

# Appendix D

## Built Heritage



## D.1 History of the site of National War Memorial and Carillon, Mount Cook Police Station, former National Museum, HMNZS Olphert, former GHQ<sup>1</sup>

In 1840 an area of 5.6 hectares between Tasman Street, Buckle and Taranaki Streets was designated a public reserve, and is shown on the New Zealand Company Town Plan. Coloured in pink, the area is described as “reserved for public purposes”, and this has not been revoked.

It appears that the first European building, on the site as early as 1843, was a jail, while a powder magazine is also noted on the site in 1846<sup>2</sup>. Authorisation for the construction of a timber barracks building is documented in 1846 and was complete in July 1847<sup>3</sup>.

1st Battalion of 65th Regiment of Foot (Royal Tigers) was the Imperial Garrison in Wellington from 1846 to 1865 for whom barracks were constructed in 1846. “A small fortress of Tasmanian hardwood and bricks with loopholes for muskets”.<sup>4</sup> Additional barracks were required by May 1846 and lots 226 and 233 on the opposite side of Buckle Street for the additional building requirements<sup>5</sup>. At this date two acres marked as Maori Reserve on the New Zealand Company Town Plan, located on the corner of Buckle and Taranaki Streets, were also taken for military purposes. Building for the new barracks was complete in 1847.

The hill was levelled for further barracks by approximately 25 metres<sup>6</sup> and by 1850 two large complexes housing the 65th Regiment occupied the hill. The other building on the site in the early period included Wellington Provincial Government Stores Department in 1856. By 1858 the name of the designated reserve was confirmed as the Mount Cook Military Reserve<sup>7</sup>.

By 1870 Imperial troops were withdrawn and the local Militia and Volunteer units, who replaced the Imperial troops in 1867-70, soon occupied the buildings on the lower part of the site. The barracks constructed for the 65th Regiment became their new Headquarters. The barracks on the upper section of the hill were used as temporary accommodation for new immigrants<sup>8</sup>.

In 1879, following disputes between settlers and Maori in Taranaki, over 200 Maori were imprisoned, and the Barracks were used to house some of these prisoners. In the 1880’s the buildings were used for Naval Artillery Volunteer training and during the 1885 Russian scare, the buildings were used as the colony’s defence headquarters.

The site became a more significant location for prisoners when Captain Arthur Hume, the first Inspector-General of Prisons identified the site for a large national prison for long-sentence prisoners. The prison was designed by Acting Colonial Government Architect Pierre Finch Martineau Burrows and drawings were prepared in 1884<sup>9</sup>. By the end of 1899 only the rear wing of the proposed seven winged building was complete.<sup>10</sup> The building was used as an industrial prison accommodating prisoners while employed at the brickworks. Prisoners were occupied manufacturing bricks from the Mount Cook clay, an industry which had been associated with the site for considerable period. Bricks from the site were used on many building including the General Assembly building.

The construction of the prison initiated substantial debate on the use of the site. Local residents considered that such a prominent site should not be used for a prison but a more worthy use such as education. Construction of the building was halted after only one rear wing was complete<sup>11</sup>. Thomas Turnbull even prepared a design adapting the building for use as a university.

1 Paul Joseph Spyve, The Barracks on the Hill: A History of the Army’s Presence at Mount Cook, Wellington 1843-1979, unpublished thesis Army General Staff Defence Headquarters, Wellington, New Zealand, 1982

2 Spyve, op cit page 30

3 End of An Era, A Commemorative Edition, An Informal History of the Military in the Mount Cook Area of Wellington, 1846-1979, page 1

4 Evening Post 29 March 1979

5 Spyve, op cit page 28

6 ibid, page 30

7 ibid, page 38

8 ibid page 54

9 Drawings numbered 1 - 9, “Convict Prison at Wellington”, dated 11/3/84, I Bowman, private collection

10 Parnell, CA unpublished report, Wellington Prison History, Justice Department, ca 1960

11 ibid page 142

The empty jail building was occupied by the Defence Forces from the time of the Boer War, when the jail building was renamed the Alexandra Barracks. The drill hall on the corner of Taranaki and Buckle streets built in 1907 housed the ‘specials’ who “swung their batons from horseback during the 1913 maritime strike”.

In 1909 the title of the land was vested in the New Zealand Government, correcting a land ownership anomaly.

The site was registered as the Mount Cook Education Reserve in 1917<sup>12</sup>. The intention of the reserve was to include a University, Museum and Art gallery, a Technical School, Art School, Research Institute, Primary and Secondary Schools, and archives. In a memo to the Minister of Education discussing the issue, it was also proposed that an avenue be constructed between Courtenay Place and Buckle Street between Taranaki Street and Tory Street with a widened Buckle Street. The recognition of the significance of the site is also discussed in the concluding paragraph of the memo:

*“In conclusion, we are of the opinion that the carrying out of the works proposed, and the grouping of such important buildings on so conspicuous an area of land in the heart of the city, would contribute in no small degree to the improvement of the City of Wellington*

*We have the honour to be,*

*Sir,*

*Your obedient Servants,*

*R W Humes, M Inst C E Engineer in Chief, Public Works Dept.*

*W H Horton, M Inst C E, City Engineer, Wellington*

*T N Broderick, Under Secretary for Lands*

*J Campbell, F R I B A, Government Architect”<sup>13</sup>*

In October 1918, the Cabinet confirmed the offer of three acres of land at the south end of the site of the Mount Cook Reserve for the construction of the Wellington High School<sup>14</sup>.

Despite considerable public opposition occupation by the prison service of the site continued until 1920. Conscientious objectors were initially jailed in the Alexandra Barracks, including J K Baxter’s father, Archibald Baxter, and then in a jail constructed at the southern end of the Mount Cook reserve behind the Alexandra Barracks.<sup>15</sup>

In 1924 the Government announced a subsidy of £75,000 towards a new museum on condition the same amount could be raised by donations. Following indignant protests, the Government raised the fund to £100,000 for a building combining Museum and Art Gallery.

The Mayor of Wellington, George Troup, initiated a fund raising campaign, and by 1929 £95,000 was raised. A major contributor to the fund raising was the New Zealand Academy of Fine Arts who sold their property in Whitmore Street and contributed the resulting money to the building fund. Another significant contribution by the Academy to the establishment of the National Art Gallery was the gift of their art collection.

Although funding had been placed on the estimates for a National War Memorial between 1919 and 1921, this had not been spent and was removed from the estimates. In 1926, to encourage the construction of a national war memorial, the Wellington War Memorial Carillon Society was formed and who called for donations for a carillon. Sufficient funding was made available within one week and a contract was let for the carillon which was received in 1931.

12 memo from Mary-Jane Thompson, 8 February, 1995, to Peter Farrell

13 ibid

14 From Riley to Royal Wellington Technical College - Wellington High School, 1886 - 1986, Centennial Committee of the Wellington Technical College / Wellington High School, 1986, page 21

15 page 242

Despite some local opposition to the combining of a Carillon with the War Memorial, the influence of combined membership of the Carillon Society meant that its voice was heard. The members included:

“Patron: L P Blundell  
 President: Sir H Beauchamp  
 Vice-President: S Kirkcaldie  
 C J B Norwood  
 H P Gibbons  
 Hon. T Shailer Weston, MLC  
 L O H Tripp  
 J M Geddes  
 Chairman of committee: H D Bennet  
 Hon. Solicitor: E A R Jones

*A more formidable assembly of influential Wellingtonians of the 1920's would be hard to imagine. The list includes some of the reform Party's most powerful supporters in the capital.<sup>16</sup>*

A combined Museum, Art Gallery and National War Memorial Carillon was agreed upon in 1928 by the Government. In 1929 a temporary Board of Trustees was established by the Government, at the request of George Troup, to judge an architectural competition for the complex. The Board included a member of the New Zealand Institute of Architects.

The design competition was arranged in 1929 which was won by the Auckland firm of Gummer and Ford in June 1930. The competition conditions of entry requested that designs be divided between a building which could be constructed for the funds available and a future extension for a “complete” building housing the “ultimate needs” of the museum and art gallery<sup>17</sup>.

The total cost of the building, including equipment and layout of the grounds was approximately £234,000 and was “within the funds available”<sup>18</sup>.

Funding was confirmed with the following breakdown:

Government	
- Subsidy	£100,000
- Carillon tower	£15,000
- Ex unemployment Fund, grounds etc.	£16,350
- Value of land	£30,000
Public	
- Main building	£100,000
- Carillon (bells etc.)	£10,662*

\* Note: National War Memorial, Wellington, New Zealand, Historical Publication Branch, Internal Affairs, 1986, page 11

Approximately nine acres was vested with the National Art Gallery, Dominion Museum and War Memorial Carillon in 1930 following the passing an act establishing the new entity.

16 Advisory and Research Branch, Dept of Internal Affairs, The National Art Gallery, Dominion Museum and National War memorial, A Review of Their Legislation, Administration and Finance, 24 November, 1967  
 17 “Conditions for Competitive Designs”, Dominion Museum and National Art Gallery, Museum Site and Buildings’ Files on Competition Plans, page 4  
 18 Annual Report, Report of the Board of Trustees for the Years ended 31st March 1937, NAG and Dominion Museum, Govt Printer, 1937, page 3

By July 1931, the old brick prison building was demolished, carried out by the successful tenderer, of J L McMillan for £1800, and the Army workshops were removed to Trentham<sup>19</sup>. Fletcher Construction Company won the tender for the construction of the new National Museum and Art Gallery buildings.

This enabled work to begin and the foundation stone was laid on 14 March 1934 by Lord Bledisloe, Governor-General.

Bledisloe held high hopes for the institution:

*“A National Art Gallery should be a source of unsullied inspiration to young students, and indeed to all thoughtful citizens - a pure fountain of sound artistic taste and, perchance, a shrine of a distinctive national artistic vision influenced by local environment and ideas.”*

After transferring displays on 1 August Governor-General Lord Galway, opened the building.

The new gallery also housed the NZ Academy of Fine Arts. Original plans for the war memorial museum did not include an art gallery. It was added only after the Academy of Fine Arts had made strenuous representations to the authorities, offered the proceeds from the property it would sell, and agreed to transfer control of its collection of paintings to the new gallery.

During the period of the 1940 Centennial Exhibition, the National Art Gallery mounted a concurrent “Centennial Exhibition of International and New Zealand Art”<sup>20</sup>.

In 1942 the military again occupied the new museum building during World War II for use as the command centre for the Pacific War. The Museum collection was compressed into a very much smaller space within the building. Many Museum staff were occupied with the war effort and a skeleton staff curated the collection. During the war years the building was closed to the public and even though Defence vacated it in October 1946 the museum was not reopened to the public until 29 September 1949. At the same time the porte cochere was erected on the east side of the building.

During this period the National Art Gallery was removed to the DIC Building<sup>21</sup> and 350 paintings and drawings were stored in the Public Trust Building in Hastings<sup>22</sup>.

During the period of occupation, the threat of air attack was heightened after Pearl Harbour. Plans were prepared for underground bunkers around the site and three tunnels were begun from Tasman Street. A WCC City Engineers Department drawing entitled “Emergency Shelters Art Gallery Site, drawing 8679 42/19 19.2.42” shows 10 trench shelters on the Taranaki street Wellington High School playing field, and 3 entrances to tunnels with “possible tunnel extension” on the Tasman street side of the Museum, where there were four entrances to the tunnels. The threat soon passed and these were filled in.

A two storey underground shelter was constructed at the south west corner of the museum site for “Fighter Sector Control” centre in 1942. Accessed from the rear of the museum, the building was never used for its original purpose and was taken over by the Department of Lands and Survey for use as a map storage centre.

The next major building on the site was the extension of the carillon. As with the original building, the design of the Hall of Memories was by Gummer and Ford. It was opened on 5 April 1964.

In 1980 the brick building on the south east corner of Buckle<sup>23</sup> and Taranaki Streets was fitted out for museum use as a conservation laboratory and storage facility. These two functions were later divided between two buildings, the Natural History Unit building in Taranaki Street and the Hector Library and Art Storage building at the south of the museum building. The conservation laboratory was completed in the mid 1980's, and in the late 1980's the library and art storage building was complete.

19 Spyve, page 264  
 20 NZAJHR 1940, Vol III, H-I, H21, page 1  
 21 Spyve page 290  
 22 NZAJHR 1946, VOL III, H-I, H21, page 3  
 23 pers com, John Rowe, Works Consultancy, 15 February, 1996

Reuse of the museum building has been studied, with a southern extension, similar to the original proposal, investigated in the late 1970's. In July, 1987, a space utilisation study was completed by the Ministry of Works and Development in which a five storey building in the central courtyard was proposed<sup>24</sup>.

## D.2 Basin Reserve

When in 1839 the New Zealand Company settled in what was to be named Wellington they created a lagoon, which the Surveyor General Captain Smith, called 'Basin'. The Basin was linked to the harbour by a stream and was intended to be used for ships to provide a safe haven. Unfortunately for the proposal the earthquake of 1855 lifted the ground five feet turning the Basin into a swamp and no longer able to be used for the canal and dock scheme.

When in 1857 a group of influential citizen petitioned the Provincial Council to have the proposed canal site and basin be reserved for a Public Park, this was approved and the beginning of the Basin Reserve. In 1863 thanks to prison labour the swamp was turned into available and dry land and in 1866 the Basin Reserve formally became Wellington's home of cricket with its first game on the 11th of January 1868. A band rotunda and grandstand (known as the Caledonian grandstand) were built in the same year while in the following decade a bank (on the left) and a bigger rotunda were built. In the meantime the Basin's uses continued to expand as Wellington's population grew.

## D.3 Aubert, Mary Joseph 1835 - 1926

Catholic nun, nurse, herbalist, teacher, social worker, writer

- Marie Henriette Suzanne Aubert (known first as Suzanne Aubert and later in religion as Mary Joseph Aubert) was born at Saint-Symphorien-de-Lay, Loire, France, on 19 June 1835.
- A serious childhood accident left her disabled for a long time, and it is to this experience that she attributed her lifelong sympathy for the seriously ill, the deformed and disabled.
- Aged 25 she sailed to New Zealand on the General Teste with Bishop Jean Baptiste François Pompallier.
- In Auckland between 1860 and 1869, teaching young Maori girls.
- 1869-1883 Missionary work among Maori in Hawke's Bay.
- 1883 Missionary work at Hiruharama (Jerusalem) on the Wanganui River.
- While at Jerusalem she began caring for unwanted Pakeha children.
- In 1879, published a Maori-language prayerbook and catechism.
- 1885 published New and complete manual of Maori conversation which included general rules of grammar and an extensive.
- In 1888 she began to market her herbal remedies, entering into an agreement with Kempthorne, Prosser and Company's New Zealand Drug Company in 1891.
- 1899, moved to Wellington. Worked from a cottage in Buckle Street.
- The main thrust of their work from 1902 was institutional care of the ill and disabled, sick children and foundlings.
- 1901 St Anthony's Soup Kitchen in Buckle Street was opened for casual and unemployed workers.
- A day nursery established about the same time was an innovation. Mother Aubert recognised the pressure on widows,

deserted wives and other women who were expected to contribute to their own support, but who faced criticism when this resulted in less than ideal standards of child care. Women were able to leave their children in the sisters' care between 7 am and 6 pm, paying only a few pence for milk. This was one of the first such facilities in New Zealand; it was to be many decades before the idea of child care became generally acceptable.

- 1900 established St Joseph's Home for Incurables in Buckle Street in 1900 meeting a vital need.
- 1907 Our Lady's Home of Compassion was opened at Island Bay for ex-nuptial children, physically and intellectually handicapped, children with acute illnesses, including paralysis, hydrocephalus and tuberculosis.
- There was antagonism toward her work from within the Catholic hierarchy - to confine her work to Catholics, Bishop of Auckland Henry Cleary put continual obstacles in her way.
- 1917 received papal recognition of her Congregation of the Daughters of Our Lady of Compassion which she had founded with a transfer of jurisdiction from Redwood to herself as superior general.
- Her activities at this time laid the basis of work still undertaken by the order.
- Was able to decide the priorities of her congregation of sisters without interference from the New Zealand Catholic hierarchy.
- Mother Aubert firmly refused to restrict her activities to Catholics.
- She was a member of the St John Ambulance Association and the New Zealand Society for the Protection of Women and Children, had links with the Plunket Society, and enjoyed the strong support of the Wellington division of the New Zealand branch of the British Medical Association.
- Mother Aubert was a national figure much admired for her pioneering work. When she died on 1 October 1926 at Our Lady's Home of Compassion, Wellington, aged 91.
- 1926 Her funeral, attended by politicians and church leaders of many denominations, was said to be the largest ever held for a woman in New Zealand.



Figure D.1: Basin Reserve 1876<sup>25</sup>

<sup>25</sup> Source Neely, D, 100 Summers, the History of Wellington Cricket, page 26.

<sup>24</sup> ibid

