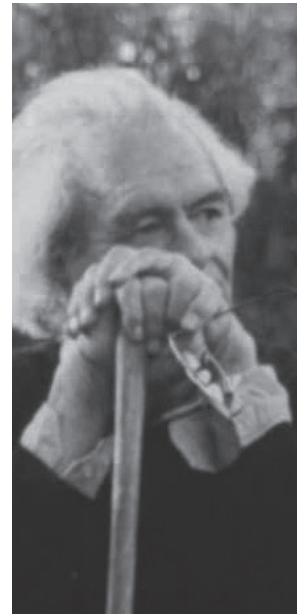
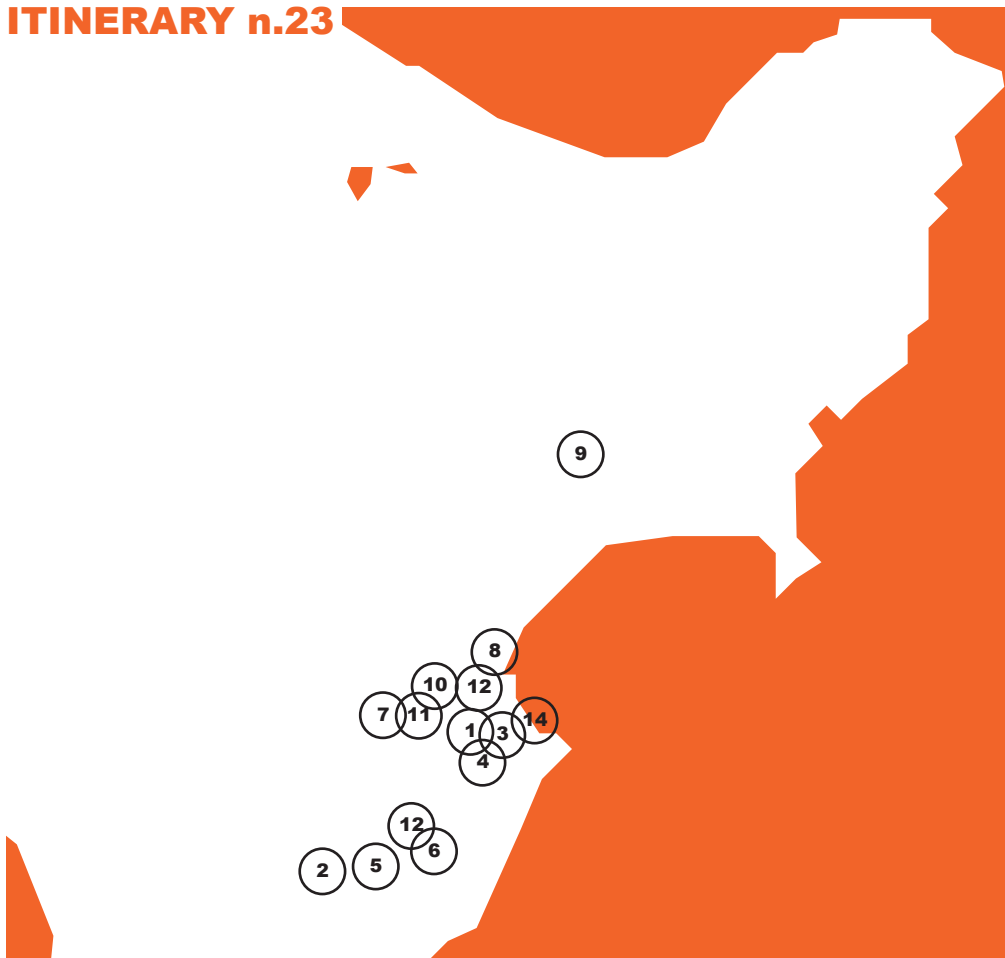


ITINERARY n.23



John Scott at his Haumoana home, 1988. Photo: Julia Gatley

The *Long Live the Modern* exhibition is now on tour, showing at the Hawkes Bay Museum and Art Gallery, Napier, from 4 July to 22 November 2009 before moving on to the capital and the South Island. In conjunction with the *LLtM* show, the NZIA Gisborne-Hawkes Bay Branch is organising a bus tour on Saturday 8 August.

John Scott 1: Hawkes Bay Public Blgs

For the Napier showing of *Long Live the Modern*, the Hawkes Bay Museum and Art Gallery has upped the quota of local material, concentrating on the work of local favourites, John Scott and Len Hoogerbrug. The pair were in partnership for much of the 1960s and into the 1970s. Their buildings tend to be attributed to one or other partner rather than to both together, and drawings are often devoid of the partnership's title-bar. For these reasons, this itinerary concentrates on Scott, while a future one will look at Hoogerbrug's work. It should be remembered, however, that there would have been much in the way of discussion and dialogue between the pair. In fact Peter Wood has identified Maurice K. Smith and Len Hoogerbrug's Firth Concrete Offices, Hastings (1958), as an influence on the design of Futuna even before the formation of Hoogerbrug & Scott's partnership.

Most of Scott's best known non-residential works are located outside of Hawkes Bay. In addition to Futuna Chapel, Wellington (1958-61), this includes the Maori Battalion Memorial Hall, Palmerston North (1954-64); St Joseph the Worker, Turangi (1965); St Canice's Church, Westport (1976); the Aniwanuiwa Visitor Centre, Lake Waikaremoana (1973-76); and the Waitangi Visitor Centre (1975-83). Those in Hawkes Bay include the wonderful Our Lady of Lourdes Church in Havelock North (1959-60), but what else?

This itinerary presents a selection of what is on offer. It demonstrates the extent to which the Catholic Church was an important client for much of Scott's career, commissioning not only church buildings but also schools. There was a smaller number of religious buildings for other denominations, as well as club premises and doctors' surgeries.

The selection confirms that in general, the best known buildings warrant their profile. It also reveals various recurrent themes, the strongest of which is the commitment to the repetitive use of simple geometric shapes, notably pavilions with square plans, each capped by a pyramidal roof, the earlier ones with skylights at the apexes. Individual pavilions within complexes (or, similarly, individual rooms within buildings) would sometimes be staggered in relation to each other, with corners dissolved to allow diagonal circulation internally while also creating private outdoor spaces which are sheltered from prevailing winds and often open on the north or north-west for sun. When sloping sites permitted it, these devices were pursued in conjunction with changes in floor level, confirming Scott to have been a very clever spatial thinker. Material palettes are varied, with extensive use of concrete block – either fair-faced or rough-plastered – in conjunction with exposed timbers. A few of the later works sport fibro-cement sheet claddings.

Some of Scott's very good buildings have already been demolished and the Aniwanuiwa Visitor Centre is under threat of demolition at the present time. On a happier note, the HB MAG, the Art Deco Trust and Hawkes Bay architects and local authorities are all making headway in researching and assessing the broader local legacy of one of New Zealand's most talented architects. *Julia Gatley*

Biography:

John Colin Scott (1924-92) was born in Haumoana, Hawkes Bay. Catholic, head prefect and a First XV rugby player, he considered becoming a priest and volunteered for the air force before deciding upon architecture at Auckland University College. There he was influenced by lecturer Vernon Brown and fellow student Bill Wilson. He married Wilson's sister-in-law in 1951 and worked with the Group for a couple of months before heading back to Hawkes Bay and was soon designing houses there. Some of the early ones are surprisingly conservative. Larger and more diverse work followed, including the Catholic churches and schools through which he really built his national reputation, the latter secured in 1968 when Futuna Chapel was awarded an NZIA Gold Medal. Scott became known for combining references to the Maori whare and the New Zealand woolshed, acknowledging both sides of his ancestry. But he also emphasized that he was an architect who happened to be Maori and did not seek recognition as a 'Maori architect'. Scott was awarded an NZIA Gold Medal in 1999.

1 1953-56
St John's College & Chapel
Jervois St, Mayfair
Hastings



When its existing accommodation proved too small, Scott's old high school commissioned him to design its new premises on a fresh site. This was his first major project and with its rough-plastered surfaces, first floor classrooms raised on piloti and giant access ramp, it must have taken Hastings by storm. These classrooms are raised to create a sizeable, open-air area underneath that is protected from both sun and rain. Early drawings show the proposal for a rectilinear chapel with a barrel-vaulted roof, but this was redesigned and built nearer to the school's main entry with an octagonal plan and pyramidal roof.

2 1959
Extension to
St Vincent's Church
Takapau



This is a surprisingly conservative porch addition that takes its lead from the old, continuing the use of rusticated weatherboard wall cladding and corrugated metal roofing. The new roof is pitched at the same angle as the old, sitting immediately under the old eave. Other than this rather odd detail, it is really in the design of doors and windows that the new is differentiated from the old. Side windows accommodate frosted glass while that above the entry is coloured. The small bellcote appears to be old and was presumably moved from above the original entry. The loss of the street façade is generally not something conservationists would now encourage.

3 1959-60
Our Lady of Lourdes Church
85 Te Mata Rd
Havelock North



Our Lady of Lourdes was designed and built concurrent with Futuna. It is a beautiful church with entry and top-lit altar at opposite ends of a diagonal axis that forms the main aisle and on which the ridge also lies. The roof drops low in the other two corners. The mass of rough-plastered concrete is contrasted by alternating panels of timber and coloured Perspex which march towards the altar. A 1960 newspaper described it as 'ultra-contemporary without destroying its identification as a church'. Scott also designed the presbytery, a cluster of square pavilions with pyramidal roofs across the carpark from the church. See Bill McKay's entry in *Long Live the Modern* (Auckland: AUP, 2008) and *Building Progress* March 1973.

4 1964-65
Chapel of the Good Shepherd
Waiapu House, Danvers Street
Havelock North



Unlike most of Scott's churches, this one is Anglican rather than Catholic and is located within a retirement village. It is fascinating for two reasons. First, its square plan echoes that of Futuna, quartered with one corner dissolved to create a sheltered entry; sanctuary diagonally opposite; and two banks of pews in the remaining two quarters, parallel with the walls but at a 45 degree angle to the altar. Second, the gabled exterior can be seen to anticipate the form of the Brow, the famous Waipawa farm house that Scott would design for the Pattison family a couple of years later. Waiapu House staff were surprised at my interest – this one doesn't seem to attract many architecture tourists.

5 1965
St Joseph's Catholic Primary
School, 6 Russell Street
Waipukurau



This L-shaped classroom block works in conjunction with an administration wing and parish hall to produce a courtyard complex, enclosed on three sides and open on the north. Around the courtyard, overhanging eaves are supported on posts to both shade the interior spaces and provide a sheltered walkway around the complex – a reinterpretation of the cloistered quadrangular courtyard buildings that ultimately have Oxbridge precedents but have been adapted in numerous different situations ever since. Roofs are pitched and are carried by exposed timber roof trusses with sloping ceilings. Windows are abundant, yet dormer windows further illuminate the interiors.

6 1969
St Columba's Convent School
4 Victoria Street
Waipawa



While Our Lady of Lourdes had included a cluster of square pavilions with pyramidal roofs for its presbytery, here the system is used on a larger scale. Four pavilions each accommodated one classroom. The four were separated from each other and dotted around a central courtyard, and were intended to be linked by covered ways. Toilets and other services are flat-roofed. Walls are of concrete block, with a slight recess under the fascias. The interesting thing here is the treatment of the corners of each pavilion as 'servant spaces', surely influenced by Louis Kahn's Trenton Bathhouse, New Jersey (1955-59). Book shelves, in particular, were tucked in behind short partitions. The building no longer functions as a school, but as an agricultural laboratory.

7 1968-70
Kamaka Pottery
64 Valentine Road
Bridge Pa



The Martin House (see *Long Live the Modern*) is becoming one of Scott's better known houses. On the same site is the building from which potters Bruce and the late Estelle Martin designed, made and sold their beautiful pots – and Bruce still does. The Martins used Japanese potting techniques. Scott too was interested in Japanese architecture and design, visiting Japan on a Churchill Fellowship in 1969 and while there, made a particular effort to see Kenzo Tange's work. There is synchronicity between the Martin House and the Kamaka Pottery building, both of which comprise multiple small pavilions in concrete block with mono-pitched roofs.

8 1972-75
St Mary's Church
58 Osier Road, Greenmeadows
Napier



The curving, windowless rough-plastered wall facing Osier Road is the character-defining element here. The sloping parapet follows the mono-pitched roof from high above the altar to low at the back of the nave, where floor-to-ceiling glass allows natural light to enter from the south-east. To find the building's entry, follow the curved wall. A wave-like portion the roof relieves the heavy mass of the street elevation and adds a sense of drama. A courtyard entry is part of the architectural promenade, leading to an interior with swooping ceiling and timber pews. Coloured windows fill the interstices between the straight and curving lines and bathe the interior, particularly the sanctuary, in warm light.

9

1973-76

Aniwaniwa Visitor Centre
Lake Waikaremoana



Lake Waikaremoana is a big drive from Hawkes Bay, but we include the Aniwaniwa Visitor Centre here because more people need to know that it is 'condemned as unsafe' (*Dominion Post*, 21 March 2009, A9) and currently under threat of demolition. The owner, the Department of Conservation, says it is sodden right through, a very leaky building. Its condition is exacerbated by its location in native bush on DoC land, this owner not generally known for chopping back bush to let architecture breathe. We understand that the Colin McCahon triptych *Urewera Mural* has already been relocated to protect it from the moisture. It will be devastating if the building goes.

10

1976-77

Hastings Bridge Club
911 Railway Road
Hastings



By this time the use of square pavilions with pyramidal roofs seems a little formulaic, although one thing that differentiates this approach here is the use of a small number of pavilions, of radically different dimensions. The largest one is the 'Card Room'; second largest, the 'Social Room'; third largest, the 'Counting Room'; and smallest, the entry porch. Flat-roofed services are located on the south side of the building. Concrete block walls are painted inside and out. Rafters are exposed and are dark stained against sheet sarking.

11

1977

GP Surgery
509 Southland Road
Hastings



Definitely one of the highlights of Scott's lesser known Hawkes Bay buildings. The form and detailing are more consistent with the Lake Waikaremoana and Waitangi visitor centres than with the pyramidal-roofed schemes. Roofs with tightly cropped eaves are pitched, other than the flat-roofed staffroom at the rear. Walls are concrete block, punctuated by windows of varying sizes, again other than the staffroom which is clad with timber boards and has large windows. Internally, an island reception and service core is ringed by waiting and consulting rooms and the staffroom. See *Cross Section* May 2008.

12

1975-85

Hawke's Bay Community
College, 501 Gloucester Street
Taradale, Napier



The foundation stone for the Hawke's Bay Community College was laid in 1975. In 1987 the School was renamed the Hawke's Bay Polytechnic. The next name change – to the Eastern Institute of Technology – occurred in 1996. EIT has multiple campuses. The Taradale campus has multiple buildings. Scott's contribution to the complex appears to be Block D, a courtyard building with a gabled entry with three supporting posts, in combination with a series of square-planned pavilions with pyramidal roofs, each one incrementally recessed like birds in flight.

13

1986

St John's Presbyterian-
Methodist Church Extension
Waipawa



This is another church project for Protestant denominations. The extension is located to one side of the old building and combines a new entry with a social / meeting room for parishioners. It provides an interesting counterpoint to Scott's earlier addition to St Vincent's Church, Takapau. This is a much more confident design. The new work is clearly differentiated from the old through the introduction of a plastered parapet, vertical coloured glazing strips, mono-pitched roof and sloping walls. Prince Charles may have interpreted it as 'a carbuncle on the face of an old friend', but the fact that the old and new are so different from each other is actually a good thing, as the building's history is legible to both users and visitors.

14

1990

Haumoana Playcentre
Holden Avenue
Haumoana



Scott produced an earlier design for a playcentre at Haumoana in 1966. It was a square-planned, pyramidal-roofed building with a skylight at its apex. That which we see today comprises two pavilions, with pitched rather than pyramidal roofs. The ridge of one is parallel to the street while that of the other is rotated 90 degrees. Between the two pavilions is a flat-roofed entry. Walls are concrete block. End walls are windowless; on the long walls, windows and French doors come right up to the tightly-cropped eaves.

Demolished:

Apostle of the Sea (1957) Napier

This building, also known as Seamen's Mission, is comparable to the Maori Battalion Memorial Hall in Palmerston North, another very frontal building on an urban corner site. The roof incorporates a series of barrel vaults, a move favoured by Le Corbusier.



Photo: Sheppard Collection

Catholic Primary School for Girls (1958) Marewa, Napier

Another building with a creative and carefully resolved roof structure. The building comprised a regular bay structure with alternating mono-pitched roofs for consecutive bays, creating a rhythm of solid and void. Beams span the voids to give the allusion of a butterfly roof. Wouldn't going to school here make you want to become an architect?



Photo: Sheppard Collection

Sources:

Except where noted, all photographs are by Julia Gatley. Scott's family holds his archive of drawings; photocopies of some are held in the Architecture Archive at The University of Auckland. Thanks to Sarah Cox and Lynette Leong for providing access to these for this itinerary.

There is a plethora of published material on Futuna, but much less on any other project. The better known works are outlined in overview articles: by Julie Dalzell in *Designscape* (June 1977); Mary Shanahan in *Architecture NZ* (March-April 1988); Keith Stewart in *Architecture NZ* (July-August 1999); and Deidre Brown in *Heritage NZ* (Spring 2005) and *Maori Architecture: From Fale to Whareniui and Beyond* (Auckland: Raupe, 2009). Walden's entry in the *Dictionary of New Zealand Biography* (see www.dnz.govt.nz/dnzb) focuses on Scott's life story. Of earlier sources, Ray Grover's 'Of Woolsheds, Houses and People: A Conversation with John Scott and Ming Ching-Fan', *Islands* (Spring 1973) remains essential reading. Craig Martin's website (www.johnscott.net.nz) is another useful source, and one that goes beyond the well known projects.