



Philip Barling enriched Dunedin life with the Savoy Restaurant and Glenfalloch Gardens.

Born in Sussex, England, of farming stock, Philip enlisted as a teenager in the British Imperial Yeomanry during the Boer War. After returning to Britain he first emigrated to Australia and then to New Zealand, where he worked initially in the North Island and later as Dunedin manager for the Vacuum Oil Company.

About 1910 he began a tearooms and two years later decided to develop a major English-style restaurant to be called the Savoy. With its oak paneling, brass chandeliers, paintings and open fires, this soon became Dunedin's premier restaurant and function venue – although on its opening day only Mr. Barling and his solicitor were there to sample the special lunch. Its “Somerset Lounge”, “Warwick Room”, and “Tudor Hall” indicated his lifelong feeling for things British.

He married Pearl Brent in 1913 and they had three children. Their Peninsula residence “Glenfalloch”, bought in 1918 from the estate of George Gray Russell, was soon converted from a fairly stark exterior of stark weatherboard, double hung windows and iron roof, to a more English style of leadlighted casements, bay windows and tiled roof with scalloped fascias, plus an entry hall with mock beam ceiling. The surroundings of shelter trees and vegetable gardens with stables and cow byre, soon became an outstanding show garden with rhododendrons, maples and magnolias – to mention only some of his plantings.

His interest in gardens was not restricted to Glenfalloch. A founder of the New Zealand branch of Men of the Trees, he took part in schemes such as the planting of kowhais on the old main road over Mount Cargill.

With the outbreak of World War Two, Philip Barling became aware of the shortage of animal fats in Britain, and personally organized, first in Otago, and later in Southland and

Canterbury, a 'Fat for Britain' scheme which delivered in 40-pound (18kg) tins some eighty tons of fat, all processed through his Savoy Restaurant. This effort was recognized with an OBE in 1949.

His other interests included the Rotary Club, the Dunedin Operatic Society and Gilbert and Sullivan Company of which he was patron.

Philip Barling died on 1 July 1956, survived by his widow and two sons, and is buried in Dunedin's Andersons Bay Cemetery. In line with his strong British and imperial beliefs he left a first option for the purchase of Glenfalloch to the Crown, hoping it might serve as the Governor-General's base in Dunedin, but the Crown turned down the offer.