



HISTORIC PLACES WELLINGTON INC
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Newsletter

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Our email address is
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EVENTS (See page 4 for details)

- Crofton visit on 13 March
- School of Architecture 40th Anniversary
- Futuna Open Day

Committee News

We are delighted to congratulate committee member **Nigel Isaacs** on **two** recent achievements. Nigel, a senior lecturer at the Victoria University of Wellington School of Architecture, was awarded a PhD in December with his thesis looking at the history of the technology of the New Zealand house from 1792 to 1982. Around 70 building materials were tracked. He has now received a Fulbright NZ Scholarship for 2016 for a project titled *Codes Across the Water - links between the first USA and New Zealand national building codes*. His study will look at the first USA national building code developed in 1922 and its relationship to the first NZ timber frame code prepared in 1924. The downside is that we shall again miss Nigel's lively presence from the committee meetings as he will be in the USA for 3½ months from November 2016 to February 2017, based at the Illinois Sustainable Technology Research Centre, University of Illinois but visiting other institutions in Maryland, Minnesota and Indiana.

We welcome onto the committee Felicity Wong who has had a distinguished career in the Government service and a long-standing interest in heritage matters.

Churches in Island Bay

Wellington is blessed with a variety of churches, several of which are notable heritage buildings, such as Old St Pauls, St Mary of the Angels (currently closed for earthquake strengthening) and the landmark St Gerard's Monastery. But the smaller churches also provide some fascinating architectural insights, often of a unique nature. The HPW visit on 28 November, arranged by Vivienne Morrell, was designed to show three very different and unusual Island Bay churches. Beginning at the Home of Compassion, we saw the chapel, which was designed by Structon Group and built in 1990.



The most striking feature of this modern interior were the windows and Stations of the Cross designed by John Drawbridge and glowing with strong, bold colours. We also visited the Suzanne Aubert Visitor Centre which is an exhibition dedicated to telling the story of Suzanne Aubert and the Sisters of Compassion.

Our next visit was to a very different church. Built in 1906 by the Catholic Church on a prominent site on the Parade in Island Bay, it was dedicated to St Francis de Sales. It was enlarged in 1922 and again in 1940 before the decision was taken to build a new church elsewhere for the parish. The old building was sold to the Serbian Orthodox Church in 1968 in order to provide a church for the refugees from Serbia being resettled in Wellington. Dedicated to St Sava, who is considered by Serbian Orthodox Christians to be the founder of the independent Church, and celebrated as the patron saint of education and medicine, this simple unassuming building is of interest because of its adaptation to the Serbian Orthodox form of worship. There are at least three other Eastern Orthodox centres of worship in Wellington – Greek, Russian and Romanian. Although the Serbian community has diminished in size, the church remains an important focus for its members.



Our third visit was to St Francis de Sales Catholic Church, built in the 1960s to replace the old church on the Parade. The architect chosen for the new church was Jason Smith from the firm of King and Dawson. (Smith was also the architect who designed the recently classified Category One historic building of Freyberg swimming pool) It is a striking white building of ferro-concrete with a fan-shaped design which converges inside towards a central altar. This is dominated by a large striking mosaic of Christ on the cross, made from 135000 pieces of ceramic glass and plastic tiles.

Among other fittings of interest is the fine coloured window backdrop in the porch. Although seemingly glass, the mosaic is made of vividly stained pieces of polyester resin and is the first example of the use of this material on such a large scale in church artwork in New Zealand.

HPW's Website and Facebook Page

It is a year since HPW set up its own website so we thought we would give members a few statistics on usage. We encourage members to look at it regularly – in particular the Home page lists various upcoming events and news items. All our newsletters can be found on the website as can the buildings we are currently taking an interest in (under the 'advocacy' page). www.historicplaceswellington.org



The graph above depicts the visitors to the website over the past year. In January 2016 we had 143 visitors to the website and 571 views (which means each visitor made about four views). Views and visitors are: "The two main units of traffic measurement are views and unique visitors. A view is counted when a visitor loads or reloads a page. A visitor is counted when we see a user or browser for the first time in a given period (day, week, month)." Eighty percent of the views were from New Zealand, with the remaining 20% from America, Germany, Japan, Brazil, Australia, UK, Italy, Portugal and Cook Islands. Sixty percent of the views came from people finding us by doing a search, but 18% were referrals from Historic Places Aotearoa's website (we have a link to our website on their site). The best month so far for visitors was November 2015, with 162 visitors.

Facebook – www.facebook.com/historicplaceswellington

We set up a Facebook page about 10 months ago to try to reach potential new members, but we encourage existing members who are on Facebook to 'like' us, as we regularly post items of interest. At the beginning of February 2016, we had 49 'followers' or people who 'like' our page. According to Facebook we 'reached' 316 people in January (but we don't know how they measure this!) Of these 316, 64% were New Zealanders and 36% were from the Wellington region. People from the UK and Australia are the next most frequently reached.

Remember you do not have to be a Facebook user to look at our page.

Events

Visit to Crofton on 13 March

We are delighted to have arranged a visit for members to Crofton on 13 March. It is a busy time of the year but we hope that members will be able to take advantage of this opportunity to visit one of the most interesting and important heritage houses in Wellington. Meet at the house at 21 Kenya St Ngaio at **2.30 pm on Sunday 13 March**. The visit includes afternoon tea and the cost will be \$25 but will be reduced if there are more than 30 in our group.

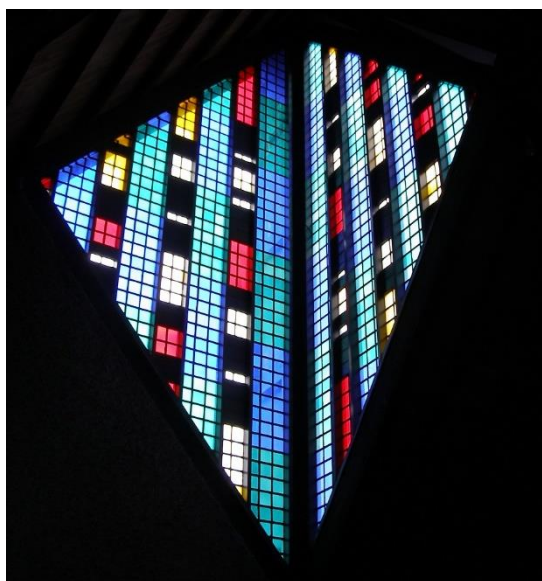
Built in 1857, Crofton is of special significance as one of the oldest surviving houses in Wellington and is a relatively rare remaining example of a house dating from the 1850s in New Zealand. Four times Premier of New Zealand, Sir William Fox built the house as his Wellington country house early in his political career. It remained in his ownership when he became Premier in 1861 and thus Crofton is an important link with Wellington's colonial history. Crofton is built in a simple Gothic Revival style. It is in private ownership. You can find more information about Crofton on the upcoming events page of our website: www.historicplaceswellington.org/upcoming-events/

To register for this visit, please either telephone Priscilla Williams 977-4667 or email priscilla.williams@paradise.net.nz by 4 March.

VUW School of Architecture

Victoria University of Wellington - The School of Architecture has announced details of its 40 Year Anniversary Celebrations to be held on 18-19 March 2016 in Wellington. Over the weekend they look forward to welcoming people to the academic symposium to discuss Global Architecture in the 1970s, and Architectural Futures; to enjoy fine cuisine with glorious views at The Boatshed on Wellington's Waterfront; and to reflect on and celebrate memories of the years past. Tickets are available now through Eventfinda.

Futuna Chapel Karori



Also on that weekend Futuna Chapel, a Category One registered building, is hosting two events. At an Open Day on Sunday 20th March. Megan Wraight, one of NZ's foremost landscape architects, will give a public talk at Futuna Chapel at 3:30pm. On the previous day the architect Lene Tranberg from Denmark will be presenting the Futuna guest lecture. For details about events at Futuna, visit www.futunatrust.org.nz

For other events that may be of interest to members, do not forget to check our website www.historicplaceswellington.org.nz

Coloured Acrylic Window in Fortuna Chapel