

APRIL 2018

Save McLean's Mansion



PUBLIC MEETING

AND

PANEL DISCUSSION

To announce a Civic Trust initiative to restore McLean's Mansion

26 April 5.30 - 7pm

Chaired by Dr Chris Kissling

Illustrated presentation by Trevor Lord

The Lounge, Oxford Tce Baptist Church

286 Oxford Tce Christchurch Central

Chairman's Report



Civic Pride – Civic Trust

For more than 50 years, the Christchurch Civic Trust has performed a much respected role as a voice both for and against policies, projects and proposals that impact upon the physical environment and social well-being for the citizens of Christchurch. Similar Civic Trusts elsewhere in New Zealand function in a like manner. They attract membership from a wide range of occupations and expertise providing a rich pool from which can be distilled much accumulated wisdom. Their common ideal is to assist decision makers frame policies that will lead to the creation and preservation of environments of which we all can be proud. For the Christchurch Civic Trust that history is chronicled in the publication, *City Pride – Civic Trust*.

Some City administrations support their local Civic Trust with annual financial grants. In no way is there expectation that their support is contingent upon their local Civic Trust providing reciprocal and favourable support for Council policies, plans, and projects. On the contrary, those Councils welcome receipt of submissions and receive delegations on many contentious issues that are considered by their local Civic Trust. They are a “go to” body when public consultation is required by Councils and other Crown agencies.

Civic Trusts have persuasive power to influence, but no statutory power to require. Their voice is not that of a vested commercial enterprise. They are seldom conflicted as they neither own nor manage property. They are mindful of the rule of law. They uphold ethics. They espouse wise stewardship of resources.

When the necessity arises for appearing before Courts, and engaging professional advice, Civic Trusts around New Zealand

are faced with significant costs. They usually seek donations and sponsors, not having “fighting funds” to call upon. That fact has inhibited the Christchurch Civic Trust from using the legal tools in our democracy just as it does for private citizens who cannot afford legal counsel and experts to provide evidence rather than opinion before the Courts. When we have taken part, we have prevailed, but the negative financial impacts have been serious.

The Christchurch Civic Trust makes annual awards that recognise good design, sympathetic heritage restoration and repurposing, and the provision of amenities for the enjoyment of citizens. We rely on sponsorship for these annual awards. We also support, on their merits, the applications made by others such as the Christchurch Arts Centre, and the Christchurch City Council, for awards and funds sought from other agencies.

It would be most helpful if we had on-going annual financial income to supplement our membership dues so long as donors do not expect favours in return. Even though it is not possible to budget for income from legacies, they are potentially most helpful to further the aims of the Trust.

Chris Kissling.

Chair

Christchurch Civic Trust

New Members

We welcome the following new members:

Martin & Jann Meehan, Sue Williams, Mark Belton, Bishop Charles Drennan, Robert & Dr Marjorie Manthei, Dr Geoffrey Rice, Sandra Shaw, Bernard Toh, Keith & Janice Hitchons and Bowen Radburn.

Saving McLean's Mansion

This Category One Heritage Building is the next big project for the Civic Trust.

McLean's Mansion was designed by Robert England and constructed by the builders Rennie and Pearce between April 1899 and September 1900.

It is the largest domestic wooden building in the southern hemisphere and possesses some splendid and unique architectural features.

The homestead was substantially damaged in the 2010/11 earthquakes and Trevor Lord, current CT Council member, drove some major restoration action in 2016. He established the McLean's Heritage Trust and achieved a \$1.9M Heritage Grant from the Christchurch City Council to restore the building.

The aim is for the McLean's Heritage Trust and Civic Trust to join forces and continue the drive for funding action to save and restore this magnificent building.

It currently has no earthquake insurance and is in a state of disrepair. Furthermore, the Murray family who own the property have placed it for sale at \$2.5 Million. So, the first major cost to be undertaken by the Civic Trust is to raise the money to buy it.

A restored McLean's Mansion could well operate like the Pah Homestead in Auckland, which is owned by the Auckland City Council and used by The Wallace Arts Trust. It operates as a major cultural centre for a variety of corporate and arts activities, attracting many visitors to and from the city.

Saving McLean's Mansion is a challenging heritage project to embark upon but the Civic Trust possesses an impressive history of achieving some outstanding goals for culture and heritage in Christchurch - including our adored Mona Vale and Mt Vernon Park.

Sydenham Heritage Trust Saga

As many members will know Sydenham Heritage Trust (SHT) purchased the former Sydenham Methodist Church on the corner of Colombo and Brougham Streets in May 2001 with the assistance of an interest free Christchurch City Council grant. This landmark building was built in 1877 and for a century complemented the former Sydenham Post Office (1911) opposite, forming a visual gateway to the southern entrance of the commercial heart of Sydenham. The church was listed Group 2 in the Christchurch City Council Plan and was registered with the New Zealand



The rubble of Sydenham Heritage Church 2011

Historic Places Trust. During the decade that followed the church was progressively restored and strengthened, and an amenities block with kitchen and toilets was added in 2008.

On 24 February as a result of the damage caused by the earthquake that struck 2 days earlier, the Sydenham Heritage Church building was erroneously deemed unsafe and demolished.

Following this event SHT was faced with the task of clearing rubble from the site. In 2011, with limited resources and a potential cost of \$100,000 +, the Trust was unable to do this until the insurance money was received by Christchurch City Council. This was delayed for several years and meanwhile the SHT received much negative publicity and criticism. The Trust was keen to salvage the granite stone from

the rubble as much of this material had been sent to reclamation or landfill. Finally in 2015 when funds were accessible a survey of the rubble was carried out and Canterbury Earthquake Authority and Christchurch City Council determined that as asbestos was found to be present in the rubble fines it had to be treated as a contaminated site. The SHT insisted that the Sydenham Heritage Church contained no asbestos and had independent tests carried out which indicated contamination in the fines had happened post-2011, likely wind borne from the many trucks that carried demolition materials along the adjacent motorway on the way to Lyttelton Harbour.

As a result plans to clear the site came to a halt. Many months of discussion followed until eventually the Christchurch City Council agreed to a plan to have the site cleared, systematically testing as the work proceeded. In February of this year the rubble was finally cleared. The 2011 earthquakes devastated Sydenham destroying not only most of the area's heritage buildings but also places that served a function for community activities.

Although the Sydenham Heritage church no longer exists it is the Trust's intention to provide a facility for the Sydenham community and South Christchurch that also reflects its heritage.

The Trust now proposes to reinstate on the site of the Sydenham Heritage Church a distinctive modern building that also has a small museum to recognize Sydenham.

It is proposed that the new building will have a commanding landmark presence at a very important historic intersection in this part of Christchurch. It will also incorporate materials and features that are both old and new.

What is the Future for the Princess Margaret Hospital ?

Members may be unaware of recent developments with The Princess Margaret Hospital, which has been an important part of the history of the city since 1959. In a nutshell, the hospital is to be declared surplus to requirements by the CDHB and expressions of interest are to be called for it on an "as is" basis, thus raising the very real possibility of demolition.

Although this news will probably not come as a complete surprise to members, it is a shock to think that this incredible building, a major part of the built identity of



Princess Margaret Hospital

Cashmere and surrounds for nearly 60 years, could end up as a pile of rubble. It suffered minor to moderate damage in the earthquakes with current seismic ratings generally varying between 35% and 100% of New Building Standard (NBS). There has already been far too much needless heritage and character building demolition in Christchurch following the earthquakes: this major asset must not itself become a demolition casualty!

What role for the Civic Trust? The board is helping, where possible, the Save Princess Margaret Hospital Group. Since late 2016 with Lee Sampson, Cashmere Spreydon Community Board member, as its leader, the Save PMH campaign has been extremely active: a heavily attended public

meeting with CDHB officials, an online petition, letter to Queen Elizabeth II, meetings with David Meates, CE of the Canterbury and West Coast District Health Boards and so on. Before Christmas Lee wrote on behalf of Save PMH to Dr David Clark, Minister of Health seeking retention of community health services at PMH; a letter of support emphasising the value of retaining the building complex itself was sent by the Civic Trust to Minister Clark and the Ministers of Environment, Climate Change, Greater Christchurch Recovery. Recently Civic Trust Board members Tim Hogan and Ross Gray met Lee Sampson and possible strategies were discussed, including obtaining the plans, possible re-uses of the building complex, eg shopping centre, entertainment, community facilities, apartment living. There has been a CDHB promise of some continuation of healthcare provision in the form of an Integrated Health Facility (largely private) as part of the building's re-use.

If you have ideas which you would like to share with us, please make contact either by phone or facebook or on our website secretary@christchurchcivictrust.org.nz Alternatively / in addition, your support to the SPMH group would be very welcome. Contact: lee.sampson.CBM@ccc.govt.nz

The city cannot afford to lose this highly significant structure, with a floor space of 40,000 sq m (about 10 acres!) which contains a massive amount of embodied energy in the form of its steel, concrete and brick construction. The oft-repeated adage "the greenest building is the one standing" certainly rings true in this instance.

Ross Gray *Convenor Heritage, Urban Design and Resource Management sub-committee.*

Robert McDougall Art Gallery ?

It is estimated that it will cost \$12.7 million to bring the Robert McDougall Art Gallery (RMAG) up to the New Building Code but as yet the future use of the gallery has to be determined.

On Saturday 16 June 2002 after 70 years as the city's purpose built public art gallery the (RMAG) closed. In the months before closure there was considerable discussion about the future use of this category 1 heritage building especially from the Canterbury Museum who expressed interest in being able to use the RMAG to exhibit its large decorative art and historical photograph collection.

The following year in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government Act, Christchurch City Council carried out public consultation to seek opinion as to future use of the gallery. Many interest groups suggested alternative uses but because of the restrictions on use the Christchurch City Council decided to support Canterbury Museum and lease the RMAG to them for a period 50 years .

To enable the RMAG building to be legally used by Canterbury Museum the City Council had to have enacted the Christchurch City Council (Robert McDougall Gallery) Land Act 2003.

This seemingly went into effect and Canterbury Museum occupied the RMAG and began using it mainly for storage. Unfortunately over the following 8 years the doors mostly remained closed to the public apart from occasions when a few temporary exhibitions were installed, the last being in 2010 - the "Heart of the Great Alone", Antarctic photographs from the Royal Photograph Collection.

The RMAG was closed permanently after the September 2010 earthquake and has been inaccessible to the public since. That same year a new Conservation Plan was

commissioned and eventually prepared. This emphasised that because of its heritage status, use was restricted.

Although the Canterbury Museum did occupy the building between 2003 and 2010 it never signed a lease and never formulated a detailed plan for the RMAG's future use that ensured it was open to the public on a daily basis as it has to be.

In 2016 the Canterbury Museum committed itself to the future ownership of Ravenscar House, and intends to show some of its decorative art collection in this new facility once it is built.

So what now is the future of the Robert McDougall Art Gallery ?

There is no question that it is Christchurch's second public art museum and has been owned by the citizens of Christchurch since it was gifted by Robert McDougall in 1932. As a prime Christchurch heritage public building it has to be maintained, and eventually brought up to the appropriate earthquake code before its front doors can again open to the public. It is acknowledged by Christchurch City Council that its use as a heritage building is restricted to the exhibition of art or art objects.

The most pragmatic future use is as an adjunct gallery to the Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu (CAG).

Since it opened on 10 May 2003 the city collection has increased and is now close to 8000 works of art. After 15 years storage space is at a premium and the CAG is unable to exhibit much more than 3.2% of its collection on a regular basis.

Some may say that the city has not run two galleries in tandem before. Not so. Between 1989 and 2001 the RMAG successfully operated a separate annex gallery facility in the Christchurch Arts Centre raising gallery attendance numbers by 40%. It also provided more opportunities

for public experience of a more varied range of art.

To see how other cities have dealt with gallery collection and space problems one has only to look to Australia. Both Melbourne and Brisbane operate two public galleries.

With the recent loss of so much of the city's heritage the re-opening of the RMAG should really be looked upon as a heritage restoration project with the aim of restoring the gallery to its original splendor and function for the benefit of Christchurch.

Christchurch Nurses' Memorial Chapel Restoration

Restoration of the earthquake-damaged Christchurch Nurses' Memorial Chapel progresses steadily and planning is well in hand for the anticipated celebratory October 2018 reopening within the WWI centenary commemorations period. Dedicated to Christchurch Hospital nurses, who perished during WWI when the

Marquette transport ship was torpedoed, or died during the 1918 influenza epidemic, the chapel was constructed in 1927.



Interior work looking back to the chancel arch

The complex and intricate restoration funded by the Christchurch City Council is being undertaken under a heritage works plan. After extensive structural strengthening of the building, including the brick buttresses, all the internal timber

panelling, parquet flooring, limestone and associated interior fittings will be reinstated. The slate roof tiles will be re-laid.

The constraints of the small work site with its limited access on Riccarton Avenue adjacent to Christchurch Hospital have created management challenges for deliveries, contractors and subcontractors, storage of items and working space.

Obituary

Pamela Rowena (Pam) Wilson, née Pankhurst (1937 – 2018)

The Civic Trust acknowledges the death on 11 February of Pam Wilson who was a board member of the Trust from 1990 – 1995 and was a well recognised stalwart heritage advocate for over four decades.

Pam Wilson was initially a teacher but her interest in heritage became more dominant.

In 1989 she was appointed Regional Officer for the Historic Places Trust and held that position for 22 years. In this role she participated in the retention of many important Canterbury heritage buildings.

In 2007 Pam Wilson was made a Member of the NZ Order of Merit (M.N.Z.M) for her service to heritage conservation.

All members and friends are cordially invited to attend our

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

On Tuesday 15 May at 5.00 pm

at

The WEA Centre

52 Gloucester St

Guest speaker to be announced

The Christchurch Civic Trust now has a Facebook group

Keep up with all the latest civic news for Canterbury and further afield

If you would like to join the group /network contact

Lynn Campbell Civic Trust Facebook coordinator
on lynnpamelac325@gmail.com

You will need a Facebook profile so that Lynn can add you to the group.



How do you get a Facebook profile?

1 To register a Facebook account go to the home page and under the words ' Sign Up' put your first name in the first box and your last name in the second.

2 Confirm your email address

3 Lynn will then get a request from Facebook asking to sign you up which she will action.

Facebook will enable you to join a regional network and also find friends

Any questions contact: Lynn Campbell on 03 980 4972

Copies still available

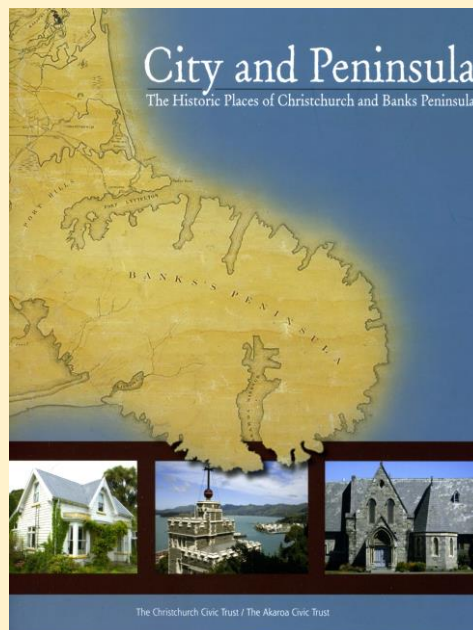
City and Peninsula

The Historic Places of Christchurch and Banks Peninsula

Authored by noted heritage historian John Wilson and published collaboratively by

The Christchurch Civic Trust and Akaroa Civic Trust, this book provides an excellent introduction to both the rural and urban heritage assets of Christchurch and Banks Peninsula

200pp with over 290 full colour illustrations



Available from the Christchurch CivicTrust

PO Box 1927 Christchurch

or email : secretary@christchurchcivictrust.org.nz

for \$50 + \$10 postage and packaging

The views expressed in this publication are not

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It was always the prime objective of the Trust to restore the Sydenham Heritage Church for community use, and take a lead in the revitalisation of Sydenham, as well as provide a focus for its heritage.

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The RMAG has 568 square metres of storage available in its basement which can hold upwards of 500 two dimensional

1. Register a Facebook account. Under the words “Sign Up” on the homepage, put your first name in the first box and your last name in the second box. ...
2. Confirm your email. ...
3. Find friends. ...
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5. Find workmates. ...
6. Join a regional network. ...
7. Lynn Campbell gets a request from Facebook asking to sign you up and with one tick all sorted

1. Any questions contact Lynn Campbell on 03 9804972



