

Kia ora, gday and welcome to the History of Aotearoa New Zealand. Episode 92 – Speight’s: The Scientific Revolution. This podcast is supported by our amazing Patrons. If you want to support HANZ go to [patreon.com/historyaotearoa](https://patreon.com/historyaotearoa). Last time, Speight’s went through a rather dark period, losing three managers all within the span of a few years along with struggling wartime restrictions and a fire that burnt down a significant portion of the brewery. All of this ultimately resulting in Speight’s losing their share of the export market and becoming an exclusively local supplier. Today we will see how they tried to recover after this decade or so of tragedy with some significant developments being made on the technical side of brewing.

In 1948, the year after the West Coast boycott a new board room was constructed by the brewery carpenters where obviously board meetings would take place and all important guests would be entertained. The walls had a nice wood panelling that Hugh Speight didn’t want to be ruined so he instructed that no paintings or other wall hangings be put up. One of the fancy embellishments the room did have was a big clock where each hour was marked with a medal that Speight’s had won at international competitions.

You might remember that I mentioned in the previous episode that, Reg Dawson, Speight’s head brewer had taken Charles Speight’s place on the now defunct local board of New Zealand Breweries. Well, he had been at the brewery for about 25 years and in 1948 was retiring to be replaced by John Rhind. Rhind began his brewing apprenticeship back in 1929 and had worked at pretty much every NZB brewery since then. One of his more recent appointments had been at the Gisborne brewery but he only worked there for one day because he was part of the Naval Volunteer Reserve and the day after he started, WW2 broke out so he was rapidly called into service. Obviously he survived and returned to New Zealand to work in a brewery in Auckland before coming to Dunedin. Rhind got a running start at Speight’s with a new beer being launched not long after he started, Speight’s Superb Pale Ale. It was a milder beer that had half the hops content of Gold Medal Ale. Rhind would also help oversee Speight’s undergo numerous changes to its processes and new machines added to their repertoire. One of the first things Rhind did was to get rid of the old fermentation process they were using called butt fermentation. It’s unknown whether it was coincidence or somehow related but almost immediately after the butts stopped being used the ‘Yeast Troubles’ began. One of the steps during beer production is clarification, where the solids are removed from the wort to make it clear, which helps in the brewing process and tends to make a higher quality beer. Unfortunately for Speight’s after butt fermentation stopped this process wasn’t working, the liquid wort would still have yeast all through it. An even bigger problem was that this doesn’t seem to have been caught before brewing completed and some of the yeasty brew was kegged and sent to pubs and hotels. Finings, which are substances added to beer to give flavour as well as further clarify it, were rapidly sent to establishments with instructions to add it to the Speight’s that had recently arrived. However, this failed to solve the problem and almost all the beer shipped out of Speight’s around that time was sent back by the local pubs as undrinkable. This was another big blow to Speight’s as their sales were still low from the whole gravity of wort fiasco and now, they dropped even further. Not all hope was lost though, Rhind had a theory that the issue had come from a new set of equipment that they had been using and replaced it with some older equipment they had lying around. This seemed to solve the problem but a year later the same issue returned. What is a more likely reason for the Yeast Troubles was that the switching from butt fermentation to another process had resulted in the yeast being contaminated as the butts do quite well in protecting the yeast from any particulates in the air, despite being quite labour intensive. Several other NZB breweries offered to help by providing yeast that they had on hand but Rhind refused thinking that Speights’ unique flavour was from the yeast. However, after this problem occurred a few more

times, Rhind had to concede that they needed new yeast, which they managed to source from Christchurch.

The other major change that Rhind made was the introduction of a huge machine to automate cask washing. Appropriately known as the Super Goliath, it would automatically move casks along a conveyor and blast hot water into them while brushes scrubbed the outside by rotating the cask. Previously all this work had to be done by hand, which as you can imagine was a pretty big job, they had whole yards dedicated to this task alone, which is also where the Super Goliath was installed. Naturally the installation of an automatic machine made 19 staff surplus to requirements so Rhind made them redundant, though at least one of them found jobs elsewhere in the brewery. There was one thing that the Super Goliath couldn't do though, removing the little muslin hop bags placed in the casks for dry-hopping. To fix this, dry-hopping was dropped altogether as a process. At the same time the casks going forward would be lined with brewer's pitch, a mix of wax and resin which helped the casks last a bit longer. The additional of the Super Goliath marks a bit of a turning point in Speight's attitude towards how it handled staff being made redundant, in this case due to automation. Previously they would have been offered jobs in either other parts of Speight's or at another NZB brewery but this, as far as I can tell, was the first time a group of people were laid off en masse at Speight's and not given the option to move. It's something that we will see more of going forward and it would be interesting to know why this change came about.

Since the butt fermentation method was no longer being used, the cellar that this was conducted in was now vacant and thoughts were being made on what it should be used for now. Speight's finally landed on turning it into a bottling hall where they could bottle their own brew. The consequence of this was that they no longer needed Powley's, who was still bottling Speight's exclusively in the South Island on their 99 year contract. Interestingly, Powley around about this time bought McGavin's and leased Strachan's from NZB. We aren't sure if these two events are linked but it is possible that NZB offered Powley a bit of compensation for the loss of their lucrative bottling rights in the form of the two other NZB Dunedin breweries. Although Strachan's was closed the following year in 1950, Powley also bought another, Wilson's Dunedin Brewery. The Wilson being that of our old mate James Wilson, or rather his descendants as he would have likely been dead at this point and in fact the brewery that Powley had just bought was on the same site as the original Well Park Brewery. The acquisition of McGavin's did present a bit of a problem though as RCB Greenslade, current assistant manager of Speight's, was on McGavin's board as well as the board of NZB. This was seen as an untenable position since McGavin's was now seen as a rival brewery and he would have to resign from one of them to ensure there was no conflict of interest. Thankfully that decision was kinda made for him when NZB bought back a 50% stake in McGavin's, meaning it was brought back into the NZB fold and Greenslade was allowed to remain. The loss of Powley's as a bottler did also have one other rather significant consequence. The moa logo belonged to the bottler, not to Speight's. So, when they began doing the job themselves, the moa on the labels was gone forever. It wasn't a full conversion just quite yet though and Powley's would continue to bottle Speight's until 1956.

By 1950, a significant development in how beer was transported had been made. Instead of beer being delivered to Powley's in a bunch of casks loaded into the back of truck, a huge glass lined tank was loaded onto the flatbed and filled with beer, which was great cause it meant more beer could be transported with less faff. This created a few hurdles though as it meant changing some aspects of how beer is processed. The main one was that beer sitting in casks would go through a natural conditioning process, which is how beer becomes carbonated. That didn't occur when the beer was put into the tanker so a carbonating and filtering process was added in 1949, taking place on the first

floor of the 'new' brewery built during the start of the war. Added in 1951, also on the carbonating floor, was Speight's first cold store, containing 13 tanks, able to hold 690 hogsheads between them. Another process that happened on this floor was finings preparation. In this case it was the isinglass, dried swim bladders from fish that were softened with acid and mixed with water to produce a gelatinous liquid. This liquid would be added to the beer after fermentation but what's interesting, or rather, kinda horrifying is that there would occasionally be spills of acid onto the floor, cause you know, these things just sometimes happen. Over the years this gradually dissolved the lime in the concrete of the floor which would travel with the acid down into the ceiling of the floor below. There it would drip and leave a small deposit of lime on the ceiling and over time create artificial stalactites!

Now that the processing of the beer had been ironed out, the thinking was that they could expand the tankers to not just deliver to Powley's but deliver straight to pubs and hotels from the tankers. This presented another problem though as they would need to convince the publicans that this was a good idea that they should adopt. At the moment pubs were only equipped to hook up casks to their taps but this new system would mean that they would have to install large tanks in their own cellars, which would be costly, take up a lot of room and generally publicans might not be super keen on the whole thing. To this end, the sales and distribution team went through Dunedin, suburb by suburb, convincing owners that they should adopt this new system. Part of the deal was likely that the brewery would front up some of the cost of getting the tanks in as a separate department was set up in Speight's called the Hotel Department whose job it was to fit hotels with tanks.

On the brewery side, a tanker filling station had to be set up to be able to easily fill up the new truck. The first tanker truck that Speight's owned was a Bedford that had a 4,800L stainless steel tank on the back. Built in Christchurch, Hugh Speight and John Rhind went up there to take delivery of it in 1951. Other guys in the group who went with them were Noel Davenport from sales, who did most of the convincing of hotels, Bernard O'Connell, secretary for NZB and the fella who would be driving it all around Dunedin, Jim Malcolmson. Malcolmson had joined Speight's in 1919 as a horse carriage driver and was later promoted to a motor vehicle driver and eventually foreman driver. The first tanker delivery of beer took place on 23 July 1951 to the Criterion Hotel, with the second hotel to take delivery being the one right next to it on 28 August. It wasn't long before demand required another tanker which was of similar design and then a third. The third one was a bit smaller than the other two only holding 2700L but the technology within it was a bit more advanced. You see, the tanks being installed into the hotels held about 1300L, which was good in the sense that the 4,800L Bedfords could service multiple hotels on a single run. The issue though is that if you are driving around with a half full tank of carbonated beer, it's sloshing around getting all foamy and becoming flat, kinda like when you shake a bottle of fizzy. There was also likely a pressure issue as well as CO2 filled the tank. The smaller truck, nicknamed The Bubble, didn't have this problem because it had two compartments in its tank, 1300L each. Conveniently, this meant that one compartment could fill an entire hotel tank. With the second compartment still full they wouldn't be driving around with half of the beer sloshing all over the place and going flat. The trade off was that it could only service two places at a time so it was used only for in town deliveries. The trucks were meant to be painted in the standard NZB colour scheme of two shades of green. However, for some reason, Hugh Speight very much disliked green as a colour so Speight's tankers were painted tan and cream.

Casks weren't fully phased out yet though, especially for those places serving Speight's further afield than Otago. Four of the five hotels in Blenheim served Speight's from a cask, same in Nelson but it was becoming harder to get those casks to them. Since the war, shipping via sea was no longer used by Speight's as it still wasn't at its prewar levels yet making it rather expensive. Roads and rail were

now the favoured method. There was a brief time though that they managed to get some casks onto ships on the cheap by replacing the wood used to secure freight with casks of beer. Eventually though, Nelson and Marlborough switched over to tanks but NZB decided that they didn't want to do long distance tanker runs, presumably for economic reasons such as fuel cost or maybe they didn't think the beer would last the journey in a tanker. Whatever the case, this meant that Speight's distribution was effectively limited to the Lower South Island, south of Oamaru. Another kick in the balls after a decade of issues.

Other changes were happening directly within the brewery as well. A new telephone and intercom system was established to help keep contact within the building running smoothly. Previously if someone within the brewery wanted to talk to someone else, they had to get a person to run around and try to find them, which was rather difficult when the brewery was now very large with multiple stories and spread across two sides of Rattray Street. The new intercom system would avoid all this with three microphones being installed, one at the reception desk which would be manned by Marilyn Dunn for next 26 years who was said have a 'melliflous voice'. The second was in the brewers' office and the last in the office of the brewery manager, currently Hugh Speight. Hugh had become quite the dominant figure within the brewery and apparently "those who worked under him can still hear echoes of his commanding voice booming from the speakers: 'Calling X, X, eight oh please,'" 8-0 was Hugh's personal phone extension and so if anyone was called on to give 8-0 a ring, they found a phone and did so right quick!

In 1951, after a long time languishing, progress was finally made on the malthouse across the street that had burnt down in the Great Fire. One of the kilns that had been damaged in the fire was restored to its former glory which increased the malting capacity of Speight's. Additionally, work had begun to dismantle what remained of the building to get it ready for whatever they wanted to put there in future. It was also around this time that the old slogan 'Purity, Body and Strength' was brought back, though it was now slightly modified to 'Purity, Body and Flavour' with strength being noticeably absent. This revived slogan also debuted with a new advertisement campaign of three anthropomorphised barrels where the barrel itself was the head with a face and they had a human body underneath. Each barrel represented one of the words Purity, Body and Flavour and were dressed in a theme to reflect that. Purity had a hat and pipe like Sherlock Holmes, Body had a striped shirt and ripped physique like a bodybuilder and Flavour a hat and apron like a chef. One of these ads showed the barrels standing on top of each other with one looking through a hole in the fence, the others asking 'what's the score?' so it was meant to be playful and a bit fun. Noel Davenport was the one who came up with them but they were adopted by NZB as a whole not long after and used in a number of ads throughout the years.

In 1952, head brewer Rhind was sent overseas to attend a course at the School of Fermentation in Copenhagen and upon his return it was decided that Speight's should produce a lager, something that had never been done in the South Island. Despite the idea being a result of Rhind's trip, he actually left Speight's the next year to take up a position as technical manager at the NZB head office. His replacement was Doug Cocks who had recently returned to Dunedin after being sent to help set up the Whanganui brewery after it had been acquired by NZB a few years earlier. Much like many of the other workers in Speight's and indeed pretty much every industry in New Zealand, Cocks' brewing apprenticeship in his hometown of Christchurch had a brief interval when he was called up for military service. He attained the rank of squadron leader in the Royal New Zealand Air Force and had a rather illustrious career in the Pacific theatre, personally being mentioned in despatches for his heroism and earning the Distinguished Flying Cross Medal for his courage. After the war he got some government help to get a Diploma of Brewing at Birmingham University and

visited a number of breweries in the UK and Scandinavia to further his studies. Upon his return in 1948, he went back to NZB and they gave him a job at Speight's, where he also met his wife through Rhind. So, it was Cocks' job to develop this new lager but it wasn't as simple as just changing some of the ingredients around, it would require 100,000 pounds worth of investment or about six and a half million dollars. A Danish brewer by the name of Tor Toft came to the other side of the planet to help with the endeavour and a new mashcooker was purchased from Germany. This meant the brewers could heat the mash in stages, allowing different enzymes in the malt to work more efficiently compared to the single strike brewing that they had been doing up until this point. Along with this two new paraflo's were installed to cool the wort. These are a slightly more advanced device but basically worked on the same principle that we talked about a few episodes ago with the fish's gills. Hot wort would be run through one pipe and cold water in the other right next to it so the heat could transfer to the water, cooling the wort and getting the water hot for the next brew, previously they had just been dumping the wort over the pipes. The old coolers were also taken out and replaced with a fridge room for hops. With new equipment you couldn't forget about the hogshead tanks! Twenty 100 hogshead tanks were also added along with three coldstores, the tanks inside these stores being built in house. There were also a few process changes done as well with how the lager was fermented as it was done slightly differently to the regular ales. The main thing is that a lot of time and money went into trying to make this lager since it required a different way of brewing.

It took a couple years to get this all together and at the end of it Speight's had a few trial lagers but nothing that they were ready to mass produce just yet. However, things were helped along a bit by the closing of two breweries in Invercargill. The locals were pretty pissed off at this because NZB had bought them and immediately shut them down but it was good for Speight's who saw an opportunity to market a local beer for Southlanders. Combining some of their trial lagers with their ale, Speight's created Southland Bitter to cater to those thirsty Southlanders who felt cheated by the closure of local breweries. I also wonder whether the name was perhaps inspired by the mood in Invercargill as well as a descriptor of the flavour! The lager experiment also included trials on the bottling of beer, such as the switching of the filtering medium to diatomaceous earth, which is basically just ground up fossils. Carbonation also went through a change and became simpler where gas was injected through a small nozzle into the beer as it went through a pipe. After a bit more experimentation the lager was officially labelled as a pilsner and sale began in September 1955. The other interesting part of this was that the lager was the first Speight's beer not to be produced in Dunedin at the main site. Instead, it was brewed in Auckland, something that will be occurring more as our story continues.

While all this was going on, some progress had been made on the old malthouse, which was still a burnt ruin. The charred timber had now been removed and the roofing of the cellars under the building turned into a car park, since that was starting to be a thing that was needed with cars becoming more and more common. Other changes were happening too with the cask washing station on the roof of the Speight's Ale House building being removed, since the need for casks was diminishing in favour of tankers and the Super Goliath was doing most of the work. The coopers were being put out of business as well as the first metal casks were introduced in June 1954 which didn't need repairs like wooden casks and couldn't be made by coopers since it was an entirely different skillset. As an aside, also in 1954, Speight's longest serving member, despatch manager Jim de Clifford, retired after 60 years. I was actually contacted by Jim's direct descendant in regards to the main source used when researching these episodes, so that was really exciting.

In 1958, after about a decade of ownership, Powley's sold McGavin's back to NZB after the government announced what is called the Black Budget. The government of course announces a

budget where it details what areas it will spend those hard-earned tax dollars on as well as any changes to those taxes. In the budget of 1958, Prime Minister Stuart Nash and Finance Minister Arnold Nordmeyer told the country that there would be an increase in taxes on a few different items such as tobacco, petrol and most importantly for our story, beer. This was all due to the price of butter taking a nosedive in Britain, which was one of New Zealand's largest exports and New Zealand's largest export market at the time. The increased tax seems to have given Powley's a spook and they decided to get out of the brewing game by selling back their half, with McGavin's soon after ceasing brewing entirely but continued malting and bottling. Although this still didn't put RCB Greenslade in the tenuous position he had been previously, he decided to resign as assistant manager of Speight's and join Powley's on their board. He was succeeded as assistant manager by Speight's secretary George Dunn. The stopping of brewing at McGavin's meant that their brands would now cease to be but Speight's took up the brewing of one to keep it going, OM Stout, the OM standing for Oat Malt as it was made with oats. Though the labels show it as being old matured stout.

During this time there were a few more changes to equipment at Speight's with some new vessels, a mash mixer and a 100-hogshead kettle imported from Germany. Interestingly, this kettle was half the size of the older ones but it actually produced the same amount of beer since each brew was now being made at double strength and would be diluted with water. An even bigger innovation was about to be implemented though, one that didn't just impact New Zealand brewing but the entire world.

In 1958 Speight's adopted a method called continuous fermentation, which they would use for the next 30 years. CF, as it was commonly known, was developed by Morton Coutts, a member of the founding family of Dominion Breweries. The method was developed in conjunction with NZB and both companies gained the patent once it was fully formed. Astute Kiwi beer connoisseurs may know Dominion Breweries by their more well-known anagram, DB. NZB Palmerston North was the first brewery in the world to use this method to make beer with a brewer from Speight's assisting. Over the next couple of years all NZB breweries switched to CF, installing any extra necessary equipment. Unfortunately, during the installation of Speight's trial run of CF, an electrician died from electrocution. An especially sad story cause he was a 20 year old refugee from Hungary, having a rather arduous journey from his home in Budapest after the Soviet Army crushed a revolt two years earlier.

Later on in 1958 NZB and Dominion Breweries jointly acquired Canterbury Malting Company. No points for guessing what these guys sold! It was a significant acquisition because NZB decided that all malt should be bought from them, meaning the breweries under their banner didn't need to do their own malting. As such, malting at McGavin's and Speight's ceased, with associated fallout of the malthouse workers losing their jobs or being reassigned elsewhere. This also meant that McGavin's entire purpose was now pretty much just to bottle Speight's, who only had so much capacity to do it on site and Powley's had now ceased to bottle for them as of two years ago.

A year after, the final independent brewery in Southland, Gore Brewery, was taken over by NZB and subsequently closed down. This left Speight's as the only brewery south of Oamaru as five other breweries had also closed down in the last few years. Combine this with increased population in the area and the economy recovering from the war it meant that there were more people with more money to spend and less beer options to spend it on. Bad for consumers, great for Speight's as over the last five years they had seen their sales increase to more than double of what they were doing about 10 years ago.

Over this time, Speight's had been increasing their fleet of vehicles, now having about 30 including tankers, trucks and vans, as well as company cars for the higher ups. This would be accompanied by a Truck and Tanker Maintenance Division opening in 1961. There was also even more expansion going on with two more cold stores being added, bringing the total to 6 and the final CF units were installed which had two circular fermenters and a yeast separator. One of the men tasked with installing the plant was 'Big' Bert Schonewille. Bert joined NZB as a member of the head office laboratory which former head brewer for Speight's John Rhind had set up. Bert was a bit of an interesting chap as he represented the new cohort of brewers that were now entering the industry, cause instead of becoming a brewer through an apprenticeship like most people had done in the past, Bert was university educated, having been trained as a chemical analyst and had in fact helped to develop the standard lab processes used across all NZB breweries. Bert was only meant to be at Speight's for about six months to install the CF equipment and help implement the lab processes he developed but he actually ended up staying there for a few years so he must have thought it was alright. Two years after it had been developed, in April 1960, CF became the main method of brewing beer at Speight's. The details of how this process works aren't super important but the main thing to take away is that CF required less labour to perform and resulted in a more consistent product. Funnily enough the first CF foreman was a guy called 'Big' Jim Preston, so named to distinguish him from his nephew, 'Little' Jim Preston who also worked at the brewery. In the first few months the CF room was plastered, painted and tiled, all while it was in operation.

The room was interior decorated by Katrena Speight, Hugh Speight's wife. She was quite meticulous about it, apparently painting one wall four times before deeming it satisfactory. A fern and flax garden was also added to the front of the building with a huge map of New Zealand which had inlaid lights to show where NZB had branches, that is to say, where all the breweries were. The CF room would later become the real centrepiece of the Speight's brewery, not because of what was actually happening in there but for its design. It gained a large mural made of 2,500 pieces of Perspex, apparently the first of its kind in the world. The mural depicted a stylised flow chart of the beer making process, flanked by images such as people cutting sugar cane and the three barrel people of Purity, Body and Flavour doing various tasks. It had a cool lighting system that lit the mural from the back, lighting up the individual parts of the beer making chart in order before lighting the whole mural up at once. The mural was so good and technically impressive that it won the Best-of-All award and first prize in the sheet processing and fabricating section of the annual New Zealand Institute of Plastics competition. Usually, the mural was only all lit up for when guests were given a tour of the brewery, which back then wasn't very often as there wasn't a dedicated touring process. Instead, the job of showing people around usually fell to Big Bert or Ernie Taylor, one of the lab staff who "had a gift of the gab". Ordinarily this sort of thing would have been done by the marketing team but since Speight's basically had a monopoly on draught beer south of Oamaru, the marketing team wasn't as high priority as it once was. That is to say, they didn't really have one.

Going back to Big Jim, he was also the head of the yeast room guys who were in charge of, well, the yeast that was used to ferment the beer. As well as being an ingredient of beer, yeast is actually a byproduct too since it is a living organism that multiplies during the fermentation process. This excess wasn't really needed and was instead sold off to the Sanitarium Health Food Company who used it to make another iconic Kiwi food, Marmite. Other byproducts of brewing included the used grains being sold to farmers for stockfeed and, now that CF was used, they could more easily capture the carbon dioxide coming from the fermentation as it was done in enclosed tanks rather than in open gyles. This CO<sub>2</sub> was then used to carbonate the beer later in the process.

At this time is also when NZB introduced a national brand of beer, which they had started planning a couple years earlier. At this time breweries mostly sold locally, as we know from the majority of Speight's beer selling to the lower South Island. However, NZB wanted some brands that could be purchased regardless of where you were in the country and as such this would require the use of the all their breweries in Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch and Dunedin to ensure all regions could be serviced. There was a slight problem, though, due to Speight's private water supply from the aquifer beneath it. The water in this aquifer had a particular mineral composition making what's called a hard water which is part of what gives Speight's its particular flavour. So, to keep the uniformity of the new products across the country they would use tap water instead, just like they had done back in James Speight's day. The new beers would be batch fermented rather than use CF to keep them all separate from the other beers Speight's made. With all the prep done, in August 1960 the four new national beers launched under the Lucky brand. These were Lucky Stout, double the strength of standard beer and put 350ml bottles, Lucky Lager, similar to today's Steinlager, Lucky Bitter which was "dark and hoppy" and Lucky Draught was "lighter and milder". Apparently, all these beers were really bloody good and it may have been a resounding success, had NZB not made a colossal error. Along with the launch of the Lucky brand, NZB pulled from the shelves all other established brands under its name, including Speight's. Why they thought this was a good idea and whether there was a plan to eventually bring them back, I couldn't find out but the fury from customers was swift. This anger must have been strongly felt as it only took two months before NZB back pedalled on the decision with Lucky disappearing from the pubs not long after.

Interestingly, at this time, Speight's was only producing what we know today as Gold Medal Ale, the flagship beer that most people are talking about when they say 'get me a Speight's' and give no additional context. We don't know why Speight's wasn't brewing any other beers but we do know that OM Stout came back soon after the Lucky fiasco as well as introducing two new beers, four star lager and two star sparkling both known under the overall heading as Brew 85 on account that they were launched 85 years after the founding of Speight's.

In the early 60s, there was only one travelling salesman but when he died suddenly, two more we appointed, Dennis Jones who would look after the draught beer customers and Bill Lowther who did the bottled beer sales. Jones would later become the transport supervisor as he was a trained mechanic while Lowther was always a salesman, having sold vacuum cleaners prior to Speight's and was rather popular on the road with his customers. He would often say upon leaving 'I must dart away' which gave him his nickname, Dartaway. These two took over as tour guides of the brewery, which was interesting since Lowther didn't really know all that much about how the beer was made. Beer that he sold. However, he managed to bullshit his way through it with his charm and wit. Or rather, he did what I used to do when I was a tour guide, if you are asked a question you don't know the answer to, just make it up and the person probably won't second guess you. In one particular case, Lowther was asked about a device that was used to shake liquids in the laboratory. Its real use was probably to separate sediment or something like that but after thinking for a moment, cause he didn't actually know, he told the guest that it was a 'transport simulator' that was used to test how well beer would do when travelling over bumpy roads.

With the doubling of the sales staff, naturally beer sales continued to rise for Speight's and with it came an increased consumption of water. Interestingly, most of the water used in brewing actually didn't end up in the beer, the majority was used to run the refrigerating systems and to temperature control the CF. All of this meant that at one point Speight's was the second largest consumer of water in Dunedin, only being beaten by the entire suburb of St Kilda. Thankfully though some cooling towers were installed that could be used to more easily cool water and recycle it, reducing

their water needs. Other small things going on were that in 1962 a new beer was launched, this time called Hokonui Draught. It was similar to Brew 85 and was produced for the Matura Licensing Trust, hence the name Hokonui. The tankers also got a bit of a facelift around this time to make them look a bit more like The Bubble and less industrial. Some beer was still being sent in casks too since some of the smaller pubs couldn't really justify a large 1300L tank, plus there was a small market for use of kegs at picnics and parties.

Overall, the early to mid-60s were fairly quiet for Speight's with sales steadily increasing and the odd brewery change going on here and there. That is until 1967 which is the year that the six o'clock swill ended by national referendum. If you forgot, the swill was the colloquial name for the legally enforced six o'clock closing of pubs, something implemented 50 years earlier in 1917 as a temporary war time measure to keep men productive and not drunk. So now that pubs could stay open pretty much all the way into the night, beer sales rose even further. This led to the decision by Speight's to establish a bottling plant on the site of the old burnt malshouses, something that Hugh Speight had been advocating to happen for a few years now. In March 1968 the plans were unveiled of what the new plant would look like and the next month the machines rolled in to tear the buildings down to make way for the new ones.

Just as a quick aside to finish this episode, the mention the swill may have just made you remember that we haven't talked about the prohibitionists for quite some time. The main reason for that is after the 1920s they were no longer a big threat, appetite for national or even local prohibition had taken a nose dive during that decade, most of the dry electorates would go wet by the 1940s. The referendums to vote for prohibition still occurred with every election but there were less and less people voting for it. In 1931 the referendum was cancelled to save costs from the Depression and by 1935 less than 30% of voters ticked the box. From that point on, one third was the peak of voter support for prohibition until the referendums were abolished entirely in 1989. Despite all that work and effort over a century, prohibitionists had lost the fight. The public had moved on and decided that alcohol was ok, perhaps even part of the Kiwi culture. That hasn't stopped some organisations to keep trying to advocate for prohibition, even to this day. But we will talk more about that when we discuss the prohibition era of Aotearoa in its own episode.

Next time, it is the penultimate episode where we will cover the construction of the new bottling plant and how it worked. We will also cover the centennial celebrations of the founding of Speight's and the rivalry between New Zealand Breweries and Dominion Breweries will start to heat up.

If you want to send me feedback, ask a question, suggest a topic or just have a chinwag you can find my email and social media on [historyaotearoa.com](http://historyaotearoa.com). You can also find helpful resources there like transcripts, sources and translations for some of the Te Reo Māori we have used. You can help support HANZ through Patreon, buying merch or giving us a review, it means a lot and helps spread the story of Aotearoa New Zealand. As always, haere tū atu, hoki tū mai. See you next time!