

Newsletter

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EVENTS

21 Nov 2021 2:30pm – Ministerial Residence visit

13 Feb 2022 2 pm – Working class Mt Victoria walk

A Call to Members to Make a Draft District Plan Submission – Felicity Wong



8/16
Kia whai mārama ki tō tātou
Mahere ā-Wāhanga Tāone
Understanding our District Plan

**Te takenga mai -
hitori me te ahurea**
Historical and cultural heritage

Absolutely Positively
Wellington City Council
No waste of time for

The District Plan is essentially
a 'rule book' managing
development, activities and
the environment within
a district, with the aim of

**Our tuku ihotanga heritage
connects our tangible and
intangible past, enlivens
our present and prepares
for our future.**

The criteria for listing historic heritage are:

- **Historic values**
These values relate to the history of a place
and how it demonstrates important historical
themes, events, people or experiences.
- **Physical values**

- **Rarity**
The place is unique or rare within the district
or region.
- **Representativeness**
The place is a good example of its type or era.

Historic and cultural heritage includes:

The banner for WCC [information sheet](#) on heritage in the Draft District Plan

The Wellington City Council has released its Draft District Plan and submissions close on 14 December. We urge all our members to make a [submission](#). The Draft Plan makes a number of proposals for new listing of heritage buildings and for several new heritage areas. There's also a number of sites of importance to mana whenua identified for protection. It contains new heritage rules which make it easier to earthquake strengthen heritage buildings and also to remove chimneys, etc. HPW supports the new listing proposals and the direction of those rule changes.

We continue to have concerns however about the removal of the requirement to get a resource consent for demolitions in inner suburbs. Old buildings in those areas have until now been largely protected by that 'demolition rule'. Only 30 percent of the suburbs will retain that protection in smaller areas of 'character precincts'. HPW would like to see those areas expanded, at least to the

50 percent size recommended by Council staff (but rejected by a majority vote of Councillors).

HPW believes that capacity for new housing will be spread out around the city as a result of the Government's new Medium Density Residential Standards (MDRS) under which three dwellings of three storeys will be permitted on all residential sites (3by3). There is an opportunity to review the intensification pressure on the inner suburbs as a result and extend the character precincts in size. It will no longer be imperative to concentrate up-zoning in inner suburbs to meet growth projections. Please submit asking for an increase in the size of the character precincts.

A large problem with the Draft Plan is that it takes the approach that 'character is not heritage'. The Plan establishes the protection of the inner suburbs as merely a matter of streetscape. HPW's contrary view is that it's because of the intact heritage of those suburbs that they were accorded 'character' protection 20 years ago. Since then, there's been a determined effort by planners and decision makers to categorise heritage as only buildings that are formally listed. Heritage is wider than this!

Wellington's existing District Plan recognises the importance of applying heritage beyond listed heritage sites. Those rules and context have guided WCC in its consenting processes, which has resulted in Wellington largely remaining a sustainable wooden city. If buildings are to be demolished and replaced, it must be by new wooden structures to retain the existing carbon emitting city footprint. Replacing them with concrete structures would increase the city's emissions footprint.



Brenda and Robert Vale at their Wellington Heritage Week talk on the greenness of old buildings (Image: Felicity Wong)

In their recent talk (hosted by HPW) in Heritage Week 'Old or Green? Is the Greenest Building an Old Building?' internationally acclaimed architects, thinkers and authors, Brenda and Robert Vale drew attention to those issues for the Draft District Plan. They described how existing wooden houses can be made carbon emissions neutral with insulation, double glazing, solar power and vegetable gardens. They conclude that adaptively reusing our existing housing stock, alongside some new medium density housing, is a much greener option than extensive demolition and rebuilding. They argued for better use of street berms and road reserves for new housing. An abridged video of their talk can be viewed [here](#).

Wellington Heritage Week (25-31 October)

This year's Wellington Heritage Week featured more than 60 events. As well as the Vales' talk mentioned above, here are reports on four other events.

Festival Opening and Panel Discussion – Ben Schrader



The panel: Marko, Jane, Kerryn (chair), Tamatha, James and Stuart (Image: Wellington Heritage Week)

This year's Wellington Heritage Week opened on 27 October with a panel discussion in the City Gallery. The panel comprised of people who had been on different sides of the polarising public debate about the recently completed Spatial Plan. It featured Wellington City Councillor Tamatha Paul (Ngāti Awa + Waikato Tainui), Marko Garlick (Generation Zero), James Solari (Solari Architects) Jane O'Loughlin (Live Wellington) and Stuart Niven (freelance urban designer). A purpose was to explore common ground between them. The panel was skilfully chaired by Kerryn Pollock (Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga).

Asked what heritage means to them:

- Tamatha identified a tension in how it is remembered. She noted that during the colonial era settlers saw some Māori heritage, or taonga, as 'evil' and destroyed it. Other taonga, including the wharehau [Mataatua](#), were taken by the Crown. How does power play out in heritage? she asked.
- Jane saw heritage as old things that had value, while also noting that these values change over time. She thought we needed to be protective of built heritage because once it's gone it's gone for good.
- James thought of heritage as storytelling and time. It's never static and always changing.
- Stuart understood heritage as something that was contentious, reiterating Tamatha's point that it's as much about exclusion as inclusion.
- Marko saw heritage as knowledge about the past and thought we needed to reimagine it to help us better understand present crises.

These thoughtful answers set the tone for a stimulating and wide-ranging debate. A highlight for me was Tamatha arguing for the Gordon Wilson Flats to be made good for housing again. This would be a huge win for both heritage and our present housing crisis. At the end of the debate differences

remained, but some common ground had been found too. It's something to build on as the District Plan process picks up steam. You can watch the event [here](#).

Historic Petone Walk – Felicity Wong

During Heritage Week there was an excellent walking tour of Petone's heritage buildings (hosted by Nik Zangouropoulos, businessman and Petone Historical Society member). It was a great pleasure to meet Paul Kingsman who bought the old Petone Magistrate's Court building from Wellington Tenth's Trust after it was recently disposed of by WelTec. The building had been left derelict and HPW earlier made input to a successful Hutt City hearing about its heritage listing. Paul said Wellington Tenth's had been excellent to deal with and now "it's a labour of love" to restore the coved Kauri ceilings and other features.



Left: Paul Kingsman inside Petone's former court (photo: Felicity Wong). Right: Paekakariki wall display (photo: Sally Hasell)

Paekākāriki US Marines exhibition – Sally Hasell

During Wellington Heritage Week the Paekākāriki Station Museum and the Kāpiti US Marines Trust presented an extensive display of photos and video material relating to the US Marines camps on the Kāpiti coast during World War II. Between 1942 and 1944 over 15,000 American troops were stationed at Camp Russell (now Queen Elizabeth Park), Camp Mackay (now Whareroa Farm) and Camp Paekakariki. The camps went up in a record six weeks, bringing monumental social change to the whole Wellington region and Paekākāriki and its people. Arrangements to supply the troops included vast market gardens and warehouses. In addition to the excellent photos there was also a series of talks that were well attended. HPW provided financial support for the preparation of the photographic display.

Katherine Mansfield's Thorndon – Vivienne Morrell

Cherie Jacobson, Director of Katherine Mansfield Birthplace and Joan McCracken from the National Library led this walk, which began at Katherine Mansfield House and Garden, 25 Tinakori Road, with a brief introductory talk and look at the current exhibitions. We heard about various places associated with Katherine Mansfield and finished with a 'behind the scenes' look at Mansfield items from the Turnbull Library collection.

Wellington's 'Roaring Twenties' – Richard Norman

While 'planning for growth', removal of protections for pre-1930s buildings and transport options dominate current political debate, it's worth reflecting on Wellington, 100 years ago. I've recently presented two talks about the heritage of the 'roaring twenties' when the region's population grew by 44,000 people, or 46 percent and New Zealand moved quickly from being a rural to an urban society. Lower Hutt – the garden city – was the fastest growing centre, and Wellington was reshaped by a lifting of height restrictions in the central city and the new technology of steel frame construction. New Zealand's first planning laws, now facing radical change, date from 1925. Ownership of motorcars more than doubled in the second half of the 1920s to 217,000, or one for every ten people, creating car dependent suburbs which current planning seeks to reverse. Electricity, radio, cinemas, aircraft changed society. Wellington airport was opened in 1929, and the Mt Victoria Basin Reserve tunnel in 1931. Significant infrastructure was built for Wellington city, including stylish and robust offices and apartments which have proved durable.



Steel framed construction of the DIC building, Lambton Quay, 1928 and its completed state in 2021 (Images: Richard Norman)

Will the laissez-faire rezoning favoured by 2021 local and central government politicians leave a legacy which will be celebrated in 100 years? Will a rezoning of most of Wellington's distinctive pre-First World War heritage to enable demolition with no public involvement really create a city with liveable, high-density spaces? If those questions also trouble you, please help HPW with individual submissions for the district plan review.

Home Restorers Group – Christina Mackay

In a year of Covid restrictions, the HRG group met in person at the Wellington School of Architecture to hear from experts and discuss a variety of topics including the sharing of key reference books and web resources, researching your house, interior timber finishes and repair of wooden doors and windows. At the October meeting, Wayne Hosie shared his experience of restoring windows in Chapman Taylor houses and Simon Cooper demonstrated the benefits of paint stripping and cleaning techniques. Discussions included the lack of knowledge on managing lead paint and the pros and cons on retrofitting double-glazing in timber houses.

The group are keen to continue in 2022, identifying questions, sharing information, hearing from experts and gathering resources for the on-going care of our 19th and 20th Century timber houses. Please contact Christina Mackay christina.mackay@vuw.ac.nz to join the Home Restorers Group interest group email list.

Heritage News

Naenae Post Office purchased by Hutt City

In mid-October the Hutt City Council announced it had bought the Category 1 Naenae Post Office (Former) with the aim of turning it into a community space. Mayor Campbell Barry said the acquisition would enable the council to restore some amenities the community had lost with the closure of the Naenae Pool and Community Hall. He said the 'post office has a strong identity and people have a connection to it. I personally can't think of a better building to return to the people.' HPW welcomes the purchase of the building by an owner committed to its long-term future. With the demolition of the nearby hall and pool the heritage values of the Hillary Court area have been diminished and we hope the council will work to better protect those that remain.



Naenae Post Office (Former) has been bought by Hutt City for a community facility. (Image: Hutt City Council)

Ewart Nurses Home (Former)

In September HPW wrote to the Minister of Housing, Megan Woods, about the future of the [Ewart Nurses Home \(Former\)](#) in Coromandel Street. We suggested the site could be used for medium density housing and the home be incorporated within the development. The issue was passed onto Kāinga Ora, who blandly replied it was a matter for current owner, the local District Health Board. We will pursue the issue.

Past Events

Sunday 19 September: Wellington's Roaring Twenties. A talk by Richard Norman

See Richard's item above for an outline of the talk. Despite level 2 Covid alert restrictions at least 35 people came.

Sunday 10 October: Heritage buildings in the Sub-Antarctic. A talk by Paul Cummack

Paul Cummack, a conservation architect, gave an entertaining talk about the challenges of trying to maintain old structures in the sub-Antarctic islands, particularly on [Campbell Island](#). This includes the challenges of getting there! Paul's topic highlighted the links between natural and cultural heritage in one of Aotearoa New Zealand's three World Heritage sites.

This talk was postponed from our AGM in August. Following Paul's talk, those interested in our second event walked to the Wellington Trades Hall.



Paul presenting his talk (Image: Vivienne Morrell)

Sunday 10 October: Wellington Trades Hall visit, 124-128 Vivian Street

We were met by Graeme Clarke who told us about the building and some of the important events that happened there. Wellington Trades Hall on Vivian Street was designed by noted Wellington architect William Fielding (1875-1946) and opened in 1929. It is a Category 1 listed historic building; [the listing](#) notes: 'it has outstanding historical significance for its connections with the union movement in Aotearoa New Zealand, with the lives of ordinary working people and well-known union figures, organisations like the Labour Party and Federation of Labour, and major events such as the 1951 waterfront dispute.' Graeme and others are making various displays in the foyer that tell these stories.

U3A Talk: 'Built heritage challenges: neglect, earthquakes and urban development'

In August, Felicity Wong gave a talk to Wellington U3A about various heritage buildings and issues. The talk by Zoom was well received and some new members joined HPW. One attendee at a similar talk given to Kapiti U3A (in person in July) was surprised by how many interesting heritage buildings Wellington has that compare very well to sites further afield. A link to the talk is [here](#).

Upcoming Events

Sunday 21 November, 2:30pm: 'Ministerial Residence' visit

We have arranged a visit to the Category 2 listed [Ministerial Residence](#) (Former) located in Thorndon, Wellington. The building has historic significance as the 'unofficial' prime ministerial residence of Prime Ministers Sidney Holland, Walter Nash and Keith Holyoake. Other Cabinet Ministers of various governments have also lived here.

Built for Robert Westley Bothamley (1888-1967) in 1927, the house has architectural significance as a design by the architect Stanley Walter Fearn (1887-1976), who was the inaugural winner of the New Zealand Institute of Architects Gold Medal in 1928 for his design of the William Booth Memorial College building (now Philosophy House) in Aro Street.

We will have afternoon tea, perhaps in the "superb old English garden" (weather permitting) or in the drawing room. **Please RSVP** to wqtn@historicplacesaotearoa.org.nz (or phone Vivienne on (04) 3837660).

For transparency we would like to mention that the house is now owned by the National Party. We are a non-partisan group who like to visit and support historic places. As with any visit we make, we will give a donation and as the friends of the house have kindly offered afternoon tea for us, we will

give more to help cover these costs. If you would like to add a koha towards the afternoon tea you can do so at the house.



Prime Minister Keith Holyoake on his 60th birthday; 1964, standing in the driveway of 41 Pipitea Street. Reference no. EP/1964/0435-F. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington. [/records/23173695](#)

Sunday 13 Feb 2022 at 2pm – Working Class Early Mt Victoria: a guided walk

Mt Victoria Historical Society will take us on a tour of some of the 19th and early 20th century homes of the working classes who helped build our city and keep its cogs turning. Many of the houses they once lived in in Mt Victoria look almost the same today, and you will be able to imagine their lives behind those walls and beyond.

This walk was offered during Wellington Heritage Week and quickly booked out. Duration: Approximately 1.5 hours. Free. Numbers will be limited to 25. We will send an email reminder in late January and ask for RSVPs then.



Detail showing part of Queen, Austin and Elizabeth Streets, Mt Victoria, c. 1884. Overlooking Wellington City Burton Bros. Ref: BB-2235-1/1-G. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington. [/records/22742427](#).