

Inverness British Restaurant - "The Churchill"

Notes

Notes on Records Accessed

Visited the Highland Archives twice: <https://www.highlifehighland.com/highland-archive-centre/>

Documents Reviewed	Inverness Archive Record ID Number
Valuation Roll 1943-44	BI/2/5/49
Inverness Town Council Meeting Minutes 1943-44	BI/1/1/77
Inverness Town Council Meeting Minutes 1945-46	BI/1/1/79
Inverness Town Council Meeting Minutes 1946-47	BI/1/1/80

Commented [1]: No mention of the BR, however the council records were unstructured with no index of topics, could do with re-checking.

Potential Documents to revisit for :

Inverness Town Council Meeting Minutes 1941-42 - BI/1/1/75 - Pre opening, perhaps more detail on the setup and organisation

Inverness Town Council Meeting Minutes 1942-43 - BI/1/1/76 - Opening Yr

Inverness Town Council Meeting Minutes 1944-45 - BI/1/1/78 - Still Operational.

West Parish Church Records, Kirk Sessions - Suggestion by archivist, may have finer details of leasing arrangements of hall for BR & when the church took back the hall (Maybe an exact date for the BR's closing)

West Parish Church News Letters (D680) - Suggestion by archivist, may include exact date of Church Hall passing back to the Church.

Inverness Industry during WW2 and need for the Churchill

While Inverness only gained "City" status in 2000, it has been the major centre of industry in the Highlands for many years. Inverness town centre had several foundries and industrial hubs. Ordnance survey maps, revised during 1938, reveal several industrial hubs across the town. (<https://maps.nls.uk/geo/find/marker/#zoom=15&lat=57.4852&lon=-4.2302&f=0&z=1&marker=57.4877,-4.2342&from=1930&to=1972&i=75632366>)

A-I Electric Welding Machines Ltd, situated on Rose Street, which saw an increase in trade from the outbreak of WW2, one of their main outputs was welding the hubs into which aircraft propeller blades were fitted. Additionally, there was a Council owned Gasworks on George Street and a tannery on Gilbert Street.

Down Shore Street heading towards Citadel Quay by the harbour, there was a Timber Yard, Slaughter House and "Creamine" (margarine and artificial cream factory) Works

(https://www.scran.ac.uk/packs/exhibitions/learning_materials/webs/40/margarine_factory.htm)

Capel Inch, one of the stops on the Churchill's Mobile Van's route, was near a ship repair yard. Inverness station, close to railway terrace the initial stop on the mobile van's route, also housed an engine shed, for repairing locomotives, as well as a coal and ash-disposal plant.

Inverness also had several defence bases, such as Royal Air Force's Longman airfield and the barracks of the Cameron Highlanders. An admiralty office was also in the area (exact location yet tbc). Mr McKenzie, Billeting officer engaged in Admiralty work, contacting the welfare committee, asking for the men he was responsible for to have access to breakfasts and other meals from the Churchill. (Welfare Committee Meeting Minutes - 20th January 1944)

Location

The Churchill was located on, what was then, 38 Huntly Street, Inverness, in the Hall and Cloakroom of the West Parish Church. The Inverness Town Council Valuation Roll 1943 - 1944 listed this address' proprietor as the Church of Scotland, but was occupied by the "Town Council for the Churchill Restaurant". The Feu-duty" (Fixed Annual Rent) was for £35.0s.0d for that year.

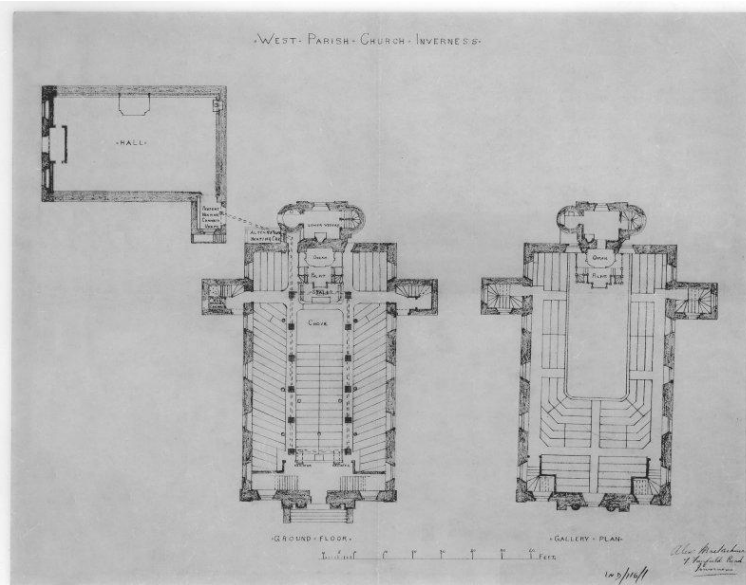
While the West Parish Church was built in 1840, the Church Hall was a later addition, built on top of a former bowling green sometime between 1865 and 1903, appearing on Ordnance survey map of Inverness in 1903. (Inverness-shire - Mainland XII.1, 1905)

(<https://portal.historicenvironment.scot/apex/f?p=1505:300:::VIEWTYPE,VIEWREF:designa tion,LB35275>)



(Inverness-shire - Mainland XII.1, 1905 - zoomed to show detail of church and hall)

Located separately from the main church, appearing to be behind the church to the left of the building. (Alterations for heating. Ground and gallery floor plans; plan of hall. Delt. Alec MacKechnie 7 Fairfield Road, Inverness, Canmore)



Organisation and Staff

The operations and maintenance of the Churchill were managed at council level by the Welfare Committee, with day-to-day management being allocated to the manageress. The Welfare Committee consisted of; Convener Donald MacPherson, Provost Hugh MacKenzie, Councillors Braine, Graham & Henderson, Mr Alexander (The Assistant Divisional MoF Officer), Town Chamberlain and the Town Clerk. Additionally on occasion the manageress' and staff of the British Restaurant would attend to provide details and help make decisions.

Staff

From the meeting minutes, it appears there was a substantial roster of employees of the restaurant, roles included: Manageress, Cooks, Assistant Cooks, Kitchen Maids, Cleaners, Kitchen Porter/ Mobile Van driver and part time workers.

While exact numbers were not mentioned in the meeting minutes reviewed, accessing the 1941/42 minutes might list how many of each role were employed. From the meeting minutes reviewed, it can be suggested there were roles in the restaurant that had multiple positions. For example, an additional cook was employed at the Churchill, to assist with the evening meals introduction and one member of part-time staff was increased to full time staff. (Welfare Committee Minutes 25 March 1943). Furthermore, mention was made to "dispensing" with 1 of the kitchen maids and a cleaner, following MoF reports' feedback, indicating there were at least more than 1 person in both of those positions, and that they were perhaps surplusous, as there was no further mention of rehiring to make up for the missing staff (Welfare Committee Meeting Minutes - 12th October 1944).

Manageress Details

The first manageress for the Churchill appears to be Mrs Edington ("The Churchill - Over 6500 Customers in First Month" - Inverness Courier 17th April 1942.). Mrs Edington then left the British Restaurant to take up running the MoF's Inverness Food Advice Bureau, giving demonstrations, recipes and advice on how to cook during the wartime. ("Food Advice Bureau Opened" - Scotsman 12 Nov 1942)

The Oban Times (1 Aug 1942) reported "Mrs W. H. Galloway, daughter of the Reverend Archibald Campbell, Kiltarn, Ross-shire, has been appointed mangeress of the Inverness British Restaurant". Mrs Galloway worked at the restaurant for over 8 months before giving her resignation, between the 8th of April and the next welfare committee on the 11th of May 1943.

The committee then appointed Miss Johan (Older spelling of Joan) MacDonald as the next Manageress of the. Miss MacDonald was salaried initially at £3.10s per week, before rising to £4.5s on the 5th of July 1943 (Welfare Committee Meeting Minutes - 21st June 1943). Miss MacDonald remained the manageress of the Churchill until its closing in 1946. (Welfare Committee Meeting - 14th October 1946).

Food Van/ Mobile Canteen Driver

The driver of the Food van, Mr MacLeod, was hired out by the welfare committee initially for 2 hours daily in the Churchill from the County Council Roads Department, where he acted as driver for the Rescue Service. By January 1944 there was need for expansion in the role. Mr MacLeod was seconded from the roads department, to take on a full time (48-hour a week) position at the Churchill as Kitchen Porter and Driver. His pay, originally 2 shillings an hour, was split between the County council and Burgh council, starting on the 17th of January 1944. (Inverness Welfare Sub-Committee Meeting Minutes - 12th January 1944 & Inverness Welfare Committee Meeting Minutes - 20th January 1944).

Staff wages

The welfare committee meeting on the 25th of March 1943 recommended the increase of staff wages, due to adopting a school feeding and evening meal service. From this, the initial wages for staff were listed (Note: Wages are listed in old money, with conversion from the National Archives Currency Converter for 1945

<https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/currency-converter/>)

Staff Wages Increase in April 1943				
Job	Present Wage (March 1943) Per week	Increased Wage Per week	Present wage (March 1943) Converted to 2017 wages Per week	Increased Wage Converted to 2017 wages Per week
Manageress **	£3.10s	£3.17s.6d	£124.43	£137.76
Cook	£2.16s	£3.3s	£99.54	£111.99
Assistant Cook	£1.16s	£2.2s	£63.99	£74.66
Kitchen Maid	£1.6s	£1. 10s	£46.22	£53.33
Part-time Workers	17/- *	£1. 1	£30.22	£37.33
Cleaners	£1.2s.6d	£1.5s	£40.00	£44.44
Porter	£1	£1.2s.6d	£35.55	£40.00

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*/- indicates shilling

** current manageress at that time was Mrs Galloway, who then resigned between April and May of the same year. Her predecessor Miss MacDonald was then initially salaried at £3.10s p.w

Wage increases 1943

During 1943 both the new manageress and assistant cook's salaries increased. The Manageress salary rose to £4.5s on the 5th of July 1943. The Assistant cook's salary rose from £2.2s to £2.16s per week on the 5th of July 1943, with a back pay lump sum of £2.10s being paid out as well (Welfare Committee Meeting Minutes - 21st June 1943).

Wage Increase 1944

On the 15th of February 1944, following a letter from the Joint Industrial Councils for Local Authority services in Scotland, stating with reference to "paragraph 1 of the recommendation as to pay. Etc, of employees in catering services CL/47/m." Question was raised to whether the recent war advance is payable to staff.

The welfare committee resolved to pay these war advances granted on the 17th of April 1943, a following letter recommended as the Churchill's staff were female, the appropriate proportion of the war advances will be payable. The committee recommended war advances of 2 shillings per week to full time employees, with part time employees being paid 1 shilling per week. This was to take effect from the next council meeting on the 6th of March 1944.

Emergency Staffing

In the Welfare Committee Meeting 13th November 1942 discussion was raised on what would happen to the British Restaurant in the event of a Blitz on Inverness. The manager of Messrs Woolworths Ltd had offered co-operation to provide emergency staff in the event of a Blitz on Inverness. In the New year (Welfare Committee Meeting, 14 January 1943) It was confirmed via letter from the Manager of Woolworth Ltd, that 12 girls were available and ready to act as emergency staff of the Churchill.

Equipment

No exact list of equipment was found in the documents review, however the 1941/42 may house more information on the equipment and where it was sourced from. From details on the closure of the restaurant and from meeting minutes regarding replacing equipment, the Ministry of Food appears to have been, at least, financially responsible for the equipment.

From Welfare Committee minutes of the 14 of January 1943, additional equipment was ordered from the burgh surveyor to allow for providing a meat basis of 250 additional meals. Listed as: 1 x Electric Steamer, 1 x gas/coal fired boiling tank, 2 x 32-pint pans, 3 x dozen dish towels and 2 x dozen pudding cloths (Pudding cloths are similar to muslin/cheesecloth).

From the mention of a report, there was also a washing machine (Welfare Committee Meeting Minutes - 21st June 1943). From the MoF wartime meals advisor's report, there was mention of "ovens", which had defects (Welfare Committee Meeting Minutes - 14th October 1943). Additionally, from the MoF wartime meals advisor reports, there appeared to have been a potato-peeling machine and dual-boiler.

At some stage a radio for the Churchill was purchased, which was recommended to be sold prior to restaurant closing (Welfare Committee Meeting Minutes - 20th March 1946).

From records of the restoration back to the Church, records indicate a larder was built in the hall, which was later demolished as part of the restoration work. (Welfare Committee Meeting Minutes - 14th October 1946).

Service, Menu and Pricing.

The Churchill initially was only open during lunchtime hours, 11:30am to 2:30pm, from its opening day until the next year. When service was expanded to include evening meals in the summer of 1943. (Inverness Welfare Sub-Committee Meeting Minutes - 24th of February 1943).

The initial menu of the Churchill was taken from the statistical report provided by Mrs Edington from the 1st month of the restaurant's operation. (Note: Prices are listed in old money, with conversion from the National Archives Currency Converter for 1940 <https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/currency-converter>)

Soup - 2d (2017 worth approx. 33p),
Meat - 6d (2017 worth approx. 98p),
Pudding - 2d (2017 worth approx. 33p),
Tea - 1d, (2017 worth approx. 16p),
Coffee - 2d (2017 worth approx. 33p),
Cake or biscuit - 1d (2017 worth approx. 16p)

From the minutes reviewed, only minor mention of sourcing supplies for the menu. Following from MoF inspection and reviews, indicating menu range could be improved upon, the committee agreed to interview a "Messrs Munro and Co" to endeavour to come up with a suitable plan to secure supplies. (Welfare Meeting Minutes - 26th May 1944). No further mention was made to the source of the food.

Price Increase in 1943

The welfare committee recommended a price increase on the meals at the Churchill, beginning from the 1st of July 1943, following a letter received by Mr Alexander from the MoF headquarters "desiring" prices for meals to be increased. From this, prices were increased as follows:, Meat 7d (2017 worth approx. £1.04), Pudding 3d (2017 worth approx.. 44p) with the special rate for children ceasing on the 30th of June. The cost of Soup remained the same at 2d (2017 worth approx. 30p)

(Note: Prices are listed in old money, with conversion from the National Archives Currency Converter for 1945 <https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/currency-converter>)

Price Increases in 1945

From the 15th of January, the prices for meat and soup were to be increased by 1d each. Meat now being 8d and soup now 3d, with the total price of a 3 course meal now being ½. (Welfare Committee Meeting Minutes - 9th December 1944).

A further increase was made to the price of the meat course by 1d and tea by 1/2d from the 15th of December 1945 (Welfare Committee Meeting Minutes - 3rd December 1945)

Accounts

The Churchill Revenue and attendance dated from the 2nd of March to the 15th of October 1942 (including the mobile canteen) showed revenue of \$1,587.12s.8s (Approx. £62,467.66 In 2017). (Welfare Committee Meeting Minutes - 13th November 1942).

Beginning in April 1943, following the 1 year anniversary of the Churchill, comparative statements of drawings were included in each Welfare Committee Meeting.

Month ending 15th	1942	1943	1944	1945	1946
January	Not in Operation	£194.0s.5d	£314.2s.9d	£332.13s.9d	£375.18s.6d
February	Not in Operation	£214.7s.8d	£397.2s.6d	£278.3s.1d	£372.2s.4d
March	Not in Operation	£218.6s	£430.14s.3d	£442.16s.2d	£353.17s.11d
April	£250.9s.2d	£231.10s.11d	£384.4s.3d	£284.11s.5d	£295.0s.3d
May	£222.6s	£215.12s.6d	£420.3s.11d	£305.6s.4d	£335.0s.1d
June	£194.19s.1d	£285.2s*	£406.14s.10d		
July	£180.12s.5d	£251.4s.8d	£357.2s		
August	£220.2s.10d	£392.6s.6d**	£276.17s.6d		
September	£206.8s.2d	£495.6s.8d**	£416.18s.11d	£315.18s.7d	
October	£185.15s.3d	£317.0s.6d	£372.2s.4d	£334.8s.0d	

Commented [2]: My knowledge on business accounting and that of this period is very limited. I personally don't know what some of these terms mean, so I'm unable to read what was going on, but they are reported below from the council meeting minutes.

November	£192.14s.3d	£340.8s.9d	£436.12s.3d	£370.5s.2d	
December	£211.4s.3d	£349.15s.9d	£456.1s.3d	£392.2s.1d	

Inaccuracies in comparative returns reporting from Welfare Committee Meeting Minutes. Several figures changed in the years from reporting, the following list highlights changes from the 1942/43 comparative return reports from 1943 Council Meeting Minutes to the 1943/44 comparative return reports from the 1944 Council Meeting Minutes.

*Initial June 1943 was reported as £269.0s.4d in 1943, but then increased during 1943/44 report.

** Initial July 1943 was reported as £252.1s.4d in 1943, but then decreased during 1943/44 report.

***Initial August 1943 was reported as £392.19s.10d in 1943, but then decreased during 1943/44 report.

***** Initial September 1943 was reported as £515.7s.6d in 1943, but then decreased during 1943/44 report.

Operating at a Loss.

While initially, the welfare committee, upon reviewing the accounts for the year ending the 15th of May 1944, were happy to report that Churchill was operating at a surplus of £23.4s.7d, (Welfare Committee Special Meeting Minutes - 30th May 1944) this happiness did not last long. The Town Chamberlain, reported that additional accounts received in respect of the year ending 15th of May 1944, revealed a net loss of £27.8s.11d. (Welfare Committee Meeting Minutes - 21st July 1944).

A quarterly statement of income and expenditure was submitted to the Welfare Committee, on the 12th of October 1944. From the Quarter ending August 1944, the churchill was operating on a loss of £33.5s.10d

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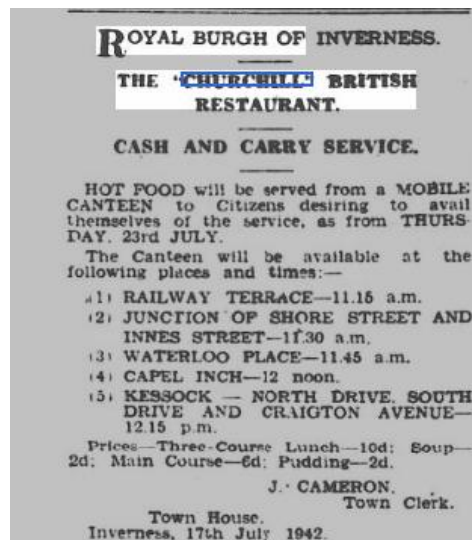
Over Expenditure

A Letter was received on the 8th of October 1943 from the MoF, desiring an explanation for over-expenditure on work done at the Churchill by a carpenter. The Welfare committee submitted a letter from the Chamberlain, detailing the difference between the estimated cost of the work and the actual capital, as well as a letter from the town surveyor with a list of additional work which was necessary to be completed that was originally not included in the estimate

Food Van/ Mobile Kitchen

The Churchill also operated a "Cash and Carry" Food Van service. The MoF arranged for the Ford Trust to provide Ford emergency food vans maintenance (Welfare Committee Meeting

Minutes - 25th March 1943). Stopping at the 5 points in the town, for 15 mins each, the mobile canteen's route took it across the major industrial hubs of the town.



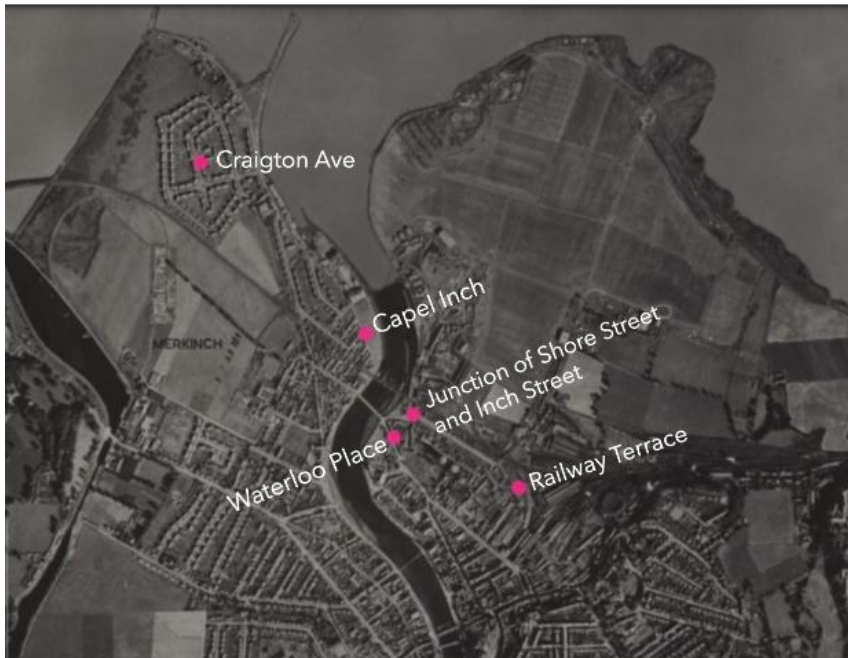
*Notes:

- Railway Terrace was identified via Canmore search
<https://canmore.org.uk/site/180607/inverness-railway-terrace>
- Capel Inch was identified via coordinates (57°29.243'N 4°14.007'W) taken from Place-Names of Inverness and Surrounding Area Ainmean-Àite Ann an Sgìre Prìomh Bhaile Na Gàidhealtachd.

(Maclean, Roddy. 2021. "Place-Names of Inverness and Surrounding Area Ainmean-Àite Ann an Sgìre Prìomh Bhaile Na Gàidhealtachd." Accessed October 7, 2024.

<https://www.nature.scot/sites/default/files/2021-06/Place-names%20of%20Inverness%20and%20Surrounding%20Area.pdf>.

Route of Cash and Carry Service Van:



*Aerial Photograph of Inverness taken in 1944, from Air Photo Mosaic Sheet (1:10,560 scale): 28/64 N.E. / NH 64 N.E. (<https://maps.nls.uk/view/75220041>)

Reports from War-time food advisor

Several reports were mentioned in the meeting minutes

The Ministry of Food report on the Churchill was read to the Welfare Committee on the 14th of October 1943. The letter, which had been received in August however the committee had not met in August of September, from the MoF's War time meals advisors stating that two separate inspections of the Churchill had occurred. One in April, during Mrs Galloway's tenure as manageress and one again after Miss MacDonald had taken over as manageress. The report highlighted the "great improvements from the last visit in April" and suggested that with some guidance and experience, Miss MacDonald could make the Churchill the "best in the country". The wartime meals advisor suggested that Miss MacDonald could visit other British Restaurants, especially those in Fife, for inspiration for making improvements. A minor issue was raised that the ovens had reported defects, which the advisor had reported onto the Ministry of Food.

A further inspection by the Wartime meals advisor was held on the 16th of March 1944, gave the following recommendations; the washing machine to be replace, additional equipment (pudding tins) be supplied and the ranges were not adequately working and needed fixed.

The committee agreed to seek out the work of a local blacksmith (Mr Mann) to fix the ranges and give an estimate of the work. As well as remove the dishwasher and refer the matter of replacing the unit to the MoF. (Welfare Committee Meeting 23rd March 1944).

Following the full report from the visit on the 16th of March, the Welfare Committee received a letter from the Assistant District Officer from the MoF. Two key points were raised, the first being the menus of the Churchill, with the Assistant District Officer raising a "lack of variety" and the second being the full report from the Wartime meals advisors. The Welfare Committee agreed to remit the matter of the menus to the convener and Miss MacDonald to interview "Messrs Munro and Co" to endeavour to come up with a suitable plan to secure supplies. (Welfare Meeting Minutes 26th May 1944)

The Full report however, required an additional special meeting to address the issues raised by the inspection and report. A special Welfare Committee Meeting was held on the 30th of May 1944. The major items on the agenda were the Staffing issues raised by the report. While the meeting minutes did not mention the specific issue, they did report that after consulting the manageress of the Churchill and the superintendent, it had been agreed to dispense with 1 member of staff. General Management of the Churchill was also noted as an item in the report, again the minutes did not venture into what exactly was reported on, but the outcome of the committee suggesting that the superintendent should be given instruction regarding the keeping of records. Mr Alexander (The MoF Divisional Officer) stated that in regard to the Menus, Miss Barland (The wartime meals advisor) was willing to come up North and make some demonstration menus, the committee agreed to the motion that Miss Barland should send Miss MacDonald a list of menus for a fortnight.

Minor issues regarding the equipment from the report were also raised at the Special Meeting. The MoF report suggested that the chimney be extended, to which the town surveyor should acquire an estimate for the work and report back. Additionally, the potato-peeling machine needed the "revolving plates renewed" and outer pipe fixed. The Steamers' wire baskets needed replaced, and the dual-purpose boilers needed inspected. The Welfare Committee finalised the meeting with a note of satisfaction that the Restaurant was "being managed as well as can be during wartime conditions".

In October 1944, another MoF Wartime Meals advisor report was received by the Welfare Committee. In the report Miss Barland stated she had again attended the Churchill to meet with Miss MacDonald. Both Miss Barland and Miss MacDonald were of the opinion, following the meeting, that 2 members of staff, 1 of the kitchen maids and a cleaner, could be dispensed with. (Welfare Committee Meeting Minutes - 12th October 1944).

Another inspection by another wartime meals advisor was held on the 19th of February 1946, while no details of the report were mentioned during the meeting, the committee commended Miss MacDonald on the "favourable observations made" (Welfare Committee Meeting Minutes - 20th March 1946).

Events

The Churchill hosted several events throughout its lifespan, the majority appear to have been events based around troop entertainment and hosting, as well as events for school children from local schools. A large number of events were listed in the minutes, I have selected a couple to highlight in this section.

Private events and hiring out the premises and kitchen, were also introduced. From the 24th of February 1943, the Convener of the Welfare Committee and Chamberlain had met to discuss "charges" for renting out the Churchill for evening events and had agreed to the charge of 30.- per night including electricity and heating, for no more than 4 hours. (Welfare Committee Meeting Minutes - 24th February 1943).

The Churchill Opening Ceremony

The Opening Ceremony was held on the 3rd of March 1942 and christened the "Churchill" in honour of the current Prime minister. Reported by the Scotsman, Churchill was capable of "providing over 1000 meals a day". The opening ceremony was attended by several well known citizens of Inverness. Inverness-born British politician and civil engineer, Sir Murdoch MacDonald, provost Hugh Mackenzie, the Very Rev Dr Dugald MacFarlane, and Lady Hermione Cameron (Wife of Colonel Sir Donald Walter Cameron of Lochiel and Great Grandmother of Rt Hon. Donald Cameron, current Chief of Clan Cameron) attended. Additionally Captain R. E. Sawyer, the Ministry for Food divisional food officer and Councillor Donald MacPherson, convener of the Welfare committee, attended the opening. Captain Sawyer spoke, stating that "effort was being made to give to the community properly balanced, cheap meals." Councillor MacPherson, who formally accepted responsibility for the Churchill at the ceremony, spoke of the good the Churchill will do in "the great war of bad eating". ("British Restaurant at Inverness" - The Scotsman 4th March 1942). (The Northern Times - 5th March 1942).

The Churchill was then opened to the public the following day, the 4th of March. The initial opening hours of the Churchill were 11am to 2:30pm, Mondays to Saturdays ("The Churchill" - Inverness Courier 27th February 1942).

Venue for entertaining troops

From the Welfare Committee Meeting Minutes of 1st December 1942, Captain Jonstone (Entertainment Officer) requested use of the Churchill to provide a meal and concert entertainment for "20 RAF, 20 Canadians and 40 British Troops". The event's structure was stated as "starting at 7:30, concert at 8pm, supper at 9pm and closing at 10pm".

Following on from this agreement was given for the restaurant to be used "every alternate Friday" with £50 (Converted to £1,777.58) given from the Inverness Common Good Committee to cover the cost of providing meals to the servicemen.

The fortnightly entertaining of the troops appears to have continued for some time. In 1944, Major General Stewart, Commander of the North Highland District, wrote to the Inverness

Town Council to express his appreciation for the fortnightly entertainments given at the Churchill for the troops and thanks to Councillor MacPherson and Miss MacDonald and her staff who contributed to the entertainment of the Troops. (Inverness Ordinary Meeting of the Town Council Meeting Minutes - 1st of May 1944).

1 year Anniversary.

The 1 year anniversary of the Churchill on the 3rd of March 1943 was celebrated with a high tea at 5.30pm, with Council, Education Committee and Welfare Committee members and their wives invited.

Holidays at Home Scheme

From the meeting minutes (21st June 1943), the convener reported arrangements would be made for the Churchill to provide sandwiches and cakes for the Sheepdog Trials and Inter-School sports days at the Burgh, in connection with the then running Holiday Scheme. The Sheepdog trials were part of the Holiday at Home Government Scheme to reduce civilians travelling on railways lines, keeping them free for troop movement, and to improve the morale of industrial workers by having at-home events.

Christmas Party 1944.

The Churchill was to then host a Christmas party for 250 of the county's "most deserving School Children", selected by the teachers of the area (Welfare Committee Meeting Minutes 9th December 1944). Additional funding was gathered through gifts of £1 from a local butcher, Mr Riggs, and Councillor Ross receiving a sum of £5 from friends. While no exact date was given in the minutes, suggestion was that it could have been held on the 11th of December 1944.

Food Minister Visit 1944.

Captain Sawyer informed the town council that Colonel Llewellyn, the then Minister of Food, was to visit the Churchill on the 11th of August 1944, for 30 minutes from 12:15pm. Councillor MacPherson was to receive and welcome the Colonel at the restaurant. (Special Town Council Meeting Minutes - 31st July 1944). No further mention of the visit was made in the council meeting minutes, however Colonel Llewellyn does mention he visited Inverness' British Restaurant during the House of Lords Civic Restaurants Bill debate (Hansard HL Deb. vol.146 cols.179, 6 March 1947).

Closure

An exact date of the closure was not found in the Council Meeting Minutes, while searching through 1946-47, two major changes limited the search. The format of the meeting minutes was changed, removing index of topics and the Welfare Committee was disbanded and combined with the ARP committee. Last mention of the Churchill was during the Welfare Committee Meeting on the 14th of October 1946.

The last Welfare Committee Meeting of 1945 showed that the committee did not meet for sometime, with the inclusion of reports of accounts and comparative drawings for September, October and November 1944/45. (Welfare Committee Meeting Minutes - 5th December 1945).

The Welfare Committee meeting in March of 1946, on their agenda was a letter from the West Parish Church, regarding Churchill. The West Parish Church, while "sympathetic to the continuance of the Churchill until the beginning of the school holidays", voiced their desire to have their church hall back in time for the winter season, (Welfare Committee Meeting Minutes - 20th March 1946).

The committee received a circular letter from the Ministry of Food, revealing that financial arrangements with regard to British Restaurants should be terminated at the end of the financial year 1946/47. Town Chamberlain raised attention to the section of the letter which stated that British Restaurants that were not transferred to local authorities, the asset should remain property of the MoF and the MoF would reimburse the authority any expenditure necessarily used in the winding up of these restaurants, including the reinstatement of premises. With that in mind and with a Ministry of Food official visiting on the 5th (of July?) to survey Churchill for equipment, the committee was in agreement that the MoF should be asked to arrange for an official, who could deal with the question of reinstatement of premises, to be in attendance on the same day, alongside a representative from the Church, the convener (Council MacKay) and the Burgh surveyor. (Welfare Committee Meeting Minutes - 24th June 1946).

A letter from the Divisional Food Officer made mention of the council's plans to close the Churchill, expressing disapproval but welcoming the increase to School meals as a way of recuperating loss from the Churchill. (Welfare Committee Meeting Minutes - 3rd December 1945).

Initial plans to close the Churchill on the 4th of July 1946 were put into motion, however due to awaiting new School kitchen it appears they were put off (Welfare Committee Meeting Minutes - 29th April 1946).

A petition against the closing was lodged to the town council, signed by 148 patrons of the restaurant. (Welfare Committee Meeting Minutes - 24th June 1946).

A motion was raised by Councillor Henderson and seconded by Bailie Graham, that representation be made to the YMCA for the continuation of providing meals. The town council wrote to the manager of the local YMCA, to "favourably consider lunches be made

available for civilians at reasonable price", as an alternative to the closing British restaurant. It was reported that the MoF would be prepared to issue any necessary permits for food staff, in the event that the YMCA agreed to take over and continue providing meals. (Welfare Committee Meeting 24th of June 1946). However, a reply from the Hons. Secretary of the YMCA on the 28th of July, declined the offer, stating they were not able to provide catering for civilians. (Welfare Committee Meeting 14th October 1946.)

Agenda item "Do - Account for storage of goods" listed £22.10/- being due to Messrs A. Fraser Ltd, for storage of goods from the West Parish Church