"... Elegance and excesses: War, Gold and Borrowings: architecture in the 1860s**: a one day symposium**
Friday 3rd December 2010

## ABSTRACTS

**Alison Dangerfield "The House that Engst Built"**
The German Moravian missionaries made a concerted foray into New Zealand in the nineteenth-century. They travelled through the mainland and then went directly out to the Chatham Islands. One of the four to arrive there in 1843 was responsible for the only remaining architectural link with their mission. The German Mission House was designed by this missionary, Engst, who was committed to the idea of self reliance. He built it of locally quarried stone and several species of timber found locally, as well as kauri brought from the mainland. It was constructed in the 1860s - a functional, straightforward building, fit for its purpose.

A hundred and fifty years later, the German Mission House still stands facing the bleak northern coastline under the looming outcrop of Maunganui, visited regularly. It has been a home and trading post, and until a few years ago was inhabited. However in recent years it has been in danger of collapse.

In early 2010, urgent conservation work was undertaken through the collaboration of many heritage professionals, going beyond the call, and interested locals, all urgently working to prevent its deterioration and collapse. The story of its conservation is one of efforts against the rugged climate.

**Jessica Halliday "Wesleyan, Primitive and Free. Non-Conformist outposts in an Anglican Landscape: early Methodist churches in Christchurch"**
The presence of Methodist colonists and emigrants on the Canterbury Association's first four ships in 1850 is often overlooked. The non-conformists, however, swiftly established themselves in the Anglican settlement and were the first to start a Sunday School in Canterbury. Vigourous activity by the Methodist circuit in Christchurch during the 1860s resulted in the construction of several churches in and around the city, including the first church constructed in permanent materials on the Canterbury Plains. This paper investigates if and how these Methodist buildings conformed or clashed with the architectural vocabulary favoured by the Anglican founders of the province, with particular attention paid to Crouch & Wilson's Durham Street Wesleyan Church of 1864.

**Adrian Humphris & Geoff Mew "A Rose between Two Thorns; Tringham, Chatfield and Toxward, 1865 to 1870."**
Charles Tringham, William Chatfield and Christian Julius Toxward are all alleged to have started practices in Wellington in the mid-1860s. Numerous tenders for building work by Tringham and Toxward can be found in newspapers at the time, but tenders by Chatfield do not appear until 1875. There also appears to have been little other competition at the time.

Tringham came to New Zealand from England as a carpenter, progressed to being a builder, and was calling himself an architect by 1867. From then until the end of 1869 he tendered in Wellington newspapers for at least 48 buildings.

Toxward, a Dane, spent several years as a draftsman in Victoria, Australia, then traveled extensively in Europe. He came to New Zealand by 1862, working in Dunedin and Invercargill before establishing a private practice in Wellington in 1866. By the end of 1869 his tender notices in Wellington newspapers totaled 25.

Tringham and Toxward appear to have had quite different approaches in establishing their Wellington practices. Tringham, the younger man at 26, concentrated on designing houses and shops combined with dwellings; he only tendered for four non-residential buildings in the 1860s. Toxward, aged 35 and a prominent Mason, seems to have concentrated on contracts for more substantial buildings such as schools, churches, stores such as Kirkcaldie & Stains and works for the Provincial Government. He only appears to have designed three houses during this period.

Chatfield arrived in 1867 and his obituary claims that he ran a practice from then until 1872 when he joined the Wellington Provincial Government as a draftsman. The lack of tenders in the papers suggests either he had limited success or his work was organised through other means, such as word of mouth. Once his architectural practice was established, his early career (40 buildings in four years) closely paralleled that of Tringham.

All three, with the later addition of Thomas Turnbull, dominated the Wellington architectural scene through to the early 1890s. To place their output in context we discuss other architects who appear in Wellington in the late 1860s, and the building profession during this time.

**Nigel Isaacs "Building controls in the 1860s"**
Less than 2 years after the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi, the first building control legislation was on the New Zealand statue books. The “Raupo Houses Ordinance 1842” was applied in Auckland (1842), Wellington (1843), Dunedin and Port Chalmers (1851), and lastly Christchurch and Lyttelton (1853). The 1860s saw Provincial building controls in place in Auckland (1854), New Plymouth (1858), Dunedin (1862) and Christchurch (1964). The Municipal Corporations Act 1867 provided local councils with some building control powers, but it was not until the Municipal Corporation Act 1876 that buildings were explicitly include in the by-law coverage. The paper will explore the development of building controls during the 1860s, and their evolution to today’s building controls.

**Clare Kelly "The Vanishing Acheron House of Refuge. A Case of "Frontier Chaos"?"**
The Acheron House of Refuge (1863-64) was one of a chain of accommodation houses built on the Inland Stock Route between Nelson and Canterbury, to provide meals and shelter for drovers, stabling for horses and pasturage for stock. In 1865 the Nelson Provincial Engineer John Blackett wrote to Nelson Provincial Government that he feared “the entire destruction of the house without the possibility of it being prevented” and blamed “the character of some of the travellers who pass this road.” By the end of 1865 it was destroyed without trace.

This paper considers the impact of the Nelson and West Coast gold rushes on the accommodation houses and particularly the brief existence of the Acheron House of Refuge. Drawing on two distinct theoretical positions in current New Zealand settler history, it questions whether its demise was the result of “frontier chaos.” This term was used by historian Miles Fairburn in his revisionist work *The Ideal Society and its Enemies: The Foundations of Modern New Zealand Society 1850-1900* (1989) to describe how rapid frontier expansion in New Zealand had scattered settlers and engendered transience, loneliness and lawlessness. The second position is most clearly summarised by Rollo Arnold in his 1990 paper, ‘Community in Rural Victorian New Zealand’ (1990) in which he described a localised world in which settlers worked cooperatively and communally.

Using settler diaries, letters and manuscripts this paper shows that these accommodation houses also served the role of courthouse, store, school, church and area pub for dispersed high country settlers. By contrast, incidents of lawlessness at the accommodation houses linked to gold rushes were short term and often the result of ill-prepared men desperate to survive in an unforgiving climate. While Fairburn stated that before the 1880s settlers had "no institutions . . . to facilitate mixing and meeting", this paper shows how accommodation houses formed the unofficial nuclei of small, loose-knit high country communities.

**Ian Lochhead "A Classical Temple in a Gothic City: Leonard Terry's Bank of New Zealand in Christchurch"**
When, in 1865, the Bank of New Zealand commissioned Australasia's leading bank architect, Leonard Terry, to design their new premises in Christchurch, the bank's governors must have been taken aback to find their decision held up to ridicule in the pages of the Christchurch *Press.* Far from being impressed at the prospect of a neatly proportioned neo-classical bank building in Sydney sandstone being built at the southern entrance to Cathedral Square, the *Press* condemned the decision to erect a box-like structure of no architectural merit so close to the spot where George Gilbert Scott's Christ Church Cathedral was to be erected. Terry's classical design was rejected on the grounds that its architecture was both pagan and foreign, in contrast to the Gothic style which was seen as Christian and British. Although 12,000 miles from the centre of the Victorian 'Battle of the Styles', Christchurch was not immune to the architectural conflicts of the 1860s.

This paper will examine the design, construction and reception of the Christchurch Bank of New Zealand, placing it within the contexts of both nineteenth-century bank architecture and Leonard Terry's career. It will also look at the building in the context of the competing notions of Christchurch's civic identity. The Bank of New Zealand's assertive commercial presence, so close to the spiritual centre of the city, was perceived as a direct challenge to the quasi-utopian vision of the city's founders.

**Christine McCarthy "Paper hanging numbers: importing and consumption of late 1860s wallpaper in New Zealand"**
This paper will develop research on wallpapers in New Zealand in the years prior to 1867, the year when importing figures for paper hangings were explicitly listed in government records. Previous research has used newspaper advertisements from 1839-1866 in an attempt to understand the wallpaper industry of the time. This paper will focus on the later years of the 1860s (1867-1870) and use both newspaper advertising and official statistics to both increase our understanding of the use and practice of interior decor in New Zealand at the time and to test whether the findings from the data of the nineteenth-century statistican differ or support those of the newspaper advertisements.

**Chris McDonald "The 1869 Royal Tour"**
New Zealand's first royal tour occurred in 1869 just four years after Wellington became the seat of the colonial government. The Duke of Edinburgh's short visit left no permanent physical impression on the new capital other than the four trees he planted in the garden of Government House (now Parliament Grounds). Nevertheless, the Duke's reception was an overtly imperial occasion which highlighted the colonial character of Wellington's incipient ceremonial spaces. In developing this argument, the paper shows how the Australasian colonies adopted a highly standardised format for their reception of royal visitors. Indeed, it will be shown that the first royal visits to Australia and New Zealand were the region's first pan-colonial event. At the same time, the Duke's reception in New Zealand, revealed much about the young colony's still-fluid political geography. In particular, the tour

drew attention to the weak and unstable nature of many public institutions. Amid the intense inter-provincial rivalry of the 1860s, the royal visit also highlighted the ambiguous relationship between New Zealand's new capital and the colony's other centres of European population. Wellington's response to the royal visit differed little from those in Christchurch and Dunedin. Indeed, despite being the seat of government, Wellington was upstaged by the younger and wealthier settlements in the South Island. Meanwhile, Auckland retained many of the attributes of a colonial capital. One British commentator went so far as to suggest that Wellington was not a 'real' capital, in the manner of Melbourne or Sydney. The paper examines this proposition, and draws conclusions about Wellington's true status in the colony at the close of the decade.

**Katherine O'Shaughnessy "The 1866 Vercoe and Harding map and the axonometric: the object of subjective representation"**
The 1866 Vercoe and Harding map of Auckland provides a visual description of colonial development during the 1860s. This map is a static representation of the past and provides the backdrop to an exploration of the site via architectural drawing.

This paper outlines the process of excavating a site through axonometric drawing looking specifically at an area within Freemans Bay. It looks at how the two dimensional Vercoe and Harding map can be extruded into a three dimensional representation of the site. The idea of the map as a subjective representation of the past will be considered alongside the use of what might be considered an objective drawing type to create a subjective visualization of the site.

The paper will investigate the process of creating this axonometric and looks at how this drawing relies on both historical fact and historical assumption. It will address how this process produces an understanding of the site, namely, the ability to translate each building based on the simple outline of its plan.

This paper is part of a wider investigation into the documentation of heritage sites and the need to create an understanding of place. Thus, this drawing alone does not create this awareness of place, but rather, informs a new understanding of the 1866 map and a representation of what might have been Freemans Bay during the 1860s.

**Tyson Schmidt ""…with their usual cunning,": gleaning architectural tactics from 1860s warfighting pa [paa] [pah]."**
Pa have been reaped by other disciplines. Archaeologists have poured over them like coroners, enquiring into what was and how it came to be, dissecting the typology, studying and debating its purposes, its uses, its spread, its numbers. Military historians have drilled into the role pa played in individual battles, campaigns, and even distant conflicts.

Architecture prefers the whare, with only a handful of architects fossicking around pa – Sarah Treadwell's enquiry into Gate Pa, Amanda Yates' examination of monumental interior, Rewi Thompson's and Royal Associates' referencing of parts of pa in their work. This article extends the architectural fossicking by looking at what can be learnt from warfighting pa of the 1860s – a decade where they reached a nadir of design and use as a result of cultural conflict.

**Linda Tyler "Mason and Clayton's Colonial Museum, Wellington"**
Described as "an expensive luxury" by politicians, the Colonial Museum, Wellington was an Italianate wooden building with a cement finish designed by William Mason and William Henry Clayton in 1865. Mason and Clayton's building for the New Zealand Exhibition in Dunedin in that same year had earned the practice the respect of the inaugural Director of the Colonial

Museum and Geological Survey, James Hector. The subsequent Colonial Museum building was partly prefabricated in Dunedin and then erected on the corner of Bowen and Museum Streets to be opened to the public in the winter of 1865.

George O'Brien's watercolour perspective of the Colonial Museum is dated 1865 and shows a larger structure than that originally built. Two storeyed offices designed to front the building, and north and south wings were omitted from the final built structure. Hector's 1866 report in the Appendices to the Journal of the House of Representatives shows that he was already petitioning for extensions less than a year after completion of the original building. Despite its spatial inadequacy, the Mason and Clayton design as built is a sophisticated one which indicates conversancy with museum architecture elsewhere, although its subtleties eluded the press of the day. The Wellington Independent of 7 April 1866 noted "a large white looking cement coated building like a gigantic eastern caravanserai, without any windows" and the Colonist of 23 March 1866 saw a "plain and unpretending building" rather than observing that natural light had been reduced to preserve the exhibits.

However, the lack of windows was no impediment to burglary. Less than a year after opening, the museum was considered "an easy crib to crack" becoming the target for professional thieves in 1866 who simply cut out a panel in the front door and drew the bolt. The Otago Witness unkindly observed that the heist (which netted a lock of Napoleon's hair amongst other curiosities valued at 200 pounds in total) was "the first symptom of interest which the colony's inhabitants have manifested in the institution". While falling short of blaming the architecture for the break-in, the writer clearly found the Colonial Museum uninviting, "Day after day it has remained open without attracting other visitors than those seeking shelter from a passing shower. The love of science appears in the Empire City to be confined to the criminal class."

This assessment was manifestly uninformed. Designer of exhibits for the Colonial Museum was artist, botanist and draughtsman John Buchanan, who had originally been employed on the Otago Geological Survey by Hector. The Colonial Museum building contained his draughting office, and surviving photographs of the interior of the Colonial Museum show that he worked ingeniously with Mason and Clayton's architecture to create interesting Victorian displays. These show that then as now, New Zealand museum professionals were ever aware of the changing fashions in display practice of their overseas counterparts, and keen to emulate their effects.

## Peter Wood "*Raupo Whare* (c. 1860) and the Tale of the Missing Dog Box"

In *A History of New Zealand Architecture* Peter Shaw describes the European settlers of the 1840s encountering an architecturally impoverished landscape. Skilled carpenters were still an uncommon migrant at that time and while some of the wealthier settlers brought prefabricated houses with them for many their first accommodation in New Zealand were deserted shoreline whare.[1] Moreover, these newest of New Zealanders were without familiar building materials and, as Shaw writes, they " . . . emulated the style and construction methods of Maori dwellings and adapted them according to European ideas of hygiene and comfort."[2] This explanation is characteristically ethnocentric in its confident view that European society, at that time, was architecturally superior. Sinclair has stated that it was colonial contact (principally commercial trade) which drew Maori from their sanitary patterns found in Pa occupation. The grand view here is that the settlers adopted an indigenous typology to suit their own physical needs but that they maintained certain environmental and occupancy standards form 'home'. That is, the settlers would have preferred to have built in the model of the places they had just left but were forced, by the limits of land and labour, to adopt local materials and knowledge, and particularly those of Maori.

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[1] "On 31 March 1841 the William Bryan anchored off Moturoa Beach at New Plymouth. Some of the 141 steerage passengers were said to be reluctant to disembark, even after the exigencies of a five-month voyage." Shaw, Peter. *A History of New Zealand Architecture*. Third ed. Auckland: Hodder Moa Beckett, 2003: 14.

[2] Shaw, Peter. *A History of New Zealand Architecture*. Third ed. Auckland: Hodder Moa Beckett, 2003.

Shaw illustrates this with a photograph titled 'Raupo whare (c. 1860)', with captioning that emphasises the European features – door and window frames – but which also goes on to suggest that the material fabric of what is essentially a cottage consists of tied bundles of Raupo ". . . which European settlers were taught by the Maori."[3]

The scene set by Shaw is one of convivial colonial adaptation. Newly landed settlers, confronted by an environment far less hospitable than they had expected, adopt and adapt a local typology using architectural elements they have brought with them but with the support of Maori technology. This is not to say the 'raupo whare' was a popular or permanent accommodation. Typically it was neither[4], but nonetheless Shaw creates the image of a nascent architectural biculturalism where settlers acknowledged the whare as an appropriate regional building type and adopted its essential form. That is, the 'raupo whare' is a cultural hybrid or, in the pejorative terminology has been used to describe mixed genealogies, it is a half-caste house.

This photograph then is an important piece of visual evidence for a bicultural architecture where each culture is present yet not easily separated or abstracted. To fully appreciate how fine the thread used to tie this image to a claim of mutual cultural interaction is one then needs to view the full frame version of photograph rather than the cropped one used by Shaw. In the original image the house is shown in a wider context that is not altogether faltering to a reading of successful settler adaptation. Revealed is the extent of disarray in the garden, evidence perhaps of the ready reliance of the 1860s settler on the production of others. To the far right are three barrels suggesting an acceptance of an outdoor lifestyle not readily apparent in Shaw's cropped image. Finally, and most significantly for my reading, there is a dog kennel whose care in design and construction can be said to significantly eclipse that of the cottage. There is in this diminutive animal shelter an architectural authority not consistent with Shaw's version of bi-culturalism. It is elevated, has a different aspect, is made to greater precision and of better machined materials. Given a chance (it seems to say) the settler would be much happier living in complete rejection of indigenous influence. This 1860s dog house throws into doubt simplistic interpretations of the period. What was the status of the colonial dog, and what questions does of architecture of this period does it pose? What conclusions can be drawn about colonial settlement in this period and the models it adopted? And - we must ask – what has become of the colonial dog that occupied such superior lodgings?

[3] Shaw, Peter. *A History of New Zealand Architecture*. Third ed. Auckland: Hodder Moa Beckett, 2003:15.
[4] Shaw cites Hursthouse's period view that a cottage 'in the native style' was good for 3-4 years. Hursthouse quoted in Shaw, Peter. *A History of New Zealand Architecture*. Third ed. Auckland: Hodder Moa Beckett, 2003:15. See Charles Hursthouse Jnr, *An Account of the Settlement of New Plymouth*, Capper Press, Christchurch, 1975.