

George Mason was the next landlord of the Inn. Little is known of him except that he was married to Elizabeth and they came from Clyde. From the extensive advertisements in the newspapers, George was involved in horse-breeding, that he continued with at Queensberry. They arrived in October 1895 and whilst they were at the Inn they had two children, George Norman b.1896 and Agnes b. 1898. Given the dates they arrived at the Queensberry Inn and the story of the next two proprietors, it would appear that the Masons rented the Inn from them, having taken over from Charles Holden.

Jessie Telford and William McLeod

These two people have had an interesting life. Jessie held herself out as “Miss” and that she was a widow. William was a police sergeant at Cromwell (and other places) and was highly regarded. The fact of the matter was that they married to each other in 1880. It appears that whilst they were married, they lived apart most of the time. This was probably due to Jessie’s connections and property at Clyde and William moving as far away as Christchurch at times. They had no children.

In the Dunstan Times dated 5 July 1895, it was stated that:

THE Queensberry estate, half way between Cromwell and Pembroke, has been purchased from the Bank of New Zealand by Mrs Telford, of Clyde. The property, which consists of 326 acres of good arable and grazing land is a fine property. The whole of the land is well supplied with water, of which there is a right to three or four heads, which commands the whole of the estate. The buildings, stable and out-houses are in good order, and while Mrs Telford has paid a good price for the estate, we congratulate her on acquiring such a splendid property, to which there are few, if any, superior in Vincent County.

Note that she is stated to be “Mrs Jessie Telford” this time. The article is not quite one hundred percent correct as Section 2, the farm (320 acres), was not transferred from the Bank of New Zealand until 1897 and then it was to William McLeod alone¹⁰.

⁹ <https://www.wikitree.com/wiki/Holden-2512> (27 March 2022)

¹⁰ Archives New Zealand query ARC156148 email dated 23 March 2022

On 13 Jan 1899 an article in the Dunstan Times appeared as follows:

MR W. McLEOD (ex-sergeant) has taken over the Queensberry Inn, and we feel certain he will make a most popular landlord, and should do well in his new line of business.

On 4 May 1899 Jessie applied for an Accommodation Licence for the Inn which now has 5 rooms available for the travelling public (previously 7 were available). The reduction in room numbers will most likely have come about because of the use of the cottage as the Post Office and Telephone Station.

The "McLeods" did not stay long at the Inn, for in 1900, William sold the properties to William A H Scheib who obtained an Accommodation Licence on 4 June 1900 which included "permission to keep the post office". Scheib reportedly purchased the inn and farm in March 1900. Things did not get off to a good start as he lost some oaten sheafs and a chaff house and cutter in a fire on 18 March 1900.¹¹

Perhaps William McLeod was not in the best of health which may have been the reason for selling. He died in 1904.

William Alfred Henry Scheib – 1900 - 1907

William (known as Alfred or Alf) came from Cromwell where the Electoral Rolls report in 1893 he was a tailor and later had a bicycle shop. He had purchased the tailoring business of James Roy shortly before January 1893 as indicated in newspaper advertisements. It appears he was a cyclist of some repute prior to coming to Queensberry and he would have had personal knowledge of the Queensberry Inn during some of his reported cycling trips. He was also a councillor at Cromwell (took his seat September 1899 for the Kawarau Ward), played in the Central Otago Brass Band and was also a rugby player. He had married to Inez Rosa de Bettencor from Cromwell, in 1896. In all, they are reported to have had eight children but a birth entry for Iris, who married in 1916, cannot be found.

Alfred apparently travelled to Alaska in 1898 and this report appeared in the Wanganui Herald on 26 July 1898:

A letter from Mr Schieb, from Lake Bennett, Alaska, on the route to Klondyke, is published in the Cromwell Argus. "I have gone through more hardships," says Mr Schieb, "since starting on this trail than I would go through in a lifetime in New Zealand. I would not go through the same again for all the gold in Klondyke. America is the last place in the world for a poor man to come to, thinking to do well, as the wages are small and the hours long. If Klondyke turns out a failure, I bid good-bye to America as soon as I can get enough money to get out of it."

¹¹ Otago Daily Times, 20 Mar 1900, page 4



Alfred and Inez Scheib

Alfred was granted his Accommodation Licence for the Queensberry Inn on 4 June 1900.
After they left Queensberry, they moved to the Luggate Hotel.



**Scheib Family in 1921 - L to R Standing: Ernie, Violet, Eric, Iris.
Sitting: Vic, Inez, Ona, Alf, Edna. Daphne absent**

John Brensell – 1907-1907

John (known as Jack) was the most unsuccessful proprietors of the Queensberry Inn. He purchased the Inn in April 1907 for £720 from Alfred Scheib. His contribution to the purchase was apparently a whole £20 and he borrowed the rest. Amongst the secured lenders, it is believed the major one was local businessman, D A Jolly.

John had sold his team of eight draught geldings in Dunedin on 28 March 1907 to raise some funds towards stock etc. He was originally from Arrowtown and was then normally resident in Cromwell.

The following appeared in the Evening Star 27 March 1908 following being adjudged bankrupt on 20 March 1908:

The meeting of creditors in the bankrupt estate of John Brensell, hotelkeeper, of Queensberry, was this afternoon adjourned for fourteen days to admit of bankrupt (who is represented by Mr B. S. Irwin) appearing. From the meagre details yet to hand the total amount of bankrupt's liabilities would appear to be £326 8s 9d. What assets can be placed against this sum are not yet notified.

A hearing before the Court on 14 September 1908 requesting a discharge from bankruptcy makes it clear what the problems were. Brensell was represented by B S Irwin:

“The acting Assignee said he understood a telegram had been sent to his Honor(sic) direct.

His Honor : Yes. It wants a good deal of explanation.

Mr Irwin: I understand the assignee reports that the bookkeeping was bad.

His Honor: There is no account of liabilities.

Mr Irwin, appearing in support of the application, said that the man was a waggoner, and sold his team, and was put into the hotel by Mr Jolly. He carried on for six months, when the mortgagees closed down. When he went into the hotel, he owed £100 and after being in six months, his debts mounted to £300. He planted 70 acres in crop. When cut, this crop would be worth about £400. Before it was cut however, the mortgagees seized and sold the property, and the crop was lost to the bankrupt. Brensell believes that if he had been allowed to cut the crop, he would have been able to meet his liabilities.

Bankrupt was examined at length.

Mr Fisher said he thought the state of the books was the result of ignorance.

His Honor: The bankrupt had no right to go into business at all. He was insolvent when he went into it and as a matter of course, in a few months his difficulties increased. It is impossible from the books kept by the bankrupt to say exactly how the money went. The fact remains however, that after a few months he was £200 more to the bad than when he went into it. I don't think there is any suggestion of dishonesty or fraud. It is a combination of ignorance and muddle. At the same time, however, no satisfactory records have been kept after bankrupt had gone into business. It is not a case for immediate discharge. Order for Discharge suspended for nine months”

Some of the expenses would have been spent on renovating and making repairs to the Inn that were called for by the Warden's Court in 1906.

The mortgagees apparently sold the Inn and buildings to Mary Sachtler, which was approved on 3 Dec 1907. The actual transfer appeared to have occurred on or about 28 October 1907.

Mary Sachtler 1907 - July 1909

Mary had recently become a widow when her husband William died as the owner of the Sachtlers Commercial Hotel in Wanaka.

Mary would have been well-known to the mortgagees involved in Brensell's bankruptcy and with her hotel experience, the ideal person to step in temporarily (perhaps). But it was still a commercial transaction for her as she had to mortgage the Inn property to borrow £300 from D A Jolly & Sons from 28 October 1907. In July 1909 she sold the Inn to John Perriam and she moved to Kokonga and operated the Kokonga Hotel. In November 1911 she was advertising the land, livestock and equipment of that hotel for sale. The hotel building was completely destroyed by fire on the night of 7 November 1911 and Mary's sister, Dorothy Carlton, was seriously burned.

In 1912 she married William Reid from Bannockburn. In 1913 she is recorded as the owner of the Bannockburn Hotel and then William followed in the period 1914 – 1915 as owner.¹² But Mary was to return to the Queensberry Inn a little while later.

John William Perriam – 1909-1915



Photo of John c1894

Whilst John purchased the Inn in July 1909 and obtained the necessary licences, the renewal in 1910 was subject to various repairs being undertaken, which were completed and the licences approved. However, that was maybe a portent of what was to come in the future.

All was not 'plain sailing' health wise, as he ended up in Cromwell Hospital, seriously ill in July 1912 but managed to recover.

John's second marriage was to Mary Cameron n^èe Lacey in 1904 and they had five sons during their marriage. John's previous marriage was to Elizabeth Auchinvole n^èe Trevathan (a

¹² The Bannockburn History Project - <http://oldbannockburn.nz/Home/Index>

widow) who he married in 1894 and divorced in 1902. Whilst married to Elizabeth, he operated the Cromwell Brewery that she received from her previous husband as a settlement.¹³

In August 1915 he sold out to William Reid of the Bannockburn Hotel. The sale was approved in December 1915. John passed away in 1923 aged 55 years.

William and Mary Reid – 1915 - 1925

It should be noted that renewals of licences by the Health Department had been subject to repairs at both the Bannockburn Hotel and the Queensberry Inn, so the latter building was slowly deteriorating and perhaps William was not so keen on undertaking repairs. In any case, he was called up by the Military Service Board and in 1917 was appealing for more time to sell his business, pointing out that out of 9 brothers, six were already serving, another had passed fit, so he would be the eighth brother called up. He was given until March 1918 to sell, but with the possibility of a further extension implied.

Time went on. The 1923 renewal approval would only be forthcoming if certain improvements were made and William and Mary were trying to sell via newspaper advertisements that extolled the success of the business, but without success. In June 1925, William's application for renewal of licences was declined due to the "dilapidated state of the premises." At the previous annual meeting William had been warned that the licences would not be renewed for a further year on account of the "out-of-repair" condition and if anything, a year later it was worse.

It meant that the Inn had to close down and the Reids had to cease serving alcohol by 30 June 1925.¹⁴

The committee said they would only consider a renewal for new premises to be built but that did not happen. As a result, the Inn ceased operation as a hotel/public house on 30 June 1925.

William continued to try to sell the properties but unsuccessfully, for quite a while.

Subsequent Owners

This is a list of subsequent owners but maybe not in the correct order (apart from the last two):

- Tom Allison
- Bert Lawless
- Alex Stalker
- Denis Fastier
- In 1993, David and Bev Belsham took over the property and started a restoration project converting what was the grooms quarters into comfortable B&B rooms. The

¹³ <https://bimboe9.tripod.com/NZ%20Familt.htm#John%20&%20Elizabeth%20Perriam>

¹⁴ Wakatipu Licensing Committee, Dunstan Times, 8 June 1925 Page 5

“Stables” as the building is known, is under a New Zealand Historic Places Heritage Covenant.

- In 2011, Jenny and Jed Hall became the owners.

ARDMORE STREET CONT. – FROM HORSES TO MOTORS

The first motor garage in Pembroke operated out of the building that was the Commercial Hotel built by William Allan in 1885, situated just past where currently Kai Whakapai Eatery & Craft Beer Bar is located at 121 Ardmore Street (on the Lakefront). The garage had been operated by a Frank Wilson who closed it and left town on 12 June 1922. Horatio M Mackay, previously the licensee of the Hawea Flat Hotel and Store which burnt down in 1921 in reportedly “mysterious circumstances”¹⁵, with an eye to the tourism industry, took over the garage in August 1922.¹⁶ The trading name, Pembroke Motors was retained for the time being. Horatio had much bigger plans afoot that would have a large impact on the tourism industry in Pembroke.

In 1923, his wife Helen purchased the narrow strip of land owned by Robert McDougall on which it was planned to build a new motor garage. Without delay work started on building a new concrete walled motor garage and it was completed in March 1924. There was not only a motor garage and workshop, but a hairdresser’s saloon, billiards room and a residence.¹⁷



Principally, the business was initially created to service their tourist cars/coaches travelling between Dunedin and Pembroke. It joined up under a new nationwide tourist service named White Star Tourist Services and on 9 October 1924 a company named Dunedin Wānaka

¹⁵ 128 Years on the Flat, A History of the Hawea Flat School and Hawea Flat, Glenda Turnbull, p.26

¹⁶ Advertisements, Cromwell Argus, 21 August 1922, P4

¹⁷ Wānaka Notes, Lake County Press, 3 April 1924, P2

Motors Ltd was registered with two other investors to take over the business. The company had another garage in Princess St., Dunedin.

Horatio Mackay was one of the principals behind the White Star enterprise.

In late 1924, the business also purchased the accommodation/boarding house owned by Mary Allan (wife of William Allan of Commercial Hotel and SS 'Makarora' fame¹⁸), just a short distance further up Ardmore St.¹⁹ This was known as the White Star Hotel and later as Pembroke Guest House.

A setback to the business happened on the night of 26 Jun 1925 when James Perrow's Store on the southwest corner of Helwick St and Ardmore Street caught fire. The fire moved next door and completely destroyed the old motor garage that was still used by Dunedin-Wānaka Motors Ltd under the banner of the White Star Company. The garage contained five motor cars and two motorcycles that were destroyed. That was the end of what was the original Commercial Hotel.

The motor garage business continued from the new Ardmore Street site. But no self-respecting motor garage would be without petrol pumps. At the March 1926 Lake County Council meeting, D A Jolly & Sons (now the Four Square Store) applied for permission to install a kerbside petrol pump, no more than 6 feet in front of the store with a tank capacity of 500 gallons. Horatio Mackay made a similar application and he stated that the height of the pump would be 9 feet and it would be surmounted by an electric light.²⁰ Approval was given with an annual fee of £2-10-0 payable. This is way before reticulated power arrived in Pembroke but the business operated a generator behind the garage building, that incidentally also provided electricity to the Wānaka Hotel over the road.

But look at how many pumps the White Star garage ended up with and where they were located away out on what we now know as the Ardmore Street. This photo is about 1940. The pumps were supposed to be removed by then so the Council could reform and seal Ardmore St. – that did not happen until 1948/9!



¹⁸ William Allan died in November 1924 but the property was always in Mary's name up till when it sold.

¹⁹ Central Otago White Star Motor Service, Mt Benger Mail, 5 November 1924, P3

²⁰ Lake County Council, Cromwell Argus, 5 April 1926, P4

But sometimes, things are not always the same as they might appear on the surface. It is probable that the losses resulting from the “Perrow” fire led to Dunedin-Wānaka Motors Ltd ending up in liquidation in late 1926/early 1927. In addition to that, Horatio was adjudged bankrupt on 29 June 1927 because of a car accident in which the driver and Horatio (a passenger at the time) severely injured two ladies. The ladies sued the driver, Dave Ritchie, and Horatio, for £4,000 and were awarded £750 damages from each of them. The driver paid up but Horatio did not. It appears that the Court decided it to be a personal liability and not a business liability, so the ladies succeeded in having Horatio adjudged bankrupt. On appeal to a Supreme Court decision not to discharge him from bankruptcy without paying anything, Horatio succeeded a few months later on condition he paid £300 to his creditors pool. In reality he got off very lightly. Not so the ladies, one of whom lost a leg. The total dividend to creditors was six shillings and two pence in the pound (30.8%).

Going back to 1928, a new company, Wanaka Motors Ltd was formed (Horatio was not a shareholder) and this company purchased the business of Dunedin Wanaka Motors Ltd from the liquidator. The Electoral Roll indicates that John M Mackay was the manager of the business in 1928 though gradually Horatio took this over even though he was resident in Dunedin. There may have been other manager e.g. F .B. Dean from about 1932 and then I Oakden before George Burrows purchased the business (excluding the land and buildings) in 1934. George’s wife, Mary, apparently looked after the confectionary shop part.

Then along came William (Bill) Manson. He purchased the business from George on 22 September 1935 and arranged a lease from Wanaka Motors Ltd for five years from 1 October 1935.

In 1936, New Zealand Railways acquired the transport services of the White Star group, including Wānaka Motors Ltd.²¹ Reading between the lines in the newspapers of the time, it might appear that the Government was removing competitors to the NZR bus services! Certainly about September 1937, the White Star Hotel closed its doors. Up till that time it had been managed by Miss Anita Urquhart.²² In December 1937 it was re-opened as the Pembroke Guest House under the management of Mrs E Andrews.²³

Bill Manson continued operating his business from the premises and eventually NZR got around to formalizing the lease arrangements. Leases were renewed over the years until 1 October 1960 when Bill arranged for his new company, Manson’s Wanaka Motors Ltd, to takeover leasing arrangements. The garage performed an important service to the Wanaka Community, as from about 1952, the fire appliances for the Fire Brigade were stored there until the new Fire Station was built in 1965.

About this time, Bill relinquished his lease having built a new motor garage over the road where the Countdown Store currently operates from. The garage ceased operation about 2020 (operating then under the BP banner).

²¹ Transport Services, Otago Daily Times, 17 April 1936, P8

²² Wānaka Story, Irvine Roxburgh, published 1957, P211

²³ Wānaka Notes, Cromwell Argus, 27 December 1937, P5

JO'S UPDATE

We have had a very productive year as a volunteer working group which numbers 20 dedicated assistants. An example is Jeannine who gives 1 hour a week of expertise in the library but like many of us extra time off-site. Pam, now living in Kerikeri, still continues to proofread the newsletters. Kaye has moved back to Australia but wants to continue with on-line research and summaries on topics. Erena, our Collections manager, is now able to access our Past Perfect database remotely so accessioning and updating has increased hugely. We have to keep an account of our hours worked to report back to the Charities Commission in categories; Accessioning, Projects, Research, Other (admin for example). Accessioning is by far the greatest hours worked which this year includes all the Oral History recording and documentation required per interview. December 6th is our final library working day and we will re convene Wednesday 7th February 2024.

ENQUIRIES, RESEARCH AND PHOTOS

The Records Room at the Wānaka Library is open on Wednesday mornings from about 9am to 11am (except during December and January). It is manned by a small team of volunteers. To make an appointment for Research enquiries, please contact the Wanaka Library staff who will pass on the request, or preferably, email admin@uppercluthahistory.org with contact details and the subject of your enquiry.

THANKS

Thanks are extended to the various publications that were the sources of the information in the newsletter. Individuals are too numerous to list but references have been sourced from Paperspast.co.nz, a number of out-of-print publications and the records of the UCHRS.

OUR PUBLICATIONS

The Society has published a small number of books and booklets over the years.

Skirt Tales – 100 Historical Stories of Women from the Upper Clutha Area, Central Otago - \$25. This is the 4th time this book has been reprinted. It is available from the Society, and the Wanaka Library. Postage is \$7-50 if required.

The Sequel – - \$25. A sequel to Skirt Tales. A small number of copies of this book are available from The Society and the Wanaka Library. Postage \$7-50.

125, Look Alive – 125 Years of Schooling in the Wanaka District - \$15.00. Available from the Society or the Wanaka Library. Postage is \$7-00 if required.

The Upper Clutha – 150 Years - \$5. A short history of the Upper Clutha district. Available from the Society or the Wanaka Library. Postage is \$6-50 if required.

Courageous and Free – \$30 -Stories of Upper Clutha WW1 Soldiers and Nurse who died due to war service. This is the second edition. Postage \$7-50.

NZ Post “Bubble Bags” are used to protect the books.

PHOTOS

Copies of the photographs held in our records can be provided either as a digital file of a printed copy.

Costs are:

For individuals:

Digital file: \$10-00

Printed Copy: \$10-00 plus the cost of printing the Photo at Kodak, Wanaka.

For Non-profit Community organizations:

There is generally no fee for digital copies but a donation would be welcome. For printed copies, the Community organization will need to pay for the Kodak Wanaka printing cost.

For Commercial Organizations:

The fee is \$30.00 plus the cost of any printed copy.

Please note that ownership of the image lies with UCHRS and further copying requires our written approval and possibly an additional negotiated fee.

WHO ARE WE?

President (and Editor): Ken Allan

Secretary/Treasurer: Bruce Foulds

Committee Members: Erena Barker, Ed Taylor, Pam Kane, Jo Wilton. Winton Davies, Helen Howarth.

The Society was established in 1985, Incorporated in 2010, and became a Charity in 2014, to collect and preserve records and images of the history of the Upper Clutha region and make them available to members of the public. The records are held in a special room in the Wanaka Library and a small team of volunteers provides research assistance (appointments are necessary) to members of the public who may be looking for their family history or for persons searching for aspects of NZ history. Copying costs apply.

Please contact a Librarian at the Wanaka Library who will pass on the request or send us an email to admin@uppercluthahistory.org .

The Society is a Registered Charity. Funding is reliant on the assistance of a variety of community funders and individual gifts. Donations are very welcome, as are new members.

Donations may be made to our bank account 03-1739-0012311-00 with the reference – Donation. As we are a Registered Charity, donations over \$5 are tax deductible – please ask for a receipt. Please note that the IRD require donor’s full name and full address

Membership Subscriptions for year ending 31/3/2023 are \$15-00 per person.

Website: <http://www.uppercluthahistory.org/>

Email: admin@uppercluthahistory.org