

# Construction Newsletter

Issue 4 / August 2005

## Stormwater culvert laid across Willis Street

**The new 2.1 metre diameter stormwater pipe has been laid beneath Willis Street, with work progressing up Palmer Street towards Aro Valley.**

Pedestrian access is being maintained throughout the project, and extensive liaison is being undertaken with Palmer Street residents regarding vehicle access and alternative carparking.

Laying the large culvert sections involves excavation of a six metre deep trench in 20-30 metre lengths. A large excavator is then used to swing the 2.44 metre long concrete pipe sections into the trench, and line it up with pipe already laid.

### Palmer Street

Work on the stormwater and ancillary water and sewer mains in Palmer Street is expected to take 2-3 months and be completed around September, 2005.

A larger 2.55 metre diameter pipe has already been installed along part of Arthur Street. The pipe is to be laid across Cuba Street and along the bypass alignment to Willis Street later this year. It will be continued from the western end of Palmer Street, across Aro Park, during winter next year.

This \$7 million mains upgrade from Taranaki Street to Aro Park, has been commissioned by Wellington City Council to coincide with the bypass construction.

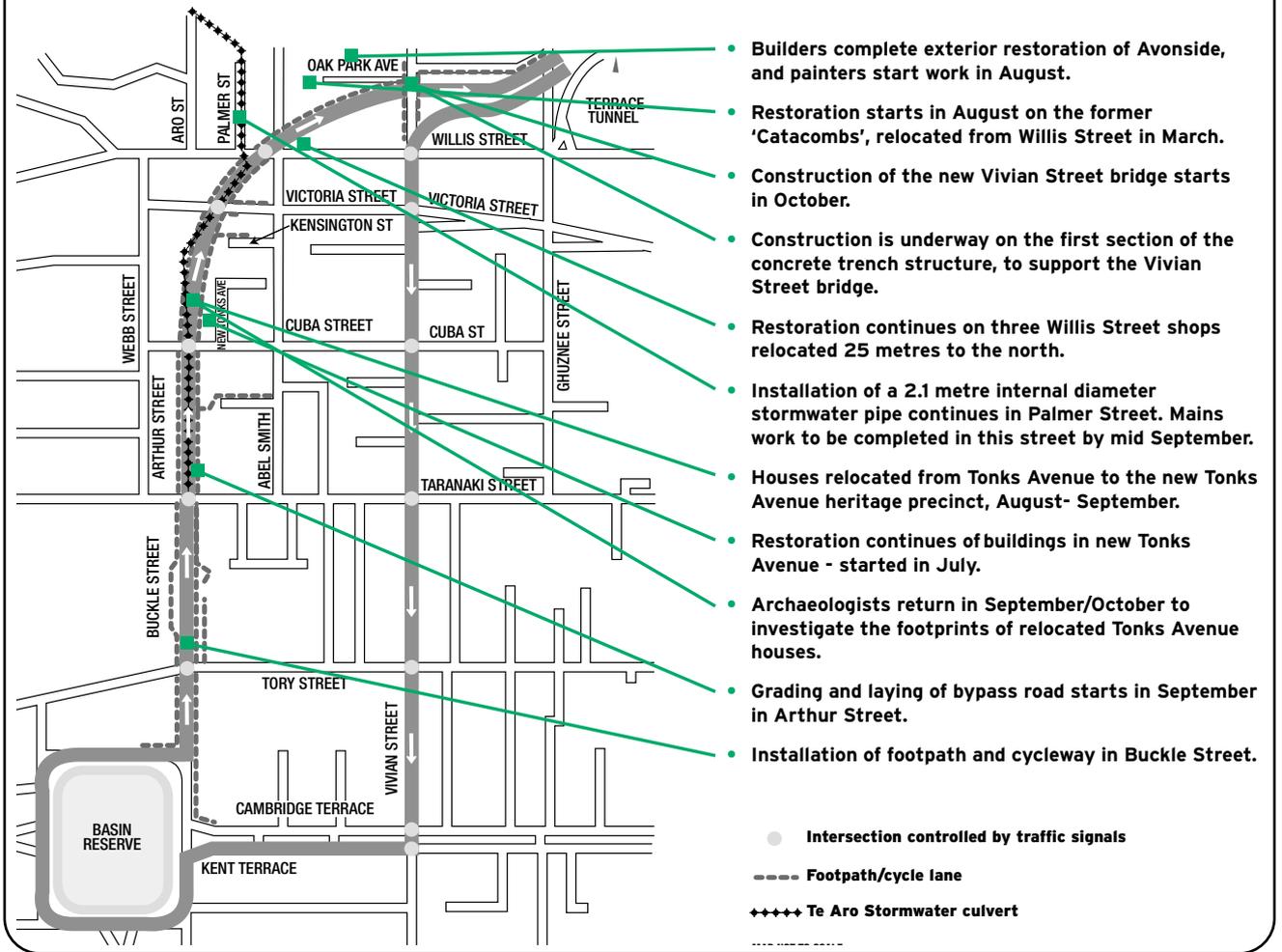
The council is progressively expanding and upgrading the stormwater system that drains rainwater from the Brooklyn and Aro Valley catchments by replacing the brick mains that are about 130 years old.



**FULL DEPTH:** An 80-tonne crane at the trench site off upper Willis Street, where excavation in the first section has reached the full depth of eight metres. The concrete blocks in the photo are attached to temporary soil nails inserted into drilled holes and grouted into place. These steel nails are 4-14 metres in length and support the cut slopes while the first section of the 150-metre concrete trough is constructed.

This trough will have vertical concrete walls and a floor of 1.2 metres in depth. It will carry traffic under a new Vivian Street bridge, that is to be constructed before the end of the year. Once the concrete structure is completed late next year, the gap between its walls and the cut slopes will be back-filled.

# Construction Programme Aug - Oct 05



## Tonks buildings on the move

The former butcher's shop at number 274 Cuba Street was the first Tonks building to be relocated, in June.

Kate Tonks had the shop built in 1901 and rented it to various small businesses (see Tonks family history page 3).

The one-room 'bootmaker's' at 272 Cuba, constructed for Kate in 1896, is to be shifted just three metres north to sit alongside two shops relocated from across Cuba Street. Numbers 289-291 were relocated at night during July, from the corner of Cuba and Arthur streets to the corner of new Tonks Avenue.

Two Edwardian houses built by Kate Tonks, numbers 12 and 13 Tonks Avenue, are the next to be relocated into the heritage precinct along with three workers' cottages built in the 1860s-1880s. Number 270 is also to be built as a replica in the precinct stretching between Cuba and Kensington streets, and two further houses relocated from Kensington Street.

### Restoration underway

Restoration has already begun on buildings in the Willis/Vivian streets zone shifted over the past few months. A team of builders is restoring the former Avonside boarding house, relocated from upper Vivian Street to Oak Park Avenue in February.

Work will then start on the refurbishment of the former Catacombs building shifted back off Willis Street in March. A further team is restoring two Willis Street shops shifted 25 metres to the north, from near the Abel Smith Street corner, in May.

The former butcher's shop, was relocated alongside these shops in June. Known as 'Bodega' bar and café during the 1990s, restoration on this building will start later this year.



Number 274 Cuba Street is readied for relocation in June.

# Tonks original Te Aro pioneers

**Tonks Grove was created in 1880 by a pioneering family from Shropshire, carving out a better life for themselves in Te Aro, Wellington.**

William and Jane Tonks and their five children immigrated to New Zealand in 1842. Their passage was 'assisted' by the New Zealand Company, in a scheme to attract settlers. According to Gary Tonks, a fifth generation descendant and family historian, the couple had few prospects in England, due to the class system and a lack of work.

He doubts any other family has equalled the Tonks in the variety of businesses and essential works that William and his descendants undertook around Wellington. The family owned brick works off Cuba and Webb streets, were merchants and importers, had a shipping line, blacksmith shop, flour mill and bread factory. They were instrumental in the 1866 harbour reclamation, and built the first tram line in Wellington so they could cart spoil from the back of Lambton Quay and Willis Street to the seashore reclamation works.

Records show William senior and his son, William jnr, bought town acres 97 and 99 in the Cuba St/Tonks Avenue area in 1860. But Tonks Avenue was not developed as it is today, until 1880, and was first called Tonks Grove.

As well as developing Tonks Grove and Arthur Street, William jnr had a contract to supply hardwood from Australia for government buildings here in Wellington. He was known as "Blue Gum Tonky" by local Maori, including those who worked the docks.

## Tonks cottages

Bankruptcy in 1879 led to William jnr losing some of his grove land to pay his creditors. In 1880 Andrew Wylie purchased a portion and built numbers 1 and 3 Tonks Avenue - two-roomed workers' cottages that stand alongside number 5 which William snr had built in the 1860s. These three cottages are to be relocated shortly as part of the bypass project.

Kate Tonks, the wife of William jnr's brother, Henry, went on to build houses and at least one shop in Tonks Avenue around the turn of the century. Henry was a Maori interpreter in the law courts, had a steam mill factory, land agency, grocery shop, and was a wood and coal merchant. He died in 1888 at the age of 40, leaving Kate to manage the family affairs - property, businesses and five children.

The butcher's shop on the corner of Tonks Avenue and Cuba Street, built by Kate in 1901, is one of the 18 heritage buildings throughout Te Aro being relocated and restored as part of the bypass project. Others include number 13 Tonks Avenue, a two-storey Edwardian home, built by Kate in 1906. She lived there with her spinster sister and later took in boarders. Kate died in 1937 and her family sold number 13 to Wellington City Council in 1950. It operated as Stagecraft Theatre from 1962 - 2002.

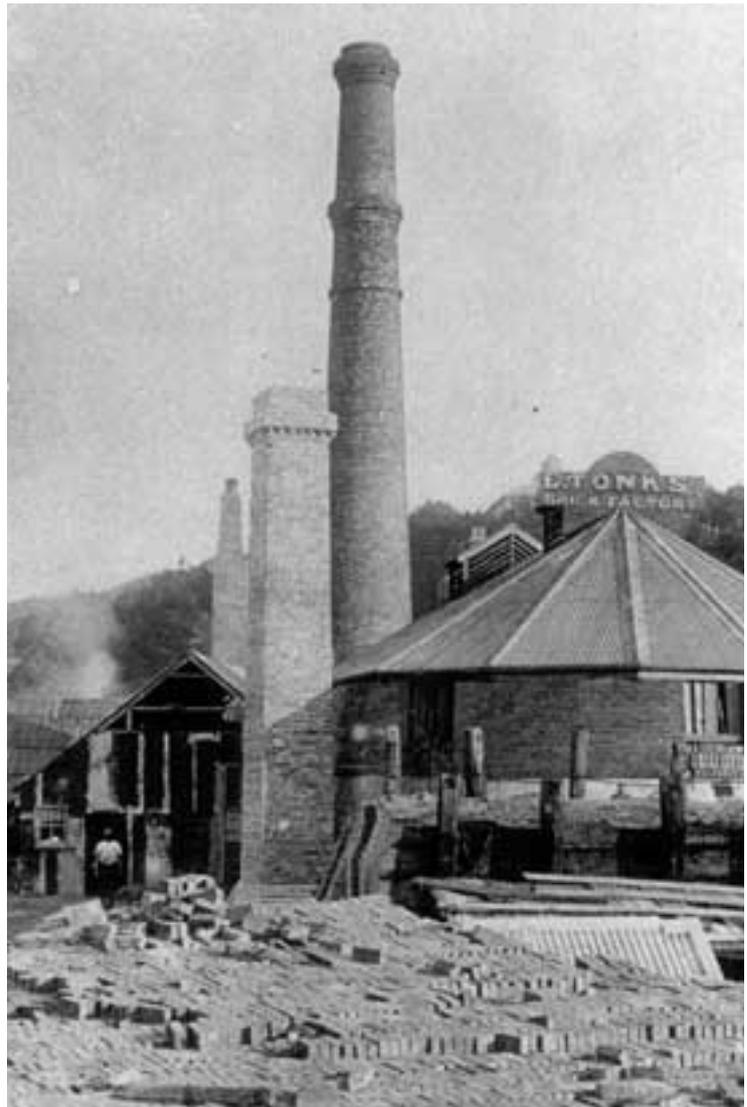


**Kate Tonks, nee Helyer, circa turn of the 19th Century. Photo courtesy Gary Tonks.**

The Tonks' entrepreneurial spirit carried through to the early twentieth century. Third generation Ted established a sand gravel works near the present quarry at Red Rocks in 1912. Metal carried by 80 draught horses, was supplied for Parliament buildings, Mt Victoria Tunnel and the Miramar seawall. His father Enoch, was a lay preacher who had taken over the brick works in 1875.

Tonks family members continued to run a flour mill and bread factory in Herbert Street until 1950, and had a blacksmith workshop until 1939, while third generation Walter and Henry (sons of Henry and Kate) operated the Monumental Masonry works at Karori Cemetery from the 1920s-50s.

Successive generations have spread throughout New Zealand and elsewhere. Family members from as far as Havelock North and Auckland visited Tonks Avenue during open days earlier this year that showcased archaeological investigations at the site of their ancestors' homes and businesses.



**Factory manager William Tonks, son of Enoch Tonks, outside the family brick works in Webb Street circa 1890. Photo courtesy Alexander Turnbull Library.**

# New home for pohutukawa

Pohutukawa requiring relocation from beside the motorway have a new home lining the fairway of hole 10 at Miramar Golf Course - sheltering golfers from the airport accessway.

Ten mature trees were carefully uprooted by Fulton Hogan from Buller Street and transplanted at the course in late May. They join a further 140 or so pohutukawa successfully transplanted by the golf club from various sites around Wellington over the last decade.

**Top: Tony McEwen and Gareth Evans of Rough Terrain Ltd load a pohutukawa onto a transporter ready for delivery.**

**Bottom: Miramar Golf Club greenkeeper Alan Turvey supervises the transplanting at the course, along the Stewart Drive fenceline.**



## Environment matters

Mud, or sediment, can be a nuisance on urban construction sites.

One of the many environmental measures put in place to minimise the impact of construction work on the surrounding environments is the installation of sediment tanks and pumping pits.

Heavier sediment will be removed from the pumping pits, and the tanks will then be used to filter off finer material, before run-off is channelled into the city's stormwater system. Tanks will be cleaned periodically with the waste disposed off-site at an approved site.

During excavation, slopes will be battered to protect against erosion. This will involve covering them with geotechnical fabric/mesh, or with shotcrete - a spray-on concrete.

Other measures implemented to protect the environment include construction of a truck wash and metal haul roads to minimise dirt being dragged on to city streets; careful stockpiling on site to minimise pollution; and erection of silt fences.

### The Wellington Inner City Bypass at a glance:

- ✦ Construction of the Wellington Inner City Bypass, which commenced in January 2005, is scheduled to finish in mid 2007
- ✦ The bypass isn't a motorway - it's a pair of two-lane, one-way 50 kph roads at ground level, with linked traffic signals at intersections
- ✦ Construction of a new Te Aro stormwater culvert for Wellington City Council is included in the project
- ✦ Relocation and restoration of 18 heritage buildings in the path of the bypass route
- ✦ More information about the Wellington Inner City Bypass is available on the Transit New Zealand website [www.transit.govt.nz/innercitybypass/](http://www.transit.govt.nz/innercitybypass/) or at the Visitor's centre, 319 Willis Street

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