

"Colonisation ... in top gear": New Zealand architecture in the 1870s:
a one day symposium held under the auspices of the
Centre for Building Performance Research, Victoria University
Friday 7th December 2018

ABSTRACTS

Paul Addison " A Scotsman abroad: the architecture of John Scotland in colonial Nelson"

John Scotland was one of a small number of architects practising in Nelson during the 1870s. Born in Stirlingshire in 1812, he was the son of a master mason and followed that same calling. However, little is known of his life until he emigrated to New Zealand aged in his mid-50s. As with a number of his contemporaries in the building trades, Scotland turned to architecture, and established a practice in Nelson in 1866. He designed some of that city's grandest homes, including Melrose and Fellworth, both now listed by Heritage New Zealand, as well as commercial premises and a synagogue. Scotland returned to his native land in about 1885, and he died in Glasgow two years later. This paper will explore his life and works.

Ellen Andersen "The House Belongs to Them, But We Belong to the House: Te Tiki o Tamamutu and Hinemihi"

One of the great collaborations in the history of New Zealand's built heritage began in the 1870s with the Ngāti Tarāwhai carvers Wero and Tene Waitere. The carved houses Te Tiki o Tamamutu, and Hinemihi were among the last projects for Wero before his death in the early 1880s, and among the first for his apprentice Tene Waitere. These were both commissioned for Māori patrons, however both were in the hands of non-Māori "owners" by the end of the nineteenth century. This paper looks at the complex physical, social and political contexts of these two houses, and considers their histories from the perspective of their enduring connection to their original people, as houses bound by whakapapa, with living descendants who acknowledge their important connection to this day.

William Cottrell "Findlay & Co.'s *Illustrated Catalogue*, 1874-75"

Dunedin mill owner George Findlay published New Zealand's first cottage plans for sale to the public in March 1874. His extensive steam powered factory bounded by Cumberland, Castle and Stuart Streets supplied all requisites for "cottages, doors, sashes, mouldings, architraves and every description of furnishings for building purposes."

The only surviving copy has 30 pages of elevations and floor plans for seven cottages of three to seven rooms. At 1/8 inch to the foot, according to the *Otago Witness* (9 May 1874) they were "prepared so as to be fit to be put into a builder's hands" and "contain[ed] not fancy sketches but drawings which are practical and to scale."

It was boom time in Dunedin, the wealthiest city in the colony, with immigrant demands for housing and for furnishing. Renegade printer Samuel Lister produced another catalogue in July 1875 but this time for George Street cabinetmakers Craig and Gillies, yet both catalogues shared some designs in common. This paper examines what prompted New Zealand's first completely illustrated architectural plans, woodware and furnishing publications to be made, what they contained and most interestingly how they were made.

Adrian Humphris and Geoff Mew "200 Architects in the 1870s? Is That Figure Real?"

In this paper we are using our architects dataset to identify every person who called themselves an architect in New Zealand in the 1870s. An initial check of our database produced around 200 names, but we know from our previous studies that this figure needs to be refined to gauge the importance of their work, or even determine whether some of them could be truly called architects.

We have taken our data and used key attributes to try to quantify and qualify our architects. For example, one initial crude sort was based on the numbers of buildings designed over their total careers; this should give some indication of their presumed competence and possible success in the profession. So-called architects who designed zero structures were assigned to the lowest class; other classes were; 1-5 structures; 6-20; and >21, the latter appearing to be the most successful. We also considered where each person was located for the bulk of the 1870s to see if there might be geographical trends related to their success or otherwise. To finish our analysis we have chosen a few architects as examples from each of our classes and described them in more detail to explain perceived trends.

Nigel Isaacs "By-laws under the Municipal Corporations Act – building controls in the 1870s in Wellington and Dunedin."

Although the Municipal Corporations Act 1867 was the first to permit local authorities to make by-laws which could impact on buildings, it was not until the Municipal Corporations Act 1876 that buildings were explicitly included. The 1876 Act permitted the making of by-laws to prohibit or restrain the use of combustible or dangerous materials; regulate distances between buildings; regulate the thickness and materials of walls, regulate the construction and materials of fireplaces, furnaces and chimneys; regulate the erection of tents and other temporary structures; limit the time non-complying structures could remain; and for the council to charge no more than two pounds for "any inspection, superintendence or other service". The paper reviews the building by-laws put in place in Wellington and Dunedin cities over the 1870s decade, exploring their coverage, differences and similarities, as well as their impact on future building controls.

Derek Kawiti & Stacy Gordine "Ka noho, kia tu. Body position and paint in the fabrication and assembly of the Māori Whareniui in the 1870s"

David Kernohan "Greytown: the oldest inland colonial town"

Greytown is the oldest town in the Wairarapa established under the Small Farms Association, and the oldest inland settlement of the British colonial era. In March 1854 at a meeting held in the Crown and Anchor Hotel in Wellington 49 settlers selected town acres in Greytown. By the 1870s Greytown had its own newspaper, a school, a hospital and a flourishing retail and commercial base. In 1871 the Greytown Trust Act was passed and the town became a centre for farming, flax and timber milling though it suffered from the regular flooding of the Waiohine river. Greytown became a borough in 1878 but stopped growing when the railway by-passed it. This paper explores the extant buildings from that period and issues around maintaining the Greytown Historic Heritage Precinct.

Christine McCarthy "" ... something I cannot make out ...": the state of New Zealand prisons in the 1870s"

In 1874 Charles H. Curtin, in a letter to the *New Zealand Herald*, noted the disparity between the availability of free prison labour and the building materials and the poor state of the Auckland Prison as a public building. He wrote "your wooden gaol, with a string stone wall around it, is something that I cannot make out, - so much material

for making a stone gaol and free labour all at a hand." He suggests a certain ad hoc and illogical approach to the structures of incarceration.

A patchwork nature to the prison system is also apparent in the smattering of its evidence in government reports in the AJHRs. Rather than an image of the comprehensive or the systematic, the impression gained is one of ad hoc commissions and piecemeal reports. These were the days during which the Gaols Committee formed and Māori prisoners from Parihaka were detained without trial, but prior to the appointment of the first Inspector of Prisons (1880-). The abolition of the provinces also shifted the burden of responsibility back to central government, transferring the administrative paper trail. This paper examines the architecture of the NZ penal system during these years when a Central Gaol was proposed, New Plymouth gaol was built, and the saga of building Auckland Prison at Mt Eden was ongoing. It will draw on the contrasting versions and perceptions of prisons documented in the reports published in the AJHRs and the letters to the editor from members of the public in major newspapers.

Christina Mackay "In the Mists of Time: Searching for traces of the first settlement of four Southland families"

During the 1870s, the Provincial Government terminated grazing licenses on large runs in Eastern Southland and West Otago. In a series of land sales, this land was surveyed into 200 acre farms and auctioned to prospective farmers on a delayed repayment scheme. 150 years later, this research searches for traces of the first buildings from this time. It focuses on the housing of eight ancestors, great grandparents of the author, who settled within a 30 km radius in the districts of Waikoikoi, Maitland, Waikaka Valley and Otama. Information was gathered from National Library collections, district and family history books, old photographs and maps, 2018 surveys of the homestead sites and interviews with cousins still living in the area. In 1870, the rolling hills were covered with open tussock. Found artefacts suggest that Māori camped in the area during expeditions to gather food from Mataura river sites. The new settlers, often in extended family groups, travelled by horse and dray overland from Dunedin or Bluff. The Dunedin to Gore railway did not open until 1879. Their first shelters were camp-sites and wagon tilts lined in felt. Soon after they arrived, established families were able to fund the building of modest timber houses often constructed by carpenter uncles and brothers. Young single men "bached" in sod and/or timber huts until they married. One great grandmother spent childhood years "comfortably" in a "half-sod and half-timber shepherd's cottage" but her teenage years at the "Big House," the twenty-room homestead on the Otama Station. It was built in 1867 of "white pine" from the forest at Tapanui. By the turn of the twentieth-century, simple cottages had received additional rooms, porches and decorative verandahs or they were upstaged by new grand timber villas. These first houses were all demolished at various times between 1900 and 2006. Family photographs, usually of the front façade, provide a limited perspective only. Memoirs and local histories offer a few more clues. While buildings from the 1870s exist, historical touchstones in these country districts are more elusive.

Ben Schrader "Wood to Stone: Re-materialising Dunedin and Wellington in the 1870s"

During the 1870s the central business districts of Dunedin and Wellington were rebuilt on the back of gold in the first city and government largess in the second. This saw a shift from wood to stone (and masonry) as the building material of choice and the appearance of a more sophisticated architecture than before. These modern buildings represented a new sense of permanence in settler urban space and strongly situated each city within an imperial aesthetic network.

Selena Shaw "The wonderful ways of weaving: kōrero from the 1870s"

Brenda Vale "When is a doll's house not a doll's house?"

Claimed as the smallest house in Australia, the Doll's House was a tiny two roomed dwelling originally imported as a prefab in the 1870s and set up as the poorest house in the then poorest suburb of Melbourne (Collingwood). It has since earned heritage status being cited by the National Trust in 1985 and later registered as a historic building. The miniature proportions of this tiny worker's cottage are the reason behind its nickname.

This fascination with the miniature produced houses at much smaller scales for the residences of dolls rather than people. This paper examines the difference between the doll's houses of the "old country" of the period and those that resulted from the need to make do with the resources at hand in the new colonies. Between the 1870s and the end of the nineteenth-century the former were moving from bespoke houses for the very wealthy to mass produced toys for the middle classes. German firms like Silber and Fleming and Gottschalk were exporting their doll's house and mass produced furniture to the UK in imitation of the exteriors and interiors of the period. In Australia doll's houses of this period were made from waste materials such as packing cases. Furnishings could also be handmade, perhaps to the suggestions of Mrs. Beeton, who encouraged children to make their own doll's house furniture. The paper speculates as to whether this might also have been the situation in New Zealand. Unfortunately, no homemade doll's house dating back to 1870 has yet been located here.

Peter Wood "Erewhon or Mesopotamia? Samuel Butler's description of New Zealand Architecture c1872"