

# Hawke's Bay Heritage News

*Newsletter of Historic Places Hawke's Bay Inc.*

- April 2016 -



In 1884, the Napier Borough Council had new offices and Council Chamber constructed on the corner of the Marine Parade, Herschell and Tennyson Streets.

In 2014, after many facelifts, and after serving a number of different roles, the building was moved to Byron Street to make way for the new MTG building. It has now taken a new lease of life as the Creative Arts Napier (CAN) community arts centre.

In November last year a plaque recording the history of the building was unveiled by Isobel Connelly and Napier Mayor, Bill Dalton. Isobel is the daughter of Robert McGregor, and researching and writing the text for the plaque (see below) was one of Robert's last projects for Historic Places Hawke's Bay.



Napier Mayor, Bill Dalton and Isobel Connelly

## A PIECE OF NAPIER'S HISTORY

This building has been part of the architectural backdrop of Napier since the late 19th century.

In 1884 it began life as Napier's new Borough Council Chambers on the corner of Tennyson Street and Marine Parade.

It was designed by renowned architect, Robert Lamb and was one of the few important public buildings he designed that survived the 1931 Hawke's Bay earthquake. While the building suffered no significant damage and escaped the terrible fires that followed, its horizontal movement during the quake was so great that the mayoral portraits hanging on cords in the council chamber (now the main gallery) swung out so far that they flipped over and ended up facing the walls.

In 1950 when Napier officially became a city, this building was remodelled; its weatherboard cladding covered with stucco and the decorative details removed to give a more modern appearance. The Council Chamber was given an Art Deco flourish at its entrance.

Twelve mayors presided over Napier from the mayoral office (now the small gallery) during the many years this building was the centre of council business, until a new Civic Building opened in 1968. It has had various uses over the years, including the Hawke's Bay Museum and Art Gallery's education centre.

In 2012 it was shifted to its present site to make way for museum extensions, and in 2014 it was refurbished and adapted to become Creative Napier's community arts centre.

*Robert McGregor (1940–2015)*

## ART DECO BUILDINGS: EARTHQUAKE PRONE OR EARTHQUAKE PROOF?

The expression “earthquake-prone building” first officially appeared in the Building Act of 2004. But since the Canterbury earthquakes in 2010 and 2011 it has become a familiar and rather intimidating part of our vocabulary—especially so in a seismically active area like Hawke’s Bay.

“Earthquake prone” means simply that a building does not meet the minimum seismic standard set in the Act. To meet this standard, buildings, including stairways, must be constructed based on a criterion that they will not collapse in a quake assessed as “moderate” that might occur once in 500 years.

The criterion for “nonstructural” components of the building, that is elements such as brick infill in walls, external parapets, and other adornments is that they will not fail with consequent risk to occupants or people nearby.

“Minimum standard” has been quantified to a “structural strength not less than 34% of the current new building standard (NBS)”—a figure that has proved contentious.

Under the 2004 Act all local bodies are required to have all non residential buildings in their area seismically assessed and to set a time frame for strengthening to the standard of any buildings assessed as earthquake prone. Assessment started in Hastings in 2006 and Napier in 2009 with an IEP (initial evaluation procedure), and it is now well known that many of our 1930s buildings in particular, were evaluated as failing to reach the minimum standard of 34% of NBS. Thus they are now classified as earthquake prone.

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 pointed out three features of these buildings that simplified the study process: that the structural detailing of the most of the Art Deco buildings is very similar, most of them were built during a very short post-earthquake period in the 1930s, and most were designed by a small group of architects and engineers.

A crucial research area in the study was the relative strength of the concrete work of the 1930s compared with today. Professor Ingham said that in the IEP these buildings had been assessed as failing to meet the standard because it was assumed that the concrete structure of the period was brittle compared to the current standard. Furthermore the buildings were assessed on the weakest component of the structure, which was generally external parapets, adornments, and cavity brick infill in the walls.



*A cavity brick wall. Many walls of this type are often plastered over on our Art Deco buildings so they are not obvious to the casual observer*

In fact, 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.

The weak point that research team identified within these well-built concrete structures, was the cavity brick infill—that is walls built of two layers of brick side by side with a central cavity between. However, the team developed a simple low cost strengthening technique.. This involves fastening the two wall structures together with large purpose-designed screws, together with ensuring that the brick infill fits tightly into the concrete structure, a procedure which, according to one report, can cost as little as \$50 per square metre.

Overall the Auckland University study and the development of the simple brick infill wall strengthening technique has proved to be very good news for owners of Art Deco Buildings who should now be far more confident that it is possible to strengthen their buildings to 100% of the new building standard at reasonable cost.



*Professor Jason Ingham with Art Deco Trust GM, Sally Jackson and Historic Places HB Chair, Barbara Arnott*

**Contact Denis Pilkington if you would like to read a copy of the full report, *Seismic Considerations for the Art Deco Interwar Reinforced Concrete Buildings of Napier, New Zealand, by Walsh, Elwood & Ingham, February 2015***

# HISTORIC PLACES

HAWKE’S BAY

*The Voice of Heritage*

### MARK YOUR DIARIES

- We plan to run another showing of historical archival footage in June at the Century Theatre in Napier.
- At this stage our AGM is planned for Sunday August 28<sup>th</sup>, probably at Te Aute College.

We would like to say a huge thank you to **East Pier** in Napier and **Spicers** in Havelock North. Both businesses allow us to meet on their premises every alternate month for our meetings.



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## NEW LIFE FOR WAIROA'S PORTLAND ISLAND LIGHTHOUSE

From Gail Menzies in Wairoa

The old Portland Island Lighthouse is the town's best known landmark. The lighthouse, established in 1878 was saved from demolition and moved from Portland Island to the present location on Marine Parade, Wairoa, and opened on 10 June 1961.

After nearly 55 years in town it has just been refurbished and the light is now revolving again, rather than static. An 'opening' ceremony is planned for 9 April at the Gaiety Theatre, with invited guests including ex-lighthouse keepers and/or their families. A little further down the track (no date set yet) there will be a 'public' opening at the Gaiety Theatre, followed by movie footage ... and there will be guided tours available through I-Site bookings (work in progress).



## CHECK OUT 'OLD HAWKE'S BAY' ON FACEBOOK

This page is the work of Lester Oliver who started the group around August 2013 while off work, he had previously joined the Old Napier group run by Dean Mardon, but felt that it was mainly restricted to Napier and Hastings, so decided to create Old Hawke's Bay which covers a wider area from Morere to Woodville and west to around Tarawera.

During a search for family information a lot of interesting old photos were found from DigitalNZ, the MTG and Te Papa to start off with, then members started posting their own or sending in photos to scan and paste.

There are now 7,048 members in the group, including people from Hawke's Bay who now live all around the world and love to see their old home town history that brings back so many memories for them.



[www.facebook.com/groups/oldhawkesbay](http://www.facebook.com/groups/oldhawkesbay)

## AN INTRODUCTION TO ARCHAEOLOGY

Dr Elizabeth Pishief

What is archaeology? Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga provides information about archaeology on its website: [www.heritage.org.nz](http://www.heritage.org.nz)

In New Zealand there is a definition of archaeology and laws around its management and protection. The *Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga Act 2014* defines an archaeological site as a place associated with pre-1900 human activity, where there may be evidence relating to the history of New Zealand. A place associated with post-1900 human activity may be declared by gazettal as an archaeological site under the Act. Archaeology is all about the discovery, recovery and interpretation of the surviving evidence of past human activity in its context in or above the ground. Archaeological sites are the relics and ruins of our past and may be on land, in water, or in the coastal marine area. Examples of archaeological sites are:

- Māori pa sites – fortified places with banks and ditches, often found on cliffs, headlands or ridges
- Types of site associated with cultivation and settlement include artificially levelled terraces, and pits for storing kumara, cultivation areas and gardens
- Middens are 'rubbish dumps' that may contain shells, bones, artefacts, charcoal and sometimes oven stones. These can be Māori or European.
- Rock art sites which may contain paintings, drawings, carvings or engravings
- Shipwrecks

Look forward to further development of this subject in future newsletters.



Dr Mark Allen and Caleb Pishief beside pits on Oueroa Pa on Gary Williams' property Rotokare. Source: Elizabeth Pishief July 2015

## VISIT THE HISTORIC PLACES OF WAIROA - Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> April 2016 -

A welcome from the Wairoa Museum, "Let us take you on a journey through the history of Te Wairoa. It is a history that reaches back hundreds of years to early Maori settlement and then on to the more recent yet compelling story of European settlement." Our programme includes the historic buildings of Wairoa, the river pathway and visits to St Theresa's Maori Catholic Church, St Andrew's Church, the Wairoa Museum, Pilot Hill and the Powdrell property.

Tea and coffee will be available *but please bring your own lunch*. Come prepared to do a little walking.

**The coach departs from:**  
**Havelock North, Martin Place at 7:30am**  
**Taradale, EIT Bus Stop at 8:00 am**  
Returning to Napier by 5pm.

**Cost:** \$55.00 per person for members of HPHB or \$65.00 for non members, reducible if you join HPHB before the day of the trip.  
Further enquiries: Philip Irwin, 8700513 or Susan Lopdell, 8446697.

Name: .....

Phone: .....

E-mail: .....

Payment \$.....for.....seats

Pick-up point : Havelock North  Taradale



Please fill in the particulars above and send with your payment to: The Secretary, Historic Places Hawke's Bay, 2 Arthur Close, CLIVE 4102  
Alternatively payment can be made by direct credit to SBS Bank account number : 031355 0727668 00

**If you choose to pay by direct credit, please contact the Secretary so he can confirm your booking.**

## OUR TRIP TO TUTIRA

28 November 2015

A party of 24 arrived at the Tutira Arboretum where we were greeted by the curators George and Kirsty Christensen. Whilst we lunched on the front lawn of the homestead, George recounted Herbert Guthrie Smith's life story and his legacy.

Herbert Guthrie Smith emigrated to New Zealand from Scotland in 1880 and worked on his uncle's South Canterbury farm in South Canterbury. In 1884, Arthur Cunningham and Guthrie Smith bought land at Tutira and began the long and arduous task of breaking in the land for farming. By 1903, Guthrie Smith was debt free, and the sole owner of what was now a 60,000 acre station carrying 38,000 merino sheep.

Guthrie Smith was now able to devote most of his time to natural history and writing. After War War One, he subdivided much of Tutira for settlement by returned soldiers and, when he died, bequeathed 2,000 acres in trust to the nation. Today a trust runs the Tutira Educational and Recreation Reserve that includes the arboretum, which is open every Sunday from October to May.



Guthrie Smith's best known work is *Guthrie-Smith of Tutira*, published in 1959, but he also wrote a play (published in 1891), and a number of books on New Zealand birdlife.

During our visit, George led us through the New Zealand, Australian, Chinese, North American, and Japanese sections of the arboretum stopping at times for group members to take photos and also admire the views over Lake Tutira. Back at the homestead, we meandered through the rock garden Guthrie Smith built on our way to view his grave- a simple plaque on a rock under one of his tree plantings.

Our next stop was the brick and tile Tutira Memorial Church. Built by volunteers on the hillside overlooking the lake, the church was dedicated on 11 December 1954. Inside there is a marble tablet with the names of the 18 men from the district who gave their lives during WW2 and brass plaques commemorating local returned servicemen from both world wars line the nave.



## COMINGS AND GOINGS

Jenny McIvor, who has served on our committee since 2014, is planning a move to Horowhenua. We are sorry to lose Jenny's thoughtful input, and we hope that she will have time to join the Manawatu-Horowhenua Historic Places group. Good luck with your future plans, Jenny.

On the other hand we are pleased to report that Dr. Elizabeth Pishief has joined the committee. Elizabeth was, for some years, a member of the our forerunner, the local branch committee of NZ Historic Places Trust and, after living in Auckland for a period, is now settled back in Napier. Elizabeth is an archaeologist with a range of useful skills and knowledge of Hawke's Bay, who will be a great addition to our group.

***We would like to add one more member to our committee and if you have an interest in local history, we would be pleased to hear from you. Our main interests are publications and signboards for places of historic significance in Hawke's Bay, submissions to local councils, and organising events for our members, such as local bus trips.***

## COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Historic Places Hawkes Bay Inc, Postal Address 2 Arthur Close Clive 4102

<b>Barbara Arnott (Chair)</b>	Napier	835 5950	<b>Susan Lopdell</b>	Taradale	844 6697
<b>Denis Pilkington (Deputy Chair)</b>	Napier	835 6525	<b>Rose Mohi</b>	Havelock North	877 9474
<b>Philip Irwin (Secretary)</b>	Clive	870 0513	<b>Evelyn Pishief-Shipp</b>	Napier	021 183 5053
<b>Maxine Anderson</b>	Taradale	844 4875	<b>Emma Keong</b>	Havelock North	027 697 4010
<b>Beverly Fullerton-Smith</b>	Hastings	870 6393	<b>Cr Rod Heaps</b>	Hastings District Council	875 1123
<b>Elizabeth Pishief</b>	Napier	835 4044	<b>Cr Annette Brosnan</b>	Napier City Council	027 337 9303
<b>Mike King</b>	Napier	842 0221	<b>Cr Sally Butler</b>	CHB District Council	06 856 5840