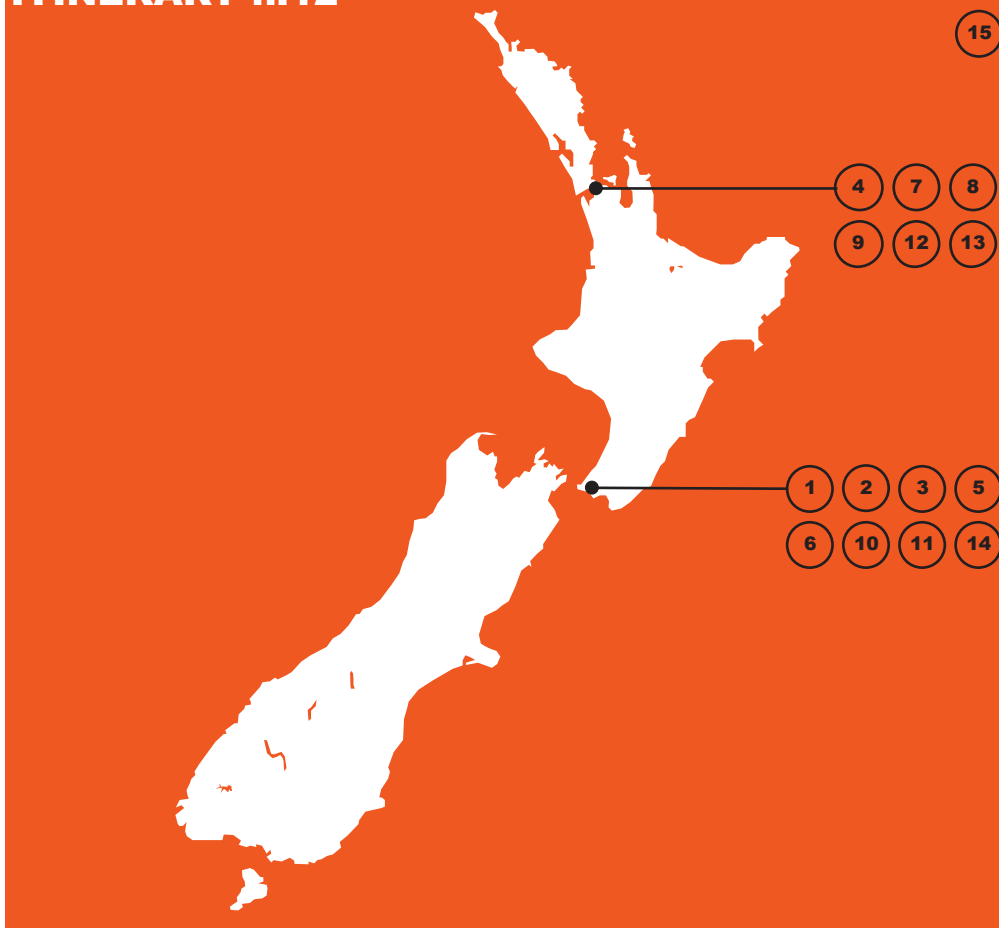


## ITINERARY n.12

NOT ON MAP



With the nights lengthening, we present some alternatives to an evening by the tellie - local architectural history books. Future BLOCK guides will look at Kiwi architecture journals and monographs on local architects.

## Out-of-Print 1: Histories & Anthologies

Looking over the books on the history of New Zealand architecture, perhaps the most surprising thing is how few of them there are. Our Institute of Architects recently celebrated its centenary, but one hundred years of professional activity have produced only a half-dozen major history books and a comparable number of minor ones.

Even through the overall number of texts is small, expansion in the field is nonetheless noticeable from the 1970s. This followed, and was also concurrent with, the comprehensive redevelopment of our inner-cities, which involved the large-scale demolition of historic buildings to make way for new highrises. Public support for the retention of significant historic buildings meant the expansion of the heritage conservation sector, which led to an increase in research and writing on the country's old buildings. In the latter 1970s and the 1980s, the rise of postmodernism encouraged further interest in architectural history; to make historical references in their buildings, architects had to know something about history.

The 1990s saw renewed enthusiasm for the clean lines of modernism. This is evident not only in our buildings but also in the architectural history books and papers produced that decade. Consistent with the interest in modernism, New Zealand architectural history of this decade culminated in Clark and Walker's excellent book, *Looking for the Local* (2000). The process begun in the 1990s and which will likely be continued in future publications is the re-evaluation and re-incorporation into our historical narratives of figures who, for various reasons, have previously been excluded. This includes architects such as Kenneth Albert, Bill Haresnape, Lillian Chrystal, and Claude Megson, who have each been omitted from a number of otherwise thorough books.

Most of our early histories were written by practicing architects. The wave of texts published through the Historic Places Trust tended to involve input from social historians, such as Frances Porter (she was married to architect George Porter, who had founded the Wellington Architectural Centre in 1946). More recently there has been greater divergence: Peter Shaw, the author of our best survey text, has a background in journalism and exhibition curating; Douglas Lloyd Jenkins is a design historian turned architectural historian and now gallery director; Justine Clark has an academic background and is currently editor of *Architecture Australia*; and Paul Walker is an academic. We can be hopeful that the coming years will bring an increasing number of books by local academics. While Performance-Based Research Funding requires academics to be constantly researching and writing, getting their work into book form requires some skill in handling the mechanics of the PBRF system – its weighting encourages academics to produce articles for scholarly journals (and thus for comparatively limited readerships) rather than books aimed at a broader readership.

But NZ's dearth of architectural histories may be not for a lack of writers but a perceived lack of readers – until recent years, publishers have assumed the market for such books was limited. However, with the increasing popularization of design culture and the success of books such as Douglas Lloyd Jenkins' *At Home* (2004), there is reason to be optimistic about the future of publishing on New Zealand architecture and architectural history. *Julia Gately and Andrew Barrie*

- ① Paul Pascoe  
 'Houses', *Making New Zealand Vol. 2, No. 20*  
 Dept of Int'l Affairs, Wellington



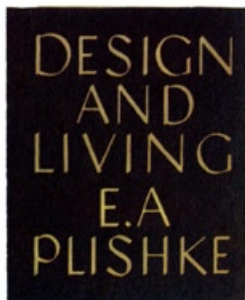
The *Making New Zealand* series was published on the occasion of New Zealand's centenary. Paul Pascoe wrote the text for the two architectural issues, and his brother John was the illustrations editor and designer for the series. 'Houses' provided a history of New Zealand housing covering Maori whare, settler huts and homesteads, villas and bungalows and state housing initiatives. It culminated in then cutting-edge projects by Humphrey Hall, Robin Simpson and Vernon Brown, as well as the Berhampore flats, soon to be renamed Centennial Flats.

② 1940  
Paul Pascoe,  
*'Public Buildings', Making New Zealand Vol. 2, No. 21*  
Dept. of Int'l Affairs, Wellington



The second architecture issue in the *Making New Zealand* series claimed that 'Our architecture derived from England', although quite progressively, it opened with the line that, 'The earliest type of public building in New Zealand was the whare runanga or tribal meeting house of the Maoris', and the opening image was of Rangiatea Church, Otaki. The historical styles were all covered, along with 20th century architects including Gummer & Ford, William Gray Young and Stephenson & Turner. The late 1930s public architecture is noticeably less radical than the corresponding houses shown in issue 20. Issue 22 of the series, by G. L. Gabites, looked at furniture.

③ 1947  
Ernst Plischke  
*Design and Living*  
Dept. of Int'l Affairs, Wellington



Plischke was a frequent writer on the subject of modern design. His best known book, *Design and Living*, was an expanded reworking of the earlier text, *About Houses*, which had been published by the Army Education and Welfare Service in 1945. Interestingly, Plischke was using the alternative spelling of his surname in this period to help unsophisticated Kiwis with their pronunciation. The book covered design at every scale, from furniture and interior design to town planning. It was one of the most widely read NZ books on architecture of its time, and made Plischke famous enough to leave the Housing Division of the MoW and go into private practice.

④ 1954  
James Garrett  
*Home Building, 1814-1954: The New Zealand Tradition*  
Pelorus Press, Auckland



This was published as the catalogue for an exhibition curated by students of the Auckland University College School of Architecture; one of these student curators was the young Peter Bartlett. Author James Garrett would later write the entry on 'Architecture' in A. H. McLintoch's *Encyclopaedia of New Zealand* (1966). In this book, Garret's survey of New Zealand houses covered Maori whare through settler buildings and Arts & Crafts to the 1950s. It culminated in one of his own designs for a concrete block house, which pre-dates the frenzy of activity in the use of this building material in the mid-to-late 1950s.

⑤ 1972  
John Stacpoole & Peter Beavan  
*Architecture 1820-1970*  
A.H. & A.W. Reed, Wellington



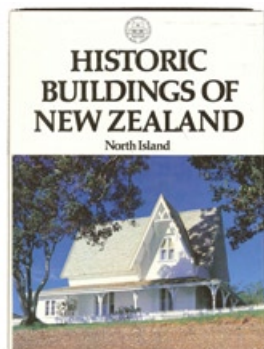
This compact volume contains a sweeping survey, dividing New Zealand architecture into three periods: 1820-80, 1880-1920 and 1920-70. Each of the three periods has an introductory essay, followed by key buildings, most given a single page of images and text. Notable is the attention given to large and public projects, in contrast to the usual obsession with the house; the houses that are here are more often mansions than baches. There is comparatively little attention to mid-century modernism, and Beaven's work on this book coincided with his increasing interest in designing buildings that demonstrated a clear response to their historic contexts.

⑥ 1976  
John Stacpoole  
*Colonial Architecture in NZ*  
A.H. & A.W. Reed, Wellington



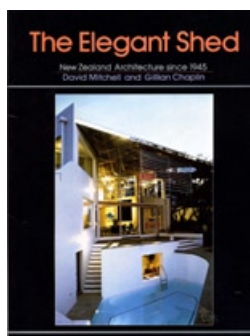
Stacpoole was a prolific writer on 19th century New Zealand architecture. Books that pre-date *Colonial Architecture* include a biography of William Mason (1971), the survey with Beaven (1972), and *Victorian Auckland* (1973). Stacpoole's 1976 survey does not correspond to the exact years of New Zealand's status as a colony (1840-1907), but instead covers the 1820s to the early 1880s, when a recession slowed construction. It is concerned with 'European architecture', but was still a much more complete survey of the colonial period than had previously been published. This book is fairly readily available for less than \$50.

⑦ 1979  
Frances Porter, ed.  
*Historic Buildings of NZ: North Island*  
Cassell, Auckland



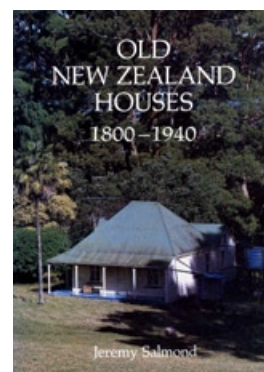
A South Island counterpart to this volume was published by Methuen in 1983. The book's coverage is limited to the 19th century, but extended to both the Maori and Pakeha traditions. Like Stacpoole's book, these two volumes coincided with increasing public concern about the demolition of large numbers of New Zealand's historic buildings and their replacement with concrete highrises. The New Zealand Historic Places Trust was actively researching and classifying the country's historic buildings and supported the publication of these two volumes. Both volumes are quite easy to find in second hand book stores.

⑧ 1984  
David Mitchell & Gillian Chaplin  
*The Elegant Shed*  
Oxford Univ. Press, Auckland



*The Elegant Shed* differs from previous texts by its focus on the post-World War II period, its attention to ordinary and everyday architecture (a la Venturi et al) and its frank analysis of comparatively recent architecture - written by a practicing architect. Like Douglas Lloyd Jenkins' *At Home*, *The Elegant Shed* was also a TV series, although in the 80s the TV show came first. The book's myth-making power is such that it was assigned a whole chapter in *Exquisite Apart*, where Peter Wood described it as a 'watershed' in New Zealand architectural discourse. A mint condition copy was recently spotted on sale at Jason's Books on Lorne Street for \$120.

⑨ 1986  
Jeremy Salmond  
*Old New Zealand Houses 1800-1940*  
Reed Methuen, Auckland



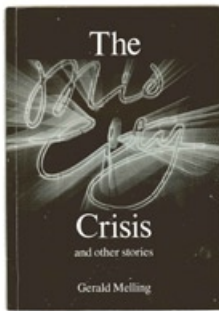
This book developed out of Jeremy Salmond's Masters thesis on the subject of historical New Zealand houses. It is a comprehensive guide to our heritage of cottages, villas and bungalows, supported by a raft of explanatory line drawings and photographs. It has become a standard text for architecture students and home renovators, and has been reprinted many times; it must be one of the best selling books ever produced on New Zealand architecture. To distinguish a corner angle bay villa from a return bay villa or even a single bay with gable over villa, this is still the place to look.



10

1989

Gerald Melling  
*The Mid-City Crisis*  
Thumbprint Press, Wellington

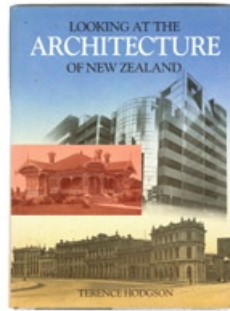


Gerald Melling, one-time editor of *NZ Architect* magazine, has been known for his fearless but articulate commentary on the Kiwi architecture scene since the early 1980s. His previous books include monographs on both Ian Athfield (1980) and Roger Walker (1985). The cleverly titled *Mid-City Crisis* gathers together a series of his entertaining essays, mostly written for the *National Business Review* between 1987 and 1989. They capture the excesses of postmodern architecture and 1980s speculative development with satire and wit. In some ways, this post-1987 crash book represents the flipside to the postmodern playfulness of *The Elegant Shed*.

11

1990

Terence Hodgson  
*Looking at the Architecture of NZ*  
Grantham House, Wellington



Terence Hodgson, a musician by training, has been writing on New Zealand architecture since 1978 when *Fire & Decay: The Destruction of the Large New Zealand House* was published. More recently, he has also turned his hand to fiction. *Looking at the Architecture of NZ*, published in black and white, was one of the more thorough surveys of local architecture to have appeared by 1990, but it was overtaken just one year later by Shaw's considerably larger, full-colour book on the same subject. Hodgson's book shouldn't be under-estimated, however, and is still a useful alternative to Shaw. Indeed, in some areas, such as the 1970s, Hodgson gives fuller coverage.

12

1991

Peter Shaw  
*New Zealand Architecture*  
Hodder & Stoughton, Auckland

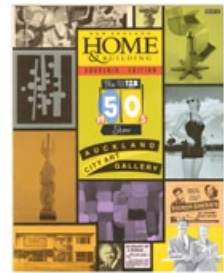


Shaw's book immediately became our key survey text, with second and third editions being published under the title *A History of New Zealand Architecture* (1997 and 2003). As suggested by the sub-title of the first edition, it includes traditional Maori buildings and is then structured chronologically, covering a broad range of architects, geographic areas and building types. Its bibliography was probably the most thorough yet published. Robin Morrison, who took the photographs, was one of New Zealand's best photographers, but died not long after the first edition was published.

13

1992

Debra Daley, ed.  
*The 1950s Show*  
Auckland City Art Gallery/AGM



This was a special souvenir edition of *NZ Home and Building*, published to coincide with an exhibition on the 1950s held at the Auckland City Art Gallery. The exhibition, designed by McKay Pearson Architects, is particularly remembered for its partial reconstruction of The Group's First House. The publication includes chapters by Peter Shaw on modernist architecture and on *Home and Building* magazine in the 1950s, as well as by Douglas Lloyd Jenkins on the design community. It includes a number of interesting and useful timelines and mini-biographies. The exhibition and this publication mark the beginning of a fixation with modernism that still drives New Zealand architecture.

14

2000

Justine Clark & Paul Walker  
*Looking for the Local: Architecture & the NZ Modern*  
Victoria Univ. Press, Wellington

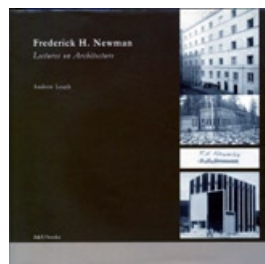


*Looking for the Local* is a very important book, in part for the stories it tells about modern architecture in New Zealand and the wealth of photographs it provides of modern buildings. But it is much more than just a book about buildings. It is a book about books, journals, manifestos, exhibitions, photography: it is a book about texts. It also articulated very clearly the emergence of two major strands of modern architecture in post-war New Zealand: the international modern and a specifically Kiwi modernism. This book is already collectable, almost impossible to find in second hand books shops or even online auction sites.

15

2003

Andrew Leach  
*Frederick H. Newman: Lectures on Architecture*  
A&S Books, Ghent



This book developed out of Andrew Leach's Masters thesis on hydro architecture of the post-war period. It comprises essays written by Newman, as well as a brief biographical essay on him by Leach. Newman was an Austrian émigré and worked in the Housing Department before moving across to Hydro. He had planned to write a book on architecture in his retirement, but he died in 1964 before either retirement or the book eventuated. His essays demonstrate interests shared by many modern architects, in medium- and high-density housing, social factors in architecture, town planning, hydro dams and the relationship between architecture and engineering.

## Still in Print:

Barbara Brookes, ed.  
*At Home in New Zealand (2000)*

Bridget Williams Books, Wellington

This book comprises a series of essays around the idea of the home in New Zealand written by academics from history, anthropology and architecture. State housing gets quite a run.

Douglas Lloyd Jenkins  
*At Home: A Century of NZ Design (2004)*

Godwit, Auckland

This book is a survey of domestic design, notable for its consideration of not only architecture and interior design but also furniture, ceramics and textiles. Commercially successful, the book earned the Montana Book Award for non-fiction and gave rise to a TV series that screened in 2006.



Charles Walker, ed.  
*Exquisite Apart (2005)*  
NZIA, Auckland

This is the NZIA's centennial publication, but it is a rather unusual centennial publication in that it is not a history: it is a series of essays reflecting on 20th century architecture – some by practicing architects and a smaller number by academics.

Douglas Lloyd Jenkins, ed.  
*New Dreamland: Writing New Zealand Architecture (2005)*  
Godwit, Auckland

This book brings together key texts on New Zealand architecture, predominantly about contemporary architecture rather than architectural history. It is an extremely valuable resource, although it has been suggested that some of the inclusions from more recent times are rather obscure.

