

# OCULUS

**Noun:** oculus, plural noun : oculi

**Meaning:** A round or eyelike opening or design, in particular

**Origin:** mid 19<sup>th</sup> cent: from Latin, literally "eye"

## HISTORIC PLACES

A O T E A R O A

*The Voice of Heritage  
for New Zealand*

## WELCOME

Welcome to the first newsletter from the Executive in a very long time!

We plan to publish a newsletter around 4 times a year in order to let Members know what is happening in the Executive, seek feedback on issues and to update you on national events within the heritage world and around the other member organisations. We welcome your feedback and input into the newsletter.

In this issue you will find information on the following items:-

- AGM 2016
- WORLD HERITAGE DAY
- McLEAN'S MANSION ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONSENT
- "BLUE PLAQUES"

## AGM 2016

The AGM this year will be hosted by Historic Places Hawkes Bay. The date has been set for the weekend of the **29<sup>th</sup> -30<sup>th</sup> October**.

The Executive is interested in what the Member Organisations would like to do during the weekend and also an indication of the number of people that are likely to attend.

At this stage the proposal is as follows:-

- 11:30 am start, AGM – Flights from Christchurch arrive at 9:30 and 10:35
- Lunch
- Tour local points of interest in the afternoon.
- Dinner – with guest speaker
- Sunday morning, speakers and workshop. Finish about mid-day.
- Extra tour in the afternoon for those that wish to stay on.

Accommodation: Suggest at Old Masonic, which is the planned venue of the AGM.

If you have any questions or would like to look at alternative venues contact Denis Pilkington:  
denis(dot)pilkington(at)gmail(dot)com

### Potential Speakers:

- (1) The Minister for Culture and Heritage. Minister could speak at the dinner or first on Sunday.
- (2) Eugenie Sage (Greens, Forest & Bird). Interesting perspective on how to grow an organisation and the issues. Or someone from Forest and Bird.
- (3) Chris Templeton
- (4) Heritage NZ – New CEO
- (5) Speaker from Anthem (PR company) – Jane Sweeney  
How they can help our organisation? Need to make HPA relevant to MOs and must grow to do this. Need expert advice and help.
- (6) Digital World – Best Practice

We are interested in inviting other organisations to the Sunday event. These could include:-

- Heritage NZ
- ICOMOS
- DOCOMOMO
- NZ Archaeological Association
- Forest and Bird
- Historic Places Manawatu Horowhenua
- Whanganui Regional Heritage Trust.

## WORLD HERITAGE DAY

World Heritage Day is an initiative from ICOMOS. This year the theme was Heritage of Sport.

Even though the date was picked up by many of the Member Organisations at the last minute it was heartening to see that a lot of publicity was obtained relating to our sporting history.

HP Tairawhiti were able to get their local newspaper reports right behind the concept and two large articles were published.

HP Canterbury Chair, Mark Gerrard had approximately 14 minutes on Monday ZB Talkback Christchurch.

Half of airtime was devoted to the Heritage of Sport using Lancaster Park as an example.

HP Mid-Canterbury- reports that the Ashburton Museum mentioned it in their print media article.

World Heritage Day is on the 18<sup>th</sup> April each year. When the theme for 2017 is known we will let you all know so that you can think about how you can gain publicity about heritage sites in your area



## McLEAN'S MANSION : Breaking News

The Environment Court has upheld HNZ's decision to decline an Emergency Archaeological Authority application seeking to allow the demolition of McLean's Mansion. The Judge concluded McLeans 'has very high historical and cultural heritage value that justifies protection. The values of the building are such that it is of local, regional, national and international significance. The building contributes towards Cantabrians' sense of place and identity'. The Emergency Archaeological Authority was sought under the *Canterbury Earthquake (Historic Places Act) Order 2011*. McLeans Mansion is HNZ List Cat 1 and scheduled under the Christchurch District Plan.

<http://www.stuff.co.nz/the-press/news/81840780/mcleans-mansion-saved-from-demolition>

## BLUE PLAQUES

Blue Plaques are synonymous with heritage sites around the world.



Historic Places Mid Canterbury has also been looking into producing some 'Blue Plaques' to put on local historical buildings of interest. We are at a very early stage in researching how these might be designed, located and procured, but we wanted to canvas the opinion of other Member Organisations, to see if there was interest in working together to come up with a consistent and coordinated design format for the plaques. At the moment no national standard exists, with the consequence that there is no distinctive or recognisable identifier of heritage buildings, places or events within NZ. Taking on the idea of the 'Blue Plaques' as first used in London (and latterly the rest of the UK) seems like a good way to promote the status of important heritage buildings, places, people and events, both locally and nationally.

We have spoken to Heritage NZ Southern Area Branch about the idea for the plaques and it is something that they have also been discussing, but which, unfortunately, does not seem to be a high priority for them, at the moment. However, they did say that they were happy to support us in our quest and asked us to keep them informed of our progress.

Initially, we will be looking at producing a feasibility study document which investigates the idea of the plaques and comes up with some design suggestions, content, format and locational guidelines, as well as looking into possible procurement options and indicative costs.

If any Member Organisation is interested in participating in the discussion about the 'Blue Plaques' proposal, or if you have any ideas or suggestions, please get in touch with Nigel Gilkison (HPMC) on 021 210 7374 for more information.



Preliminary mock up design

## Ever Wondered About The Story Of Your House?

Heritage New Zealand, in association with the Ashburton Museum and Ashburton District Council recently hosted a free public seminar in Ashburton on how to research the history of your house. The idea for event came up during discussions with the new HNZ Southern Area General Manager, Sheila Watson, when she visited Historic Places Mid Canterbury (HPMC) shortly after she took up her new position. The format for the event was based on a similar pilot seminar which was run by HNZ in Dunedin last year and is something that HNZ is keen to take to a wider audience - so if this sounds like something that might be of interest in your local community, lobby your local HNZ branch to see if they will do a seminar in your area.

The three hour event, which was held at the new Ashburton Museum on the morning of Saturday 11th June, was very well attended and warmly received by locals (50+ attendees - a sell-out!). HNZ did all the organising for the event whilst HPMC put on the morning tea. We had an opportunity to give a short talk to promote our organisation and explain what we do to advocate for heritage locally (and, of course, this was also a great opportunity to promote HPA and to encourage more local people to join up!). We also had our organisations' display boards set up at the museum and popped our promotional pamphlets in with the info pack given to each participant.

The speakers included representatives from Ashburton District Council (how to search local authority records); Ashburton Museum (how to search local museum records); HNZ (general internet and library search resources and HNZ records (for listed buildings)); Ashburton District Family History Group (how to search the histories of local people); and Archives NZ (how to search official Government records and archives).

It was a really enjoyable and informative morning, with a good mix of local, national and on-line research sources as well as valuable research tips and techniques. An info pack with handouts and lists of where and how to access helpful resources (books, journals, organisations, image sources and websites) was also provided to all who attended.

## The New Workplace Health and Safety Act

I have put my mind to the position of the organisation in respect of the new legislation. I emphasise that while I am sending this from my law office these are merely personal comments in my Capacity as an Executive member who is qualified in law, and not any kind of formal opinion or advice from my firm. I have attended a N Z Law Society Seminar on the topic and have also read the WORKSAFE website material.

The emphasis of the legislation is on proactively identifying and managing risks to ensure every workplace is safe and healthy. Previously the emphasis was on reporting incidents. The obligations are on the persons conducting the business or undertaking [the PCBU]. HPA is not in my view conducting a business or undertaking in terms of the Act as, apart from anything else, it has no employees. A volunteer association is not a PCBU. While casual volunteers at workplaces are included under the legislation HPA does not meet that workplace test either.

It is conceivable though that on occasions constituent members of HPA could be within the Act, or at least be involved in an unfortunate coverage dispute. An organised heritage tour, for which payment has been made by the participants, might give rise to such a situation. It would seem though that a voluntary working bee on a heritage site, for example, would not be covered. If there is coverage then the organisation must be able to show that it has put its mind to critical hazards and associated risks as part of the planning. The website of WORKSAFE as the Government agency most responsible for health and safety, provides a substantial resource, including a 92 page guide. In the case of a business, .ie. a PCBU ,it should weigh up and consider all relevant matters such as –How likely are any hazards or risks to occur?–How severe could the harm that might result from the hazard or risk be? –What measures exist to eliminate or minimise the risks? These processes should be minuted or documented. Even if not strictly covered by the workplace legislation this is probably good practice for our activities in any event.

Hope this is helpful.

Regards Jimmy Wallace HPA Exec

## HPA Executive Member Nigel Isaacs

Nigel Isaacs (Board member of HPW) has recently completed his thesis on the history of the technology of the New Zealand house from 1792 to 1982. It is available for free download from the VUW Research Archive (<http://hdl.handle.net/10063/4804>). Nigel Isaacs has also been awarded a Fulbright NZ Scholar Award to visit (November 2016 to February 2017) three American archives with materials on the 1922 " *Recommended minimum requirements for small dwelling construction: report of Building Code Committee*" which provided the base for the 1924 NZ code " *Recommendations of Building Conference Relating to the Use of Timber in Building-Construction.*"

## Assessment of Earthquake Prone Buildings

*Historic Places Hawke's Bay in their newsletter "Hawkes Bay Heritage News" has an article on the assessment of Earthquake Prone buildings which we consider to be important reading.*

**"ART DECO BUILDINGS:**

**EARTHQUAKE PRONE OR EARTH QUAKE PROOF?"**

"Concerns about the large number of art deco buildings in Napier with this classification led the Art Deco Trust to commission the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering of the University of Auckland to conduct a study, which involved inspection of a number of Art Deco buildings in Hawke's Bay, including a very detailed study of the IMS Building in Hastings. Professor Jason Ingham, the study leader, presented the findings of this research at a seminar organised by the Art Deco Trust at the Century Theatre in Napier in November last year. "

" Professor Ingham concluded that the structural design of the Hawke's Bay Art Deco buildings of the 1930s was probably well ahead of its time because, when they examined the concrete structural parts of these buildings, the research team found that columns and other structural components had been constructed with plenty of well placed reinforcing steel – and also that there were plenty of these columns and components to ensure the building's strength. Tests showed that the concrete and steel used were both equal in strength to that in current use and overall the concrete structure of the Art Deco era buildings generally exceeded the current new building standard. "

*You can download a copy of the full article (and a great newsletter) at the following link:*

<http://historicplacesaotearoa.org.nz/read-our-latest-newsletter-april-2016/>

## South Canterbury Historical Society

The South Canterbury Historical Society is looking forward to celebrating the Golden Anniversary of the opening of South Canterbury Pioneer Hall (South Canterbury Museum) on Saturday 10th December. The Society built the (then) new museum to replace the first dedicated museum located in a converted house. Later gifted to the people of South Canterbury and now run by the Timaru District Council, it is hoped that the 50th Anniversary will coincide with the completion of the first stage of the museum gallery upgrade, which will be started at the beginning of July.

## Public Liability Insurance

HPA is investigating the viability of organising collective coverage for HPA and the Membership Organisations.

James Blackburne (Pres HPA) would like to hear from you : what type of events and numbers attending you hold each year ie Bus Trips, Stalls etc. James Blackburne's email is: james(at)a44(dot)co(dot)nz

## Historic Places Wellington

HPW communicates with its members and public through a regular newsletter, a Facebook page and an active website (<https://historicplaceswellington.org/>). The committee works on heritage issues and plans members' events. HPW has advocated for action on a number of important heritage buildings including the privately owned Erskine College and chapel in Island Bay; Wellington City Council's Town Hall; the Department of Conservation's Turnbull House in Bowen Street; and the NZ Defence Force owned former GHQ Building on the corner of Buckle and Taranaki Streets. Erskine has been an intractable case for many years, but there are grounds for cautious optimism on the others.

HPW also maintains a watching brief on other cases of interest. Recently the Wellington City Council, following an independent hearing, voted to rezone the land occupied the Gordon Wilson Flats which have been empty since 2012 due to earthquake concerns. Victoria University of Wellington had purchased the site, and is expected to demolish the complex in order to create a pedestrian route between its main campus and the city. Although not having a Heritage NZ listing, the complex was heritage-listed by the city. The decision is now subject to an appeal. HPW runs regular building visits – recently these have included Crofton (Category 1, list number 1363) built in 1857 by Sir William Fox; Thomas Turnbull's own house (Category 2, 1397), built in 1877 now occupied by the Italian Ambassador and the 1876 concrete Crescent House or "Goldie's Brae" (Category 1, 216).

## Other Wellington News

The Wellington Region Heritage Promotion Council provides an excellent gathering of information and the activities of heritage related organisations in the region, including links to their latest newsletter (<http://www.wrhpc.org.nz>).