

Churches and Religion for the MANSSEN family in New Zealand (Weblink Churches and Religion for the Manssen Family in NZ)

The Manssen family and descendants attended many Nelsons Churches. I have gathered a little of the History of these churches. A lot of information for this chapter came from the book called "The Nelson Narrative" by H.F. Ault.

Lutheran Church

When Johanna and George Manssen arrived in Nelson in 1843 they were Lutherans. George must have helped to build that first Lutheran Church in Upper Moutere, considering he was living there at the time. The half-built church was later abandoned after the 1844 floods. Charles Manssen was baptised by the Lutheran minister Rev Heine in 1847 when the family were living in Nelson. Rev Heine was the strong force in keeping the Lutheran faith alive in those early days and was a distinguished member of the community. The 1849 census recorded George Manssen's religion as Lutheran.

The family moved to Wakapuaka in 1853. In 1854 at Wakapuaka the first church service which was held at the Clifton Terrace School covered the Anglican and Presbyterian rites. There were no services for the Lutheran members. I have been unable to find any baptism records for George and Johanna's daughters, Mary Elizabeth and Eliza Manssen. When Eliza died in 1856, at Wakapuaka, her name did not appear on the Lutheran Church burial records. I think this is when the family changed to the Church of England faith. One reason could be that the churches built in the Wakapuaka area were all Church of England. George and Johanna Manssen, William and Caroline Page, Charles Henry Martin, Charles Frederick Henry Manssen and Mary Elizabeth Manssen were all buried by Church of England ministers.

Today there are two Lutheran Churches in the Nelson area. One in Upper Moutere and the other in Waimea East. The Upper Moutere Lutheran Church and Community are planning their 150th Jubilee on the 4th, 5th and 6th June 1993, just three weeks after the Manssen Family Reunion. The Lutheran faith has survived in Upper Moutere even though the first church built no longer exists.

The first two marriages

The first family member to marry in Nelson was Caroline Louisa Henrietta MANSSEN to William PAGE in 1865. They married at the Lower School House in Clifton Terrace. The Anglican minister G H Johnstone, conducted the service. G H Johnstone was the vicar from 1864-1873 for the town parish of Nelson. Under the title "Education for the Manssen Family" is a sketch of the school where the marriage took place.

Next to marry was Charles Frederick Henry MANSSEN to Emma Elizabeth MARRIS in 1874, at the residence of O. Clayton in Wellington. That minister did not give his denomination. I have been unable to find out why they went to Wellington to marry.

Nelson, Suburban North and Nelson Region churches

All Saints Anglican Church Vanguard Street Nelson

The building of this church began in 1862 and it was dedicated on the 11th November 1868. The church was enlarged in 1884 and the tower added in 1889. It is well known the lovely sounds of its tubular bells and it is still being used today. Two members of third generation married in this church.

Norman MANSSEN married Eliza BATE in 1912

William Cuthbert MANSSEN married Inez Muriel RICKETTS in 1915

Trinity Presbyterian Church Nile Street Nelson

Services are still conducted in the Trinity Presbyterian Church in Nile Street Nelson. Listed below are members of the third generation who married in the church.

Caroline Mary PAGE married Daniel BARNES in 1894
Lilian Ida PAGE married John Thomas BARNES in 1894
Edith PAGE married Alfred John SLOSS in 1905
Ethel PAGE married Archibald SIMPSON in 1906
Hilda Jane MANSSEN married Thomas John ROBERTSON in 1910
Catherine Alice PAGE married Herbert Samuel CLOSE in 1912

The Christian Meeting House, Waimea Road, Nelson

On 24th May 1883 the Christian Meeting House was formerly opened with a tea meeting. Brother Lewis was the usual preacher with a total church roll of 38. The building was situated opposite the old Immigration Depot. Its cost of 350 pounds was partly borne by James Barton. The builder was Mr John Scott. In 1910 the building was winched to the back of the church section to become the Bible School Hall, and a new Church was built. This old church is still in existence. My grandparents were married in the Christian Meeting House.

Bertha MANSSEN married James Smith LESSELS in 1900

St Johns, Wakefield

This is one of the oldest existing Anglican Churches in the South Island. Situated at the front gates of the church is an historical plaque. The church was dedicated on the 11th October 1846 and was opened by the Rev C.L. Reay. The site was given by the New Zealand Company and Edward Baigent's mill provided the timber. Some of our ancestors worked for the Baigent Mills. Although none of the first three generations married in this church, some were buried here. Many later Close descendants were baptised, married, buried and attended this church.

St Andrews Church Hillside Wakapuaka

St Andrews Church was the second church to be opened in the area of Wakapuaka. The first was the Maori St Barnabos, which opened in 1862. This was later moved in 1876 to the Maori Pa at Wakapuaka but now no longer exists. St Andrews was opened on 27th April 1865. The cost of the building was 394 pounds. Bishop Hobhouse preached at the dedication, Rev J.H. Johnstone took care of the church after the dedication. There is an historical plaque on the hill where the church once stood. Many of the Frost ancestors married and were buried at St Andrews. The churchyard cemetery still exists.

Amy Elizabeth PAGE married William Thomas FROST in 1894

St Peters by the Strand, Atawhai

St Peters was dedicated on the 1st October 1874 and stood on the hillside alongside of the Clifton Terrace School for about 110 years. It was known to many for its clock tower, which was removed in 1941. The church building cost under 300 pounds to erect and the land was given by W Barnett. None of the first three generation of Manssen were married in this church but many of them and their descendants attended its services. On 15 January 1983 the church was lifted and mover to a site at Founders Park. A new St Peters was built at Atawhai, closer to Nelson. Many family members still belong to and attend this church. We held the first meeting to organise the family reunion at the St Peters Church Hall on the 18th March 1991, adding to the history of the church. We hope to hold the reunion church service in the old St Peters by the Strand, which is now, restored it its original condition, including the tower.

St Johns Anglican Church Hira

The church was dedicated on 27th December 1888. None of the first three generations married in this church but many of the next generation attended services there and were buried in its cemetery. The land, an acre in size, was given by Hugh Martin. The church is situated on the corner of State Highway 6 and Cable Bay Road. This area was once called Happy Valley. The church is well known for its chimney. The ministers who served the church used to stay overnight in the vestry and the fire kept them warm. St Johns Cemetery is further up the hill towards Nelson. There are memorial iron gates at the entrance to the cemetery. This church still stands today.

Charles Henry Martin transferred land, which was part of his section 20 Suburban North, to the Nelson Diocesan Trust Broad Incorporated on the 3rd July 1913 for the amount of 50 pounds. On this land an Anglican vestry was built. The house still stand today in Todd's Valley but is now a private residence.

Married in their Parents residence

Many of the third generation were married in the homes of their parents. Here is a list of their names followed by the minister's denomination.

Bertha PAGE married Frederick James LILEY in 1896 = Anglican
 John Harold MANSSEN married Malvina Louisa GIBSON in 1902 = Not stated
 Florence PAGE married Thomas George FLOWER in 1903 = Anglican
 Mary Ethel MANSSEN married Albert Ernest COOK in 1904 = Presbyterian
 Annie Amelia PAGE married Edward READ in 1907 = Presbyterian
 Albert William PAGE married Flora Alice BARNES in 1912 = Not stated
 Francis Moss MANSSEN married Letitia Mary REYNOLDS in 1914 = Presbyterian
 Alfred Edgar PAGE married Ruby Florence MOWATT in 1919 = Presbyterian
 Charles PAGE married Olive Gertrude WRATTEN in 1939 = Anglican

Other Churches around New Zealand**St Johns Westport**

This church was dedicated on 28 August 1869 and was still standing in 1910. It is now been replaced by a new building.

Conrad Marris MANSSEN married Emily Ethel MILLS in 1910

Wesleyan Church, Masterton

This church still stands today but is no longer used for church service. It was moved many years ago to its present site next to the Masterton Arts centre and is used for musical and theatrical performances.

Alice Edith MANSSEN married Edward Lewis BATT in 1903

I hope you have all learnt a little more about our early ancestors and the churches they attended.

“God bless them all.”