

**King's Buildings, 400-404 Heretaunga Street West**

Inventory Number: 42; Property ID: 21067; TRIM Reference: 21067#002#0003

Report by Marguerite Hill

Draft: 9 August 2007, updated December 2009, updated July 2012 (Cochran & Murray); Final Report: November 2012

---

## Hastings CBD Heritage Inventory Project



---

### KING'S BUILDINGS

---



Photo: R. Murray, 2012

#### LOCATION:

*Street and Number:* 400-404 Heretaunga St West (Council) or 402 Heretaunga St West and 101 Nelson St South (Business).

*Location:* Corner of Heretaunga Street West and Nelson Street South

*City / Town:* Hastings

*Region:* Hawke's Bay

#### LEGAL DESCRIPTION:

*Legal Description:* Lot 4-5 and part Lot 3 Deeds Plan 491

*Certificates of Title (including Registry):* HB B2/540 Lot 4-5 and part Lot 3 Deeds Plan 491, Hawke's Bay Registry

## King's Buildings, 400-404 Heretaunga Street West

Inventory Number: 42; Property ID: 21067; TRIM Reference: 21067#002#0003

Report by Marguerite Hill

Draft: 9 August 2007, updated December 2009, updated July 2012 (Cochran & Murray); Final Report: November 2012

---

### SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANCE:

#### *Architectural Value:*

King's Buildings, as it stands today, has modest architectural values, being a competent but otherwise relatively plain single-storey commercial building, fairly typical of its era.

#### *Historic Value:*

King's Buildings has the typical history of a retail building in Hastings, having housed a variety of tenants over the years. It has modest historical value for this.

#### *Aesthetic Value:*

King's Buildings has a prominent corner site near the edge of the Central Business District. It has aesthetic value in the streetscape, mainly deriving from its strong rhythmic arrangement of contrasting vertical and horizontal elements.

### HISTORY:

Plans for the original King's Buildings were designed by Grant and Ball architects in February 1911. These plans show a building one bay wide along Heretaunga Street, to be constructed on land owned by Francis King. This building must have been damaged or destroyed in the 1931 earthquake, as King received rehabilitation security from the Crown. In 1931 the design for the new King's Buildings, now occupying a large portion of the block, was draughted and in 1932 the building permits were approved by Council.

Title of the property was transferred to the Public Trustee in 1951, and then to Richard John Bernard King in 1953. In 1965 the property was then transferred to Leonard Joseph Webb and Cecil Eustace Hayward Pledger as executors in 1965, and eventually passed to Leonard Joseph Webb in 2001 and then to Brian Bernard King and Pauline Judith King later that year.<sup>1</sup> The site is now owned by Quovadis Seqentis Limited.

Previous tenants included a number of grocers (including Coon, Lee, Ching & Co,<sup>2</sup> Tritt,<sup>3</sup> and the long-standing G.W. Grainger & Co Ltd.<sup>4</sup>) Other tenants have included S.D. Coben, confectioner,<sup>5</sup> Hilda Gowns<sup>6</sup> and Zak's Bar and Grill. The current tenants are Monumental Services, Secondhand Computers, Copyplus and Cut Above.

In 2000, a façade enhancement grant was gifted to the Kings Building in order to upgrade the Art Deco façade, as it appeared 'dowdy and unattractive'. It was noted that a repaint would help the Art Deco decorative features to have an impressive impact on the local area, especially due to its location at a key entry point to the Hastings CBD.<sup>7</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> C.T. HB B2/540 Lot 4-5 and part Lot 3 Deeds Plan 491.

<sup>2</sup> *Wises Street Directories* 1916 and 1920.

<sup>3</sup> *Wises Street Directories* 1934.

<sup>4</sup> *Wises Street Directories* 1940, 1946, 1950-1, 1959-60.

<sup>5</sup> *Wises Street Directories* 1916 and 1920.

<sup>6</sup> *Wises Street Directories* 1950-51.

<sup>7</sup> Façade Enhancement Scheme – King's Building report, 2000

## King's Buildings, 400-404 Heretaunga Street West

Inventory Number: 42; Property ID: 21067; TRIM Reference: 21067#002#0003

Report by Marguerite Hill

Draft: 9 August 2007, updated December 2009, updated July 2012 (Cochran & Murray); Final Report: November 2012

---

### PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:

*Architect:* John Thomas Watson

John Thomas Watson (d. 1960) was born in Hull, England and came to New Zealand in 1905. He began a practice in Napier in 1932 after working in Greymouth, Masterton and Wellington (for Edwards Construction Co.). He worked as city architect in Napier, and while in both private and public practice he designed a number of structures along Marine Parade, including the Sound Shell. He also designed the Colonnade, the Municipal Theatre and the airport buildings.<sup>8</sup>

*Builder:* Unknown

*Date of construction:* c. 1932

*Construction details:* Concrete structural frame, steel windows, timber-framed roof.

*Description:* King's Buildings has a prominent corner site. A single storey structure, it is chamfered around the street corner, with a verandah running the full length of each elevation.

Most of the building's visual interest resides in the upper façade. This is distinguished by the rhythmic spacing of vertical column elements, half-engaged on the façade and half projecting above the parapet, with large scrolls on either side. These run through - and are visually counterbalanced by - a heavy horizontal parapet beam, with dentils below. At the street corner, an elevated parapet bears the legend "King's Buildings". There is a row of windows set low above the verandah to cast light into the shops below. The verandah stays project from the column elements. The soffit of the verandah, battened out over fibrous plaster, appears to be largely original, including a collection of old light galleries and an old light fitting.

Below the verandah, the external walls of the building are mostly composed of modern fabric, particularly aluminium shop-front joinery. Some items of interest remain on the Nelson Street frontage, including fluted pilasters, old timber window frames and coloured plaster infill panels that suggest something of the original finish quality of the shop-fronts. Some panels of the attractive original reddish mottled tiles remain on the Heretaunga Street frontage, although these have mostly been painted over.

Internally, some parts of the building retain original finishes, including battened ceilings and moulded cornices, run between the exposed concrete structural beams and columns.

### ELEMENTS OF ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE:

Element	Significance
Form and detail of façade above verandah	Townscape, aesthetic, architectural
Verandah and soffit, including lights	Townscape, architectural
Remnants of original wall finishes	Aesthetic

---

<sup>8</sup> 'Obituary, John Thomas Watson', *Hawke's Bay Herald Tribune*, 13 December 1960, n.p. (found in New Zealand Biographies volume 2, 1960, p. 145); 'Obituary, Mr. J.T. Watson', *Napier Daily Telegraph*, 12 December 1960, n.p. (found in New Zealand Biographies volume 2, 1960, p. 145).

**King's Buildings, 400-404 Heretaunga Street West**

Inventory Number: 42; Property ID: 21067; TRIM Reference: 21067#002#0003

Report by Marguerite Hill

Draft: 9 August 2007, updated December 2009, updated July 2012 (Cochran & Murray); Final Report: November 2012

---

**MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHIC REFERENCES:**

C.T. HB B2/540 Lot 4-5 and part Lot 3 Deeds Plan 491

'Obituary, John Thomas Watson', *Hawke's Bay Herald Tribune*, 13 December 1960, n.p.

'Obituary, Mr. J. T. Watson', *Napier Daily Telegraph*, 12 December 1960, n.p.

*Wises Street Directories*, 1916-1959-60.

*HDC Permit records:*

"Proposed shops for Mr F King", 3.2.1911, Grant & Ball Architects

**OTHER INFORMATION:**

*NZHPT Register:* Not registered

*District Plan:* The Kings Building is not specifically listed as a Heritage item in the Hastings District Plan, but is included within the Central Character Precinct.

*New Zealand Historic Places Act 1993:* This site has not been identified as a potential archaeological site under Section 2 of the New Zealand Historic Places Act 1993.

**OTHER PHOTOGRAPHS:**



Heretaunga Street West view of King's Buildings (Sarah Akers, 2009).

**King's Buildings, 400-404 Heretaunga Street West**

Inventory Number: 42; Property ID: 21067; TRIM Reference: 21067#002#0003

Report by Marguerite Hill

Draft: 9 August 2007, updated December 2009, updated July 2012 (Cochran & Murray); Final Report: November 2012



Nelson Street South view of King's Buildings (Sarah Akers, 2009).

ARCHIVE PLAN(S):

Erection of new shop premises, Heretaunga St West, Hastings for George Ebbett Esq. by Edmund Anscombe and Associates (1934) (TRIM Ref: 21067#0041)

