

*Merry Christmas to all our members*



Christmas parade, Basin Reserve, 12/11/60 [ATL 1/2-212637-F]

### AGM

At our AGM in September, the following officers were elected to the committee: Joanna Newman, Margaret Earle, Jane O'Loughlin, Rosemary Bromley, Alan Olliver.

Our Constitution, revised to meet new incorporated societies legislation, was also approved by all members present.

We held our AGM at The Cambridge Hotel and also enjoyed a tour and short talk about the establishment. Inspired by that, Alan Olliver did a lot of research into its history, filling out the story and correcting one or two misconceptions, so we're sharing that in our Historical Note this issue.

### Embassy Theatre centennial

Our history panel marking the 100<sup>th</sup> birthday of the Embassy Theatre, on its Majoribanks St wall, was 'unveiled' on the birthday of the Theatre at a function supported by Wellington City Council. An especially huge thank you to members who generously donated towards its costs – both those who are named and those who wished to remain anonymous.

The Committee arranged a cake for the occasion, decorated with the technological wonder of an edible photograph of the Deluxe Theatre in 1924. Many of us went on to watch the showing of Cecil B DeMille's black and white silent movie (with added sound track), *The Ten Commandments*, which was surprisingly engrossing. The six guided tours of the history of the theatre which we ran over Labour Weekend were also enthusiastically and well-attended, but it is the panel which will be an ongoing reminder of the significance of the building and a point of interest to passersby.



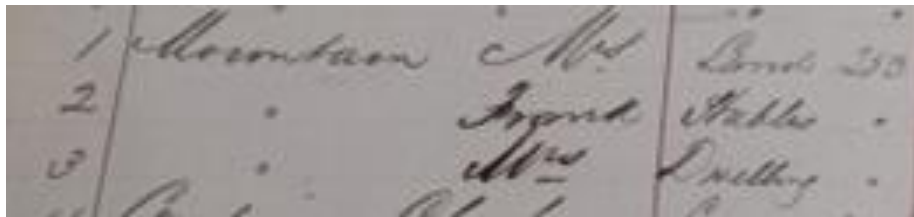
## HISTORIC NOTE



### A History Re-write for the “Cambridge” Hotel

There is some confusion over when the Cambridge Hotel on Cambridge Terrace was established. Last year the hotel celebrated its 140<sup>th</sup> anniversary, however research that I’ve carried out, indicates that the hotel’s history is older than that.

The site of the Cambridge Hotel was part of Town Acre 283, which was subdivided by Lipman Levy in 1873. There were several transfers of the land title that followed, but in 1878 the certificate of title (CT 14/122) for TA 283 was transferred to Mary Mountain. Her husband, Frank established the Tattersall’s Horse Bazaar on the site, and next door built a hotel which was largely complete by October 1880. Frank had been a hotelier in Wellington and the Wairarapa. From 1878 to 1880 he had run the New Zealander Hotel in Manners Street. In March 1880 he applied for a hotel licence on the Cambridge Terrace site, but failed to get one as the plans for the hotel were different from what had been built.



*Detail of rates entry by Frank & Mrs Mountain for TA 283. This entry is before the hotel construction was completed. [Rate Book Cook Ward 1880-1881. WCA 00163-54]*

There were also complaints and ill feeling towards Frank in the community. Overall, the committee did not support his application and basically said there was no need in reapplying.

However, on October 1<sup>st</sup> 1880, the hotel did open and was serving drinks and accommodating customers. It appears he did have a licence, but this did not last for long. He had serious financial problems and couldn’t pay his creditors.

*Right: Detail of Frank Mountain’s boastful Tattersall’s Hotel advertisement EP. 29/9/1880*

**TATTERSALL’S HOTEL,**  
CAMBRIDGE TERRACE,  
FRANK MOUNTAIN, PROPRIETOR,  
Will  
OPEN ON 1<sup>ST</sup> OCTOBER, 1880.

FRANK MOUNTAIN, the Host, who is known  
so well,  
In spite of a fierce opposition,  
Has opened his TATTERSALL’S splendid  
HOTEL  
In a proper and first-rate condition.  
The building’s erected regardless of cost ;

The assets of the horse bazaar were auctioned on the 28<sup>th</sup> October 1880. A creditors meeting was called for 24<sup>th</sup> December 1880, when creditors then took control of the hotel and its assets worth a total of £3015. Sawmillers, James & Charles Stewart and James Hutchin, owners of Stewart & Co. in Courtenay Place, obtained the land title through the Supreme Court. They were owed money presumably for the supply of building materials for the hotel. Other assets were sold on the 11<sup>th</sup> January, and Frank Mountain was declared bankrupt on the 12<sup>th</sup> February 1881.

In the meantime, the hotel’s licence was transferred, and the hotel was enlarged and renovated by April 1881. The “Tattersalls” name was retained, sometimes referred to as “Tattersalls Royal Hotel” or “Tattersalls Hotel and Tramway Terminus”.

At the time of the timber hotel’s construction, this was considered a very pleasant part of the city, and that from the balconies an excellent view of the harbour and city could be obtained. On the ground floor were the public and private bars, three private sitting rooms, a dining room, a billiard room, a kitchen and a scullery. Upstairs

there were nine bedrooms, two sitting rooms, and lavatories with hot and cold water. A room cost 25/- per week. A dark room was provided for tourists to develop their photographs and meeting spaces for groups including coroner's hearings. One hearing, was the sensational killing of William Spreat of Pirie Street by his son Louis in 1893. (See Newsletter No. 104 for the story of William Spreat.)



Cambridge Hotel, 1920 [ATL 1/2-037388-F]

From 1883 the hotel was leased by John & William Staples. They owned the Staples Brewery, located in Thorndon on the current New World Supermarket site. William died in 1885 and John, then trading as J. Staples & Co, sold the brewery in 1889 to Martin Kennedy. At the Cook Ward Licensing Committee hearing in June 1887, the name of the hotel was changed to the Cambridge Hotel. [Right: EP27/6/1887.]

The present hotel was designed in the inter-war Classical Style by the architects Swan, Lawrence & Swan, late in 1929. An adjacent section to the south of the old hotel was bought, allowing for a larger hotel development on the Cambridge Terrace frontage. Demolition of the old wooden hotel began in February 1930, and construction of the new hotel was completed in April 1931.

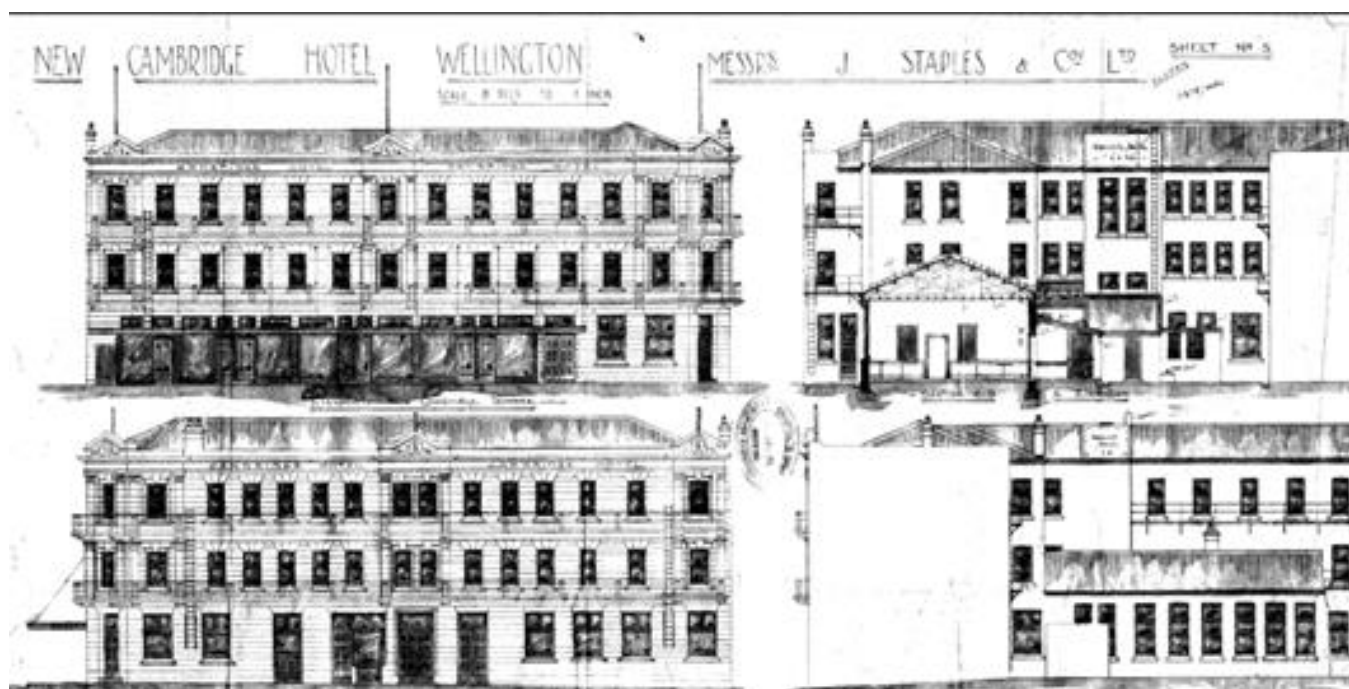
### **Cook Licensing Committee.**

The adjourned annual meeting of the Cook Licensing Committee was held at the Corporation Buildings at noon to-day. Present—Messrs. A. Young (in the chair), F. H. Fraser, M.H.E., J. E. Hayes, and J. Potherick.

The Clerk to the Committee (Mr. J. Ames) said that the only business before the Committee was the application of Henry Wright for a license for Tattersall's Hotel.

On the application of Mr. Edwards the Committee agreed to the alteration of the name of the premises from Tattersalls Hotel to Cambridge Hotel.

This concluded the business.



Above: 1930, 28 Cambridge Terrace, Hotel [WCA 00056:97:B9030]

The hotel was originally leased out, but in 1937 it was purchased by New Zealand Breweries and managed by the company until its sale to private interests in 1996.

The website [wellingtoncityheritage.org.nz](http://wellingtoncityheritage.org.nz) noted that the new hotel had seven retail shops incorporated into the Cambridge Terrace frontage. This was in an era when retail shopping was more popular in Cambridge Terrace. The Hotel underwent a number of modifications, as drinking fashions and cultures changed. The shops were demolished in 1967 for conversion to a club bar, around the same time as the demise of six o'clock closing. The large bar serveries and small customer areas, typical of the six o'clock closing era, were modified in 1972 and 1974 to meet new expectations. Women's toilets were also installed during this time – a feature absent from the original bar designs. Changes were also made to the accommodation above, notably the inclusion of ensuite bathrooms in some rooms.

The current Cambridge Hotel has been serving patrons and guests since 1931. With the demolition of a number of Wellington's historic hotels, it is now one of the oldest in the central city and entertainment district. The hotel is Heritage New Zealand Listed (2/ Historic Place 1344).



*A view of Cambridge Terrace from the Cambridge Hotel's upstairs veranda c. 1890. [Alexander Turnbull Library]*