

Scannell Building, 122 Queen Street East

Inventory Number: 51; Property ID: 21251; TRIM Reference: 21251#002#0003

Report by Chris Cochran

Draft: 29 August 2007, updated 6 January 2010, updated July 2012 (Cochran & Murray); Final Report: November 2012

Hastings CBD Heritage Inventory Project



SCANNELL BUILDING



Photo: R. Murray, 2012

LOCATION:

Street and Number: 122 Queen Street East

City / Town: Hastings

Region: Hawke's Bay

LEGAL DESCRIPTION:

Legal Description: Lot 1 DP 26075 and Lot 1 DP 2774

Certificates of Title (includes Registry): HB62/86 & HBW1/148

SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANCE:

Architectural Value:

The Scannell Building is something of an architectural landmark, and for two reasons. The exterior is of an unusual and quite severe Stripped Classical design, organised around six fluted pilasters with bases and capitals, with large windows and symmetrical doors at either end. Inside, the building has remarkably authentic joinery and finishes, able to evoke the now very rarely found atmosphere of an Edwardian commercial / legal interior.

Aesthetic Value:

The Scannell Building has high townscape value, as it is located in a CBD block that has a high concentration of period buildings. Although it is not large in scale, its distinctive form and proportions draw attention in the streetscape.

Historic Value:

This building was built – probably in the early 20th century – as offices for the law firm established by the David Scannell. The building has housed various incarnations of the firm and today the firm still bears the Scannell name. This building is a rare and significant example of the association of one firm with the same building for its entire existence. Scannell's has been a Hastings-based general practice law firm with over 100 years of history, involving three generations of the same family. It is a firm familiar to many Hastings residents and the building, although small, is something of a social landmark for that fact.

HISTORY:

The date of the building's construction and the architect for the original building (and later façade replacement) is not known. David Scannell was the registered owner of the land by at least 1903.¹ It could be assumed that the building was constructed in 1897, when Scannell began practising law with David Mackersey, whose family forged a legal dynasty of its own. This construction period is supported by the Edwardian timber panelling in the interior of the building.

In 1912, Scannell formed the firm of Carlile, McLean, Scannell and Wood, which also had offices in Napier. The top part of the building was affected by the 1931 earthquake and subsequently underwent repair in 1933.² Appearances suggest that this was when the building gained its Stripped Classical façade, although it is far from clear what else might have been changed or built at the same time.

The business went through various name and personnel changes but, to this day, members of the Scannell family remain principals of the firm. Scannell and Bramwell was formed in 1942 and concluded in 1959. David Scannell then continued on his own account before Scannell, Hardy and Coleman was formed in 1970. It became Scannell Hardy and Co. in 1975 and, finally, S.J. Scannell and Co. in 1986.³

¹ CT HB62/85, LINZ, Napier. The number of the prior CT (22/162) is erroneous.

² Fowler, M 2007 *From Disaster to Recovery: the Hastings CBD 1931-1395*, Michael Fowler Publishing Limited, Havelock North, pp. 142-143.

³ http://scannelllaw.co.nz/3_history.htm

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The property was passed to David Scannell in 1961, following his father's death five years earlier.⁴ The most recent land transfer came with the passing of the property to Simon Scannell, and business partner Timothy Wrigley in 1986.⁵ Later, in 2001, Timothy Wrigley's share passed to Malcolm Taylor.

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION:

Architect: Davies and Phillips (new front to building, 1933)

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 Chaplin⁶.

Builder: Unknown

Date of construction: possibly 1897, 1933 (new street frontage)

Construction details:

Description: The Scannell building is a single storey building of a forthright and interesting Stripped Classical design. The main façade to Queen Street East is divided by a regular grid of six fluted pilasters, with two small bays at either end and three larger bays between; the pilasters are stripped back to a minimal expression of architectural detail, with the merest hint of bases and capitals, and support a plain entablature with panels above each of the façade bays and finished with a band of fluting under the parapet cap. The line of the parapet is straight and full width of the building.

Between the pilasters there is a row of three large steel-framed windows, with opening sashes above, and there is a panel below each of the sills worked in plaster. In either end bay there are tall panelled timber doors, with fanlights above, the transoms lining up with the transoms of the windows. The whole composition is simple, symmetrical and of appropriate gravitas for a long established legal practice. It is marred only by an electrical power box and cables stuck on the parapet above the left door.

The entrance porch to the left door is unaltered from the original design and there are timber doors through into the offices. The visible interiors include timber wall paneling and battened ceilings, the latter giving some credence to the idea that the body of the building is older than the façade.

ELEMENTS OF ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE:

Element	Significance
Form and detail of Queen Street façade	Architectural, aesthetic, townscape

⁴ CT HB62/85, LINZ, Napier

⁵ CT HB W1/149, LINZ, Napier

⁶ adapted from <http://www.historic.org.nz/corporate/registersearch/ProfessionalBio/Professional.aspx?ID=3084>

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CT HB W1/149, LINZ, Napier

Fowler, M 2007 *From Disaster to Recovery: the Hastings CBD 1931-1395*, Michael Fowler Publishing Limited, Havelock North, pp. 142-143.

http://scannelllaw.co.nz/3_history.htm

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.

ARCHIVE PLAN(S):

New front to Existing Building Queen St Messrs Carlile, McLean, Scannell & Wood (1933) (TRIM Ref: 21250#0003)

