

MINING DAYS: Fremmie on the left with his father, also called Fremmie

maining seven workers, including Mr Hutchinson, were laid off.

During the war, he served in the army and met Gwen, his future wife, from Wales, who was the sister of a colleague.

They married in 1947 and went on to have two children. The couple kept the Tan Hill inn – famed as England's highest pub – and were once fined for a notorious bank holiday Sunday lock-in. They also endured severe winters and were once snowed in for three weeks.

Mr Hutchinson never lost his knack of lead mining and returned to the practice on his own land in his spare time.

His mother would tap with a hammer to find the vein and he would dig out the lead and carry it nearly a mile in buckets across the moor to the farm. It was then sent to Newcastle and Mr Hutchinson earned £110 per ton.

As plastics continued to be used more and more in household and industrial items and cheap lead was imported from America, the bottom dropped out of the market and the price plummeted to £11 a ton.

Mr Hutchinson and his wife then took over the Temperance hotel in Reeth. After that, he worked at Catterick Camp before buying The Gallery in Silver Street, Reeth, as a retirement home for himself and his wife. Mrs Hutchinson died nine years ago, a month before they were due to move in.

Mr Hutchinson was a key member of the "Reeth parliament" – a group of elderly local men who gather in the village bus shelter to debate and put the world to rights.

He also enjoyed dominoes and visiting the local pubs, including the King's Arms, where former landlord and artist Mr Mark Thompson painted his portrait.

Mr Hutchinson leaves two sons, David and Richard, daughters-in-law and grandchildren and great-grandchildren. A funeral service is held tomorrow at St Andrew's church, Grinton, followed by private interment at Grinton cemetery. Family flowers only are requested with donations in lieu to the district nurses' fund and St Andrew's church.