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# HART'S BLACK HORSE BREWERY, WETHERSTONS, OTAGO

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## Introduction

The Hart's Black Horse Brewery site (H44/1112) is located at Wetherstons (variously spelled 'Weatherstons' and 'Wetherstones') just outside Lawrence (Figure 1). The brewery ruins and extensive associated daffodil fields are administered by the Hart's Daffodil Charitable Trust (HDCT), and are open to the public each spring when the flowers are in bloom. In October 2014 the Otago University Anthropological Society (OUAS) carried out a surveying weekend at the brewery with two main aims: to help archaeology students gain and practise basic surveying and recording skills; and to assist the HDCT by producing drawings and maps of the site and structures that could contribute to a conservation plan and other heritage management documents.

The brewery site consists of the stone ruin of the malthouse, other building foundations, a small shed that was the brewery office, the derelict Hart family house, old gardens (including paths, box hedges and rhododendron trees) and the extensive daffodil fields. The 2014 survey work concentrated on the core area of the ruins, foundations and derelict house.

## Site history

The following is paraphrased from Leckie (1997: 145–150). In 1865 Henry William Coverlid established the London Brewery in Blue Jacket Gully, just outside the small goldfields township of Wetherstons, and the first ale was sold in March 1866. In 1868 the brewery was sold to John McColl, who then leased it to Johannes Thorsen Kofoed and Horace Bastings. Business was so successful that Kofoed and Bastings purchased the plant outright in 1869,



*Figure 1. The location of Wetherstons.*

and then applied to the Otago Provincial Council to purchase the underlying freehold of three acres of land. They also called for tenders for the construction of a new stone and brick brewery to be built in front of the old plant, and brewing began in the new building in November 1869. It was at this time that the business was renamed the Black Horse Brewery. In 1874 a new malt house and kiln was added to the premises.

In 1874 the partnership between Kofoed and Bastings was dissolved and Bastings's share was purchased by William Hayes. Kofoed and Hayes then purchased a further 48 acres of land in Blue Jacket Gully. In 1879, after an unsuccessful goldmining enterprise, Kofoed sold his share of the brewery to Hayes, who was declared bankrupt the following year, and the brewery was sold at auction to Henry Carey Clayton. In 1884 the brewery was leased to

J.K. Simpson and Benjamin Hart, and Hart's two sons Henry and Albert both later worked in the business. Under Simpson's and Hart's management the Black Horse Brewery became the most successful of Otago's provincial breweries, and won prizes at the 1889-90 Dunedin and South Seas Exhibition. In 1895 the partners purchased the premises, and it is at about this time that the planting of the daffodils on the land surrounding the brewery began. In 1909 Simpson and Hart formed a private company, and the name of the business was changed to the Tuapeka Brewery.

Beer production continued at the Tuapeka Brewery until 1923, when New Zealand Breweries purchased the brewing rights and the plant was closed down. From the evidence of the surviving structures visible today it is clear that the brewery buildings were largely demolished and all the brewing plant was removed. The land remained in the Hart family and the daffodil fields continued to be a popular springtime destination until the 1950s. In 2008 the Hart's Daffodil Charitable Trust was formed to protect the brewery ruins and restore and reopen the daffodil fields. In 2013 the brewery and daffodil fields were registered as a Category 1 Historic Place (No. 9598) by the New Zealand Historic Places Trust.

## Survey

The purpose of the surveying weekend was to practise underlying basic surveying and recording skills, and so no electronic instruments were used (other than an electronic distance meter to measure parts of the ruins that were not safe to enter). Two plane tables and alidades (one optical and one open) were employed to produce a site map (Figure 2), drawing frames were used to draw the stone ruins (Figure 3), and basic building recording methods (tape measures and drawing boards) were used to draw the derelict wooden house (Figure 4). Four stations were established, each run by an experienced member of the society, and the other students circulated around in groups during the two days.

The main site map (Figure 5) was drawn in three main sections in the field and combined later to produce a single image. This shows the main features in the core brewery area but does not include the outlying areas that include such features as the brewery water supply, several hut/house sites and the daffodil fields. The map shows that the main brewery buildings were located on the east side of the stream, with large yard areas around and between them. Historic photographs (Leckie 1997: 147, 149) show large numbers of beer barrels stored in these yards. The bottling plant was on the west side of the stream, where the car park is now located. The present bridge is on the



*Figure 2. Using an open alidade to record the malt-house location.*

*Figure 3. Drawing the wall of the malthouse.*





*Figure 4. Recording the wooden house.*

same site as the brewery bridge, and the old bridge beams are still in place beneath the modern structure.

### *Malthouse ruin*

The main stone ruin (Figures 6, 7 and 8) is the remains of the malt house and kiln. The southern wall of the building is still standing, but is leaning outwards, and only the inside elevation of the wall was drawn, while the outside area (under the overhang of the leaning wall) was roped off and made a no-go area.

The building is rectangular (45' x 29', 13.7 x 8.8 m) with a square extension (20' x 18', 6m x 5.5 m) on the eastern end that housed the malting kiln. The building was originally two stories high but only the south and kiln walls still stand above the first floor level. The lower floor walls of the main building are of stone with brick detailing to the window openings, while the second story is of brick. The kiln walls are stone. The kiln section of the building still houses a concrete hopper, which has split (it was probably damaged during the partial demolition of the building), and is leaning on the south wall of the building, causing the lean. A large sycamore tree is fortuitously located on the other side of the wall, and this is presently propping it up.

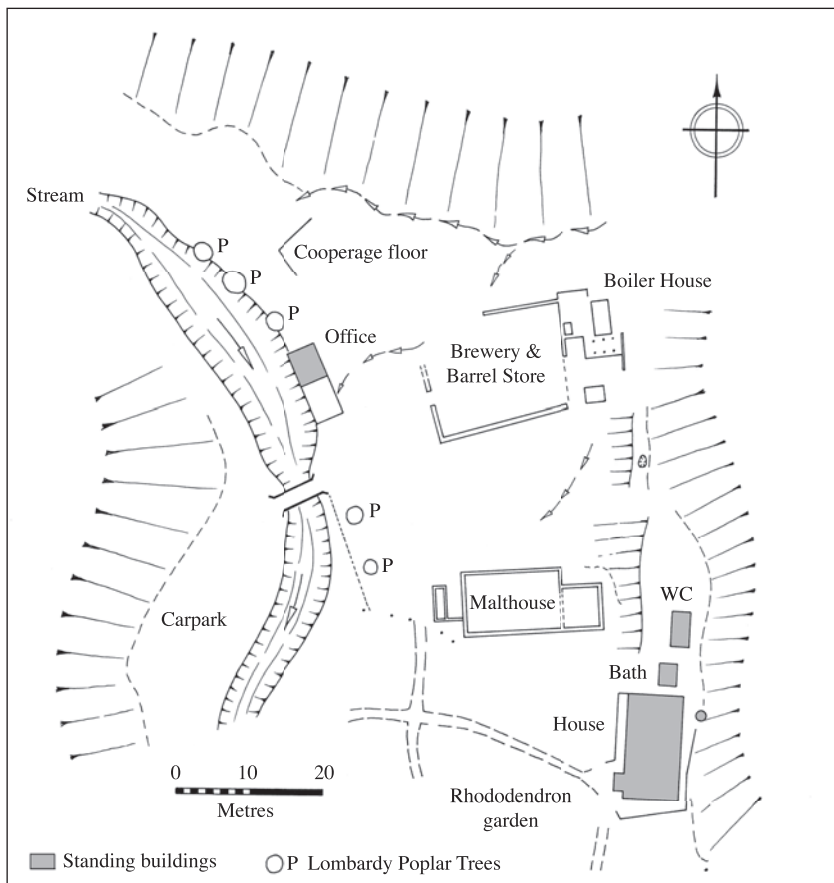


Figure 5. Plane table and alidade map of Hart's Black Horse Brewery site.

The ground floor of the malthouse is concrete, and six square holes show where posts were located to support the first floor. One iron strap is still in place in the stonework of the south wall, which was probably used to tie the first floor wooden joists into the wall.

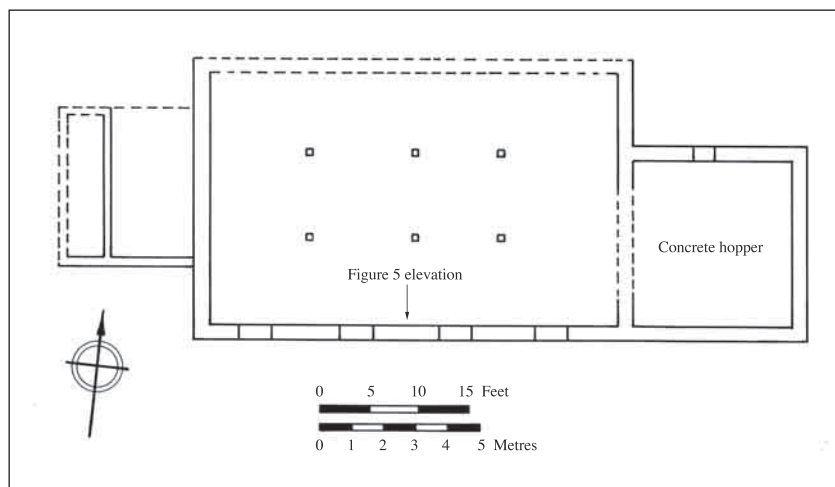
#### *Brewing house/barrel store foundations*

The foundations for the brewing house and barrel store consist of a low stone wall that is partially obscured by demolition rubble. The main door is still identifiable in the front wall. Based on the visible archaeological evidence



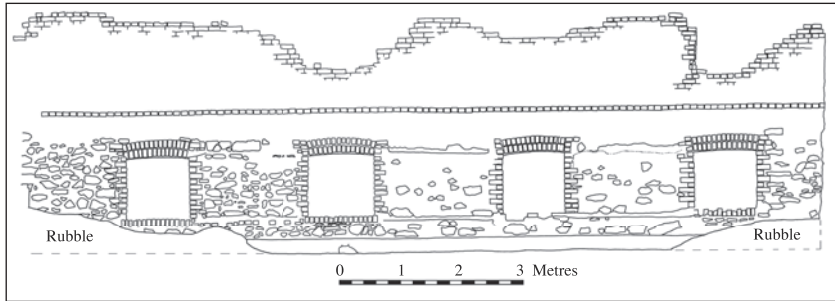


*Figure 6. The stone ruin of the malthouse and kiln.*



*Figure 7. Floorplan of the malthouse and kiln.*





*Figure 8. Drawing of interior elevation of south wall of the malthouse. The lower section of the wall is stone, and the upper section (above the brick beltline shown) is brick.*

the main building measured 18 x 13 m. Early photographs show that the main part of this building was brick, and the lack of large amounts of demolition rubble suggests that most of the bricks were taken for reuse when the buildings were knocked down.

#### *Boiler house foundations*

The foundations of the boiler house are located immediately behind the brewing house. They consist of concrete floors, foundations and machinery plinths, and include a set of six securing bolts. No machinery remains on the site. Historic photographs (Leckie 1997: 147) show that the building was constructed from timber and corrugated iron on a concrete foundation and that the boiler had an iron chimney. The structure probably measured approximately 15 x 8 m, but the foundations are complex and more detailed examination would be required to fully interpret them.

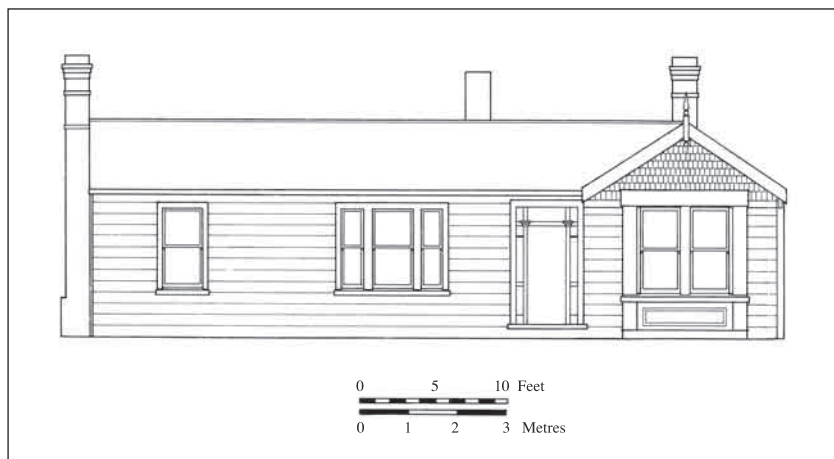
#### *House*

The existing timber house on the site was occupied by the Hart Family, but has been unoccupied since the 1960s. The building is becoming very dilapidated and part of the rear wall has fallen out. The main roof, and front, side, part rear, and internal walls are still largely intact, and the building was sound enough to record safely (Figures 9, 10 and 11). However, its continuing deterioration will probably be rapid. Many of its architectural details, including all doors and mantelpieces, have been removed. A veranda along the front of the house has collapsed.

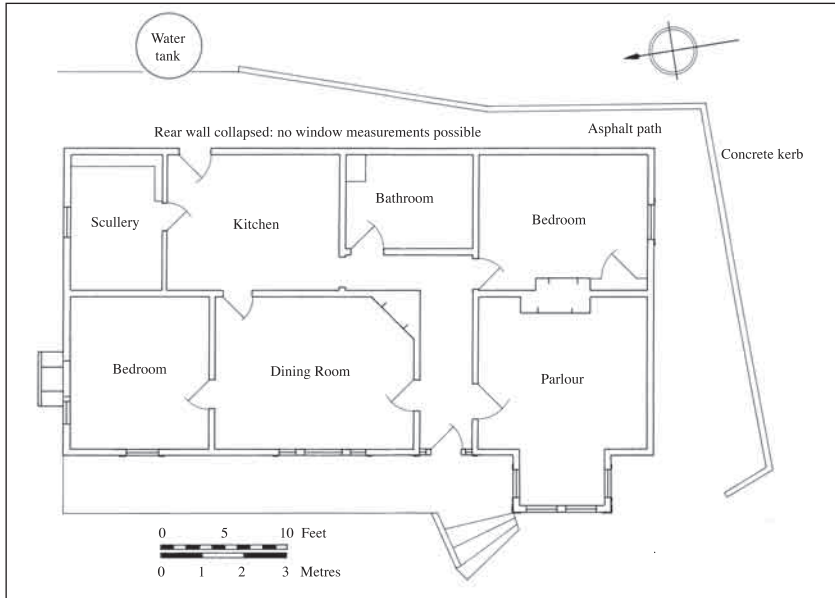
The house is built of timber, with timber piles, framing, weatherboards and matchboard lining. The foundations for the bay window (a later addition)



*Figure 9. The derelict timber house, showing the bay window.*



*Figure 10. Front elevation of the derelict timber house*



*Figure 11. Floorplan of the derelict timber house.*

are concrete. The roof is corrugated iron. The house has a basic rectangular floor plan (with a projecting bay window) (Figure 11), and measures 47' x 24' (14.3 x 7.4 m). The main elevation of the house is asymmetric, with a projecting bay on the right hand (south) end, and the front door also offset to the right (Figure 10). The door itself is missing but the frame, with both fan- and side-lights, is intact. The main windows are all sashes and while, those in the bay have been removed, several others are intact. There is an external brick chimney on the north wall and two internal brick chimneys. It is of note that no kitchen range chimney is present. The weatherboards on the front (west) and south walls are 9 inch wide rusticated boards, while on the north and rear walls plain overlapping weatherboards were used. The gable wall above the bay window is finished with decorative timber shingles and a wooden finial is mounted on the gable end.

The house has a total floor area (including the bay window) of 105 m<sup>2</sup>, divided into seven rooms plus an L-shaped hallway. The internal arrangement appears to consist of one or two bedrooms, a living room/parlour, a probable dining room, a bathroom (which still contains a bath), a kitchen and a scullery. Surviving detailing shows that the interior was moderately ornate in a typically late Victorian style, with the parlour having the most decorative finish.

An ornate cornice painted in a three-colour scheme of pale green, yellow and pink, ornate skirting boards and door architrave with plinth blocks (pale green) and the remains of a cast iron and tile fire surround are still in place in this room. The surviving door architraves in the front section of the hallway are painted in a combed woodgrain finish and also have plinth blocks.

It seems likely that the house was originally a small wooden cottage that has been extended on one or more occasions to become a bay villa. The bay window is an obvious later addition, and multiple layers of wallpaper show that the house had been redecorated several times during its life. The general appearance of the building is typical of the 1880s period, which matches the time when the Hart family became involved in the business. However, a detailed forensic analysis of the building would involve examination of the roof framing and some removal of wall linings, and this was beyond the brief of the current survey project.

There are also two outbuildings; one contains a bath, and the other a toilet and workshop/shed. The presence of two bathrooms (one inside and one outside, each with surviving bath) is of note.

## Conclusions

This surveying exercise was undertaken by the OUAS to provide archaeology students with tuition and practice in basic field surveying skills, and to support the Hart's Daffodil Charitable Trust, and it succeeded in both aims. An increasing number of archaeology graduates are finding work in heritage management consultancies, where the assessment and recording of historic-era structures are regular tasks. The work at Wetherstons included recording masonry and timber structures, and overall site plan preparation.

The surveying work described here was all based on surface observations and no excavation or other clearing was undertaken. As with any archaeological site, the removal of built up soil and rubble would allow a more detailed interpretation of the remains, but this would require an archaeological authority. The site certainly has archaeological potential for the study of a number of topics, including the industrial archaeology of brewing, the domestic archaeology of the residences and the garden archaeology of the house garden and daffodil fields. The Category 1 Listing of the site attests to its significance and archaeological potential.

A detailed analysis of the Hart's Black Horse Brewery complex was not intended as part of this exercise, but the results of the basic survey work are described here and have also been entered on the New Zealand Archaeological Association's Site Recording Scheme (Archsite), and so are available for future research.



*Figure 12. The survey team sitting on the ruins of the malthouse (photo: Jennifer Lane).*

### **Acknowledgements**

We would like to thank Kim Murtagh of the HDCT for her hospitality on the site, and Dr. James Ng of the Lawrence Chinese Camp Charitable Trust for the use of the old Empire Hotel for accommodation. Phil Latham of the Department of Anthropology & Archaeology organised the survey equipment. The surveying weekend participants were: Tristan Russell, Helen Heath, Jamie Hearfield, Evan Morcom, Rebecca Adam, Gabe Vilgays, Nick Sutton, Eleanor Moore, Jennifer Lane, Lucy Kavale, Jamie Aitchison, Cameron Olsen and Holly Brinsdon, plus the four authors.

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[www.heritage.org.nz/the-list/details/9598](http://www.heritage.org.nz/the-list/details/9598)