



WELLINGTON CIVIC TRUST

Newsletter No. 2 June 2013

This is the second update *Newsletter* in 2013 for members and supporters of the Wellington Civic Trust. For the archive of earlier Newsletters see <http://www.wellingtoncivictrust.org/newsletters>

Feel free to circulate this further or to copy (with acknowledgement) from it. For more information, or for suggestions as to what you would like the Newsletter to cover, see our website or contact secretary@wellingtoncivictrust.org

Chairman's Introduction

I'm writing this in the week that the Dominion Post is publishing an interesting set of features about the positive future of Wellington. The cynic might say that this is just pre-election spin, or a reaction against the Prime Minister's throwaway comment (later in effect retracted by him) that Wellington is now a "dying city". The optimist will say that a renewed drive is all that is needed to turn Wellington's potential into full realization. The realist will say that Wellington's a great place in every respect – economically, socially, visually – and that it always thrives best on lively debate which is well-informed and not dependent on sound-bites. In which camp would you, a member, put the Civic Trust? I'd say the realist trending towards the optimist. Sceptic maybe, when the evidence supports this; but not cynic.

Our 2012/13 Annual Report was tabled and adopted at the AGM on May 30th, and to give it wider circulation it's up on the website and

attached to paper copies of this Newsletter. Most of last year's themes will carry forward into the 2013/14 year, and at the first meeting of the new Board on 10th June we confirmed Trustee portfolios to focus our efforts. We'll keep you informed through these Newsletters and will call upon the huge range of skills amongst our membership when sub-committees or project groups are formed for specific tasks. Often the timing of these are set by others, e.g. during this submissions for the Basin Bridge consents and the Local Government change processes. The main thing is that we have done our homework and built a sound policy base.

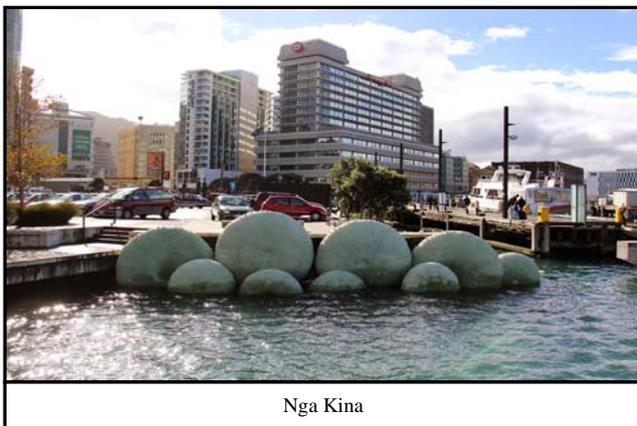
The new Board has done me the honour of electing me Chairman again. Thank you. We have a good team and look forward to adding positively to the Wellington scene.

Alan Smith

The 2013 Civic Trust Awards

Many thanks to Toni Izzard and Bruce Stokell for driving this, our sixth in the series.

The people's choice? Those Kina on the Waterfront. The winner of the **People's Choice Award** for 2013 is **Nga Kina** by Michael Tuffery and the Wellington Sculpture Trust.



Nga Kina

This was presented by Chris Parkin at the fifth Wellington Civic Trust Awards on Tuesday evening 21 May in the City Council Chamber. The Awards celebrate the Civic Trust's long-standing objectives of encouraging and celebrating high quality building, restoration, public spaces and city art – the things which add so much to making our city a wonderful place to live, work and play.

Awards convenor and Civic Trust Deputy Chair Toni Izzard thanked Mayor Celia Wade-Brown for hosting the ceremony and the generous sponsorship from Chris Parkin of the Museum Art Hotel. "We want our Awards to raise spirited discussion about structures and spaces", said Alan Smith, Civic Trust Chairman. "It keeps this active city always moving forward with urban design which celebrates both its potential and its heritage."

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The runner-up in the **Built Environment Award** is:

- The **Maori Women's Welfare League Head Office** by Herriot and Melhuish Architects.



Central Park Flats

The winner of the **Built Environment Award** is:

- The **Central Park Flats** of the City Housing Project- Novak and Middleton Architects and the Wellington City Council.

The runner-up in the **Open Space Award** is:

- **Pipitea Marae** by Moorhead & Newdick Landscape Architects.

The winner of the **Open Space Award** is:

- **Taranaki Wharf Jump Platform** by Wraight & Associates and Wellington Waterfront Ltd



Taranaki Wharf Jump Platform

The **Grant Tilly Memorial Award** for heritage building conservation is a new category, with the support and input of Grant's widow, Ruth Jeffrey. Ruth provided a very special prize to the first winner of what should become a regular category for future Awards.

- The runner-up is **Government House** by Athfield Architects.
- The **winner** of the Grant Tilly Memorial Award is **Chevening Apartments** by Studio and Pacific Architecture.



Chevening Apartments

One further entry didn't fit within any of the categories, but shows innovation and good use of existing urban space which the Civic Trust applauds. That entry is **Urban Dream Brokerage** on behalf of Letting Space by Helen Kirlew Smith.

Although there is no runner-up in the **People's Choice** category, Toni Izzard let slip that in second place was the street art work on the **Tattoo Apartments** building in Abel Smith Street. We would love to see more of this type of urban enhancement.

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Annual General Meeting

At the generous invitation of the Hon. Fran Wilde this was held in the Greater Wellington regional Council Chambers, with 20 members present. After the regular business, and the award of two new Hon Life Memberships (see below), we had a fascinating talk by Wellington City Council's new CEO, Kevin Lavery. Kevin spoke of his UK local government background (Newcastle, Cornwall) and private sector IT-related work in the UK and Europe, and saw a positive future for Wellington through harnessing its potential and through collaborative engagements. It was good to introduce the Civic Trust to Kevin and we look forward to a productive working relationship.



Wellington City Council CEO Kevin Lavery

New Hon Life Member citations

WILLIAM TOOMATH

In early 2010 there was a landmark exhibition in the City Gallery entitled Architect Bill Toomath:

Liberating Everyday Life. It was wonderful – and so is the man, and so is his contribution to the built character of Wellington. From the newly-formed Civic Trust’s very first project – the Lambton Harbour Design Competition in 1982 – Bill has brought his professional skill and commitment, and his clear but certainly not dogmatic vision of what Wellington might be, to the Wellington Civic Trust and by so doing has enriched our work and the collegiality of the Civic Trust’s people.

Bill’s commitment to the urban form and quality of Wellington has been around long before 1982, though. Born in Petone and educated at, amongst other places, at Hutt Valley High School where later I, unknowingly, was an appreciative user of new facilities he designed there, Bill has brought the best of international thinking to his work and thinking. Here is a man who studied at Harvard, who spoke with Le Corbusier and Walter Gropius and worked for I M Pei. He was an early participant in the immediate post-war years of both the Architectural Centre here in Wellington and The Architectural Group in Auckland. As head of the then Wellington Polytechnic’s School of Design from 1979 to 1989 he influenced the emerging generations of creative thinkers and doers. He will always be associated with Modernism but it’s worth quoting an insightful remark of his recorded in 4 Architects 1950-1980 put out in 2010 by the New Zealand Architectural Publications Trust. Bill comments on ‘the New Brutalism – or at least on “brutalism”. I think” Bill says “that it’s a most unfortunate word to have been adopted by architectural journalists because it has nothing to do with brutishness. It comes straight from the French word ‘brut’ as in champagne brut.....this word ‘brutalism’ has

done more damage than any other tricky phrase.”

Modernist he may be, but Bill’s thinking spans time to bring the very best to the Wellington character. At his Roseneath home he has built a study following an exact design from analysing a 15th century painting in the National Gallery, London - St Jerome in his Study by Antonello da Messina. Sitting there, he can look out over the harbour to the hills and the city which is not only his 21st century home, but a city which he has enriched in many ways, including by his staunch support of the Civic Trust and of its goals. It is truly an honour, albeit a modest one, to accord William Toomath with Honorary Life Membership.

DAVID MCGILL

Our official history records that “on 5 December 1980, David McGill, journalist with the Evening Post, and Mike Smith, Director of the Inner City Mission, convened a meeting at the Wesley Lounge, Taranaki St attended by 26 citizens of experience and expertise.....it was passed unanimously that a Wellington Civic Trust be established. David McGill was, and remains, a forceful fellow who understood that city character was more than just the economy of buildings and spaces; he said at that meeting that what was needed was greater public support for the Historic Places Trust; and even more important, the necessity of a Civic Trust to represent the thousands of concerned Wellingtonians. He had a vision of a Wellington Civic Trust as the focal point to receive matters of public concern for open discussion and for appropriate action.

The following year the Civic Trust was formed and here we are over three decades later, new generations carrying on that vision. David was only in his thirties at that time, with the passion of relative youth and a life already rich in diverse experiences. Today, as his prolific writings attest, he remains a man of wide and passionate beliefs; and we are grateful indeed for his strong suggestion last year that we instigate a special Heritage category in our now-regular Civic Trust Awards to honour David's late colleague Grant Tilly, who had been part of that creative ferment of 1980 and 1981.

David is a man of words, and of deeds. He understands how important words are to tell a story, to spread an idea, to build support, to encapsulate a picture, to spark a latent interest. Thus it was that in 1981 David sparked the movement toward the Wellington Civic Trust with his leadership. Read some of his books to get a glimpse of the diversity which lies within this initial force of ours. *Shaking 1960* describes a real Wellington which hovers in the background of an intriguing story. As David is reported to have said, "it's not autobiographical". It's more like what I would like to have happened to me that year". There are lots of things we would all like to have happened to our city, and it is only by words, and actions, that we can help shape the forces that determine what actually does happen. The Wellington Civic Trust is one vehicle for that, and it is an honour to accord David McGill with Honorary Life Membership.

Heritage Structures

We are joining with the NZ Historic Places

Trust and Historic Places Wellington as RMAs274 parties to the owner's appeal against the Commissioner's decision to decline consent for the demolition of this Grade 1 listed building. Gerald Blunt will represent us at the Environment Court case, which is expected to be in August. Our position is summarised in the Annual Report included with this Newsletter. Places Trust.

New Trustee – Maurice Clark

Welcome to a new face at the Board table, but a man with an impressive record in the Wellington commercial construction and heritage refurbishment scene. Maurice is the owner of McKee Fehl Constructors, and included in his refurbishment projects have been Victoria University's Hunter Building and Law School (Old Government Buildings), and the Tower Insurance and Stout St Departmental buildings.

Get Involved!

Participating through the Wellington Civic Trust is stimulating, topical and relevant.

It's membership renewal time and the Wellington Civic Trust welcomes both new and returning members. If you haven't renewed your membership, are interested in contributing, or know somebody else who might be, then go to the Wellington Civic Trust website to find out how to get involved:

<http://www.wellingtoncivictrust.org/get-involved>

Underground Wellington

In the last Newsletter we showed you some brickwork that had been unearthed during the works for the new memorial park and bypass tunnel. The pictures below relate to the **Waimapihi Stream** that has been underground for some time.



Wellington's Waimapihi Stream - The sculpture reflects the past pre European history and also tells the story of the streams of Wellington which have been hidden in drains for over 100 years. The blue line shows the path of the stream which has been redirected under the road away from the Z service station. As well as the bricks and the stream a midden was also unearthed and the shells carbon dated to approximately 600 years ago.

Check the sculpture out for yourself at the Z service station on Vivian Street, Te Aro.

We hope to tell you more about **Underground Wellington** in future Newsletters...until next time.

WELLINGTON CIVIC TRUST – BOARD TRUSTEES 2013/14

<u>Chairman:</u>	Alan Smith
<u>Deputy Chair:</u>	Toni Izzard
<u>Treasurer:</u>	David Tai (and Membership Secretary)
<u>Secretary:</u>	Vacant
<u>Other Trustees</u>	Bill Robertson, Craig Palmer, Liz Mellish, Mike Mellor, Bruce Stokell, Jonathan Suggate, Gerald Blunt, Duncan Joiner, Brett McKay, Murray Thessman, Jim McMahon, and Maurice Clark.

This *Newsletter* compiled by Alan Smith and formatted by Bruce Stokell and Jonathan Suggate, June 2013. Further details from secretary@wellingtoncivictrust.org or ph. 027-285-6304

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