

The BRISTOL



1927-2002
**75 Years of Loyal
Service & Hospitality**

In the Beginning.....

The founding of Hotel Bristol some 75 years ago owes much to both of my paternal grandparents Howard & Minnie Young's formative years and connections. The former managed a number of holidays on the continent prior to his marriage where he became acquainted with many a "Hotel Bristol" in Europe's principal cities.

It was in 1906 that they met at the Northernhay Hotel in Exeter, a small Hotel owned by Minnie's father and frequented by the then young Howard for overnight stays in the course of his work as a builders merchant's representative.

Following their marriage they went to live in Bristol where their 3 children namely Beryl, Jean & Bernard were born.

It must have been early in 1927 that Minnie, born in Bugle Cornwall, learned from her cousin Alice ,who was married to Willie Julian, a member of a well known family of house furnishers and agents, that Newquay College on the Narrowcliff had gone bust and was on offer at a rental of £300.00 per annum with an option to purchase for £6000.00.



Having disposed of the family home in Filton Avenue, Bristol for £1000.00 they acquired the lease on the 8th March 1927 from one Isaac Foot, (Father of Michael Foot, the former Labour Party Leader) and arrived in Newquay, according to my Aunt Jean, on a stormy March night to begin a new life.

Progress and profits were soon forthcoming.

Howard Young kept his old job for the first few years and Minnie was joined by her sister Evelyn Francis (Auntie Bill- soon to be widowed) with



her young sons Laurie and Dennis.

The newly opened Hotel only occupied the eastern part of its present site, for next to it was a car park, where the old Hotel Edgumbe, which burnt down in 1919, once stood.



The Early Expansion

So early expansion was by necessity restricted to utilisation of the original acquisition.

By early 1931 the original option had been exercised. The major expansion of 1934 could be planned as in 1933 the adjacent site was acquired for £3500.00 from the Commercial Cable Company, who had bought it in 1926 following the Irish troubles with a view to bringing ashore a cable from Newfoundland.



The family capital was limited and Howard Young turned to his friend John Knox Hine, a builder from Minehead in Somerset, to help build and finance the enlarged Hotel.

The Hotel Bristol (Newquay) Ltd. was incorporated on 21st December 1933.

The first directors were

Mr. & Mrs. H.B. Young and Mr. J.K. Hine. However with capital expenditure of some £40,000 further finance was required.

Regular guests and friends put up some £15,000 in redeemable preference shares and with a mortgage from Lloyds Bank the hotel façade and building came to fruition much as it is today.



260 guests were catered for. An Annexe was rented, where the present Narrowcliff Surgery now stands, to help satisfy the continuing demand for holidays at the seaside during a season which only lasted from mid May to mid September.

Staff were engaged for the season and mainly came from London. Evening dress was worn on dance nights. It is hard to imagine that the hotel had 147 bedrooms at one time and only four had a private bathroom. How times have changed. Bookings were only accepted on a weekly or fortnightly basis. Outings and sports tournaments were a weekly feature of the pre-war years on Mondays it was a picnic at Treynon, Tuesdays–Tennis, Wednesdays was Cricket on the sands with Putting held on Thursdays. Afternoon Tea was often served on the beach with great hampers brought down from the hotel, a service much envied by guests at other hotels.

PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL.

NOT FOR PUBLICATION.

Enclosure to accompany letter dated 10th. February 1938 to the Preference Shareholders.

THE HOTEL BRISTOL (NEWQUAY) LIMITED.

SUMMARISED PROFIT AND LOSS ACCOUNTS.

	Year ended 8th April.		
	1935	1936	1937
Income from Visitors :—			
Visitors General Charges	...	£16,277	£18,342
Liquor Sales	...	1,811	2,176
Gross takings	...	16,277	20,518
Expenditure :—			
General Working and Management expenses			
including Directors' Management Remuneration	11,746		14,040
as fixed by the Articles	...		
Repairs and Renewals including provision for	2,488	2,359	2,712
depreciation	...		
	14,234	16,272	17,052
	2,043	2,842	2,866
Income Tax	...	681	
Dividend (less tax) on Cumulative Preference	...	785	808
Shares	...	736	794
	1,417	1,530	1,602
Balances	...	£1,312	£1,264

NOTE :—The figures for the year ended 8th April, 1938 are not yet available, but the receipts are, in fact, substantially in excess of those for the year 1936/37.



W a r t i m e Hotelkeeping

With the advent of war in September 1939 the directors were faced with an uncertain future for the Company. Visitor numbers declined sharply

with the possibility of the Hotel being unable to pay its way.

After the fall of Dunkirk and the threat of invasion it was with great good fortune that the founders of Benenden School from Cranbrook, Kent entered into an agreement with the Company to evacuate the entire school to Newquay. Thus the Hotel was saved from possible requisition or closure.

For the entirety of the war the Hotel was able to open for visitors during the Easter and Summer holidays. Those in charge had to put up with rationing, restrictions on the use of water (Baths had to be marked with a red line to give a permitted depth) to conserve fuel. Peace brought with it three or four years of hectic trading and the advent of year round opening. We have had a few Benenden reunions in recent years and their stories include tales of the Great Fish Poisoning, playing LaX (Lacrosse) on the beach and racing to get a hotel bed rather than a school one at the start of term to name but a few. Later in 1951 when another war seemed imminent my father wrote to Wycombe Abbey school to ensure the hotel's future was secure. He even wrote to my prep school headmaster enquiring about the cost of food per child per week. The reply came that he budgeted 18 shillings to 18 shillings &

During WAR TIME the Bristol is being run on exactly the same lines as in the past. The Directors realize that they will be contributing to the National Effort by continuing to give the fullest opportunity for the perfect holiday, more essential now than ever before.

RIISING FOOD COSTS—The Charges in this Brochure are the same as those quoted before the War. It is hoped that they will not have to be increased but in the event of food costs rising considerably they might have to be amended slightly. We trust this will not be necessary.

All reservations are subject to cancellation in the event of War conditions preventing the fulfilment of the contract.

During the War the Hotel Bristol will be open throughout the Year. Special Residential Terms are quoted during the Winter.

February, 1940.





The founders with their family in 1950

Back Row L-R: Jean Francis, Laurie Francis, Auntie Bill, Bill Boyle, Bernard Young
 Next Row L-R: Priscilla Knight, Mary Young, Beryl Boyden, Jean Boyle, Frank Boyden
 Seated; Minnie & Howard Young with Sarah Young
 Front Row L-R: Richard Young, Jacqui Boyden, Anthony Young, Mary Boyle, Stuart Young, John Boyle

sixpence.

Return to Peacetime

The post war years set in train many changes. Guests came to expect en-suite facilities resulting in a loss of rooms and visitor numbers. Gradually the pattern of weekly holidays diminished to one's of differing length. Eating habits changed from full-board with afternoon tea included to half-board . With global influence we have arrived today at having to offer room only rates.

A resident dance band was a feature of both the pre- and post war years. Names such as Norman Nankervis, Gerry Alvarez, Bob Batley and Ronnie Pleydell come to mind.

One's clientele has always been a changing feature. The winter months saw a gradual build up over the years in the function trade with most organisations having an annual dinner-dance.

Packaged holidays opened up new frontiers and a feature of the last 25 years has been the arrival of foreign visitors from all parts of the globe with many in organised groups.

Mr J K Hine died in 1943 and his trustees disposed of his shares to my family. Mr & Mrs Howard Young retired to By-The-Sea in 1946, when my father returned from war service. Sadly he contracted TB in 1951 shortly after his father's death.

In 1950 plans were drawn up to rebuild the eastern side of the hotel to mirror the western side. To my grandmother's dismay these were not put in place.

Sister Hotels

Bernard saw his sister Beryl and her husband Frank acquire the Hotel Victoria here in Newquay in 1949 having moved from the Penhallow Hotel which the family had purchased in 1944 prior to their return from India.

Laurie Francis and his wife Jean ,whom he had met pre war at the Bristol, ran the Polurrian Hotel at Mullion, which the family purchased in 1946 prior to their marriage in 1947.

By 1953 the hotel's function trade was well established but the family were



The Rt. Hon. Mrs. Margaret Thatcher, M.P.

HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

15th March 1979

Stuart Young

I am just writing to thank you so much for looking after me and my party so well during our stay at your Hotel while I was in the West country last week.

It really was wonderful to arrive at such a comfortable Hotel, after my hectic day's programme and your staff could not have looked after us better.

Would you please pass on my thanks to all those concerned with our visit.

Yours sincerely
Margaret Thatcher

Stuart Young Esq

During the annual closure in October 1973 a serious fire broke out in the Stillroom. The main water supply had been turned off to renew the hotel boilers but unfortunately the Still boiler had remained on without water and eventually exploded causing the fire. Luckily the shutters between the Stillroom and the service



corridor dropped preventing the fire from spreading. Mr Campbell Docking, who was caretaking, heard the explosion and alerted the fire brigade. The hotel re-opened on time with new crockery and silverware. The insurance claim was £13,000.00

The old playing field of Alexandra House, the former Orphanage, was acquired in 1974 to improve our parking facilities.

Many future couples first met in the hotel, myself included, my second wife Vera came over from Hanover in 1977 to improve her English. As a travel agent we were able to build on her connections and establish a reputation for reliability in hosting study tours.

Over the years the hotel has been visited by numerous well known figures. HRH Prince Charles, Duke of Cornwall attended a meeting of The Duchy Council in 1975. Two former Prime Ministers, namely Sir Edward Heath and Baroness Thatcher, came in the course of their political careers.

Among those in the world of music and show business were Dame Vera Lynn, Michael Caine, Eric Clapton and Dave Allen, to recall but a few.

The Dynasty Continues !

In November 1991 my eldest son Howard joined the firm following professional experience & training in the hotel industry. He is the fourth generation of my family to take on the responsibility of the hotel, which has managed to remain an integral part of day to day life in Newquay and Cornwall as a whole because of the continued loyalty of staff and

customers. In 1993 he married Allison Atyeo whom he had met while they were working together at the Falmouth Hotel, in which the Bristol has an interest,. Hotel and College trained she now has responsibility for personnel and assisting Howard! They have two children Emma & Alec and maybe one of them will follow in their father's footsteps.

Recession and Consortia

In 1992 the business experienced its worst year since the outbreak of war. Had it not been for pre and end of season golfing holidays our tenure might well have ended. Fortunately, the following year, a slow recovery began assisted by income from our self catering houses and strict control of expenditure. We joined Best Western Purchasing group to help keep down our costs.



The remainder of the 1990's saw a steady increase in our levels of business helped in some way by our fully joining Best Western, a marketing consortium of independent hotels. Membership was essential to compete against the major groups, access the international reservations systems that all hotels ought to be available on.

1999 was a strange year—in August we experienced the eclipse and in December the Millennium Eve had to be celebrated. Both were over hyped and by some avaricious establishments greatly over priced. Our policy was to cover any additional costs but not rip off our loyal guests and see them return again the next year!

More buoyant trading lately has enabled the foyer, cocktail bar and lounges to be refurbished.

This last year started badly with the outbreak of Foot & Mouth disease. Many cancellations ensued (over £100k), especially from abroad but the opening of The Eden Project in March 2001 was the saviour for us, and Cornwall as a whole. The year ended better than the previous one with a very optimistic outlook for 2002.

Guest Recollections

We asked our guests to send us tales of their memories whilst staying with us. Here are a selection of those we received, we sadly could not publish them all. For obvious reasons we have not included names.

“...the last time I stayed at the Bristol with my father was in the late 1980’s when I was 20 something. On our first evening I went to meet my father in the bar. It was empty save for a tall, slim and very handsome man. After a while we began to chat and I learned that—let’s call him Gerald—was unattached. We got along like a house on fire and arranged to meet again the following evening. Gerald had been due to leave a day or two later but he prolonged his stay and we spent the week swimming, surfing, walking and generally enjoying Newquay. Most evenings we dined in the hotel and other guests began to take an interest in the progressing romance, especially when he presented me with an enormous bouquet of red roses.

When the holiday came to an end we exchanged telephone numbers but I didn’t expect to hear from Gerald again; after all most holiday romances are just that. But when I arrived home he had already rung and had left a message to say that he would be in touch again very soon. The days went by without a call, so I decided to try ringing him—the number was unobtainable. Ah well, it had been a lovely holiday.

Gradually I forgot about Gerald. Then one morning about three months later a plain brown envelope dropped through the letterbox which, on opening, I found stamped “HM Prison.....” Puzzled I turned to the last page and found it was from Gerald! He apologetically explained the delay in making contact: apparently while staying at the Bristol he had been on the run from the police and the day after checking out had fled the country. As he stepped off a plane coming back a few weeks later he was arrested.

Gerald was on remand for robbing a bank and, presumably, his stay in Newquay—and the roses—had been funded by the proceeds of his crime!”

Mrs C.B. [Editors note: This story was spotted by a BBC producer and was included in a Radio 4 programme about holiday romances]

“My wife and I were staying at the Bristol in the last two weeks of August 1939 when war was imminent. I remember that hardly a

mealtime passed without someone being called to Reception over the public address system to receive instructions to report to their unit or government department immediately. By the end of our holiday the dining room was very depleted. We left on the Friday night to drive home through the night, the first of the “black-out”, when we encountered many army units on the move”
Mr H.T.

“I came to H.B. with my parents in Feb 1958 for my first Masonic Ladies Night. My husband and I came for one night in 1962 on our way back from honeymoon on the Isles of Scilly. We started holidaying regularly in 1965 and have enjoyed at least one visit a year ever since bringing our sons, who have grown up loving their days with you. Our eldest learned to swim in the new pool (1972 I think). They both had fun playing with Howard & John on Tolcarne Beach. Sometimes our parents came too—it was a real family gathering. Now our eldest son’s children play with Howard’s, it is such a special place for us all.”
Mrs J.S.

“I have recently stayed with you twice in the last 12 months and enjoyed our stays unlike my first stay with you in the summer of 1943, aged 4. We were evacuated to Cornwall during the war; I can’t recollect why we stayed at the Bristol but I do remember the toilet on the second floor which locked itself. I was locked in for about an hour or what seemed like an hour. My mother remembers this and she was frantic. Needless to say when we revisited the Bristol last year, my first thing was to visit this toilet which was basically the same as 60 years ago”
Mr M.T.

“It was Christmas 1948, our first visit, and as we stood at the desk checking in, a Christmas tree which had been beautifully decorated, went up in flames!! When we came down for tea, we were most impressed to find your grandparents busily decorating a new one, which remained intact for the rest of the holiday.”
Mr P.J.

“During the autumn of 1939, a Primary School boy, evacuated from north London, saw the sea for the first time in his young life from high on the Barrowfields, it was awesome. A few days later walking from his temporary home in Bonython Road to his new school, in an old church hall, (now a funeral parlour), he saw something which, in his eyes, was just as fine in its way; the dining room of the Hotel Bristol at breakfast

time. In the gloom of that grey morning the chandeliers blazed their light throughout the grand room.Food there was in plenty, the likes of which he had never seen before at home.

A promise was made there and then; one day the boy would bring his mother to stay and eat in those splendid surroundings. He never forgot his private promise and his childhood ambition was finally achieved; his mother was in her 90th year and both he and his wife were pensioners when they, at last, visited the Bristol”.

Mr C.R.

“My father had stayed at the Bristol before, during and after the war. My first visit was with him in the summer of 1957. We returned at Christmas 1961 and thereafter I have been every summer since 1962 up to now, (except for 1966 when I was unwell).

Coincidentally my wife has also been every summer since her first visit with her parents in 1962, although our paths didn't cross until 1969. We spent a couple of days looking at each other across the Dining Room and Ballroom. When I eventually asked her to dance, it was the night before she was due to depart! At that time she thought that she would be going abroad with friends the following summer, so as Lancashire and Middlesex were 230 miles apart, we did not expect to see each other again.

However, the following summer, 1970, I pulled up at the Hotel at 10.15 on the Sunday morning, for three weeks , and J was just coming out of the front door to go to the beach. We were both taken aback, with pleasure, and spent a lot of time together before she was to go home three days later. We knew now that there was something “in it”. We had a few long phone calls. Although the Hotel was full, Stuart managed to find a cancelled room (unusual for August) and J was able to return by Train for our first planned holiday together during my third week. We are both creatures of habit, as from then on, we've been every summer.

The Bristol has therefore been a significant part of our lives and still is . We've seen many changes, watched the family grow up and thoroughly enjoy our annual rest in the comfortable relaxing atmosphere”.

Mr R.L.

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