

In MEMORY of HENRY MANSON



Henry James Manson 1922-2014
(Harry) died 1 December 2014 at age 92 years.

Henry Manson known as Harry was born in Lyttelton 10 May 1922 the third child of Charles Samuel Manson (descendant of James Manson) and Helen Mary Wheeler. Henry married Monica Lillian Wanstrell and together had five children.

In July 2003, whilst researching the Manson Family, I had the pleasure of meeting Harry at 440 Bower Avenue, his home in North Brighton.

Harry, a widower was a very fit looking man in his 81st year.

In the past Harry had worked as a plasterer and had some very good examples of his work, one being a four foot statue of 'David' and another 'Napoleons wife'. He explained that these had been taken from moulds.

Many other statues including cats and birds were displayed throughout the garden. He also had a pond with goldfish, a dove cot with doves and a small aviary.

Harry took a great interest in the history of the Manson family; his thoughts on the subject have appeared several times in the Christchurch Press.

One project connected to the Manson family he really enjoyed, was his involvement in the straightening of the Monument and tidying of Samuel and Jean Manson's grave at Governors Bay Church yard in 1994.

He spoke affectionately of his Grandchildren and great Grandchildren who were living in Christchurch at that time. One Grandchild offered his bedroom to Harry 'when he got old' and he the grandson would sleep in the sleep-out.

Harry had a remarkable memory and could recall places and incidences of his life back to a young age, so it is not surprising he eventually put pen to paper and wrote extensively on his childhood memories.

Janet O'Loughlin.

"HENRY MANSON Some Memories....."

A selection of his Memories :

Henry Manson was born in Lyttelton at the time his parents were living in a house opposite the Hotel at Teddington.

"So that's where I started. I was called Henry, Mum always called me Henry and so I was called that at school, but now people call me Harry – I actually changed my name when I was working because a chap at work would always sing 'Henry the V111th.' Every time he saw me. I got sick of that so the next job I went to I changed my name to Harry.....

I was only a baby when Dad died and Mum had to take on housekeeping jobs. We travelled a fair bit- Auckland, Sydney, went to school at Heathcote and then came back to Grandad's place at Prebbleton. That's Grandad Wheeler, Mum's father. She'd been brought up in Kaiapoi where Grandad was a ranger, he had black hair-stayed black all his life too, but in those days he had a black beard as well as his black hair and he was known as "The Black Tracker". Mum used to tell us that after the weekends they always had fish, always fish because Grandad would confiscate it!

Anyway Grandad had married again and Grandma was called Buzz – don't know why she was called that but she was. She was a big women and I always remember one time she went to the toilet. They had a long drop – everyone did in those days, and I remember it had two holes in the seat, one was a small one for a child.

Anyway Grandma was on the toilet when the seat broke and she got stuck in the hole. Her legs were against the door and Grandad couldn't open it so he had to run to Jimmy Smith's down the road and borrow a tripod. He had to take the roof off the toilet and hoist Grandma out that way. Always remember that.

Grandad had a magpie. It used to go and sit on top of the tank stand, it was a real high stand and the magpie would sit up there and call the cows in any time of the day. "Come on, come on, come on" and the cows would all come down to the bale. Grandad used to go crook. If you chased the magpie it would say "bugger you, bugger you, bugger you.

Grandad was a qualified bricklayer. I recall him telling us that he laid the last brick in the Catholic Cathedral in Barbados Street. Don't know if he did or not, but that's what he said.

I remember the way he used a scythe to cut the lucerne. Back and forwards, back and forwards, so evenly and the lucerne all lay there in rows. That's a real art, you have to do it just the right way.

Us kids used to go to Lincoln about once a fortnight I think, for woodwork and cooking. The boys did woodwork and the girls did cooking. We had to go by bus and it left at the corner at quarter to eight, an early start and then we would wait around for the bus to bring us home,

We used to fool around while we were waiting –jumping over the creek that was there- well, see who could make it, that is. We used to be given 6d to spend that day. I used to buy 3d worth of aniseed balls. I enjoyed that day, looked forward to it.”

Contributed by, Charles Manson, Christine Wakelin and Patricia Willoughby.

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Stone Cottage Orton Bradley Park

The condition of the stone cottage at Orton Bradley Park is unchanged from the time of the cottage update written in the Manson Newsletter December 2014.

“The plans for the rebuild have been approved and the Orton Bradley Trust is at present getting together quotes for the rebuild”.

Earlier this year the stone cottage was mentioned in the ‘Orton Bradley Park’ newsletter as becoming the ‘Information Centre’ this being part of their plans to re-invigorate the historical buildings.

‘Orton Bradley Park’ newsletter,
Development plans,
pg. 3.

“ Over the next three years we are looking to re-invigorate the historical buildings/area with the rebuild stone cottage becoming the information centre. The buildings will provide historical interpretation of the area, the Bradley family and park history in general. They are currently working on programmes that visitors and schools in particular, can use to understand how colonial families lived, the technology involved, and how they sustained themselves in the area and compare it with current behaviours.....”

“The most noticeable change to begin with will be the realigning of the driveway around the back of the historical buildings as it was in the 1970’s.”

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Old Smithy at Teddington



The Smithy in early days of restoration



A recent view of the Smithy

David Bundy reports good progress at the Smithy.

“A retired Blacksmith, Les Schenkel from Lyttelton is fitting up the forge. The fit up is almost finished so the Smithy will be in working condition again.

Other parts are yet to be installed. ie. The story of Ra Blatchfords use of the building along with some Teddington history.”

Forge – a blacksmith’s hearth or fireplace with bellows, furnace or hearth for melting or refining metal.