

Hastings CBD Heritage Inventory Project



TONG & MCIVOR



Photo: R. Murray, 2012

LOCATION:

Street and Number: 104 Nelson Street South

City / Town: Hastings

Region: Hawke's Bay

LEGAL DESCRIPTION:

Legal Description: Lot 2 DP 6142

Certificates of Title (including Registry): 93/154, Hawke's Bay Registry

SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANCE:

Architectural value:

The Tong & Mclvor building has architectural value, linked to its unusual proportions, interesting asymmetric composition, Art Deco styling and decorative features, and to the funerary chapel space.

Historic value:

The building has a long association with funeral direction in Hastings, as the building was occupied by a funeral business for at least the first 50 years. It could be considered to have some social value on the same basis.

Aesthetic value:

The building is located on Nelson Street, a key route to the Hastings CBD and its distinctive appearance and character in the streetscape helps to add to the sense of arrival at the western end of the city.¹

HISTORY:

The building at 104 Nelson Street was built in 1936 for undertakers' Charles Tong and Austin Mclvor.² Constructed by H.W. Abbott, the building was designed by well-known Hastings architects Davies and Phillips.³

Purpose-designed for Tong and Mclvor, the building at 104 Nelson Street included a chapel for funeral services.⁴ Sometime around the late 1950s Tong and Mclvor became Tong and Peryer Limited, and they used part of the building for manufacturing coffins.⁵ The building was used as a funeral home until at least the early 1980s.

In 1992, the building at 104 Nelson Street was acquired by the present owners, Tony Wilson and Christine Wilson.⁶ The building has been used as a retail space for the sale of leather clothing (known as Jet Clothing); other occupants have included Leather Direct and Connections (the Cranford Hospice Shop), and most recently Leather Action. The building is currently vacant.

In 2004, 104 Nelson Street South was gifted a façade enhancement grant in order to improve the appearance of the Art Deco architectural features of the building. The building is currently owned by Tony Wilson and Christine Wilson.

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:

Architect: Harold G. Davies & Eric Phillips

¹ Façade enhancement scheme application – Jet Leathers report, 2004

² Hastings District Council information file.

³ Hastings District Council information file.

⁴ Hastings District Council information file.

⁵ *Wises Street Directory*, 1959-60; Hastings District Council information file.

⁶ CT 93/154, Hawke's Bay Registry.

Tong & Mclvor, 104 Nelson Street South

Inventory Number: 43; Property ID: 21103; TRIM Reference: 21103#002#0004

Report by Phillip Cleaver

Draft: 9 August 2007, updated 5 January 2010, updated July 2012 (Cochran & Murray); Final Report: November 2012

Harold Davies (1888-1976) and Eric Phillips (1897-1980) worked independently in Hawke's Bay before forming a partnership with Albert Garnett in the early 1930s. Davies Garnett and Phillips were particularly active as part of efforts to rebuild Hastings following the Hawke's Bay earthquake of 1931. While Garnett left to work on his own account in 1933, Davies and Phillips carried on their partnership, which went on to become one of the most successful in the city's history. Davies and Phillips were responsible for the design of a broad range of buildings throughout the Hawke's Bay. Among the most important buildings the partnership was responsible for in Hastings were the former Commercial Bank of Australia Building (1933), Roachs' Building (1934), Las Palmas (1935), and Hastings War Memorial Library (1959), the latter as Davies, Phillips and Chaplin⁷.

Builder: H.W. Abbott

Date of construction: 1936

Construction details: Reinforced concrete structure, timber-framed roof covered with corrugated steel.

Description: The Tong & Mclvor building is a distinctive feature in the streetscape of Nelson Street. Driveways along either side set it slightly apart from its neighbours and allow views in the round. A tall single storey building of reinforced concrete construction, it is notable for its asymmetric composition, lightly-applied Art Deco ornamentation, and somewhat unusual proportions.

The main elevation to Nelson Street is finished with plain brocaded plaster above a smooth plinth and is divided into two bays. The right-hand bay contains the funerary chapel and steps up from the lower left-hand half; it is decorated with a central panel of vertical fluting between "bookends" of solid plaster and has a prominent central flagpole. The outer corners of the parapet have receding stepped panels, a motif carried through to the lower parapet on the left-hand side too. Both parts of the façade have a simple frieze of slightly recessed small rectangular panels.

The stayed verandah has distinctive rounded ends and a simple battened soffit. Below the verandah the detail of the door and window openings is most distinctive, with a combination of heavy chamfered edges and curved fluted panels used to emphasise each doorway. The door and window joinery is all aluminium, which sits awkwardly with the building.

The singular interior feature of the building is the funerary chapel. A tall single storey space with a gently vaulted ceiling, it is divided into four main bays along its length by shallow pilasters and curved beams depending slightly from the vault. The walls feature semi-circular headed windows on both long sides, one window centred on each bay (on the left (north) these open to the other part of the building), and a triptych at the rear, made of two matching windows and a niche.

There is a workshop attached to the rear of the building, and the right-hand driveway opens to a large open yard that services a large number of nearby buildings.

⁷ Adapted from <http://www.historic.org.nz/corporate/registersearch/ProfessionalBio/Professional.aspx?ID=3084>

Tong & McIvor, 104 Nelson Street South

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ELEMENTS OF ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE:

Element	Significance
Form and detail of the street frontage	Townscape, architectural, aesthetic
Form and detail of the side elevations, including arched steel windows	Architectural, aesthetic
Funerary chapel interior	Architectural, aesthetic

MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHIC REFERENCES:

CT 93/154, Hawke's Bay Registry

AT 13/19/1, September 1991, Alexander Turnbull Library.

Façade enhancement scheme application – Jet Leathers report, 2004

Hastings District Council file information.

Wises Street Directory, 1916 to 1959-60.

OTHER INFORMATION:

NZHPT Register: Not registered

District Plan: The building is not specifically listed as a Heritage item in the Hastings District Plan, but is located within the Central Character Precinct.

New Zealand Historic Places Act 1993: This site has been identified as a potential archaeological site under Section 2 of the New Zealand Historic Places Act 1993.

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OTHER PHOTOS:



South-west elevation, steel windows to funerary chapel, 2012

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Modified door opening (infilled for window), 2012

ARCHIVE PLAN(S):

Hastings District Council does not currently hold the original plans for this building.