

BROOKLANDS - 1486 Kimbolton Road, Cheltenham



Architect: Unknown

Construction date: 1885

Visible materials: Timber cladding & joinery, corrugated steel roofing

Architectural style: Victorian villa

Use/building type: House

Date and Compiler: Ian Bowman, 2015, Val Burr 2019

Heritage New Zealand listing: Nil

Proposed category: B

PHYSICAL AND SOCIAL HISTORY

Although there has apparently been some uncertainty about when this house was built, it was in fact built in 1885, about four years after members of the Bruce family purchased this property. The *Feilding Star* of 8 August 1885 (p. 2) recorded the following: “We notice that several good substantial dwelling houses have been or are being erected along the Kimbolton, Ashurst (sic) and Taonui roads. Among those on the first-named highways is one of two stories, now being built for Mr Glacken, **and another finished and occupied by Mr Bruce, on his section opposite the Cheltenham hotel.**” John Bruce, who was not yet married, had named his new home and property ‘Brooklands.’

The exterior of the house is made of matai, while the inside is of rimu. Originally the house had a shingle roof, and this is still present beneath the iron roof of the oldest part of the house. At some stage an addition has been made to one end of the house, and this added more bedrooms. This extension did not have a shingle roof.¹ It was not apparent during this study as to which owners did the extension, but it seems more likely that it was the Bruce family.

Diana Johnson, who has lived opposite this house since the 1950s, recalls that until the 1980s there was also a single-room extension on the south-western end of the house. She understands that this

¹ Historic Places Manawatu-Horowhenua Inc. File No: 31-0019: ‘Brooklands’

room began as an office, but which owner added it is uncertain. It was later converted into a ‘bird room’ – a topic that will be covered due course.

When John Bruce died in 1914, the Halcombe correspondent of the *Rangitikei Advocate & Manawatu Argus*, wrote a most touching and personal obituary for his late friend. This provides a more detailed life story than the more stereotypical obituaries published in other newspapers at this time:

“Since my last, another old and much-esteemed settler, the late Mr John Bruce, of Cheltenham, has ‘crossed the bar.’ It is close upon forty years since I first met deceased, who, with his late brother Alex, was then farming near Sanson. These brother Bruces, together with the Henson brothers—two of whom have also departed this life—when seen together impressed me with a sense of my physical smallness. Each of them was over six feet in height and each appeared fit for anything that required strength of will, muscle and endurance. Yet, alas, these apparently powerful men, whose hand grip I have often felt and compared to that of a vice, have passed away and left me, a comparative pigmy, to record the melancholy fact and voice my growing sense of depressing loneliness.

“Distinctly do I remember the time when the deceased John Bruce purchased the Cheltenham property, which was then heavy bush land, all of which has since been cleared and a portion made into a sports and cricket ground, and upon which I have often met the genial owner. As a liberal and popular president of the Cheltenham Rifle Club, old rifle shots will have reason to regret what appeals to me as the untimely death of a kindly friend and useful public man. A man who delighted to meet and discuss matters of more importance than sports. How rapidly these sources of conversational and other pleasures are being removed only the old who make few new friends can fully realise. With the sorrowing widow and bereaved family I deeply sympathise.”²

History as seen through the Property’s Certificates of Title

The property’s numerous Certificates of Title provide a timeline of the various changes of ownership, starting with the Strawbridge family, different members of whom owned quite a lot of land in the area around the 1880s.³ These Certificates of Title show as follows:

Samuel & John Strawbridge (? – 1881)

The Certificates of Title for this property trace to one that was replaced in 1880. This was WN25/131 – which was not sighted for this study. Insofar as this property is concerned, CT WN25/131 was replaced on 14 July 1881 by CT’s WN26/162 (for Section 213 of the Township of Sandon – 245 acres) and WN26/163 (also for Section 213 of the Township of Sandon – 245 acres). Both the two new titles vested the property in the name of Samuel Strawbridge, a settler of Taratahi, as *“Tenants in Common.”* The property already had a mortgage on it, dated 16 June 1879, in the name of *“John Strawbridge and another.”*⁴ This mortgage was duly cleared, and this fact was recorded on the title on 9 September 1881.

The Bruce family (1881-1937)

Both of these aforementioned Certificates of Title show that the two were then transferred (both on Transfer No. 6991) on 24 September 1881. CT WN26/162 was transferred to *“John Bruce of the Hutt, farmer,”* while WN26/163 was transferred to *“William Bruce of the Hutt, farmer.”* The pair were therefore tenants in common on Section 213.

² *Rangitikei Advocate & Manawatu Argus*, 4 January 1915, p. 8

³ For example, see MDC Heritage file: RH28 - 291 Haynes Line, Beaconsfield (formerly ‘Te Mara’ II), which was a former Strawbridge family home.

⁴ Diana Johnson’s research reveals that “another” was in fact Francis O’Reilly

CT WN26/163 then records that William Bruce had died on 1 July 1883, and that his tenancy had therefore been passed on to “Peter Bruce of the Hutt, farmer,” as administrator of William Bruce’s Estate. Then in 1887, the property was transmitted on to John Bruce (by then) of Sandon, evidently in association with the Will of William Bruce. This will has not been sighted for this study.

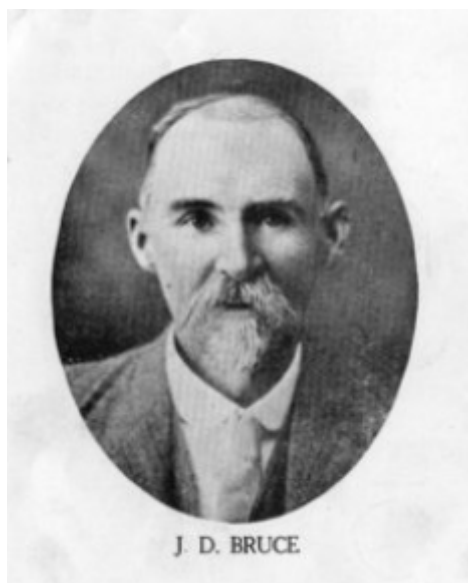


Figure 1 John Duthie Bruce – from an image in the Cheltenham Co-operative Dairy Co. Ltd’s history publication. The company obtained two acres from John Bruce (some sources say he donated it), where the company erected the dairy factory in 1893. This site was effectively across the paddock from the homestead, and also across Kimbolton Road from the Cheltenham Hotel. However, this transaction does not appear to be shown in this timeframe on the certificates of title sighted during this study. This seems likely to be the property transfer entered on the Certificate of Title in 1901. Bruce was one of the original directors of the company. [Source: *Golden Jubilee 1893-1943: Cheltenham Co-operative Dairy Co. Ltd.*, (Cheltenham, 1943) pp. 3, 4]

The two Certificates of Title were finally amalgamated on 7th April 1895 as CT WN77/102, and under the ownership of “John Bruce, (still erroneously referred to as) of Lower Hutt, farmer.” The acreage remained almost the same as above, but had reduced by 1 rood [$\frac{1}{4}$ acre] which was then sold and became CT WN77/101.⁵ Then in early 1900, an acre (or thereabouts) of land on the road frontage of the property (at the intersection) was transferred to Jane Elizabeth Rhoda Maud Stewart.⁶ Mrs Stewart, nee Kear, was the wife of John Stephen Stewart, who in turn was a civil engineer, a school teacher, and the son of the well-known early civil engineer in this region, John Tiffin Stewart (by then of Whanganui). The Stewart property at Cheltenham was called Fern Lea both some years before and certainly after this section of land was obtained from John Bruce.⁷ In 1904, Jane Stewart’s land was transferred to the Cheltenham Cooperative Blacksmithing Company.⁸

The remaining 244 acres and 12 perches of Brooklands became CT WN113/151. This in effect replaced CT WN77/102 and it was issued on 16 July 1901 - with John Bruce still erroneously being described as a farmer of Lower Hutt. In 1905, a grant of easement on the property was transferred to the mayor, councillors and burgesses of the Borough of Feilding. The details are unclear.

John Bruce died on 29 December 1914, and CT WN113/151 records that an entry was made on 11 October 1915, stating that the property was being transmitted to Agnes Bruce, widow of Cheltenham, and Henry Burrell, a farmer of Cheltenham – and was also Agnes’ brother.⁹ Burrell also had a prior relationship with the property as a holder of a mortgage over it. On 4th December 1925, the property was transferred on the Certificate of Title to Henry Burrell, as survivor (of the pair). Then a few days later, on 14th December 1925, the CT records Henry Burrell transferring the property to three Bruce daughters: Mary Elsie Tidy, wife of Christopher Alfred Tidy, an agent of Marton; Edith Doris Will, wife of William Hunter Will, a medical practitioner of Palmerston North; and Phyllis Ena Nicols, wife of Gordon Campbell Nicols, a farmer of Turakina, as tenants in common in equal shares. The property became known as the ‘Bruce Estate’.

⁵ Ref Diana Johnson’s notes, June 2022

⁶ The 1901 transaction appears to involve the two properties with the MDC Valuation Numbers: 13830/37200 and 13830/37201.

⁷ *Manawatu Herald*, 9 April 1891, p. 2; *Feilding Star*, 26 January 1893, p. 2, 15 January 1895, p. 2; *Wanganui Chronicle*, 25 May 1883, p. 2; *Wanganui Herald*, 16 August 1901, p. 2; Births, Deaths & Marriages Online <https://www.bdmonline.dia.govt.nz/>; Marriage Ref: 1891/3444

⁸ Diana Johnson’s notes, June 2022

⁹ *Feilding Star*, 21 June 1920, p. 1

In 1926, the trio granted water rights to the Mayor, Councillors and Burgesses of the Borough of Feilding.

The Bruce family story

As already stated, the Bruce family purchased the Brooklands property in 1881, and then built the first stage of the house in 1885 – at which time 31-year-old John Bruce was still single, unless there was a previous marriage that has not been identified in this study.

John Bruce was born in the Hutt Valley in about 1854 to Peter and Helen Bruce, although some oddities in the early NZ birth records in this time, cause some confusion here. His brothers Alexander (born 1844) and William (born 1852) also appear in the history of the property and in this story, with William having initially been its co-owner along with John. Alexander also lived variously at Feilding and Halcombe, where he is buried with his wife and son.¹⁰ Peter and Helen Bruce's family appear to have consisted of at least five or six children.¹¹

Evidently, John Bruce and his brother Alexander moved to the Sandon district in the 1870s. Then in due course John sold out his share of the Sandon property to Alexander and – with brother William - he purchased the Cheltenham property.¹² The next transition resulted from the death of William Bruce, aged 31, at Taita, on 1st July 1883.¹³ The Certificate of Title (WN26/163) then records the transfer of William's share of the farm back to their father, Peter Bruce, as administrator of William's estate. Then on 20th September 1887, Peter Bruce died at Newtown, aged 71,¹⁴ and so the Brooklands property passed entirely to John Bruce.

From soon after the Bruce family bought the property, "*Mr Bruce's Paddock, Cheltenham*", with its handy hill that accommodated the spectators¹⁵, became a popular venue for community sports days. For example, on 24th December 1883 the Cheltenham-Kiwitea Athletic Sports and Trotting Matches event was held there. The racing including trotting races open to all horses, and another for Kiwitea horses only. Races for the humans ranged up to a one mile race, and others included jumping races.¹⁶ These Christmas Eve events were not then consistently held at the Bruce property, however, with the 1885 event certainly being held elsewhere.¹⁷

John Bruce and Agnes Burrell married on 21 February 1887, their first child, Mary Elsie, arriving the following year. She was followed by Emily in 1890 (who died aged two days), William Burrell in 1893, Edith Doris in 1895 and Ena Phyllis Lizzie in 1897.¹⁸

The *Feilding Star* of 31 January 1898 (p. 2, col 4) advertised the fourth annual meeting of the Cheltenham-Kiwitea Sports, which was also to be held at "*J. Bruce Esq.'s Paddock*." For the horses, this included trotting races (for any horse that has not won public money), and a jumping event.

¹⁰ Manawatu District Council: Cemetery Search: http://www.mdc.govt.nz/Online_Services/Find_It/Cemetery_Search (Search: 'Alexander Bruce')

¹¹ Births, Deaths & Marriages Online: <https://www.bdmonline.dia.govt.nz/> : Birth Rego Refs: 1840/641 (born 1842), 1840/824 (born 1844), 1852/3709, 1856/4200, and most likely also 1850/2229 and 1854/2881 – the latter is listed as name 'not recorded', but is likely to be John Bruce. The latter two have the mother identified as "Ellen" rather than "Helen".

¹² *Feilding Star*, 30 December 1914, p. 3

¹³ *Evening Post*, 2 July 1882, p. 2

¹⁴ *Evening Post*, 21 September 1887, p. 2

¹⁵ Diana Johnson's notes, June 2022

¹⁶ *Feilding Star*, 18 December 1883, p. 3(3)

¹⁷ *Feilding Star*, 8 December 1885, p. 3(1)

¹⁸ Births, Deaths & Marriages Online: <https://www.bdmonline.dia.govt.nz/> : Birth Rego Refs: 1888/1893, 1890/14267, 1893/6742, 1895/2761 & 1897/5335. Emily's Death Ref: 1890/4969. ALSO: *Feilding Star*, 16 January 1895, p. 2, & 15 March 1897, p. 2

Events for the humans were now more varied, with assorted races up to one mile in distance, hurdles, races for married women, and wrestling. Agnes Bruce's garden was also used for other events, such as (along with the local hall across the road) the 1912, 1913 and 1914 Cheltenham Flower and Vegetable Show.¹⁹ Garden fetes were also held there to raise fund to build the Anglican Church opposite the farm. These fetes continued until 1917. John Bruce had also donated the land the church was built on.²⁰



Figure 2 Rifleman William Burrell Bruce – Killed in Action, 7 June 1917 (Source: *Free Lance*, 5 October 1917, p. 7)

John Duthie Bruce died in Wellington on 29 December 1914, aged 60.²¹ His obituary in the *Feilding Star* on 30th December 1914 (p. 3), referred to him as “the Father of Cheltenham” and said that he had been ill for about two months at the time of his death. The obituary stated that: “He was a wonderfully likeable man, full of broad sympathies, who never had a quarrel with anybody, always ready to heal broaches between others or between bodies with which he was connected and those who had differences with them, a genuinely good “sport” in the best sense, as fair as the daylight, a man of immense value to his district and all its settlers, a sturdy farmer and a generous and honourable business man. It is hard to say what the Cheltenham people will do without him.”

The obituary then outlined his community work: “Mr Bruce had extensive experience on the Kiwitea County Council, (which he was on) for many years retiring from that body three years ago. He had been Chairman of the Cheltenham Dairy Co. for some years, and helped that corporation out of the mire and clay to a sound position. He was one of the representatives of the Kiwitea county on the Palmerston Hospital Board, and held that office at the time of his death. He always filled a leading position on the cricket, football, and sports clubs of his district.” He

was to be buried at the Kiwitea Cemetery.²²

The obituary that appeared in the *Manawatu Times* on 31 December 1914 (p. 5) added that: “Various persons who attended Cheltenham sports every New Year, which were held on his property, will have a good idea of the vast amount of work which Mr Bruce did in the interests of sport in that district. Trotting meetings were also held on his property. In fact there was not a single branch of sport in which Mr Bruce did not play a prominent part. Liked and respected by all, his unexpected death will come as a great shock to all who had the honour of being acquainted with him.”

The timing of the 1915 Cheltenham sports day three days after Bruce's death, was a dilemma that the *Feilding Star* of 2 January 1915 (p. 3) solemnly recorded: “It was only natural that many people at Cheltenham sports yesterday should have been thinking of the late Mr John Bruce. Officials of the club wore black with their badges in memory of their deceased president. By request, Mr D. H. Guthrie, M.P., explained to a gathering that the sports would have been postponed had it been possible, but they all knew it would have been Mr Bruce's wish that the programme should be gone

¹⁹ *Feilding Star*, 10 February 1912, p. 2; 15 February 1913, p. 2; 17 February 1914, p. 3

²⁰ Diana Johnson's notes, June 2022

²¹ Births, Deaths & Marriages Online: <https://www.bdmonline.dia.govt.nz/> : Death: 1914/8082

²² *Feilding Star*, 30 December 1914, p. 3

on with. There could not be any there, added Mr Guthrie, who did not, sorely miss their genial president, and everybody will sincerely sympathise with Mrs Bruce and the members of the family in their bereavement. As a settler, a public man, and a supporter of all good sport, Mr Bruce set an example to all.”

The property was then transferred into the names of John’s widow Agnes, and her brother Henry Burrell, and this status remained until Agnes’ death on 12 December 1924, aged 69.²³ Then in December 1925, Henry Burrell transferred the property into the names of John and Agnes’ three surviving daughters.

William Burrell Bruce, the only son of the family, sailed for the UK in December 1916 as a rifleman in the 9th Reinforcements, 4th Battalion, H Company, in the NZ Rifle Brigade. He fought in the Messines campaign in Belgium, where he was initially reported as missing in action on 6th June 1917. He was subsequently confirmed as having been killed in action on that date.²⁴ The *Feilding Star* of 7 August 1917, (p. 3) duly reported that: “Very deep regret was expressed when news came through that Mr. Bruce, of Cheltenham, was killed at the front. He was well liked and very popular with all right through the district.” The *Free Lance* of 5 October 1917 (p. 7) subsequently reported: “Rifleman W.B. Bruce, who has been reported killed in action (is) the only son of Mrs Agnes Bruce, of Feilding, and is the last of this family of Bruce.” This latter reference will be to there having been only one other son born to the three Bruce brothers. He was Alexander’s son, Cecil Hamilton Bruce, and he had already died on 25 July 1907, aged 28.²⁵ There were surviving daughters however.

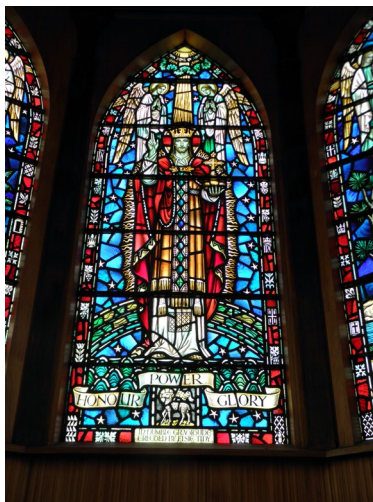


Figure 3 The loss of their brother in WWI continued to affect William Burrell Bruce’s family. In 1961, his sister, Elsie Tidy, donated the three leadlight windows now fitted above the high altar in the historic St. Stephen’s Church in Marton. The wording on the central window reads “In humble gratitude, Erected by Elsie Tidy” and the reason was her gratitude that her only son, Warwick Bruce Tidy (7/4/1918-21/3/1993) had survived the Second World War, where he had served as a pilot in the NZ Air Force.¹

The first of John and Agnes’ three daughters to marry was Mary Elsie, who married Christopher Alfred Tidy at St. Paul’s Church, Cheltenham, in a quiet service (due to the recent death of her father) in 1st September 1915.²⁶ Edith Doris then married William Hunter Will at the same church on

²³ Births, Deaths & Marriages Online: <https://www.bdmonline.dia.govt.nz/> : 1924/5519

²⁴ *Feilding Star*, 28 June 1917, p. 3; *Evening Star*, 20 September 1917, p. 7; Auckland Museum Online Cenotaph: <http://www.aucklandmuseum.com/war-memorial/online-cenotaph/record/C1838>

²⁵ *Feilding Star*, 27 July 1907, p. 2

²⁶ *Feilding Star*, 6 September 1915, p. 2

17 June 1919, followed – again at the same church – by Phyllis Bruce, who married Gordon Campbell Nicols on 16th June 1920.²⁷

In light of the premature loss of both the father and only son of this family, one farm manager is identified with the Brooklands property - a Mr Jaggard. He also used to allow the district's annual sports days to be held on the property.²⁸ He is possibly a Mr H. Jaggard, who was on the committee of the Cheltenham and Kiwitea Sports Club in 1927.²⁹ Other references to him also suggest that he was living in the Cheltenham community and involved with the sports days over a long period from the 1890s. Certainly, in August 1920, he represented Mrs Bruce in a letter about road conditions to the Kiwitea County Council.³⁰ It is likely that he was English-born Harry Jaggard (1874-1961), husband of Clara, nee Fitton (1877-1971).³¹ The Cheltenham School history records that Mr H. Jaggard left the district in 1929, after six years as chairman of the school committee.³²

Larsen family (1937-1988)

In 1937, the property was sold to the Larsen family. Jens Larsen, the father of this family, was Swedish, and had migrated to New Zealand with his parents aboard the *Terpsichore* in 1876. However, his father died of fever during the voyage, and then his younger sister died at the quarantine station on Somes Island at the time of arrival. That left Jens (22), his younger brother Anders (17), and their mother Inger (54) to settle in their new homeland. Inger died at Bunnythorpe in 1898. Meanwhile, Jens was living at Birmingham (Kimbolton) at the time he was naturalised in 1893.³³

Josephine Emily Bocking was the oldest (known) child of Prussian-born Robert Bocking (originally spelt 'Bocknig'), a shoemaker, and his wife Christine Bengtson. The family had migrated to New Zealand in 1871 on the ship *England*, and had been allotted a farm in Napier Road, Palmerston North. However, in 1888, Robert Bocking was balloted a 100-acre farm in the Birmingham Small Farms Settlement (i.e. at Kimbolton). During the First World War, Bocking described himself as Danish sheepfarmer.³⁴

Jens Larsen and Josephine Emily Bocking married in 1896 and had five known children: Orlando Edward (b. 1899), Herbert Bennett (born 1901), Walter Archie (b. 1903), Maudie Josephine (b. 1905) and Percy Bertie (b. 1913).³⁵ All except Jens Larsen were named on the various certificates of title as the owners of the property. This possibly reflects a financial contribution to Josephine given by the Bocking family.³⁶

²⁷ *Dominion*, 2 August 1919, p. 1; *Hastings Standard*, 24 June 1920, p. 5

²⁸ Historic Places Manawatu-Horowhenua Inc. File No: 31-0019: 'Brooklands'

²⁹ *Manawatu Times*, 26 October 1927, p. 3

³⁰ *Feilding Star*, 23 August 1920, p. 1

³¹ *Feilding Star*, 22 October 1902, p. 2; Also Manawatu District Council Cemetery Database:

http://www.mdc.govt.nz/Online_Services/Find_It/Cemetery_Search (Ref: 'Clara Jaggard' headstone)

³² H.W. Wood, *These Fifty Years – Cheltenham School District Jubilee 1886-1936* (Cheltenham, 1936),

<https://feildingphotos.mdc.govt.nz/nodes/view/18583#idx22385>, p. 15

³³ Sten Aminoff, *Svenskarna in Nya Zeeland [The Swedes in New Zealand: The Swedish emigration to New Zealand until 1940]*, (Vaxjo, Sweden, 1988) Ref: 1616, 1618, 1659, 1673 & 1686

³⁴ Val A. Burr, *Mosquitoes & Sawdust: a history of Scandinavians in early Palmerston North and surrounding districts [Skandia II]*, (Palmerston North, 1995), pp. 66-67

³⁵ Births, Deaths & Marriages Online: <https://www.bdmonline.dia.govt.nz/>; Marriage Ref: 1896/4209; Birth Refs: 1899/974, 1901/3900, 1903/8244, 1905/18418, 1913/17873.

³⁶ *Manawatu Standard*, 9 June 1941, p. 2. This is the obituary of Jens Larsen and provides some information in respect of prior property ownership. See also Burr, p. 67

Brooklands' ownership on the Certificate of Title (WN113/151) shows that it was transferred from the Bruce family to Josephine Emily Larsen, wife of Jens Larsen, a farmer (3/9th share); Orlando Edward Larsen, a farmer (2/9th share); Percy Edward Larsen, a farmer (2/9th share); and Maudie Josephine Larsen, a spinster (2/9th share) – all of Cunninghams (i.e. now Beaconsfield), as tenants in common, in the shares described.

The Larsens' renamed the property 'Bokaboa', which had already been the name of their Jersey cattle stud at Beaconsfield since at least 1931.³⁷ The name is not obviously Swedish, Danish or Prussian, but does mean "good mouth" in Portuguese according to online translation websites. The Larsens supplied cream to the local dairy factory and also ran sheep.³⁸

Certificate of Title (WN113/151) states that following Josephine Emily Larsen's death on 27 March 1951, her share of the property was transmitted to Orlando Edward Larsen as administrator in 1956.³⁹ On the same date, the property was then split in various shares between the three surviving owners (13/45ths each), along with Herbert Bennett Larsen and Walter Archie Larsen (3/45th each), both described as farmers of Feilding.⁴⁰ Next, also on the same date, a piece of land apparently totalling about four acres was removed from the farm and placed on a separate title (WN657/13) in the name Orlando Edward Larsen. Then again on the same date, Orlando and Walter's shares were transferred to Percy, Maudie and Herbert in various percentages, as tenants in common. A new Certificate of Title for the property (WN687/64) was then issued.

Percy, Maudie and Herbert Larsen remained owners together, but later in 1956, Percy and Maudie took over a portion of Herbert's former share. Then in 1960, about a quarter acre of land was transferred out of the farm and given a new Certificate of Title (WN889/45). That became Cheltenham Garage.⁴¹ The main farm, now reduced to 239 acres, 3 roods and 39 perches, then continued on with CT WN899/46, in the names of Percy (4/9th share), Maudie (4/9th share) and Herbert (1/9th share).

In 1979, the property was transferred to Colin Victor Larsen (Orlando's stepson whom he had adopted⁴²) and Paul Orlando Larsen, both farmers of Cheltenham, as tenants in common in equal shares. Meanwhile, Orlando Edward Larsen had died in 1977, while Herbert subsequently died in 1990 and Maudie in 1993.⁴³

In 1985, Paul Orlando Larsen's share of the property was transferred to Colin Victor Larsen's wife, Patricia Ellen Larsen, of Cheltenham. The following year the property was subdivided, the portion containing the homestead becoming Lot 3 of Plan 59681. It also received the new Certificate of Title WN29C/45 – which is the present Title. The land area consisted from that time as 5700 square metres more or less. No information was sighted during this study regarding who actually lived in this house during the Larsen ownership, but Diana Johnson advises that the house was unoccupied for a while.

Diana Johnson, who grew up opposite the house, recalls that at some point a single room had been added to the south-west end of the house as an office. However, *"in later years, during my childhood*

³⁷ For example, Manawatu Times, 2 October 1931 (p. 10)

³⁸ Diana Johnson's notes, June 2022

³⁹ Manawatu District Council: http://www.mdc.govt.nz/Online_Services/Find_It/Cemetery_Search (Search her name)

⁴⁰ Note that the splits between the five new owners were located by Diana Johnson, June 2022

⁴¹ Diana Johnson's notes, June 2022. This was Diana's parents' garage.

⁴² Diana Johnson's notes, June 2022

⁴³ Manawatu District Council: http://www.mdc.govt.nz/Online_Services/Find_It/Cemetery_Search (Search the various names of the Larsen family members, who are all buried at Feilding Cemetery)

(around the 1960s), *the windows were removed and replaced with wire-netting, and the room was used to house some of the Larsens' extensive bird collection. They were keen bird fanciers and breeders of budgies, cockatiels, lorikeets, parakeets, canaries, finches, doves, quails, etc. As well as the birdroom, there were numerous birdcages spread along the garden path in front of the house. Larger birds, such as peacocks, pheasants, exotic ducks, guinea fowl, etc., were housed in enclosures in a paddock behind the house.*"

While no additional information was located on this array of exotic birds that once lived in and around this house, it is noted that in the 1930s, a partnership known as Larsen Bros. operated a significant poultry farm named the "Cunninghams Poultry Farm" at what is now Beaconsfield – where the family had certainly lived before buying Brookfields. Therefore, if this is the same Larsen family, they certainly had significant prior experience with birds.⁴⁴

Post-Subdivision (c1987)

On 16 March 1988, the house was entered on the certificate of title into the name of Christopher Tony Sinkinson, a plumber of Cheltenham.⁴⁵ He apparently cleared all the trees that had previously masked the house from the road, these having made the house very dark. However, notes from a conversation with Shelley Corpe in about 1993, indicate that Sinkinson only remained at the house from between six months and a year.⁴⁶ The Certificate of Title, however, records on the same date as the Sinkinson transfer (16 March 1988), that the house was then also transferred to the current owner.

Diana Johnson also notes that the birdroom was demolished by Chris Sinkinson during his period of ownership. By this time its floor had contained many years' worth of bird droppings and seed husks, and the room had been invaded by wild bees. She further recalled that at some undefined point, the original brick sitting room chimney had been removed from the central part of the house, and a modern log fire had then been installed.

ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN

Planning, style, construction

The building could only be inspected from the road, which is some distance to the house. The following assessment is based on long distance photography, google aerial maps and descriptions included in the historic narrative. No plans of the building have been sighted and the interior could not be inspected.

This single storey, timber framed house is designed in the Victorian villa style with an original rectangular plan with what appears to be later additions to the rear in a matching design. The main façade of the house is aligned with and faces Kimbolton Road. Consistent with the Victorian villa style it is asymmetrical, a prominent hipped roof, a verandah to the front and wrapping around the side elevations, bay and double hung sash windows. The prominent, symmetrical roof is similar to that of the Victorian Georgian villa as is the lack of decoration other than the decorative brackets to the verandah posts. There are two chimneys located at each end of the house.

⁴⁴ For example, Manawatu Times, 28 February 1931 p. 3(4) and numerous other such adverts

⁴⁵ The website qv.co.nz lists a sale date of 18 November 1987: <https://www.qv.co.nz/property/1486-kimbolton-road-cheltenham-feilding-4777/802585>

⁴⁶ Historic Places Manawatu-Horowhenua Inc. File No: 31-0019: 'Brooklands' – undated notes

The house has corrugated steel roofing, timber rusticated weatherboards and timber double hung sash windows.

Style background

The villa, and later, the bay villa, were a New Zealand small, domestic version of the Italianate Villas first made popular in England for large houses designed by architects Sir Charles Barry and John Nash. Pattern books were influential in the spread of the style with Englishman Charles Parker's *Villa Rustica*, style books by Andrew Jackson Downing, and American Calvert Vaux's *Villas and Cottages*. Many of these English houses were designed with arcaded porticos, which was quickly adapted into the ubiquitous verandah in Australia and New Zealand.

The earliest villas, built in the 1860s, were an enlargement of the square planned, Georgian Box Cottage style in which the house had four rooms either side of a central hallway and, usually, a lean-to at the back to house kitchen and toilet. The front elevation had an ornately decorated verandah, which was either bull nosed or skillion. Details were Italianate inspired, such as quoins on corners and keystones over windows. Timber companies produced pattern books from which designs could be selected.

Setting

The house is set back from Kimbolton Road within open, flat farmland. A circular driveway from the house leads to the road while to the immediate south and west are large trees. Also aligned to Kimbolton Road are several houses opposite and to the north and east. Over 100 metres to the west is the village of Cheltenham situated at the corner of Kimbolton and State Highway 54, Cheltenham Hunterville Road.

SUMMARY OF HERITAGE VALUES

Brooklands has **low to high local** significance for **physical, historic** and **cultural** heritage values.

The house has **moderate architectural** and **low representivity** values as an example of the Victorian villa style with an asymmetrical elevation, double hung and bay windows and a verandah but with neo-Georgian elements of a symmetrical, prominent hipped roof and lack of decoration. The combination of styles has **moderate rarity**.

The house has **low technological** values with timber framing, wall cladding and joinery with a corrugated steel roof, typical of the period.

The exterior visible form the road appears to have **high authenticity** with few recent modifications.

Brooklands has **moderate associative** values with the Bruce and Larsen families, each of whom owned the house for more than 50 years. The first owner, John Bruce was chair of the Cheltenham Dairy Co., a member Kiwitea County Council, Palmerston North Hospital Board, and the Cheltenham and Kiwitea Sports Club. The Larsen family were Swedish settlers.

The design and construction of the house has **moderate pattern** values reflecting the growth and development of farming in the Manawatu from the latter part of the 19th century.

Given the range and levels of heritage values, Brooklands has **moderate education** values as it can contribute to an understanding of settlement, emigration, and the architectural history of the Manawatu.

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St. Stephen's Visitor Information Sheet, p. 3, St. Stephen's Anglican Church, Marton

Also: Conversation with St. Stephens' Anglican Church's tour guide, **John Vickers**, at Marton on 21 January 2019; and the notes, recollections and research of **Diana Johnson**, of Cheltenham, who in 2022 writes that she has lived opposite the Brooklands Homestead for 67 years. Diana's research document is held in the Brooklands file at Manawatu District Council.



Figure 4 'Brooklands' in May 2015 (Source: Google Street View)



Figure 5 Brooklands – January 2016 (Source: Manawatu District Council website: http://www.mdc.govt.nz/Online_Services/Find_It/District_Maps)