



Newsletter

MAY 2024

CANTERBURY PROVINCIAL BUILDINGS

WHAT IS THE FUTURE ?



Canterbury Provincial Government Buildings c 1860

With so much uncertainty arising recently about the future of ChristChurch Cathedral and the Christchurch Arts Centre the same questions could be asked about another significant city heritage architectural icon, the Canterbury Provincial Government buildings. Our guest speaker at the Civic Trust AGM this year will be the well-known architecture historian Dr Ian Lochhead who will remind us of the wonderful past the Canterbury Provincial Government buildings have had but also allude no doubt to the amazing potential they have in the decades ahead.

FROM THE CHAIR



Hello everyone.

Firstly, an introduction to the wider membership.

My name is Hamish Gilchrist. I have been Deputising for Ross Gray as Board Chair. Some of you may be unaware that Ross Gray will be away on an extended leave of absence due to his health and will be so for the foreseeable future. Which means of course that as Deputy Chair it's my honour and duty to step in for Ross as Acting Chair.

He has left a big pair of shoes to fill, and I promise I will do my very best.

With that in mind, this will be my first (and hopefully not last) 'From the Chair' for the first newsletter of the year, so here goes!

Already a lot has been happening in Christchurch this year that requires the Trust's attention, and as a group, we have a lot to consider.

It would be fair to say, however, that now more than ever, support for Heritage and the Arts is in desperate need of all our best efforts.

It's no exaggeration to say the funding for Heritage projects is in dire straits as City Councils and Local Bodies are so financially stretched that discretionary money for anything other than the 'essential projects' is extremely limited or non-existent.

I use the term 'essential projects' advisedly because when we look around our city, we see ratepayer money spent on projects that some would say are unnecessary or 'nice to have' and not focused on core infrastructure. Of course, it depends on who you ask about the spending of public money – comment about these matters is ultimately subjective and everyone has an opinion.

It goes without saying that the Trust's opinion is unequivocal. Heritage, Arts, the

Natural and Built environment are top of that funding list.

Frustratingly heritage restorations nowadays seem to come with eye-wateringly high price tags which are never adhered to, leading to cost 'blow-outs', which invariably mean the project falls short before the finish line.

Nothing is more emblematic of this sobering problem than the plight of The Christchurch Arts Centre - Te Matatiki Toi Ora, Christchurch Cathedral and McLean's Mansion.

I have been deeply distressed that Council funding for the Arts Centre has been left out of the Draft Long Term Plan (DLTP) and as a Board, we have vigorously protested this omission through the submission process.

It may seem daunting to think about what can be done, but it's not. Go on-line to the Council's Submissions web page (<https://letstalk.ccc.govt.nz/draft-ltp-2024-2034>), follow the prompts, putting in your reasons why you think funding must continue. Talk to your friends and encourage them to do the same. Hearts and Minds. Public pressure. There is still time to submit. Submissions don't close until the 21st April.

The Trust board is up for the challenge and as ever we will be lobbying and submitting to the Council to ensure that these Christchurch icons receive their fair share of the pie.

A quick reminder that the CCT AGM is coming up. That will happen on June 19th at the WEA in Gloucester Street. Our Guest speaker will be Ian Lochhead, renowned Professor of Art History at the University of Canterbury and expert on Gothic Revival architecture. His talk will be on the Canterbury Provincial Government buildings.

Refreshments at 5.30pm and the meeting starts at 6.00pm.

Another reminder if you haven't done so already, please visit our new updated Website

www.christchurchcivictrust.org.nz where you can keep up to date with CCT activities.

In the meantime, get writing those submissions and we will see you all at the AGM.

Regards Hamish

OPEN CHRISTCHURCH 2024

With 50 open buildings, 4 guided walks, 3 landscapes, 3 special events and over 40 activities (from expert talks and tours to workshops), Open Christchurch 2024 is a celebration of our architecture.

The dates to mark on your calendar - **Saturday 4th & Sunday 5th May.**

There are many fantastic events in the 2024 programme.

Here are just a few highlights to look forward to:-

- A sensory exploration of Ōtākaro Orchard (See It, Hear It, Taste It, Touch It, Smell It, Map It) open at all ages and abilities
- Ground-floor tours of the former MED building (a Civic Trust award recipient in 2022) for those after a behind-the-scenes glimpse. Get inside the NZME studio and enjoy a behind-the-scenes experience to see how this former converter station and substation building has been adapted to house a contemporary media company.
- Architecture tours of St Mark's Opawa (also a Civic Trust award recipient in 2022) for the heritage lover. Learn about the melding of traditional and modern forms at this community church with architect Stephen Crooks (Chaplin Crooks Architects)
- Canterbury Museum redevelopment Q & A - come along for a chat with Sarah Davie, who has been part of the design

team on the museum redevelopment project since 2020

Check out the program and make your bookings today. See you there.

<https://openchch.nz/>

Erin Oakley

All members and friends are cordially invited to attend our

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

On Wednesday 19
June
at

The WEA Centre

52 Gloucester St
Light refreshments will commence
at

5.30 pm

Followed by the meeting at 6pm

**The guest presentation is by
Dr Ian Lochhead**

**who will speak on
Canterbury Provincial
Government Buildings
Please mark 19th June on your
calendar**

HERITAGE WIRE FENCES

Decorative, twisted wire fences were a common sight in and around Christchurch, from early 1900's. Oscar von Sierakowski (1874 -1951) set up his factory and shop on the south west corner of Colombo and Tuam Streets, built in 1906. It was the largest wire works factory in the colonies, manufacturing decorative wire fences,



Corner of Colombo and Tuam Sts 1906

garden arches, flower stands, hanging baskets, fire screens, dress stands, and bird cages etc. etc. You could even buy the birds to go in the cages!



Sydenham

I have admired a wire fence in Purchas Street, near to my home. Recently the house was renovated and I watched with concern, hoping the fence would be retained. It was, and that got me wondering how many wire fences, once so common, are left in Christchurch.

The Remembering Christchurch Facebook group was a great resource, with many



St Albans

members sending me addresses of some wonderful examples. I located several dozen wire fences, the majority of them in the suburbs of Sydenham, Beckenham and



Woolston

St Albans. The examples on this page are from a skill of a bygone age. Hopefully owners of properties who are lucky enough to have one of these lovely fences, look after them for the future. As our heritage houses fall to development, the wire fences



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will go too. One day, sadly, they will disappear completely.

Sandra Shaw

CHRIST CHURCH CATHEDRAL

Christchurch heritage supporters haven't got much to be happy about at this time



Photo of ChristChurch Cathedral 2006

The news that the restoration of Christ Church Cathedral may be mothballed came as a shock to many who have followed the fraught path to restoration. There are many reasons and theories for this latest admission from the Bishop, Peter Carrell and Chair of Christ Church Cathedral Reinstatement Ltd. and major funder Mark Stewart. Their message is that the costs involved have sky-rocketed from \$160 million to \$248 million, and the timeframe for completion of the restoration has increased to 2031. Most concerning is the need for \$30 million by August which will complete the strengthening work and see the project through to the end of the year.

The proposed sunken courtyard on the north side has been shelved, and I'm hoping the ancillary buildings will go the same way. Maybe the buildings proposed on the south side of the cathedral could take space in one of the buildings nearby - thinking of The Grand (the old Post Office building) as one example.

It's essential that the Cathedral restoration continues as it's the heart of our city, and Cathedral Square will never be a place to gather, whilst the building sits unfinished and unoccupied.

Sandra Shaw

CANTERBURY MUSEUM

ARAITEURU – ARA NUI. ARA ROA. ARA AKE RĀ.

Christchurch Civic Trust was invited to attend the launch of Araiteuru, Canterbury Museum's epic redevelopment journey, at Rehua Marae, 79 Springfield Road, on 18 March 2024.

The great journey the Museum has embarked on has two distinct but converging pathways. The physical journey will see the Museum buildings redeveloped over the next 5 years. These have been plagued for years with problems that were exacerbated by the Canterbury earthquakes. The Benjamin Mountfort-designed heritage buildings and the Robert McDougall Gallery (the city's former art gallery) will be strengthened and restored, and the twentieth century buildings will be replaced. The Museum has released a fly through of the redeveloped Museum which you can watch [here](#).

At the same time the Museum has embarked on a cultural development journey in partnership with mana whenua, to reimagine and redevelop not just the physical buildings but the institution itself. Canterbury Museum's focus for this journey is to build both stronger and deeper relationships with mana whenua. Central to this will be embracing the place of Te Tiriti o Waitangi and working together to learn what it means to be a better Treaty partner with mana whenua and all Canterbury Museum's communities.

The Museum is at the start of a challenging journey towards becoming a world-class museum that celebrates the people and place of Waitaha Canterbury. The name Canterbury Museum has adopted for this journey is - **Araiteuru – Ara nui. Ara roa. Ara ake rā. A great journey. An extended journey. A revealing Journey.**

Araiteuru, was one of the earliest of the great voyaging waka to arrive in Te Waipounamu (the South Island), from Hawai'iki, and acknowledges the tīpuna (ancestors) and mahi (work) of those who have come before us. Canterbury Museum has a long relationship with Ngāi Tūāhuriri and they are working together to ensure that Māori voices tell Māori stories, and that the Museum's redevelopment occurs through genuine relationships.

For nearly 40 years, Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu has been represented on the Museum Ngāi Tahu Trust Board. In 1996, Ōhākī o Ngā Tīpuna – the iwi liaison committee – was established. Since 1996, bicultural competence and understanding has been elevated with te reo Māori lessons, waiata, noho marae (overnight marae stay) and



Museum staff and the Crown Relocation crew manoeuvre a large waka from the basement of the Museum in November 2023

increased understanding of tikanga and tradition underway with Te Manutaki, a group of Māori Museum staff, providing guidance in a 10-year bicultural strategy – Te Rautaki Kākano Rua – which has a number of initiatives and a range of areas supporting the Museum's journey.

A new website launched in April 2023 is designed to acknowledge and reflect the values and tikanga of biculturalism as the foundation of Canterbury's multi-cultural and diverse communities.

You can watch the launch of Araiteuru at Rehua Marae on 18 March [here](#).

Lynette Hardie Wills, PhD.

Follow the Museum's journey of change on its website:

<https://www.canterburymuseum.com/redevelopment>

Link to fly through video

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D9v9GLtnDHY>

Link to the launch of Araiteuru
<https://youtu.be/kSsPUCIvvdY>

AWARDS 2024

The Christchurch Civic Trust is seeking nomination for consideration in its annual awards. Nominations should be sent by 31 July. to

secretary@christchurchcivictrust.org.nz

The views expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of the Civic Trust