

# HERITAGE

## Protecting heritage a challenge

### FROM THE TOP



HPA President  
James Blackburne

It's been a busy few months for HPA. The Government released the Exposure Draft of the Natural and Built Environment Bill and we have been busy

planning the AGM/Conference with ICOMOS NZ.

The work on the Exposure Draft of the Natural and Built Environment Bill has been challenging, given very short timeframes and the need to co-ordinate

a group of people from around the country via video conferencing. The submission was prepared with ICOMOS NZ which broadened the expertise on the working group. We had input from 18 people and submission totalled 19 pages. We hope the select committee takes the submission on board when they draft the Natural and Built Environment Bill proper, as the exposure draft provided very little protection of our built heritage.

With the outbreak of the Delta variant and the risks associated with organising an event for more than 100 people, we have postponed the conference until early 2022, date to come. **Continued p2:**



*Aotea waka monument, 1933, celebrates the settling of the Patea area by Turi and his hapu after they voyaged from Hawaiki to Aotearoa in the 15th century.*

## Festivals roll on ... and off

Taranaki and Wellington are both forging ahead with their plans for heritage festivals while Whanganui (see page 6) has postponed its month until October 2022 due to Covid.

The Taranaki Heritage Month is scheduled for 2 October to 5 November 2021 and Wellington's Heritage Week from 25-31 October.

It's a first for Heritage Taranaki, in collaboration with iwi and hapū, museums, historical societies and similar community groups. Its month-long programme of activities will reflect upon and share community understandings of the province's complex and interesting past.

The month's activities begin with a pōwhiri at Waitara War Memorial Hall after which local historian and kaumatua Hoani Eriwata will lead a tour over significant sites of the First Taranaki War. For many years, he has led a public event commemorating the first shots of the Taranaki War. Riri Me Te Raukura is held annually on 17 March.

On 7 October, a highlight will be an evening panel discussion developed to

engage public in considering:

- What is heritage?
- Why is anything classified as heritage while other items are left out?
- Who gets to make these decisions?
- What are the implications of these decisions for who we believe we are and who we aspire to be?

A group of experts will take part in a debate on heritage issues facilitated by Parihaka and Taranaki leader, Ruakere Hond. The panel will include Meng Foon, Race Relations Conciliator; Andrew Coleman, CEO Heritage NZ – Pouhere Taonga; Brett Graham – Ngāti Koroki Kahukura, Tainui, – recent artist in residence, Govett Brewster Art Gallery; Jay Ruka, Manuhautū of Taranaki Cathedral; Jacq Dwyer, Chairperson, Pātea Historical Society; Debbie Ngarewa-Packer, MP Te Paati Māori, Ngāti Ruanui. The discussion will invite audience participation.

Organising committee chair Rob Green says 'an honest gaze to face our past is well due'.

**Continued on page 5**

## ARCHITECTURAL TERMS *explained*

### MODILLION

A modillion is an ornate bracket, more horizontal in shape and less imposing than a corbel. They are often seen underneath a cornice which it helps to support. Modillions are more elaborate than dentils.

In New Zealand they are commonly found under the eaves on villas and also on Victorian and Edwardian commercial buildings.

On villas the number of closely spaced modillions was an indication of the wealth of the owner.



*Gisborne villa with pairs of modillions.*



*The Voice of Heritage  
for New Zealand*

### Our executive

The HPA seven-member executive meets monthly via Microsoft Teams. Its members are:

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## HPA EXECUTIVE MAHI

*By Denis Pilkington*

While the Executive Committee has continued to look at upgrading our website, its main recent focus was the reform of the Resource Management Act.

The proposed Natural and Built Environments Act will largely replace the RMA. The process has been a bit unusual in that the NBE Bill was initially released in shortened form as an exposure draft on which the first round of submissions could be made.

Before this draft's release, we set up a working group to study the draft and make a submission. The working group included members of HPA affiliated organisations from Canterbury, Mid-Canterbury, Taranaki and Hawke's Bay along with some members of the Executive Committee.

The group was joined by members of ICOMOS and latterly by the NZ Archaeological Association. We were extremely pleased to be able to assemble such a strong group with a wide range of skills for this task.

The exposure draft was released at the start of August leaving us four weeks to consider the draft and prepare a submission. The working group met on a Microsoft Teams video link numerous times during August and completed a submission, a summary of which appears in this issue of Oculus. The working group expects to re-assemble for the next round of submissions when the full NBE Bill is released later in the year.

You can read the submission at

### AGM 2021 to be via video

**From page 1:**

As our constitution requires us to have an AGM, this will proceed on 9 October via video conferencing. We realise this is less than ideal. The aim is to get through AGM business and leave the regional round-ups until the conference.

It's disappointing to see the impact the Covid outbreak has had on all the fantastic heritage events organised around the country. Such events take a huge amount of work to pull together and are critical to bringing our heritage to the forefront of people's minds. We hope some will still be able to proceed and 2022 proves to be more settled on the Covid front.

Take care of yourselves and I look forward to catching up in person in 2022.

historicalplacesaotearoa.org.nz/assets/RMA-Exposure-Draft-HPA-ICOMOS-Joint-Submission-2021-08-04.pdf

Member organisation submissions can be seen at parliament.nz/en/pb/sc/submissions-and-advice

### Housing and Urban Development

We also made a submission on the Government Policy Statement on Housing and Urban Development, the long-term vision for [the] housing and urban development system, and how Government will work with others to make it happen. We were concerned that the policy neither mentioned built heritage nor reflected the value of heritage buildings in the context of urban development.

### Heritage EQUIP

We circulated a media release on the cancellation of the Heritage EQUIP fund following the May Budget.

### MCH meeting

In June, we were represented at a meeting with the CEO of the Ministry for Culture and Heritage where topics included RMA reform, the cancellation of the EQUIP fund for seismic strengthening of heritage buildings and future policy on the upkeep of heritage buildings occupied by government departments.

We remain disappointed that the Ministry has yet to release a final version of proposed policies for strengthening heritage protection, which will be crucial in forming the NBE Bill.

### Chelle steps down

The Executive Committee thanks Chelle Gandell for her five years of service as treasurer and contribution to HPA's development.

HPA president James Blackburne said Chelle had done a fantastic job of getting HPA's accounting systems in place, which will help new treasurer Jo McLean take over the reigns.

Secretary Denis Pilkington said the treasurer's job had been quite complicated at times.

"We are grateful to Chelle for guiding us through the bureaucracy associated with charities and incorporated societies. Her participation in meetings also helped get executive members more involved in financial statements."

# OCULUS Time to front-foot benefits of heritage

By Ben Schrader, HP Wellington

Over the past year, Wellington's built heritage has come under a sustained attack that has surprised and troubled many of us. Heritage has become an emblem and scapegoat for a range of city ills: unaffordable housing, restrictive and officious planning practices, poor health among renters, Nimbyism, and more.

Critics have charged that the city's 'obsession' with heritage is holding it back and stopping it from modernising. This was highlighted in the recent furore over the Railway Station's accessibility ramp and ticketing machines.

It began when the NZ Herald journalist uncovered through an OIA request that Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga (NZHPT) had opposed Metlink colours being used on ticketing machines in the station because it didn't fit with the station's heritage colour palette.

NZHPT was lambasted for being rigid and anti-modern – a stance pilloried here. What was under-reported was that the discussion about the machines was part of the normal process of consenting changes to a listed heritage building and nothing had been set in stone. The whole story was a beat-up



Wellington Railway Station.

designed to discredit both NZHPT and heritage advocates. It worked.

So how should we respond? One way is to retreat into bunkers and come out when things feel safer. But a better strategy is to front-foot the issue and seek to change the terms of the debate. We need to show how heritage can improve people's quality of life rather than diminish it; that it's not a barrier to new city building, but a pivotal component within it, and that it can be part of the solution to the housing

crisis, not an obstacle to it.

It's reassuring that there are new groups in the city adopting this approach and more will be heard from them over the coming months.

We understand NZHPT is also looking at how it could do more to promote the benefits of heritage.

HPW is part of this process. Over the next year we will be working with others in the city to better show the ways heritage is integral to Wellington/Te Whanganui a Tara's future.

## Exposure draft submission highlights heritage

By Elizabeth Pishief

I was part of a working group of HPA and ICOMOS New Zealand members that prepared a joint submission to the Environment Committee Inquiry on the 'exposure draft' of the Natural and Built Environments Bill (NBE Bill) and the associated parliamentary paper.

This bill is intended to replace the Resource Management Act 1991, which no longer adequately protects the natural or cultural environment while allowing for appropriate development.

We collectively believe cultural heritage in its many forms (eg, archaeological sites, cultural landscapes, buildings, objects, wāhi tapū, and wāhi tūpuna places) provides



Elizabeth Pishief.

an understanding of New Zealand's development, and the sense of place and connection between people and their environment that contribute to individual and national wellbeing. We think that replacing 'historic heritage' with the term 'cultural heritage' better reflects the breadth of our current and evolving heritage including intangible

heritage such as sacred mountains and recent built heritage like post-war/early modernist buildings. It is crucial Parliament hears how ordinary people and communities value cultural heritage.

We focused on parts of the draft with implications for the effective management and protection of New Zealand's cultural heritage.

We requested additions and improvements to definitions, including using the definition of 'cultural landscape' in the ICOMOS NZ Charter which:

Means an area possessing cultural heritage value arising from the relationships between people and the environment. Cultural landscapes may have been designed, such as gardens, or may have evolved from human settlement and land use over time, resulting in a diversity of distinctive landscapes in different areas. Associative cultural landscapes, such as sacred mountains, may lack tangible cultural elements but may have strong intangible cultural or spiritual associations.

We said sustainability is the cornerstone of modern heritage protection and management practice, and promotes ongoing repairs, maintenance and adaptive reuse of buildings.

Continued on page 4:

# Submission urges coherent national standards

From page 3:

We see heritage protection as a vital element in reducing the carbon footprint of our built environment – not only more environmentally sustainable but also more economically, socially and culturally sustainable.

The construction and demolition industry is one of the largest waste producing industries in New Zealand and that waste may represent 50% of all waste generated in the country.

We raised the lack of synchronisation and direction between laws and organisations that manage heritage, eg, HNZPT lists places but cannot protect them; only local councils can do so by scheduling heritage places on their District Plans.

The Building Act 2004 allows stand-alone buildings under three storeys to be demolished without a building consent, while the HNZPT Act makes it

a criminal offence to destroy a building built before 1900 without an authority from HNZPT. It is equally confusing that archaeological sites, often wāhi tapū or wāhi taonga, are managed by HNZPT, yet HNZPT has no authority over other forms of heritage, managed by local authorities.

Our main points to the select committee were:

- we are all kaitiaki of our cultural heritage
- by protecting cultural heritage, we contribute to protecting the environment of our ancestors and for our descendants
- cultural heritage assists with meeting climate change goals by retaining significant built heritage

- rather than sending it to landfills to include cultural heritage in Clause 13(1) as a topic the National Planning Framework (NPF) must include
- a NPF is needed to direct cultural heritage outcomes
  - for the government to review and bring together existing and new national planning directives to form a coherent suite of national standards.

**The construction and demolition industry is one of the largest waste producing industries in New Zealand and that waste may represent 50% of all waste generated in the country.**

The review of the current RMA is an opportunity to develop world-leading environmental legislation that protects our natural environment and cultural heritage that together contribute to our national cultural identity.

## Lack of heritage emphasis disappoints

By Felicity Wong

HPA made a submission on the government's draft "General Policy Statement on Housing and Urban Development (GPS-HUD). The policy will "communicate the long-term vision for [the] housing and urban development system, and how Government will work with others to make it happen."

It was, therefore, disappointing the policy neither mentioned built heritage nor reflected the value of heritage buildings in the context of urban development. HPA submitted that:

*Heritage buildings are important for urban wellbeing, and provide an important sense of identity and place. Heritage buildings are critical to maintaining wellbeing and identity, and memory.*

In our view, heritage buildings are good for association and connection with towns and cities and in creating liveable places. They layer architectural interest and beauty within our urban fabric for many to enjoy.

HPA recognised the need for an increase in affordable housing supply, and supported the policy direction towards increased government building programmes and density in appropriate places.

We drew the Government's attention

to the role that repurposing and reusing heritage buildings can play in increasing housing supply.

We noted recent UK research which illustrated that between 2010-2018

*"...there were 60,400 more pre-1919 homes than there were eight years prior, as a result of the conversion of existing historic homes into multiple dwellings and through the conversion of non-domestic historic buildings into homes."*

And that:

*In the UK over 12% of all new housing in England in 2018/19 resulted from change of use from a non-domestic use to residential. (Historic England (2019)).*

It also cited the additional environmental benefits of this adaptive reuse strategy, including reducing other negative environmental impacts such as waste production, resource depletion, water pollution, land-take, erosion and health impacts.

Internationally, attention is now on the process of building as being one of the most wasteful and carbon hungry



HP Wellington chair Felicity Wong.

human activities. Tearing down old houses or shops and creating new ones, and covering the earth in concrete, steel and plastic gobbles up fossil fuels.

HPA wants the Government to be a leader in this field, and notes such initiatives as the recent UK architects' campaign to "RetroFirst"

aimed at reuse, refurbish and retrofit buildings rather than simply throwing them away. Award-winning French contemporary architects Anne Lacaton and Jean-Phillippe Vassal have a philosophy: "Never demolish, never remove or replace."

HPA's submission encouraged recognition of this wider issue about sustainability within the context of urban development goals.

HPA hopes the diversity of built heritage can be woven into the Government's policy given that it's apparently "intended to provide a shared vision and direction across housing and urban development, to guide and inform the actions of all those who contribute".

# OCULUS Myriad events showcase people, places and stories

From page 1: "The stories we tell ourselves of our heritage will naturally be different according to our perspective, our 'lens'. We need to challenge ourselves to better understand how our identity is reflected and reinforced through the monuments and heritage chosen to be honoured and celebrated,"

The month will include engagements with all Taranaki museums – Puke Ariki, Aotea Utanganui (Museum of South Taranaki) and Nigel Ogle's renowned Tawhiti Museum along with historical societies and other such organisations across the province.

Local archaeologist and historian Ivan Bruce will lead several field trips in North and South Taranaki. The programme will conclude by recalling events surrounding the invasion of Parihaka on 5 November 1881.

28 October is the day in 1835 of the Declaration of Independence and has been identified as the national day on which to commemorate the New Zealand wars, Te Pūtake o te Riri. This year the event will be held at Orākau and a group will travel to support the occasion.

Rob Green said the politicians had decided New Zealand's NZ history would now be taught in the school curriculum and this decision has been widely welcomed. Yet it remains unclear how different groups will support or become involved. We look forward to focusing on a wider consciousness of



Engineering NZ hosts tours of engineering heritage in this year's festival. Mark Murphy

our past and raising the profile of our Taranaki heritage.

Heritage Taranaki hopes that at month's end people will feel that they have a better grasp on local heritage and have a thirst for more. Our aspiration is that the Taranaki Heritage Month becomes an annual fixture for our province.

The programme is currently being finalised and will soon be published on Heritage Taranaki's website and Facebook.



More than 60 events are planned as part of **Wellington Heritage Week**, showcasing Wellington region's people, places and stories. Events will be held in Kapiti, Porirua, Upper Hutt, Lower Hutt and Wellington City. HPA members and affiliates can enjoy discounts at heritage accommodation.

The festival team released its inspiring programme in August on [www.wellingtonheritageweek.co.nz](http://www.wellingtonheritageweek.co.nz).

Coordinator Henry Buckenham says the

festival's reach has expanded. With a culinary background himself, he is pleased to see gastronomic events included, notably the sold-out Dinner & Discussion at the Green Parrot and the Heritage Beer & Quiz at the Waitoa Social Club, where a

line-up of specially brewed, historically inspired beers will be available.

This year's festival, the fifth, brings operational improvements. Most are thanks to coordinator Clemence Galot, who instigated online event registration and application processes – vital as the festival has almost tripled in size.

"Improving the user experience for event hosts was critical to taking the festival to the next level," Clemence said. "And we added a Heritage Blog where we post festival itineraries and articles to spur broader interest."

Other new events are the Historic LGBTI Rainbow Inner City Tours, which explore the formative years of the LGBTI Rainbow community in Wellington, and the Public Art Talk - Gordon Crook Banners hosted by the city council.

Festival director David Batchelor says the events offered show an expanded interest in heritage topics. He recommended Public Art Heritage, which champions the protection of 20th century public art works.

HP Wellington's talk Old or Green? Is the Greenest Building an Old Building? will explore the environmental costs and benefits of making older houses energy-efficient, healthy and comfortable. This features internationally renowned architects and thinkers Brenda and Robert Vale.

The festival offers discounts at three heritage accommodation providers – the renovated 1880s-built cottages near Cuba Street, or the Bolton Hotel (among the Rita Angus Galleries) next door to the historic Bolton Street Cemetery, or the DoubleTree by Hilton with its 1920s-glamour. See website for special rates and discount codes.

*Wellington Heritage Week is organised by the independent Wellington Heritage Week Trust, comprising six volunteers. The 2021 festival is sponsored by Wellington City Council, Hutt City Council, Heritage New Zealand, Department of Conservation, and Aro Digital.*



Karori Cemetery tours are always a highlight. Mark Murphy

# Whanganui Heritage Month postponed

Whanganui's September Heritage Month has been postponed until October 2022 due to the uncertainty and restrictions of the latest Covid outbreak.

Disappointed Whanganui Regional Heritage Trustee Helen Craig paid a huge debt of gratitude to naming rights sponsor Ray White Whanganui, major sponsors WDC, PYTHON Fixings and Whanganui Garden Services, Kiwiwebs, Downer and Tranzit. She said continuing grant support from Whanganui & Partners, Four Regions Trust and Whanganui Community Foundation have made the event possible every year.

"Event coordinator Ann Petherick has done an incredible job and organised a line-up of exciting events including our first-ever heritage parade and park-up that was to include horse-drawn carriages, cycles and vintage cars. This transport theme will be rescheduled for October 2022."

The move to October will be permanent to allow Whanganui's riverboats and other key attractions, that don't operate over winter months, to take part.

A varied programme of 35 events, promoted in 10,000 event guides already in circulation, and an extensive



**A transport theme will be repeated for Whanganui's October 2022 Heritage Month.**

advertising campaign had to be cancelled at short notice. Some events may continue if alert levels reduce later in September, but most cannot occur until Level 1 is reached.

"We're working through our accounts and hope to refund sponsors and advertisers a portion of their investment. This is not an easy discussion, but we were able to cancel our main advertising campaigns, and

therefore can return some funds."

The Whanganui Regional Heritage Trust will continue to support event holders via Facebook posts to promote any event if Covid levels allow.

"Sharing photos and stories extensively to well-developed audiences online throughout New Zealand is proving very effective in building Whanganui's reputation as a heritage city well worth the visit."

## Submission time for district's first draft heritage strategy

Whanganui District Council is now consulting with the public on its first Heritage Strategy.

Councillor Helen Craig said this was quite surprising given Whanganui's reputation as an outstanding heritage district with a large number of heritage buildings still in use in the CBD.

While the council had been proactive strengthening all its outstanding heritage buildings, and having various initiatives to support commercial heritage, it hasn't had a strategy until now, she said.

"A strategy is key to council's future direction in this area, and will not only guide its efforts but will ensure funds and projects are committed to. The draft heritage strategy provides a vision, goals and tailored guidance via a five-year action plan.

"The goals are quite ambitious and include a community Heritage Grant Fund that could accept applications



**Maria Place, Whanganui, taken between 1929 and 1934.**

for seismic strengthening and fire upgrade work.

"The strategy was developed by the council's heritage officer Scott Flutey, who surveyed heritage strategies throughout New Zealand and spent considerable time in pre-consultation

with the community including iwi."

Submissions close at 5pm on Sunday, 12 September 2021.

The draft strategy can be viewed at [whanganui.govt.nz/Your-Council/Have-Your-Say/Consultations/Draft-Heritage-Strategy](http://whanganui.govt.nz/Your-Council/Have-Your-Say/Consultations/Draft-Heritage-Strategy)

# OCULUS New entranceway for unique elevator

Whanganui's Durie Hill Elevator celebrated its 100-year anniversary in 2019. To celebrate this milestone, the Whanganui Regional Heritage Trust determined on replacing the tired, 1976 model with a new entranceway.

With an initial grant from Whanganui District Council (WDC), which owns the site, the trust led the project to design and fundraise for a replacement. About \$245k was raised and construction that began in early 2021 is nearly completed.

Until his death in late 2019, trustee Bruce Falk led the project with trustees Mary-Ann Ewing, Don Robinson and

Ann McNamara.

Trustee and architect Bruce Dickson took over as project lead and trustee Dennis McGowan joined the working group. The trust selected the design of Dickson's grandson, graduate architect Henry Dickson, which uses low-maintenance materials with a metal alloy pergola.

The elevator, tunnel and tower are unique to Whanganui. The Durie Hill Elevator, ranked by NZHPT as a Category 1 Historic Place, is New Zealand's only public underground elevator, and one of only two in the world that service a hill suburb in a

town. The other is the Santa Justa Elevator in Lisbon, Portugal.

The elevator and tunnel are by far the most visited tourist attraction in Whanganui, with a monthly



*The entranceway built in 1976.*

average of 3129 visitors. Between March 2017 and February 2018, 37,547 people visited.

New interpretative panels explaining the elevator and tower's significance and history will be placed on the walls of the entrance. Funding permitting, a bike rack and storage lockers will be placed nearby to cater for cyclists, joggers and walkers.

A new pou, as seen in the draft drawing, will be carved when funds permit. The original carvings by Austin Brassel were removed with proper ceremony and iwi consultation.

The NZ Lottery Grants Board contributed \$140k, Four Regions Trust and WDC \$50k each and a fundraising dinner hosted and supported by the Red Lion Inn raised \$3,500.



*Draft drawing of new entranceway, and (right) existing tunnel.*

## Honoured for outstanding conservation of former bank

Bernice Frost and Anthea Hatfield's restoration work on the former BNZ building in Raetihi paid off when they were awarded the Heritage Blue Plaque at the inaugural Whanganui Regional Heritage Awards last year.

The plaque, sponsored by Heritage NZ, was unveiled in July by its CEO Andrew Coleman. The plaque was awarded for their outstanding conservation work. Anthea and Bernice received funding from the National Heritage Preservation Incentive Fund for their continuing work. The building operates as Raetihi Arts Trust Gallery and has a growing reputation as one of the best provincial small independent art galleries in New Zealand.

The unveiling was attended by Whanganui Regional Heritage Trust members, project supporters and

tradespeople, who worked on the building (see photo below), Mayor Don Cameron and wife Phyl and some whose parents had worked or lived in the bank in former years. Most banks of the era had live-in managers who kept a gun or two handy for security.

Whanganui Regional Heritage Trustee and councillor Helen Craig said this was the first such plaque to be installed in the region. At least five more were expected to be unveiled this month.

Plaques can be bought if the

building or site meets certain criteria. The trust is approaching owners whose buildings reach major milestones, such as centenaries. The council is keen to install plaques on its own significant heritage buildings and sites over the next few years.

The Whanganui Regional Heritage Awards were first introduced in 2020 and are held every two years.

See [whanganuiheritagetrust.org.nz](http://whanganuiheritagetrust.org.nz) or call Helen on 021 1030737.



# Spending a penny in the Manawatu

By Cindy Lilburn

HP Manawatu-Horowhenua

The Palmerston North Ladies Rest Rooms in the centre of the Square has long been admired for its Art Deco style and facilities... but the facility also hides a secret.

Built in 1936, the rest rooms are perched over the top of the former 1918 ladies' loos. Opening a hatch in the floor gives access to a subterranean black and white tiled room with the toilet facilities still intact. A recent archaeological 'dig' by the council's heritage officer came up with a kettle and pair of heavily-repaired women's shoes from the 1930s with a heel missing [perhaps why they were hurled down the hole].

The heritage officer has hopes that these items could be displayed in the rest rooms with a glass panel in the floor so people can view the original loos lit up below.

Women's public toilets are now so commonplace throughout New Zealand (often combined with Plunket Rooms) that we must be reminded they were a hard-won privilege of the 1910s onwards.

Palmerston North's male toilets, like many, were built some twenty years before their female counterpart. Historian Caroline Daley suggests this is because before the 1900s 'the public was presumed to be male'. Most women worked at home, in family settings or as domestic servants. The 1900s brought women opportunity to work in shops or offices, and women coming to town with their children. Other than department stores (which didn't encourage non-customers to use their facilities), hotels and clubs were male-only and off limits to women (and children) in need. As Dorothy



Ladies' Rest Room, The Square – Ian Matheson City Archives, June 2020. Manawatu Heritage website



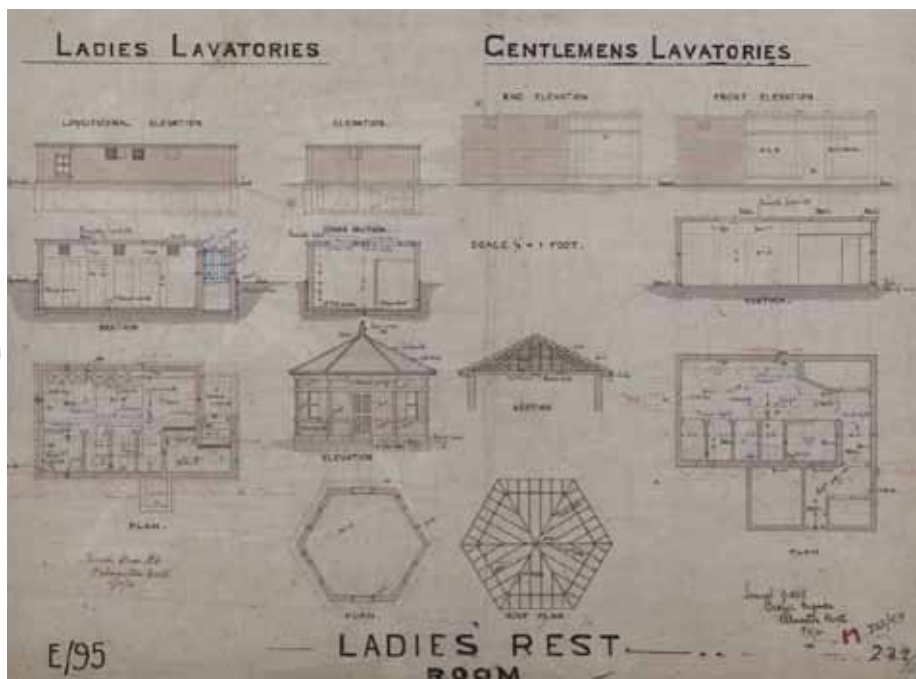
The offending shoes – Te Manawa Museums Trust, Palmerston North, April 2021

Pilkington comments in her history of the Palmerston North rest rooms, not having access to a toilet is a very effective barrier to participation in the everyday social life and events of a community.

Thanks to the Women's Christian Temperance Union and women's campaigns, towns such as Palmerston North had their first council-run toilets built in 1918. Palmerston's were semi-underground behind a hedge (to preserve women's modesty entering

the facility) and somewhat spartan in style. Within 20 years, the Palmerston North City Council splashed out on a new enhanced facility reputedly with design input from the Mayoress and councillors' wives. In addition to the tiled toilets (at a charge of a penny a visit), it featured a rest room with comfortable seating and reading material, a mother's room with child-sized toilet and stove for heating milk, and even a cubicle for those changing into evening wear after work. Quite a difference to the utilitarian unisex toilets that are the current style.

In 2002, separate male toilets and an information centre were added to the Palmerston North Ladies Rest Rooms, not without some protest that this should remain a women-only place. The building continues to be well-maintained with many of its original features, like the Art Deco rosette in the rest room ceiling. Its worth as a women's amenity is still much appreciated. Thanks to Caroline Daley 'Flushed with pride? Women's quest for public toilets in NZ.' (Women's Studies Journal, Autumn 2000) and Dorothy Pilkington, 'Spending a penny – public rest rooms for women in Palmerston North and Feilding' (Manawatu Journal of History, issue 5, 2009.)



Plan – Palmerston North Borough Council, September 7, 1916. Manawatu Heritage website



# OCULUS Heritage sites may help counter climate change

Auckland's historic John Kinder House has become a botanical pollinator sanctuary as part of its fight against climate change.

Curator Gary Russell, a member of Historic Places Auckland-Tamaki Makaurau, has the support of Auckland Botanical Gardens.

He says heritage sites provide the best places for pollinators to ensure the continuation of plant populations that lock up carbon in their woody stems, bulbs and tubers. He welcomes moves by Auckland Council to adopt measures to combat climate change and suggests New Zealand heritage sites help reduce carbon debt by creating wild flower gardens.

Russell was prompted by an article in the March 2021 *New Scientist* by Professor Jeff Ollerton of the University of Northampton which talked about the impact parks and reserves can have against climate change. Ollerton said:

"To reverse the effects of climate change, we need nature-based solutions, built on conservation of biodiversity, to capture the carbon dioxide from the atmosphere.

"Pollinators are crucial to this, but their numbers are declining, some species have gone extinct and others are critically endangered. The best way to restore natural habitats to help fight



*Daffodils at John Kinder House.*

global warming is through natural regeneration from seeds, and for that we need pollinators."

Around 75 percent of the world's crops rely on pollinators. About 90 percent of the 352,000 species of flowering plants are pollinated by insects, birds and bats.

How pollinators affect soils may be even more critical, Ollerton said. When a pollinator visits a flower it sets in motion a chain of events that leads not just to seeds, but a series of structures as with woody stems, seed and fruit casings, and seed dispersal structures

such as wings of sycamore seeds. All these contain a very high proportion of carbon. Once they have fulfilled their function, they fall to the ground where they enter the soil as a source of locked-in carbon."

Soils are the world's second most important carbon store, with 75 percent of terrestrial carbon accumulating there.

Plant litter is the main form of how carbon is stored in the soil.

Russell said that by becoming a botanical pollinator sanctuary, John Kinder House is in line with the UN Convention on Biological Diversity, which aims to safeguard pollinators.

The Tree Council is also fighting to save trees not only for landscape beautification but to support future generations' wellbeing.

"John Kinder House, with its extensive number of mature exotic and native trees, is involved in this war against climate change. We are maintaining these plant species as part of the early history landscape scene as a habitat for many native birds, insects and reptiles."

This requires action at all levels from governments to conservation groups and residents to create and restore habitats in which pollinators can thrive.

Without pollinators as allies, reversing the effects of climate change will be much harder.'

## Blue Plaques make mark in South Canterbury

The main aim of the South Canterbury Historical Society (SCHS) formed in late 1945, was preserving

the history of South Canterbury and forming and running the South Canterbury Museum.

In 1988, a Trust Deed drawn up with Timaru District Council saw the museum and artefacts gifted to the council in return for the museum being staffed fulltime.

The South Canterbury branch of Historic Places Trust later amalgamated with the SCHS, an associate member of HPA.

The society is now taking part in the Blue Plaque Project. In collaboration with the Timaru Civic Trust (TCT), five buildings around Timaru were identified for receiving plaques, paid for by SCHS and TCT:

- Sacred Heart Basilica, built in 1910-11, designed by Dunedin architect Francis Petre.)
- Chalmers Church, built 1903, local architect James Turnbull.(Now St. George's Coptic Church.
- St. Mary's Church, built 1880-1909,

Christchurch architect W. B. Armson.

- Landing Services Building, built 1870-76, saved from demolition in 1989 by Timaru Civic Trust.
- Customhouse, built 1902, local architect Daniel West.

The first plaque was mounted on the Landing Services building and unveiled by Timaru District Mayor Nigel Bowen. Plaques have also been placed on the Sacred Heart Basilica, and the former Chalmers Church. The last two are pending.

As well as these five plaques, SCHS has received a \$20k grant from Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga (part of the Betty Jordan bequest for use in South Canterbury), which will be used for a series of Blue Plaques around South Canterbury.

Work is currently being done on identifying buildings and sites for plaques, and then approaches will be made to owners about accepting a Blue Plaque for their site.



*Chalmers Church.*



Protestors in bid to save the Leys Institute, February 2020. Connor Crawford

## Power to the people as sites saved

Those who value heritage must be still cracking open the bubbly in Auckland.

### St David's Church

St David's Church in Khyber Pass has been saved; the Leys Institute will be refurbished and a Long Bay heritage protection area has been enlarged.

Ted Manson ONZM, patron of Friends of St David's Trust, who has supported the project to save St David's since 2015, has purchased three properties to secure the church building -- the church, Old St David's at 68 Khyber Pass

Road (adjacent to St David's) and the Madeira Lane carpark. The latter two will be developed.

The funds that the Friends of St David's raised under the leadership of Paul Baragwanath will be used to transfer the ownership and stewardship of St David's into the Friends of St David's Trust.

### The Leys Institute

The Friends of the Leys Institute, set up by former Civic Trust Auckland board member Helen Geary, has welcomed the Waitemata Local Board's memo outlining a path for the upgrading of the Leys Library and Gymnasium, which were closed in December 2019.

An indicative business case has confirmed the preferred option is to earthquake strengthen

and refurbish the buildings to enable continued use as a community facility.

The Waitemata board endorsed the delivery of a detailed business case by July 2022, which will confirm the scope of work, levels of service provision, a more refined and accurate estimate of costs and potential funding streams. The buildings and surrounds will continue to receive maintenance and care while closed.

### Long Bay heritage protection area

Auckland Council has bought over 3000 square metres of land within the heritage protection area to complete the 18ha area alongside Long Bay Regional Park -- one of Auckland's most highly visited regional parks. The Long Bay Okura Great Park Society has lobbied for this for many years.

For an investment of \$3.6M, this addition to the park protects the integrity of cultural heritage values across the site and secures it as

public and open space for Aucklanders.

The park and adjoining heritage protection area contain evidence of pre-European Māori occupation by Ngāti Kahu and Ngāti Poataniwha, as well as historic European farming practices.



St David's, Khyber Pass, Auckland. Helen Geary



St David's Windows. Freestyle Event Photography