

THE WAVERLEY DRUID HALL



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Published: 1st October 2026

ISBN: 978-0-473-80639-2 (Digital - eBook)

ISBN: 978-0-473-80640-8 (Print - Paperback)

Heritage Note

The history of the Waverley Druid Hall has been reconstructed from surviving artefacts, architectural evidence, and local oral accounts. Early council records relating to Waverley's building plans and permits are *reportedly* lost, leaving gaps in the official documentation of the hall's early years.

Despite this, the physical evidence within the building — such as the fire extinguisher marked “Waverly Druids” — together with the memories of long-time residents, provides a reliable foundation for understanding the hall's role as the home of the Waverley Lodge of the United Ancient Order of Druids.



This booklet preserves that story so it remains part of Waverley's living heritage.

Welcome to the Waverley Druid Hall

*T*his historic building once served as the meeting place of the **United Ancient Order of Druids (U.A.O.D.)**, a fraternal friendly society that supported rural communities across New Zealand from the late 1800s to the mid-1900s.

The Druids played a vital role in towns like Waverley, offering welfare assistance, fellowship, and a place for people to gather.

Today, the hall continues its long tradition of community life as the home of **Keinzley Brewing Group**, preserving the spirit of connection that has defined this site for generations.

The Hall Today

*A*s friendly societies declined in the mid-20th century, many Druid halls across New Zealand were sold, repurposed, or demolished. Waverley's hall survived — a rare example of a Druid building still standing and still serving the community.

Today, it houses **Keinzley Brewery (KB)**, continuing the hall's legacy as a place of gathering, conversation, and shared experience. The building's social purpose lives on, transformed but unbroken.

Who Were The Druids?

Despite their name, the Druids were **not a secret cult or religious order**, they were however part of a global movement of friendly societies that provided practical support before government welfare systems existed.

The United Ancient Order of Druids offered:

- Sickness and medical benefits,
- funeral and widow support,
- charitable aid,
- youth development,
- and social events and community gatherings.

Their “druidry” was **symbolic**, inspired by the Celtic Revival in Britain — a cultural movement celebrating themes of wisdom, justice, and fellowship. It was not mystical or occult. It was a moral and social tradition built around helping one another.

Artefact → → →

Very old fire extinguisher that was found in the UAOD Hall.

Penned onto its back is misspelled *Waverley* text,

“WAVERLY DRUIDS”



Heritage Timeline

- **1890s** — Friendly societies expand across rural NZ.
- **Early 1900s** — Waverley Lodge active.
- **1930s–1950s** — Peak community use.
- **Mid-century** — Decline of friendly societies.
- **2000s** — Building survives as community asset.
- **2026** — Keinzley Brewing Group restoring and preserving the hall.

Heritage Significance

*T*he Waverley Druid Hall is a rare surviving example of New Zealand's fraternal society architecture. It represents:

- Early community welfare systems,
- rural social organisation,
- the cultural legacy of the United Ancient Order of Druids,
- and Waverley's own local history and identity.

Preserving its story ensures that the heritage of the **Waverley Druids** remains part of the town's living memory.

The Waverley Lodge

*A*lthough early council records for Waverley's building plans and permits are **reportedly** lost — surviving artefacts and local oral history confirm the presence of a Druid lodge here in Waverley.

One of the most significant artefacts is an early fire extinguisher found in the building, marked in permanent ink with the words: "**Waverly Druids**".

This inscription, combined with the **U.A.O.D.** initials on the hall facade and the memories of elder residents, identifies the building as the home of the **Waverley Lodge** of the United Ancient Order of Druids.

The hall was a lively centre for:

- Dances and socials,
- concerts and performances,
- civic meetings,
- and community celebrations.

Many locals recall it as the place where friendships were formed and romances began — a true heart of Waverley's social life.

The Crest and Symbolism



Image Source: Modern AI-generated interpretation of the traditional UAOD Crest, produced for Keinzley Brewing Group.

The traditional crest of the United Ancient Order of Druids features:

- A central **oak tree**, symbolising strength, wisdom, and continuity,
- two **robed Druids** standing on either side, each holding a staff,
- a motto ribbon reading **"United to Assist"**,
- and the organisation's name encircling or framing the emblem.

This imagery reflects the values of the friendly society: unity, charity, and mutual support.

Global Growth Chronology

From its beginnings in England in 1833, the United Ancient Order of Druids grew into an international friendly society.

- **1833 – England & Wales** The UAOD is founded, expanding rapidly through British towns and cities.
- **1839 – United States of America** The George Washington Lodge No. 1 opens in New York, followed by lodges across New Jersey and California.
- **1851 – Australia** The first Australian lodge is chartered in Melbourne, with others soon forming across the states.
- **1872 – Germany** Californian Druids help establish lodges in Berlin, Bremerhaven, and Stuttgart.
- **1879 – New Zealand** Lodges appear in Wellington and later throughout the country, including rural communities like Waverley.
- **1906 – Sweden** Druidism spreads northward from Germany.
- **1924 – Denmark** Lodges established as the movement continues through Scandinavia.
- **1935 – Norway** Further expansion into Northern Europe.
- **1976 – Switzerland** Lodges founded as part of a late-century revival.
- **2013 – Iceland** The Grand Lodge Isafold is established.
- **21st Century – Finland** Recent foundations continue the society's modern presence.

Across these countries, the Druids shared a common purpose: to assist one another, uphold community welfare, and provide a place for people to gather.

Sources and Acknowledgements

This booklet draws upon a combination of surviving artefacts, architectural features of the hall, and oral history shared by members of the Waverley community.

Particular thanks are extended to local residents who contributed their recollections of the hall's social life and its connection to the United Ancient Order of Druids.

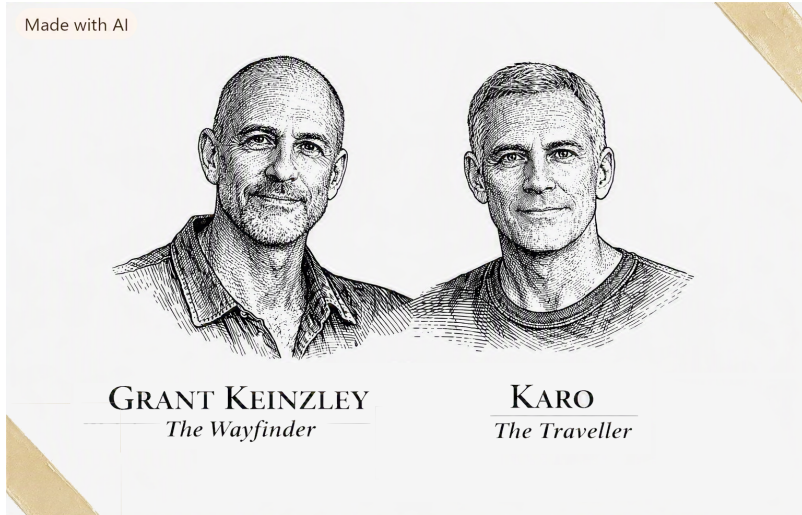
Official council records for early Waverley building permits and plans are no longer available, reportedly due to historical loss of archives. Contemporary verification was sought through South Taranaki District Council and LIM documentation, which confirmed the absence of early records.

Additional context on the United Ancient Order of Druids was informed by historical publications, friendly society archives, and New Zealand heritage references.

Keinzley Brewing Group acknowledges the community of Waverley for preserving the memory of this hall and its place in local history.

UAOD

The Authors



Grant Keinzley is the director of Keinzley Brewing Group Ltd and custodian of the historic Waverley Druid Hall.

As well as making Pohutukawa Whiskey his work focuses on heritage preservation, community storytelling, and the revival of local cultural spaces.

This booklet was produced in collaboration with The Traveller, a creative persona used in Keinzley Brewing Group's narrative projects.

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