



The Way We Were

by Peter Buffett

Tui Glen — early tourist centre

West Auckland has long provided attractions and venues for those on sight-seeing trips and holidays.

The Central Hotel Auckland Guide for 1902 noted that a day trip to Titirangi or the Waitakere Falls and Cascades were "the best inland excursions about Auckland".

For a price, Cook's Tourist Office provided transport and guide, a wagonette and pair cost two people £1/10 (\$3) for a view of Titirangi's Kauris.

Picnickers could eat their hardboiled eggs and pressed meat at Waitakere's Falls and Cascades for an all inclusive £1 (\$2) train fare to Swanson and horse hire.

By 1920 better roads and increasing numbers of reliable motorcars brought people for outings in scenic West Auckland. Mrs Knight's Ferndale in Henderson Valley with its tea kiosk, 1500 square foot dance hall and camping sites set among native bush and streams, catered for daily and long-term tourists. Half a kilometre from the middle of Henderson between Edmonton Rd and the Oratia Stream, Tui Glen was also catering for the motoring holiday-maker by the 1920s.

Registered in 1925 as New Zealand's first camping ground, Tui Glen had been purchased in 1912 by Claude Brookes. Brookes was a successful engineer with a business in Eden Crescent specialising in oxy-

acetylene welding and marine work. Motor vehicle overhauls and engine construction also became an important part of Claude Brook's work.

Following their acquisition of Tui Glen's six hectares in 1912, the Brookes family worked hard at clearing the land, landscaping and planting trees and shrubs.

Always innovative, Brookes attempted to transport the family home from the city to his developing park aboard a couple of barges. Just off Shelly Point, Te Atatu, one barge — and half the house — foundered and sank. Undeterred, the remaining portion of the Brookes home completed its journey to later become a holiday cabin.

Brookes bought a nearby orchard and house in 1915, using income from the apple orchard to defray costs on the increasingly popular picnic spot.

Recognising the growth potential for motoring trips and holidays, Mr Brookes installed his first holiday cabin in 1921. Using a deck cabin from the old sailing ship 'Wainui', Brookes began to build up his supply of permanent accommodation, ready-made buildings being barged up the creek from the Waitemata, others being built on site.

Throughout the 1920s, playgrounds were built, hire boats brought in, fireplaces installed, even a beach complete with diving board was created using sand brought up the creek from Shelly Point.

Brookes maintained all the while both engineer-

ing and camping businesses. By 1930, Tui Glen had become one of Auckland's major attractions and among the finest picnic and camping areas in New Zealand, fully serviced with electric light, water, tennis and games areas, swimming, children's amusements and even a laid on radio system. Costs were reasonable at 4 shillings (40 cents) for an overnight stay for one carload. Half day picnickers paid half a crown (25 cents) to use the Glen's facilities.

C.F. Brookes passed the camp over to a company, Tui Glen Ltd, in

1945, development of the park apart from a skating rink having reached its peak.

The Henderson Borough Council also had a share in running the still popular camping and picnic area from 1963.

Today Tui Glen is still a calm, green oasis in the centre of an urban development, providing among the Phoenix palms and oaks planted by Claude Brookes, camping, caravan and cabin sites with all amenities for those wanting to relax in shady quietness not too far from the middle of town.

OUR PAST • OUR PAST • OUR PAST • OUR PAST • OUR PAST

Tui Glen kept thousands of holidaymakers happy

By MATTHEW GRAY

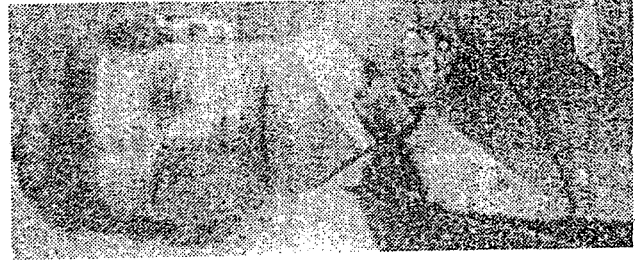
Claude Brookes was a man of the sea. Soon after 1900 he piloted his launch up the Henderson Creek to discover what would become his second love — 6ha (15 acres) of land known today as the Tui Glen motor camp.

The Auckland engineer continued to visit the area, buying his first 20ha (70 acres) in 1910. Claude spent every holiday clearing the land and replanting it with fruit trees. He and his wife Mary finally decided to establish the property as a summer residence.

The first cottage on the creek was shipped up the creek by barge. Unfortunately construction was hampered when the vessel sank near Te Atatu while carrying the third section of the building.

Once refloated it continued its trip, closely followed by the Brookes family and many of their possessions.

Claude's son Colin remains the



PARK FOUNDER: Claude Brookes discovered Tui Glen while on a boating excursion along the Henderson Creek.

cottage. The 79-year-old spent the two first years of his life there.

"In those days Henderson was a small place with only five shops," he recalls.

"There was the sawmill, two grocery stores,

a bakery, and a blacksmith." The lack of conveniences did not deter Claude, who bought more land in 1918, naming the entire property Tui Glen.

"He couldn't have chosen a better name," says Colin.

"Kowhai trees lined the river banks and there was an abundance of tuis."

After the second purchase, the Brookes moved into another house on the property and began planting the grounds in English trees.

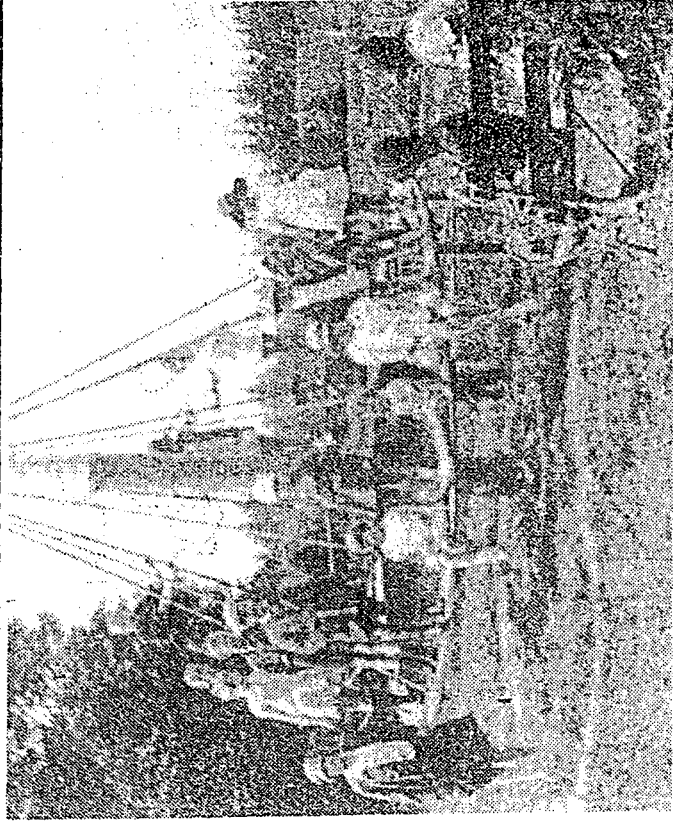
As the elms, oaks and chestnuts grew so did the property's parklike appearance.

The area was becoming increasingly popular with boats — many of whom used it, or the nearby Henderson Falls, as a meeting spot.

"The creek was still quite navigable at that stage," says Colin. "It was not uncommon to see big yachts and launches moored there."

Tui Glen was also

By the end of World



HENDERSON WATERWAYS: Easily navigatable, well into the 1920s, Henderson Creek was a popular playground for Tui Glen campers.

War II, the camp had up to 50 amusements, including donkey rides, tennis courts and a skating rink.

Sand freighted up the creek by barge had been used to create a beach along the water's edge, where Claude built a diving platform.

In 1946, Colin bought the campsite from his father. But times had changed along with people's respect for the property of others.

"During the war, when many fathers were away overseas, we

began to have problems with vandalism," says Colin.

"I think much of the discipline in the homes disappeared in those years."

Tightening security, Colin kept the park open to the public. Urbanisation slowly took its toll, and with it came pollution of the area's waterways.

Campers were advised not to swim in the creek after it was deemed a health risk in the 1950s. Claude Brookes died during

that decade.

Colin sold the park to the local council in 1967. He kept a small parcel of land for himself, where he lives today. At the rear of his property sits the former cabin from the Wainui.

Tui Glen bears little resemblance to the camping ground of old. The council closed its park attractions, saying they were too costly to run.

The roadway leading to the park has been named Claude Brookes Drive.