"From over-sweet cake to wholemeal bread": the *Home & Building* years: New Zealand Architecture in the 1940s
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ABSTRACTS

Daniele Abreu e Lima "Max Rosenfeld, *The Home Architect*"
1949 marks the beginning of a radical change in the relation between New Zealanders and their homes. The new government at that time began encouraging home ownership in opposition to the existing policy of renting state houses. In those days, one of the most influential architects in the country was Max Rosenfeld, a Czech immigrant that became known mainly through the Auckland magazine *The Weekly News*. Rosenfeld hadn't produced any icon building or brought any revolutionary aesthetic style, nevertheless his contribution to New Zealand domestic architecture was tremendous, though today he is hardly ever mentioned. This paper proposes to shed light on the work of this architect focusing on his participation in *The Weekly News* publication which started in 1949.

For almost a decade Rosenfeld became known as *The Home Architect* following the name of his magazine column. His ideas and architectural advices became very popular and his publications inspired owners and helped builders to familiarize themselves to the modern way of living and building. Rosenfeld is mainly quoted as a reference for the popularization of New Zealand plan books, a kind of publication renowned for containing projects made to fit just about any taste, budged and site. Seen with disdain by some, those books were nevertheless, the most efficient vehicle for the dissemination of architecture into the everyday life of ordinary kiwis. In that sense Rosenfeld can be seen as one of the essential contributors for the modern building practice we find in New Zealand who decisively influenced the way kiwis live today.

Adam Alexander, Beth Chaney, Sophia Cogswell and Sarah Rutledge "Wallpaper and New Zealand in the 1940s"
This paper will draw on various popular sources (newspapers, women's magazines, directories and contemporary photographs etc.) to explore the use and imaging of wallpaper in New Zealand in the 1940s. Specific patterns used, the local industry and distribution of wallpaper, and international influences (imported wallpapers, and advertising images) will be examined to consider the role and significance of wallpaper during and post WWII in New Zealand. This research is part of the Martin Hill wallpaper project.

Karen Cheer "Economic Reality or Philosophical Change?"
There was no radical philosophical change in the thinking of the modern architects in the 1940s. They merely reacted to the conditions prevailing at the time. The war in Europe and the Pacific impacted on shipping supplies of materials such as steel; early in the decade materials were diverted for defence construction; the Building Controller restricted the use of the materials that were available.

I intend, in this paper, to discuss these restrictions that I believe lead to the "stripping" of ornamentation and the rise in the number of utilitarian buildings in the 1940s - domestic and commercial, private and public. I also believe that the move away from "over-sweet cake" really began in the mid-1930s when the Government diverted materials and manpower to solve the problem of housing. With the influence of the efficiency movement and the Government wanting value for money, designing houses became a case of supplying the minimum of floor space for the minimum cost, albeit with the goal of not sacrificing quality in the process. Commercial building suffered the same fate; cash-strapped clients needed the maximum amount of floor space for the minimum amount of money.

Modern architects found ways in which to comply with the wishes of their clients and the Government-imposed restrictions and thus created the "wholemeal bread" demanded of

them. The “straight lines and absence of ornament” described by Helen Gossett in 1940 were the result. To do anything other than adapt would have been vocational suicide.

Michael Dudding “Memory, evidence, and artifice: the overseas journal in New Zealand post-war architectural historiography”
This paper is based upon the premise that US architectural journals have had a much greater significance on the development of post-war New Zealand Modernism than has thus far been admitted to be the case. This is a rather difficult position to defend, not just because of a lack of hard evidence, but because the established orthodoxy posits the English *Architectural Review* as the ‘bible' to this generation of architects.

The privileging of the *Architectural Review* is easily traced to a 1994 interview, conducted by Philippa Hoeta, with five architects who were of that post-war generation. As a ‘fact,' this privileging is easily taken at face value: there is archival evidence; there is evidence in the many libraries and collections that subscribed to the *Review*; and there is the personal testimony provided in the interview itself. It is fairly safe to say that the statement is valid. But somewhere along this process, which sees simple fact become historiographic truth, other truths are overlooked, skirted around, rejected, or forgotten - perhaps there was more than one gospel?

In the Hoeta interview, the conversation was redirected after only a few seconds - the journal discussion was not returned to. This paper restarts that discussion, extends it, and probes deeper to find the role and significance of the other journals that sat next to the *Review* on local architects' shelves.

New Zealand architectural historiography has shifted into its second-generational phase; where the canon is largely set and new histories are able to operate uncritically within its scope, its structure and main narratives have become entrenched, and the key truths are almost self-evident. This paper picks up on one such truth, examines the historiographic process from which it arose, and investigates what has been obscured by uncritical adherence to its complete veracity.

Michael Findlay “Making New Zealand: Houses and Public Buildings. A view of New Zealand architecture from the South”
The year 1940 marked the centennial of the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi and was an opportunity to survey the achievements of New Zealand society. The Department of Internal Affairs published a strikingly modern illustrated multipart serial entitled *Making New Zealand: A Pictorial Record of New Zealand's First Hundred Years* (1940). It featured two issues on New Zealand architecture, *Houses* and *Public Buildings* written by Christchurch architect (Arnold) Paul Pascoe (1908-1976), whose brother John Pascoe (1908-1972) was the illustrations editor for the whole publication. The selection of buildings focused on South Island architects and projects, an editorial position that was arguably aimed at correcting the imbalance of content that was evident in the Auckland-published journal *Home and Building.* This paper examines Paul Pascoe's choice of projects and looks closely at the inclusion of his own plans for the Dunedin house for the controversial Otago University librarian John Harris (1903-1980).

Julia Gatley "Slums’, ‘Slum Clearance’ and the Lower Greys Avenue Flats, Auckland, 1941-1947"
In the early part of the twentieth century, Auckland’s Grey Street, as Greys Avenue was known until 1927, was home to a Chinese community, and was associated with opium smoking and prostitution, and regarded by some as a ‘slum’. In 1941, with financial support from Auckland City, the Labour government embarked upon a scheme of ‘slum clearance’ in the area. Initially, the government hoped to acquire and clear both sides of Greys Avenue. Housing Division architects prepared a vast scheme for the site, comprising 468 state rental flats. Construction was delayed because of the Second World War. From 1945 to 1947, four blocks (50 units) were completed to this original design. These are the Lower Greys Avenue

Flats. The architectural language was a continuation of that of Wellington's Dixon Street Flats, with fewer flower boxes (the street elevation faces south-east). Construction to the south was delayed because post-war construction costs were disproportionately high. By the 1950s when the decision was made to proceed, the 1940s design was no longer considered appropriate and the Upper Greys Avenue Flats were redesigned to reflect technological developments. They were completed in 1958.

This paper focuses on the slum rhetoric that preceded the realisation of the Lower Greys Avenue Flats; the standard of the houses that were deemed to be slums; the occupations and ethnicities of the occupants who were considered to be slum dwellers; and the commitment by central and local government to the acquisition of the land and its clearance to make way for state flats. Did the slum rhetoric accurately reflect the conditions or was it used polemically, to cultivate middle-class concern about the area and support for its clearance? What became of the displaced occupants and tenants?

By questioning the existence of 'slums' in Greys Avenue, this paper revisits, teases out and complicates one of the arguments put forward in my Masters thesis, 'Labour Takes Command: A History and Analysis of State Rental Flats in New Zealand, 1935-49' (VUW, 1997).

"Who was H Courtney Archer?"
Jessica Halliday
Harry Courtney Archer's article on architecture in New Zealand published in *The Architectural Review* in 1942 is recognised as part of the rich collection of publications that shaped the discourse about modern architecture in this country (Clark & Walker 2000). On the face of it, Archer was an unlikely contributor to the discussion on New Zealand's architecture and proselytiser for modernism: he had lived most of his 23 years to date in small rural towns, before the war working in his father's flour mill in Rangiora and during the war moving between pacifist rural communities in the South Island.

In this paper, I consider Archer's 1942 article, his sole contribution to architectural discourse, in relation to his personal background, asking where and how Archer formed his views and how he came to expound them in the Journal the New Zealand architects of his generation acknowledged as 'the bible' of contemporary architectural thought. I also analyse his article beyond its brief figuration of the NZ timber tradition as "frank" and therefore a source for the local manifestation of modern architecture, by reflecting on his writing in light of his commitment to socialist movements and also by paying attention to the dialogue created between his essay text and the photographs, drawings and captions used to illustrate that text.

Douglas Lloyd Jenkins "Invisible men, invisible building, invisible decade: The fatal circumstances of the Auckland Glass building"
This paper looks at the Auckland Glass building designed by Robin Simpson for the firm Vernon Brown and Robin Simpson in 1948. The first multi-story commercial building to be completed in Auckland, and perhaps New Zealand, after the Second World War, Auckland Glass marks a significant moment in the development of postwar modernism. Despite extensive coverage in *Home & Building* soon after its completion this building has received scant attention in the period since and remains in imminent danger of demolition.

This paper explores the reasons behind the academic and physical neglect of this important building. It speculates that Auckland Glass has suffered from a very unique series of 'fatal' occurrences that have shaped its destiny and rendered it an 'invisible building'.

The paper then goes on to examines the notion of invisibility as it applies both to the building's architect, Robin Simpson, whose reputation has been shaped both by his early death and the high profile of his surviving partner and the buildings client Pascoe Redwood – who like so many businessmen has see their role as patrons rendered invisible by the processes of architectural history.

Finally this paper examine the broader context of the 1940s and argues that New Zealand architectural history has difficulty recognizing the 1940s as a decade of importance – sandwiched as it is between the innovations of late 1930s and the new architectural impulses of the 1950s

Kate Linzey "Mangakino and Power"
In between Whakamaru (1949-56) and Maraetai (1946-53) dams, on the Waikato River, sits Mangakino. Planned and built from c.1948 to 1951, by the Town Planning section of the Ministry of Works, the civic centre was to provide housing and services for the work force on the Maraetai scheme. The architectural design of these dams has previously been discussed as the work of émigré architect, Fredrick Neumann/Newman (Leach), and the town, as that of Ernst Plischke (Lloyd-Jenkins, Sarnitz).

In 1948 the plan for Mangakino was published, alongside the plan for Upper Hutt, in the February – March edition of the *Design Review*. As two 'rapidly growing towns', Upper Hutt and Mangakino are briefly reviewed in the context of two essays ('Who wants community centres?' and 'Community Centres' by H.C.D Somerset), an outline of the curriculum of the new School of Architecture and Town Planning, run by the Wellington Architectural Centre, and notification of the 1948 Town Planning Amendment Act. When comparing the two essays on town-planning and the two centres of Mangakino and Upper Hutt, great emphasis is placed on balancing educational facilities (discussed as 'high-brow') with sporting facilities.

While Somerset focuses on small community theatres, as the best segue between intellectual and physical pastimes, the editorial essay 'Who Wants Community Centres?', critiques the 'sudden eagerness' for government subsidised War Memorial come Community Centres. What is this thing, a 'community spirit', the essay asks, and why does it need a specialist building? History has demonstrated, argues the author, that community 'found its forms of congregation regardless of the lack of solid buildings. After all, the Christian faith and many others gained their vital strength in catacombs.' (p3)

As published in the *Design Review*, the plan of Mangakino includes a church in the south west, with the sporting facilities to the north and Rangatira Drive flanking a shopping strip on the east. The church sits in a field of grass, isolated and apparently serene. In the drawing published in the monograph *Ernst Plischke*, however, this building has been cropped off.

Focusing on the case of Mangakino, this essay will review the discourse of town planning for secular and religious community in the late 1940's. This era, framed by the end of World War Two and the deepening of the Cold War, is seen as the context for industrial action, a changing sense of nationalism, and small town New Zealand as the site of civil dispute.

Leach, A. (2002) 'Public service : social factors in the architecture of F H Newman' in : *Journal of New Zealand studies*, Oct 2002; n.1:p.109-130.
Lloyd-Jenkins, D. (2004) 'The Man Who Made Mangakino' in *NZ Listener*, October 30-November 5, 2004 Vol 196, No. 3364.
Sarnitz, A (2003) 'Ernst Plischke in New Zealand – Building for a New Utopia (1939-1963)', in *Ernst Plischke* ed. Sarnitz, A. & Ottillinger, E.B. Munich, Berlin, New York & London: Prestel, pp135-202.

Christine McCarthy "War, America, and Modernity: Anscombe's revival of the Combined Factory."
Following the success of the design of the 1939-40's Centennial Exhibition, Edmund Anscombe began investigating factory architecture. This interest - which had entertained him since before his 1919 publication *Modern Industrial Development* - characterised the last eight years of his life, apparent in his office's factory designs for: Samuel Brown Ltd (1940,1943), the Disabled Soldiers' Vocational Centre/Rehabilitation League (1942-43), Die Castings Ltd, Lower Hutt (1943) and the W.H. Symmington & Co.'s factory, Palmerston North

(1948). This paper examines this work in relation to his visit to America in 1940 and his proposal for a combined factory on Aotea Quay.

Bill McKay "Maori and architecture in the 1940s"
This paper examines buildings by Maori and the use of Maori motifs by Pakeha in the 1940s.

The 1940s was of course a decade in which the Second World War was preeminent. However 1940 also saw the Centenary of the Treaty of Waitangi and Government sponsored commemorations including the erection of the whare runanga at Waitangi. Perceived by Pakeha as a contribution to the celebrations it can also be construed as a reminder of Maori presence and the failure to fulfill Treaty obligations. Apirana Ngata observed that not everyone had something to celebrate, Waikato tribal leaders did not attend Waitangi Day in 1940 and Nga Puhi protested during the event.

Publications such as the centenary's *Making New Zealand* series and *The Maori People Today (1940)* and indeed the Centennial Exhibition itself are interesting in their portrayal of Maori, Maori motifs and indeed Maori carvers. These contributed to the "traditionalisation" of Maori, locking them into the past and a restrictive set of practices that helped subsume them into NZ society, a view that was to dominate successive decades.

The runanga house at Waitangi was a result of the resurgence of interest in the customary arts through Apirana Ngata's establishment of the Rotorua School of Arts and Crafts in the 1920s and the involvement of carver Pine Taiapa. However Ngata lost his parliamentary seat in 1943 and in contrast the 1940s saw the continued growth of the Ratana movement, despite the founders death in 1939. Ratana MPs gave the Second Labour Government its parliamentary majority and the Ratana building programme of the 30s continued with two branch churches built in the north followed by another two in the early 50s. The Ratana movement's architecture can be contrasted with meeting houses in the way it eschews customary forms yet embodies the movement's aspirations for Maori rights – contrary to the public view of Maori architectural expression in the 40s.

Robin Skinner "Keeping him off the job: Plischke and the student union"
In 1947 the Victoria University College students lobbied to have Ernst Plischke design their proposed new student union building; however, with enemies on several sides, it would not be an easy commission to secure for the Austrian émigré. Citing archival sources, this paper examines the activities by the students, academics, the NZIA and Wellington architects to bring to light contemporary architectural culture, the inner-workings of the NZIA and the intellectual life in post war Wellington. While much of what happened accords with standard professional practice, this episode exposes the contemporary in-committee operation of the NZIA executive. It is well known that Plischke's reluctance to sit the examination for admission to the NZIA stifled his professional life, making him to an extent "the author of his own misfortune". Although that is largely correct, this paper substantiates the hitherto controversial claim that there were other behind-the-scenes forces working against the Austrian and his professional advancement.

Linda Tyler ""Mr Plishky," you are a spy""
In 1947, the School of Architecture at Auckland University College appointed Alfred Light to the chair of design rather than the more talented applicant, Viennese-born Ernst Plischke. Supposedly the latter was too radical in his approach and represented a European rather than an English tradition of architecture. Two years later when the New Zealand government wished to send Princess Elizabeth a wedding present, Plischke was chosen to design a writing desk that was both Maori and modern. The NZIA Secretary wrote to the Prime Minister, Peter Fraser to protest that the opportunity "should not have been given to a New Zealander of natural born British origin". Was the fact that Plischke was German speaking the major problem with his candidacy for these roles, or were other factors at play?

Brenda and Robert Vale "Into the closet: the spread of consumption and fitted furniture in the 1940s, with particular reference to the houses of Bernard Johns"
The houses of Bernard Johns are characterised by a delight in cupboards, from the very small and quirky to fully fitted kitchens and bedrooms. The use of fitted furniture in the mid 20th century produced an interior that was controlled by the architect, often to maintain a simplified modernist aesthetic. However, national economies after WWII were propped up by encouraging increased consumption of material goods, and this in turn produced a demand for more storage inside the home. This period saw the cupboard move from a separate piece of furniture or a simple storage space created to the side of the chimney breast to become part of the architecture of the house. These themes will be explored with reference to the particular characteristics of cupboards in Johns' houses of the period.

Brenda and Robert Vale "The people's choice"
Reported in 1946 the results of a limited survey of 'typical' New Zealanders on the house they preferred from a series of photographs of architect designed houses from *Home and Building*[i] scored as top Bernard Johns' own house in Lowry Bay. During the war in the UK, and especially towards the end, there were a number of surveys canvassing opinions on the house people wanted after the war. These suggested a high proportion in favour of the conventional house in its garden. This paper will explore the difference between the surveys in the UK, with their emphasis on the type of house and its facilities, and the NZ example where, because the majority of dwellings already satisfied the need for the house in the garden, what the house looked like was more important.

Peter Wood "The Grand Tour: 1939-1945 (A New Zealand Infantryman's Guide to European Architectural History)"
At the outbreak of war in 1939 the New Zealand Government committed the country to maintaining an Expeditionary Force of one Army Division as the Country's primary military contribution. Lead by General Bernard Freyberg, the first echelon of the 2nd New Zealand Division (as it was known) landed in Egypt in February 1940. Over the next six years of fighting the Division played a small but distinguished role in a number of campaigns that took it across the battlefields of Europe.

Had a 2NZEF soldier enlisted in 1939, and survived through to the War's end, he would have seen combat in; Greece (March-April 1941), Crete (May 1941), North Africa (November 1941 – November 1942), Libya and Tunisia (December 1942 – May 1943), and through Italy (Sangro October-December 1943, Monte Cassino February-March 1944, Central Italy May-December 1944, Adriatic Coast April-May 1945). The closing weeks of the War saw the New Zealand Division advance into Trieste to confront Tito's communist partisans (which produced an uneasy stand-off some consider the inaugural confrontation of the Cold War).

For the individual infantryman this passage would have been bloody period of damage and sacrifice to body and mind. Yet during the peaceful periods of the 18th and 19th centuries a journey from Egypt to Trieste represented a view of architectural history from Egyptian and Greek antiquity to the Italian Renaissance. It would have been considered a Grand Tour and been seen as an essential part of the education of a fledging architect. Despite claims that those who enlisted did so in search of adventure, for New Zealanders in the 2NZEF their view of Europe was anything but. However there is between these men and earlier architects similarities of passing names, familiar places, fleeting geographies, and buildings that hints at a degree of common experience.

In this paper I will be identifying points of intersection between the 2NZEF and the Grand Tour architecture of Europe. In doing so I will argue for an alternate version of architectural education. It is one experienced by many thousands of New Zealand servicemen, in appalling and often dehumanizing conditions. But for all that it is still a story of New Zealand 'architecture,' and it has not before been recounted.

[i] Stewart LD, 1946, 'The man in the street chooses a home', *New Zealand Home and Building,* March 1946 vol.9 (1) pp.24-32