



MARITIME

HERITAGE TRAIL



Absolutely

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ME HEKE KI PŌNEKE
WELLINGTON CITY COUNCIL

Wellington

WELLINGTON'S MARITIME HERITAGE TRAIL

This trail will take approximately an hour and a half to walk and can be easily negotiated by wheelchair.

MAIN FEATURES OF TRAIL:

Shed 21
Queens Wharf
Wharf Offices
Museum of Wellington City and Sea
Wellington Free Ambulance Building
Rowing Club Buildings
Herd Street Post and Telegraph Building
Clyde Quay Boat Harbour

KEY:

	Registered by the New Zealand Historic Places Trust
	Listed on the Wellington City Council District Plan
	Information panel
	Concrete sculpture installed for Wellington Writers' Walk
ATL	Alexander Turnbull Library
WCA	Wellington City Archives
MWC+S	Museum of Wellington City and Sea

Note that many of the places visited on this trail are former Wellington Harbour Board buildings, most of which retain their numbers on their exteriors.



The Wellington City Council gratefully acknowledges the significant contribution made by the original Heritage Trails committee to the development of this trail – Oroya Day, Sallie Hill, Ken Scadden and Con Flinkenberg.

Historical research: Tony Wilson and Michael Kelly

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Biographical details of architects and engineers from "Inventory of Architects, Engineers and Designers", New Zealand Historic Places Trust, 1990

Brochures for other Council walks are available at the Visitor Information Office 101 Wakefield Street. You can also visit the Wellington City Council on-line at www.wellington.govt.nz

Cover image: Queens Wharf, the centre of port activities at Lambton Harbour for 120 years, on a busy day about 1915. (S.C. Smith Collection, ATL 452091/2)



MARITIME

HERITAGE TRAIL

TRAIL 

SITE NO.  CORRESPONDS TO NUMBERS THROUGHOUT TRAIL GUIDE

STREET 

"The winds and the woodenness ... are only incidental to the grand fact of Wellington's harbour... It is more tremendous by far than Sydney's overvaunted harbour, if only because it is uncluttered by islets and fjords, but stands there like a noble bowl among its surrounding mountains. It looks symmetrical, purposeful, altogether functional... It might have been scooped out by a million bull-dozers."

– James Morris, *Cities* (1963)

Introduction

Wellington Harbour is a large expanse of water, more like a lake than a harbour, up to 28 metres deep and occupying nearly 50 square kilometres. These natural attributes have helped Wellington become one of this country's most important ports. The harbour is also a wonderful recreational facility, with yachts filling the water on weekends, fishermen lining its shores and hundreds walking its margins. Though it is no longer so central to Wellington's life, the harbour has a unique location and appearance. It is ever changeable, like the city's weather – calm one moment and then rough and agitated the next.

The trail you are about to walk is almost exclusively on reclaimed land. Wellington's waterfront changed dramatically as the demands for more land and wharfage grew. Wellington's original shoreline, today some distance inland, is the subject of its own walk. Just how the present shoreline was formed, and the uses the land created behind it has been put to, are the main subjects of this trail.

Lambton Harbour – the beginnings

When the first New Zealand Company settlers arrived in Wellington in early 1840 they settled on the flat land at Petone, at the north end of Wellington Harbour. Soon deterred by the shallow anchorage, rough tides, exposed situation and the swampy and easily flooded land they began moving down to Lambton Harbour in April 1840. The new site had greater depth of water and fewer hazards from winds and tides and would allow permanent wharves to be erected. The subsequent growth of harbour traffic and the settlement itself, however, would bring into focus one major problem – a lack of useable land.

Part of Lambton Harbour, about 1860. The shoreline here was largely unchanged from 1840, when settlers first arrived. By 1876 much of this area had been reclaimed. Note Tinakori Hill, still partly forested. (MWC@S 295a)



The Trail

1 Shed 21 (1910)

 The trail begins at this two-storey brick building, with a mezzanine floor, located on Waterloo Quay wharf, opposite the Waterloo Hotel (now a backpackers' hostel).

The tallest of the Wellington Harbour Board's (WHB) industrial warehouses, Shed 21 was built in 1910 to store wool and was designed by the WHB Chief Engineer, James Marchbanks. It replaced the timber J Shed, built in 1880, which had burnt down earlier that year. The apse-like extension at the northern end of the building housed an 'accumulator', part of an hydraulic mechanism. Accumulated water pressure was used to drive lifts that moved goods between floors. Hydraulic power was once the main source of power on the waterfront and was still used for wool presses, cranes and other equipment until finally superseded by electricity in the 1950s. The charm of Shed 21 lies in the fine use of brickwork to embellish an otherwise plain and functional building facade. Note in particular the circular headed windows.

In the 1940s the big four-masted steel barque *Pamir* was sometimes berthed off this shed. Built for German use in 1905 and under Finnish ownership from 1931, she was one of the last of the great square-rigged sailing ships to make a commercial voyage around Cape Horn. In July 1941 she was taken as a prize of war while visiting Wellington, the Finns having joined Hitler's attack on the USSR in June. Eventually, under Finnish ownership again, the ship was lost in the Atlantic, during a hurricane in September 1957.

The skylighting and tall ceilings of Shed 21 and other sheds have made them ideal for use for, among other things, exhibitions and concerts. As early as 1911 an Industrial Exhibition was held in Shed 21. In the late 1990s, while the future of the building was uncertain, it was partly used for conservation work on the remains of the *Inconstant* (see 12-Plimmer's Ark) and as a car park. The building was converted into apartments in 2002 and is now known as Waterloo on Quay Apartments.

James Marchbanks (1862-1947)

Marchbanks was born and educated in Dunedin and joined the Public Works Department as a draftsman in 1878. He worked mostly on railway survey and construction. He became an authorised surveyor in 1883. In 1890 Marchbanks joined the Wellington-Manawatu Railway Company as assistant to the Chief Engineer and in 1895 he assumed the top position. When the railway company was sold to the Government, Marchbanks became Chief Engineer to the Wellington Harbour Board, succeeding William Ferguson. He was appointed Chief Engineer and General Manager in 1923. He retired in 1932 and remained a consulting engineer until 1935. His son D.S.G. Marchbanks was also a very prominent Harbour Board employee. He was acting Chief Engineer and later Chief Engineer, from 1945 to 1966.



Wellington City Council

- ▶ **Walk along the seaward side of Shed 21. To your far left you can see the southern portion of Wellington's container port, which now handles the city's international cargo.**

The Pamir in Wellington Harbour in the early 1940s, alongside Shed 21. (Hall-Raine Collection, ATL F207271/4)



2 Site of former Shed 17 (Waterfront Police)

Shed 17 once stood on the land to the south of Shed 21. It was the headquarters of the Wharf Police from 1917 to 1983. There has been a police presence on the waterfront since the late 1880s, initially only in the form of a part-time constable. By then, crime, including smuggling, common assault, theft and prostitution, was already part of the waterfront's social and industrial culture.

In 1917 the newly established Foreshore Police consisted of a sergeant and six constables and they were paid a bonus by the WHB to encourage their efforts. Apart from controlling general criminal activity they were required to prevent sand removal, enforce harbour bylaws, including those on gambling in public areas, and protect WHB property, particularly during the waterfront unrest of 1913 and 1951. Perhaps the Wharf Police's most important role was, and still is, the prevention of pilfering, from both general wharf traffic and special shipments, such as US military supplies during World War II. Police numbers peaked in the 1940s at around 23, led by a sub-inspector, but declined thereafter as wharf activity itself did. Numbers of harbour employees shrank from 2640 in 1968 to 300 in 1992.

The Wharf Police presence has included a police rescue launch service since 1941. The current police launch, *Lady Elizabeth III*, is berthed near the old Ferry Terminal (3 below), and run from an office in Shed 19, visible further to the seaward side, but not included in this tour. The first *Lady Elizabeth* was a private cabin cruiser converted for service in 1941. The second capsized near the harbour entrance in 1986 with the loss of two police officers. The various police launches have made hundreds of rescues in and around Wellington Harbour.

▶ **Walk to the small two-storey timber building.**

3 Eastbourne Ferry Ticket Office

 This two-storeyed, plain weatherboard building is important for its past history. It dates from about 1913 and its name is derived from a former owner, the Eastbourne Borough Council. The Council ran a ferry service, the first local authority in the country to do so, between Eastbourne and here, from 1913 until 1948. The service was originally begun in 1890 by shipping merchant James William, and initially only for day-excursions. It later became a fully-fledged ferry service. The ticket office became a familiar landmark to thousands of commuters. Improved roading along the western side of the harbour bays ended the service. Ironically the proliferation of the motor car and the consequent traffic congestion saw the ferry service revived under new owners in the late 1980s.

- ▶ **From the ferry building continue south and keep to the harbour edge. Take the narrow concourse to the left and walk down to the next information panel.**

*The Eastbourne Ferry Ticket Office
(MWCE-S 7023)*



i 4 Site of Wellington Custom House

Adjacent to the ticket office was the former Custom House, built in 1902 and demolished in 1969. With its Romanesque arches and cupola it was a prominent harbourside landmark at the beginning of Customhouse Quay, next to Shed 13. The landing of goods and mail by sea meant that along with the Post Office, Customs was the earliest state agency present on Wellington's waterfront. Prior to 1902 it was housed in a wooden structure near Queen's Wharf and in the new Chief Post Office (1884). Customs is considered the oldest of New Zealand's government departments, having been established in 1840, the year the country became a British colony.

Note also some of the original (1921) set of iron gates, pillars and railings to the front of this site, marking the southern end of Waterloo Quay on your right.

▶ **A short distance on is a recently relocated building.**

The Custom House, from Customhouse Quay. Note the turret with its lookout, a feature of many Harbour Board buildings, past and present. (ATL PAColl-6348-43)



5 Former Union Steam Ship Company Store

This building was the Union Steam Ship Company's Wellington store, and was originally sited at Greta Point, Evans Bay. It was constructed in 1911 and was part of a large complex of buildings, including a workshop and laundry, constructed by the company between 1910 and 1911 and adjacent to the Patent Slip. By 1981 all but this building and the Patent Slip had been demolished. The former store was converted into a bar and restaurant – the Greta Point Tavern – and in 2003 it was moved in stages to this site. Little of the original structure remains except part of its exterior shell, but this is possibly the only remaining building in Wellington linked to New Zealand's most successful shipping company. It has been converted to bars and restaurants.

The Union Steam Ship Company was begun in 1875 by a Dunedin ship owner, James Mills, who anticipated that rail would overwhelm short-distance shipping and decided to go into the long coastal freighter business. He ordered two big steamers, the *Hawea* and the *Taupo* for the Dunedin-Onehunga run. With British and Otago capital behind it, the Union Company took over its major rival, the New Zealand Steam Shipping Company, in 1876 and quickly grew to be the largest trans-Tasman shipping line. By 1914 it was bigger than the five biggest Australian shipping lines combined. Head office moved to Wellington and for much of the 20th century it was New Zealand's largest private-sector employer. Its best-known service was the overnight Wellington-Lyttelton 'steamer express' service, which ended in 1976. It was re-acquired by New Zealand and Australian interests in 1971 and in 1983 it moved its head office to Auckland. In 1999 it sold its trans-Tasman shipping interests.

- ▶ **Turn right before the steamship building and walk forward until you see the two brick sheds.**

6 Sheds 11 and 13



 These two structures are attractive examples of Edwardian industrial architecture. Built in 1904-05 and designed by William Ferguson, the WHB's first Chief Engineer, their simple elegance, forms and proportions owe much to Dutch colonial architecture, displayed most obviously in the segmented Queen Anne arches. Note the circular cartouches, with the WHB crest, under the eaves of both sheds' walls. The buildings were originally capped with Marseilles tile roofs but these were replaced in 1938 with corrugated asbestos sheets. These were the first WHB structures with driven concrete piles and steel-reinforced concrete foundations; earlier WHB buildings used timber.

In 1985 Shed 11 was converted into a temporary gallery space for the National Art Gallery. It continues to be used for the performing arts, movies, exhibitions and catered dinners. Shed 13 is to be refurbished in 2006.

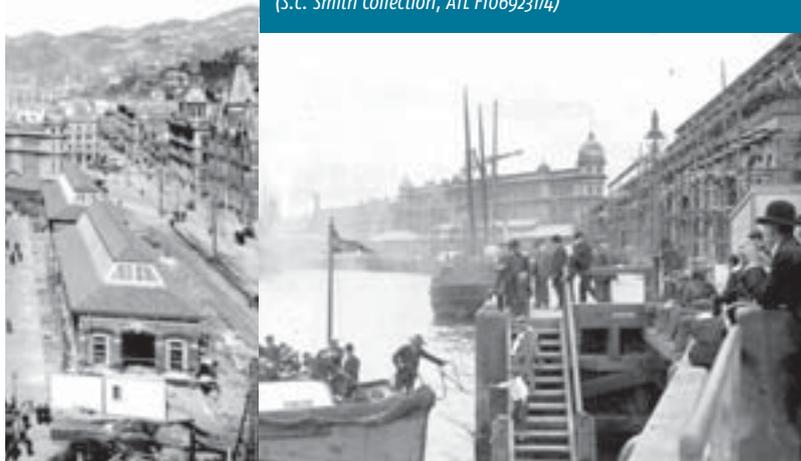


William Ferguson (1852–1935)

Ferguson was born in London and educated at Trent Grammar School, Burton. After engineering and drafting apprenticeships he studied engineering at Trinity College, Dublin. He continued his professional career while studying and worked on, among other things, waterworks and railway construction. In 1883 he emigrated to New Zealand and in 1884 he was appointed Engineer, Secretary and Treasurer to the Wellington Harbour Board. He stayed for 24 years, the last five spent as a consultant. He later worked for the Wellington Gas Works, was Chairman of the National Efficiency Board during and just after World War I, and was a member of the Board of Health.

Left: A panorama of the waterfront, taken, perhaps, from the Custom House turret. Sheds 11 and 13 are immediately at the bottom right of this view. More reclamation was to come, if you compare this 1905 view with today. (Muir and Moodie, ATL F162231/4)

Below: A view in 1904 of the same vista as opposite, this time from ground level. Sheds 11 and 13 are under construction. Away in the distance is Shed 7, or the Wharf Offices. The ferry Moturoa is just arriving. (S.C. Smith Collection, ATL F1069231/4)



WELLINGTON'S MARITIME HERITAGE TRAIL

- ▶ Turn left and walk toward the building with the cupola on the end. Just before you come to this structure, you will see something resembling a grey, curved pipe, with a bolted end poking through part of the iron railing. This is a remnant of a saltwater fire-fighting system, set up during World War II, for piping water from deep in the harbour (to avoid low tides and possible enemy sabotage). It was intended to be used to fight fires in the city or on the wharves, resulting from enemy action, earthquakes or other causes.

Jervois Quay in the early 1900s. The Wharf Offices are to the left, followed by the Head Office and Bond Store. The entrance to Queens Wharf is between them. The line of sheds further down Jervois Quay is now gone. (S.C. Smith Collection, ATL 22698 1/1)



7 Queens Wharf Offices/Shed 7



Next door to Shed 11, and also hugging the road, is the distinctive curved facade of the WHB's Wharf Offices/Shed 7. Built in 1896 as a large woolstore and wharf office, with an accumulator tower, stores and workshops, it now houses a number of apartments and, on the ground floor, the New Zealand Academy of Fine Arts. The Academy has regular exhibitions and entry is free to the public.

Designed by Frederick de Jersey Clere in a late English Classical style, the building features considerable external ornamentation, unlike the Head Office building (see 9) designed six years earlier. The outstanding feature of this building is the decorated oriel window at the south-eastern corner. The building was substantially reinforced and much of its external decoration – pediments, cornices and three cupolas – removed, following an earthquake in 1942.



WELLINGTON'S MARITIME HERITAGE TRAIL

- ▶ **As you walk towards the entrance of Queens Wharf, look out for an information panel to your left. Look out also for the main gates, and an unusual memorial, fixed to the wall of the Wharf Offices.**

*Paddy the Wanderer.
(MWCeS 5137)*



8 Iron grill gates and Memorial to Paddy the Wanderer



i

On the Wharf Offices' southern facade is a memorial, in the form of a plaque and drinking fountain, to a dog nicknamed Paddy the Wanderer. This dog took to wandering Wellington wharves after his young owner died of pneumonia in 1928. He was befriended by watersiders, seamen, taxi-drivers and many others, becoming a waterfront identity by his death in July 1939. Surplus stone and marble from a demolished London bridge used in the construction of a lookout on Mt Victoria, were also incorporated in the base of this memorial and that of a sundial further along the walk at Clyde Quay.

The ornamental gates that separate the wharf from Jervis Quay are fine specimens of late Victorian wrought ironwork, with their cast-iron spandrels and ornaments and matching cast-iron pillars. Made by the British firm of Baylis, Jones and Baylis, they were shipped out and erected in 1899, in time to mark the departure of the second New Zealand contingent to the Boer War. Prior to this the wharf was guarded with a small wooden stockade-like arrangement, with two sentry posts.

More gates and enclosing railings – metallic grey and wrought-iron and this time made locally and more cheaply – were erected along Customhouse and Jervis Quays between 1901 and 1921. They provided security to other wharf buildings, especially during the unrest of 1913 (see below). Most of the railings along Jervis Quay (south of the current Events Centre) and further north along most of Waterloo Quay, were taken down, along with the Jervis Quay Sheds, during the mid-1970s as part of further harbour reclamation and park development. These sheds were, in their day, a significant presence along this Quay, being similar in style to Sheds 11 and 13, although mostly timber.

9 **Museum of Wellington City & Sea (former Wellington Harbour Board Head Office and Bond Store)**

Completed in 1892, this building is the architectural highlight of the central wharf area. In 1890 the WHB commissioned Frederick de Jersey Clere to design a head office and a bigger, more effective bond store, with concrete floors, to replace a wooden structure dating from the 1860s. The "Queen's Bond" housed cargo, sometimes precious, on which Customs dues had not been paid. Enterprising thieves were known to bore through the wooden floor to steal goods and, especially, siphon liquor out of casks.

Designed in a restrained French Second Empire style the building is, unusually for a late-Victorian structure, quite without external decoration except for roof iron work and carved relief panels on the entrance. The other principal interest lies in the mansard roof with its pedimented dormer windows. Around each of the nine flagpoles on the roof is an iron railing, an imitation of sailing ships' lookout posts. Inside some of the notable interior features that remain are a curved staircase and an ornate timber boardroom, installed in 1925/6.

Originally Harbour Board members were both elected and appointed. For many decades the interests of the Board were tied very closely to the demands of commerce. Men such as chairmen W.H. Levin, a prominent merchant, T.K. McDonald, auctioneer, MP and founder of the Gear Meat Company, Robert Fletcher, Chairman during the 1913 Maritime Strike, and Sir Charles Norwood, founder of Dominion Motors, were clearly concerned for the efficient operation of the port. Their counterparts in the administration included William Ferguson, James Marchbanks, and Harold Meachen, also a long-serving General Manager. From 1950 all Board members were elected by the region's voters.

Since its completion the building has been much altered, initially as a result of the 1942 earthquake. Later, the inauguration of the Wellington Maritime Museum in 1972 and the conversion of the entire building into the Museum of Wellington City & Sea, completed in 1999, saw further changes. The museum was originally founded on a fine collection of maritime exhibits and archives, relating to the Wellington area, including the donation of a private museum built, round the tragic sinking of the interisland ferry *Wahine* in Wellington Harbour in April 1968, with the loss of 51 lives. Today the museum's focus has shifted to the city as a whole, but its maritime foundations are still very evident. Allow at least one hour for a visit.

Frederick de Jersey Clere (1856–1952)

Clere was born in Lancashire and emigrated with his family in 1877. Already well trained as an architect, he practised in the provinces before returning to Wellington. He stayed in practice for another 58 years. Clere was Diocesan Architect of the Anglican Church for much of his professional life. He was also an enthusiastic advocate of the building properties of concrete. He was pre-eminent in church design; his best known design is the reinforced-concrete St Mary of the Angels (1922). Apart from churches, Clere designed a huge variety of buildings including many for the Wellington Harbour Board. Clere practised on his own and in association with many other architects, including his son.

- ▶ **From the Museum, walk to the entrance of Queens Wharf.**

🏠 10 Huddart Parker Building, 10-26 Jervois Quay

Just across the road to your left is the Huddart Parker Building, designed by Crichton, McKay and Haughton in the Chicago style. Built in 1924, it was named for a Melbourne-based shipping company that ran services between Australia and New Zealand and was once one of the main rivals of the Union Steam Ship Company. For much of the latter part of the 20th century it was the headquarters of the New Zealand Rugby Football Union.

- ▶ **Walk towards the sea along Queens Wharf under the three sail-like canopies that cover the space between the Queen's Wharf Retail and Events Centres. Completed in November 1995 these buildings were the centrepiece of the Lambton Harbour development begun in 1986. Just past the Events and Retail Centres is Queen's Wharf proper – the focus of the old waterfront.**

This well known Burton Bros. photograph shows Queens Wharf, and a variety of steam and sailing ships, about 1885. (ATL PA7-34-20)



Queens Wharf Area

Queens Wharf was built by the Wellington Provincial Council in 1862, after much agitation by the local Chamber of Commerce for better wharfage. It extended some 167m from land reclaimed in 1857–63. Known in its early years as Deep Water Wharf, it was managed successively by a Wharf Committee of the Province, a private leaseholder, the Wellington City Corporation (1871) and, eventually (1880), by the newly inaugurated Wellington Harbour Board.

Opposite Queens Wharf, on top of the old timber Customhouse, was a timeball, erected in March 1864, and visible to town dwellers and shipping alike. Set on a mast, the red ball would be lowered just once a day, at midday, to indicate the precise time. The timeball was relocated to the former J Shed (now the site of Shed 21) in 1888. It is not known when use of the timeball was finally abandoned.

With much stronger financial, engineering/planning resources, the Board was able to undertake many capital improvements to this wharf, and others, including extension of jetty areas, deepening, by dredging, of adjacent water and, from 1909, the replacement of older timber structures with new, more permanent structures.

For years the open spaces along this 'double T'-shaped wharf remained unchanged. At the turn of the century they were the focus of a bustling waterfront life and a variety of harbourside trades. This reflected Wellington port's status as one of the country's busiest, having at one time the highest volume of steam (as opposed to sail) traffic, and being, for a time, the home port for New Zealand's first large steamship company, the shortlived New Zealand Steam Navigation Co. This company was absorbed by the new Union Steam Ship Company in 1876. The signs of this old life have largely vanished.

Old Maritime Trades

Watermen

During the sailing era in particular, up to around 1890, these men were licensed to run small craft to ferry goods and passengers, for set fees, between the waterfront and vessels anchored in the harbour. This was no easy task in the often stormy conditions prevailing on the harbour and in the small, open craft used. Such men were often very hardy individuals and included Dickey Harman, one-legged Jack Thompson, who also ran a tobacco and sweet shop, and the long-serving, redoubtable Harry Chalker.

The men operated from steps on the former General Post Office (opposite the wharf gates). They paid licence fees to the WHB, usually several pounds per annum, to operate their boats, as did other harbour operators, i.e. those working coal hulks, legally removing sand from the foreshore, running boatsheds and so on.

Below: Harry Chalker, waterman, about 1900. (MWCeS 5222)

Right: A crowd gathered on Waterloo Quay in front of the Customs Buildings during the Maritime Strike of 1913. Sheds 17 and 15 are next door and in the distance are Sheds 11 and 13 and the Wharf Offices. On the right is a train on its way to Te Aro Station. (ATL 461671/2)



Wharfinger

For day-to-day operations the most important people were wharfingers – WHB employees who were the head men of a particular wharf (or wharf shed) and responsible for cargo-handling activity. They would determine which watersiders would work the ships moored nearby. The chief wharfinger wore a uniform and had near ultimate authority on the wharves.

Watersiders

The watersiders, or 'wharfies' as they remain colloquially known, were the men who did the wharf work. Their union was the militant Waterside Workers' Union and it had a long association with this and other New Zealand ports. The union and its members were central in defining the old waterfront industrial culture in Wellington, a key element of which was loyalty and solidarity during strikes and employer lockouts.



WELLINGTON'S MARITIME HERITAGE TRAIL

The union was at the centre of two major industrial disputes, in 1913 and 1951, that led to nationwide industrial upheaval. The former was a strike in October 1913 by 1600 wharfies in support of shipwrights denied paid travelling time to the Patent Slip. What started out as a matter of principle turned into the worst industrial confrontation in the country's history. Troops loaded ships and the Government enrolled farmers as special mounted police, nicknamed 'Cossacks', which further enflamed passions. The whole matter was uneasily settled after a month of bitter dispute.

In February 1951 watersiders banned overtime, both in support of a 40-hour week and after employers refused to pass on a full 5% wage increase, as granted by the Arbitration Court. The Harbour Board refused to let the watersiders on the wharves and a five month standoff began. Again troops were used to load ships and there was a heavy police presence. Under enormous pressure from the Government the union finally capitulated in July that year.



Wellington City Council

One effect of the 1951 unrest on Wellington was that on May 7 that year the port hosted a record 70 ships, with 61 of them tied up at the wharves.

- ▶ **Walk towards the other end of Queens Wharf. An information panel in front of Shed 6 (on the right) tells the story of some of the surrounding buildings.**

The flotilla of merchant shipping at anchor in Wellington Harbour during the Maritime Strike in 1913. (ATL F721531/2)



11 Queens Wharf buildings – Sheds 1, 3, 5 and 6

On your left is Shed 5, built in 1887 to a design by William Ferguson. This is the last remaining wooden warehouse on the waterfront, the others having been cleared to make way for Frank Kitts Park. The building was converted in 1992 into a restaurant, bar and fishmarket.

Just along from Shed 5 is Shed 3, again built in 1887. A top storey was added early in the 20th century to house WHB tug and pilot staff. It was converted into the Dockside bar and restaurant in 1990. At the end of Queen's Wharf is Shed 1, similar in size and age to Shed 6 and housing the offices of the *Dominion Post* Ferry and Helipro Ltd. Take the opportunity to walk around the outer tee and enjoy the views of the harbour and city.

Queens Wharf on a busy day c.1915. Shed 3, with its top storey added, is to the right. (S.C. Smith Collection, ATL 452091/2)



12 'Plimmer's Ark'

Directly opposite Shed 5 is the much larger Shed 6, built in 1959. Between Shed 6 and the Events Centre is a gallery displaying the conservation of the remains of 'Plimmer's Ark'. Formerly the barque *Inconstant*, it was grounded at the entrance to Wellington Harbour in 1849. The damage to the vessel was too great to repair and it was eventually sold to John Plimmer, an entrepreneur and businessman, who towed it to Clay Point, on the corner of Lambton Quay and Willis Street. Plimmer converted the hull, which sat partly in the water, into the basement of a warehouse and auction room.

By 1861 reclamation of the shoreline had swallowed up the 'Ark'; it was finally demolished in 1883 to make way for the construction of the National Mutual Building, later part of the Bank of New Zealand complex. Remnants of the hull's teak timbers were found when the site for the BNZ head office was excavated in 1899. Plimmer, by then a major figure in the city, was photographed among the excavated remains of the famous 'Ark'. In 1997 the timbers were rediscovered during redevelopment of the BNZ buildings. The bow remains in the BNZ building (now the Old Bank Arcade) and on display. Those parts that could be recovered were removed and are now on display and being conserved in this space alongside Shed 6.

The opening hours for this display are the same as the Museum of Wellington City and Sea. Check the Museum for details. You can walk through the display to the other side of the building to continue the trail.

- ▶ **If you didn't visit the display, head south along the seaward side of Shed 6. The walk along here offers good views of Te Papa (the Museum of New Zealand), as well as Mount Victoria, with its houses perched on the hill and the landmark of St Gerard's Monastery, built for the Catholic Redemptionist Fathers in 1932.**
- ▶ **At the end of Shed 6 continue along the waterfront.**

i 13 Frank Kitts Park – later reclamations

W To your right is a park, named after Wellington's longest-serving mayor (1956–74). It sits on land once partly occupied by a row of identical wharf sheds. Facing these sheds, on the other side of Jervois Quay, was a line of private warehouses, all close to their source of business – the wharf. All these buildings have now gone.

Frank Kitts Park was opened in 1976 and significantly extended in the late 1980s. A children's playground is the first of a number of features here. The orange mast you see mounted on one terrace was recovered from the *Wahine*. The park wall facing the sea has a number of commemorative plaques fixed to it. At the end of the park is the lagoon and, to the right, a water sculpture, *The Albatross*, by Tanya Ashken. Further in the distance is the second and larger bridge over Jervois Quay linking the Civic Centre with the waterfront. Its timber sculpture of birds, whales and celestial motifs by Maori artist Para Matchitt was completed in 1993. These sculptures symbolise the arrival of Maori and European ancestors here and also, by extension, present day visitors' arrival from the sea to city.



On the seaward side of the park and lagoon are large rocks (rip-rap), piled up against the seafront to protect the reclaimed land you are walking on. Completed in the mid-1970s, this was the last major reclamation in Wellington, and was to provide terminal space for the Union Steamship Company's trans-Tasman and coastal roll-on/roll-off cargo ships. These ships and rows of stacked containers had gone by the late 1980s, as this whole south-eastern part of the harbour was earmarked for redevelopment by both Lambton Harbour Management and the Museum of New Zealand.

- ▶ **Cross the bridge by the lagoon and walk in front of the timber buildings along the decked path.**

The site of Frank Kitts Park in 1973 during the removal of the wharf sheds that lined Jervois Quay. (ATL 213621/2)



14 Star Boating Club



Founded in 1866, the Star Boating Club must surely be one of New Zealand's oldest surviving sporting clubs. The club built these premises in 1885 to a design by William Chatfield.

The building was originally sited further north along the waterfront, where Customhouse Quay is today. It was twice moved to make way for harbour reclamations or redevelopment. The first came just four years after it was built, when it was shifted along the waterfront to a site near the corner of Cable Street and Jervis Quay. It was later joined here by the Wellington Rowing Club building, Odlin's Building and later still, in 1932, by the former Wellington Free Ambulance Building (see 17). Exactly 100 years after the first move, in 1989, it was moved again to its present site on the edge of this redesigned lagoon. This building is significant for its long association with the waterfront and, like its companion, is a notably rare central city timber building. It remains most appropriately sited here so close to the sea, but some distance from where it began life.

The Star Boating Club on a busy day in 1912. In the background is the then unpainted Odlin's Building (see 18). (ATL F80651/2)



15 Wellington Rowing Club Building

 Yet another Clere design, this building was erected in 1894 as a base for the Wellington Naval Artillery Volunteers. The volunteers were formed in 1879, after a 'Russian Scare' in 1877-8, to enhance the city's existing defence forces. This building was also designed to house two naval cutters used by a Wellington harbour defence contingent. It is not certain if they were ever used by the volunteers. The Wellington Rowing Club took the building over in 1931. The decorative use of timbers over the weatherboards, known as half-timbering, which gives the building an English Tudor appearance, once covered the building much more extensively. The combination of shed and squat octagonal tower heighten its overall nautical feel. The crenellated tower was built to provide a lookout for the volunteers.

The lagoon-side location of these two double-storeyed structures (with a common balcony railing) gives a pleasing view of them from both city and harbour. Both still serve as club buildings, while doubling as popular reception venues.



16 Statue of Kupe

This statue was originally sculptured in plaster by William Trethewey for the Centennial Exhibition of 1940. It was well known to Wellingtonians from the many years it spent in the Wellington Railway Station. It was later stored in the Winter Show Buildings in Newtown before former City Councillor Rex Nicholls led a fundraising campaign to have the statue cast in bronze. It was completed and installed in 2000. The statue depicts the great Maori explorer Kupe, the legendary explorer and discoverer of New Zealand/Aotearoa, his wife Hine Te Aparangi and Peka-Hourangi in their canoe Matahoua. A number of places in Wellington were named by Kupe.

▶ **Continue south from the end of the Wellington Rowing Club building. To your right is a grove of karaka trees and an installation of upright wharf piles. Beyond that is a group of three buildings.**

17 Former Wellington Free Ambulance Building



This structure was designed by William Turnbull and built in 1932. It represents a transition between Art Deco and the less decorative Moderne style, with its more severe aesthetic; there is a more restrained 'streamlined' approach to the design of the side walls and an absence of Art Deco-like decoration. Nevertheless the building is significant for having decoration on all four façades. Motifs common to Art Deco are found on the façade facing Cable Street. The Wellington Free Ambulance, the only free ambulance in New Zealand, was founded on funds raised by Sir Charles Norwood, businessman, philanthropist and Mayor of Wellington, 1925-27.

18 Odlin Building

This large five-storey brick building was built in 1907 on a late Te Aro reclamation, and it rests on extensive foundations of cast iron and iron bark piles. For much of its life it served as the head office and warehouse for the company which built it – C & A Odlin Timber and Hardware Co., established in 1903 by former rail clerk Charles Odlin. The company had timber yards here until 1924. Odlin's went on to become one of the biggest timber merchants in the country before merging with building materials conglomerate Winstone in 1985. Odlin Building, once located right next to the water, is today the only privately-built wharf-related structure left standing on the waterfront. The Odlin Trust, established in 1952 by Charles Odlin and his wife Florence, makes annual bequests to the Wellington Free Ambulance Service. After the building sat unused for many years, refurbishment began in 2004, but with considerable changes to seaward facing façades, the roof and interior. Work was completed in 2005.

19 Shed 22

Shed 22 is the southernmost WHB warehouse – the 'end of the necklace'. A functional design, erected in 1921, its special feature is the Romanesque arches above the windows, derived from a very influential American prototype – the Marshall Field's Wholesale Store in Chicago (1886). The building was converted into a bar and brewery in 2002.

Taranaki Street Wharf Gates

Alongside Shed 22 are the railings and pillars of Taranaki Street Wharf Gates, erected in 1907 and in a style similar to others on the waterfront.

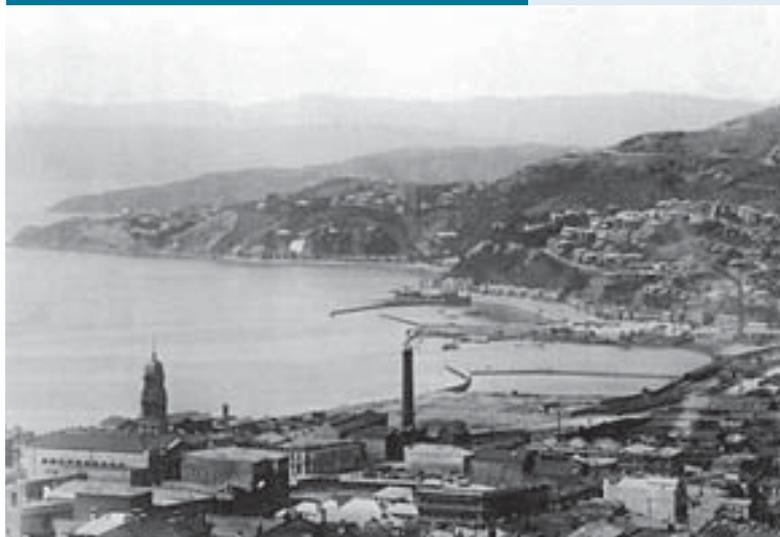
Reclamation and the Te Aro rail extension

Both the land you are standing on and much of that you can see beyond the gates was created by major reclamations of the Te Aro foreshore, undertaken by the Wellington City Council from 1882 onwards. Apart from the development of further wharfage, the extra land allowed the railway to be extended to Te Aro. Te Aro station opened in 1893 on land today occupied partly by a supermarket. The rail extension was superseded by electric trams and the rationalisation of Wellington's two Thorndon rail terminals and it finally closed in 1917.

20 Circa Theatre

 Just past the Taranaki Street gates is the Circa Theatre (1994). Its main elevation is the former front facade of the former Westport Coal Company building (1916), moved across from its original position on the opposite side of Cable Street. The Westport Coal Company was formed in 1885 and was once the country's biggest coal supplier. Circa Theatre, an independent theatre company was founded in 1976.

The last Te Aro reclamation nearing its end in 1905. Part of this new land was soon occupied by the Odflins Building, Cable Street and, later Shed 22. (Watt Album, ATL 804391/2)



W 21 Te Papa Tongarewa – Museum of New Zealand

Next to the theatre is the huge Te Papa Tongarewa or Museum of New Zealand. Designed by Jasmx and built at a cost of about \$280 million, it was the biggest single building project in Wellington's history. It replaced the previous National Museum and Art Gallery, which continues to occupy a prominent site on Mt Cook and is now the centre of Massey University's Wellington campus.

- ▶ **Walk in front of the Museum and follow the waterfront. Note the four writers' walk sculptures in the vicinity. Continue past the Museum and the 185-berth Chaffers Marina (1993) on your left until you reach the Post and Telegraph Building in Herd Street.**



22 Former Post and Telegraph Building, Herd Street

Dominating this area of the waterfront is this imposing six-storey structure. Designed by prominent Wellington architect Edmund Anscombe and built in 1939, the structure is a relatively restrained design except for a dynamic Moderne flourish on the intersection of its southern and western corners, repeated on the eastern end. The entrance foyer features some typical Art Deco chrome and plaster effects. Its western yard once housed stables and, much later, linesmen's sheds while there were tennis courts on the roof until a sixth floor was added. The building is presently being converted into apartments and its façade and interior considerably altered.

Edmund Anscombe

Anscombe was born in Sussex, England and came to New Zealand as a child. He began work as a builder's apprentice and then went to the United States to study architecture in 1901. He returned to Dunedin in 1907 and became architect to the University of Otago. He went on to design a number of university buildings and others in the city. Anscombe came to work in Wellington in 1928 and he established a successful business, retaining offices in Dunedin and Hawkes Bay. Anscombe is best remembered for his Art Deco buildings, including public buildings like the Sargeant Art Gallery, Wanganui, and blocks of flats including Franconia, The Terrace, Wellington. One of his most outstanding designs, the Centennial Exhibition buildings (1939-1940), was only temporary.

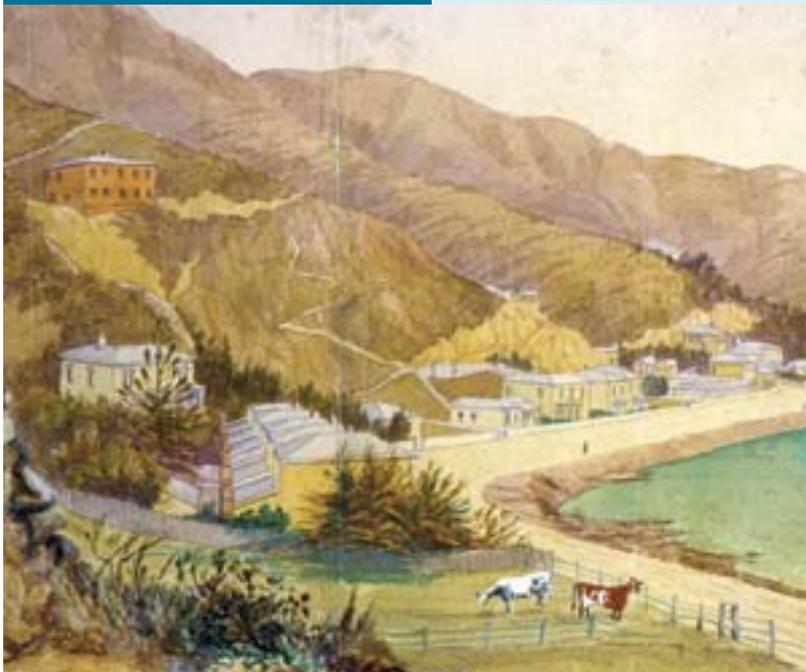


i 23 Overseas Passenger Terminal

Designed by Morton, Calder, Fowler and Styles, this building remains a prominent waterfront landmark. This terminal was erected in 1964, but its role as an disembarkation point was quickly superseded by air traffic. For many years parts of the building were used as a reception centre and restaurants, and also by boatbuilders. A major refurbishment is planned for 2005.

- ▶ **Turn left at the end of Herd Street. This point marks the beginning of the Old Shoreline Heritage Trail. You may wish to end the Maritime Trail here or carry on along Oriental Parade. If you continue you can enjoy some magnificent harbour and city skyline views *en route* (by looking back) and you can always rest on the several benches along the way or even drop into the Freyberg Pool for a swim.**

Oriental Parade in 1889; a watercolour by Christopher Aubrey. (ATL C-030-023)



Oriental Parade

Oriental Parade was named for one of the early immigrant ships to Wellington, but it took some time to become the elegant esplanade we see today. In the 1840s it was remote enough to be a quarantine station and later, in the 1880s, dead whales were rendered down here. In the same decade the bay was a source of material for the first Te Aro reclamation — a railway was built to carry fill. A number of enhancements in the early part of the 20th century, including extensive beach redevelopment, the arrival of the tram (1905), the planting of Norfolk pines (1917), and seawall construction (1918), helped transform the bay into Wellington's Riviera. Bigger and finer houses were built, adding to the bay's prestige. The first apartment buildings were constructed in the 1920s and today they dominate the bay. In 2003 work was completed on a major enhancement of the beach and surroundings. Swimming and promenading have long been popular activities here and Oriental Bay is as popular a destination as it has ever been. Perched above this is one of Wellington's landmark buildings, St Gerard's Church and Monastery.



i 24 Clyde Quay Boat Harbour and Freyberg Pool

Just past the corner of Oriental Parade and Herd Street is the Clyde Quay Boat Harbour. First established in 1902, its eastern boundary was marked by one side of the saltwater Te Aro Swimming Baths. The first baths, "securely protected from the visits of sea monsters", were built in 1862 and were located about the middle of where Clyde Quay harbour is today. In typical late Victorian fashion, ladies could swim between 9am–2pm daily (with a red flag indicating their presence); men (blue flag) at other times. The baths were rebuilt in 1900. They were finally demolished in 1962 and replaced the following year by Freyberg Pool, named after former Governor-General and New Zealand Army Commander Lord Bernard Freyberg, who was a champion swimmer in his youth. This pool now forms the eastern side of the boat harbour.

The brightly painted boatsheds that line the boat harbour date from 1905–6, and more were added in 1922. During World War II the boat harbour served as a United States military depot. The military also constructed a number of buildings.



The only building you can see above the wall on the city side is the Royal Port Nicholson Yacht Club House. It was built in 1942 as a hospital for United States troops. It was used as a hostel for government interns after the war, before being taken over by the club in 1957. It was extensively renovated in 1987. The club itself dates from 1883 and moved to Clyde Quay soon after the boat harbour was completed. Its first clubrooms were built in 1919 at the eastern end of the harbour and this building still stands.

- ▶ **On your way past the boat harbour, take the steps down to visit the boat harbour. Then continue along Oriental Parade.**

United States military personnel and naval craft in the Clyde Quay boat harbour in 1943. (MWCeS 7749)



25 Charlesworth Houses

 Around the point and on the right hand side of the road is a row of houses, 186–200 Oriental Parade, most of which were built in 1906 to a similar design by architect Joshua Charlesworth, designer of Wellington Town Hall (1904). There were originally nine houses in this group, but one, no. 202, Charlesworth's own house, has been demolished. No. 186, the only house built with a gable and extended wing facing the street, was completed in 1909. Today all but one of these houses, no. 194, has been considerably modified, but they retain their obvious physical relationship and are a highlight of any visit to Oriental Parade.

26 Band Rotunda

 Further along, on the left-hand side of the road, is the Band Rotunda. It was built in 1936 to replace an earlier rotunda, moved here in 1917 from its original location in front of the Town Hall. It was built on a rock promontory that can still be seen. The new rotunda was also a changing facility for swimmers. In 1981 the rotunda was enclosed and turned into a restaurant. A public viewing platform on the roof offers excellent views of the city.

*Band Rotunda and new bathing facilities
c. 1937. (ATL PA Coll-6301-17)*



Geology

Much of the Wellington area consists of the remnants of a flat expanse of land (or peneplain) that protracted seismic activity wrested from the sea about 20 million years ago. Much later (one and a half million years ago), south-east of the Wellington Fault there was a massive down-tilting of land. A series of basins formed along the fault-line, the southernmost and largest becoming, eventually, Wellington Harbour.

Uneven levels in the harbour have been caused by deposits of rock, gravel and mud in the basin through erosion and river action over time. Also the harbourscape has been modified by changes in sea levels during the various Ice Ages and warmer periods in between. Finally, successive earth movements have raised wave-cut platforms and alluvial areas in the harbour to form an intermediate zone between steep surrounding hills and deep water.

As a result today the harbour has an entrance that is shallower than its inner basin. Its deepest part is the area closest to the fault-line around Queens Wharf; there are also comparatively shallow areas off the eastern and western shorelines. It is from the latter that the 'man-made' geology, comprising most of the Maritime Trail, has evolved, in the form of extensive reclamations from the sea, as outlined further on.

Maori Settlement

The earliest name for Wellington, one derived from Maori legend, is *Te Upoko o te Ika a Maui* or 'the head of Maui's fish', i.e. the one pulled by the eponymous Polynesian navigator Maui – which became New Zealand's North Island.

The first Polynesian navigators were Kupe and Ngahoe, who camped on the southern side of the harbour at Seatoun in 925AD. The Maori names for the two islands in the harbour – Matiu (Somes) and Makaro (Ward) – are taken from two of Kupe's female relatives. Kupe himself is commemorated in the Maori names for Barrett's reef and Seatoun Beach and by the statue that features as part of this trail.

Later visitors were Tara and Tautoke, the sons of Whatonga from the Mahia peninsula; their encouraging reports led Whatonga to establish a settlement around Wellington Harbour; the area became known as *Te Whanganui a Tara* (the Great Harbour of Tara – still one of the Maori names for Wellington). To other tribes who subsequently settled here from Taranaki – Te Atiawa, Ngati Tama and Ngati Mutunga, the area was later known as *Poneke*, the Maori transliteration of the abbreviation 'Port Nick'.

"Bird's eye view of Port Nicholson, 1839". This lithograph of the harbour, made in London by James Allon, from charts and drawings prepared by Charles Heaphy and others, was remarkably accurate, given that the artist (unknown) never saw Wellington, let alone had the opportunity to view it from this position. (ATL F49051 1/2)



European Contact and Settlement

Both Abel Tasman (in December 1642) and James Cook (in November 1773) reached the environs of Wellington Harbour; bad weather, however, kept their ships in Cook Strait.

Captain James Herd of the New Zealand Company barque *Rosanna* visited on 26 May 1826 with 60 Scottish mechanics on board, to examine settlement prospects. Landing at Seatoun to survey the area for a week or so, he decided against settlement. Both he and Captain Thomas Barnett, on the accompanying cutter *Lambton* provided the earliest known charting of Wellington Harbour, with details of (varying) fathom depths, suitable anchorages, outlying rocks, shoreline shape etc. Herd was the source of the observation that "here, all the navies of Europe might ride in perfect security".

Apart from visits by whalers ("Worser" Heberley, Dicky Barrett and Jackie Love) as well as some settlers, the next major arrival (2 September 1839) was a New Zealand Company survey party on board the *Tory*. One member, Colonel William Wakefield, was to select the most suitable local site for a large settlement and arrange land purchases from local Maori. The *Tory's* captain, E.M. Chaffers, also produced a more precise and professional survey of Wellington Harbour, published in 1842.

Reclamation

Reclamation of land was not required immediately, but by the late 1840s small private reclamations for access and the construction of wharves and harbourside businesses had begun. From 1852 the provincial government oversaw a programme of reclamations, with the Wellington City Council, inaugurated in 1870, playing a later role in the projects. After the creation of the Wellington Harbour Board in January 1880, reclamation work was divided between the Harbour Board, the Government and the City Council. Reclamation continued through the 20th century and did not cease until the mid-1970s. By then nearly 360 hectares had been reclaimed from the harbour.

Harbour administration

The Wellington Harbour Board, along with all others in the country, ceased to exist after October 1989. Its commercial, property management and recreational functions were split between the Port of Wellington, Lambton Harbour Management and Wellington City Council respectively. Lambton Harbour Management (now Wellington Waterfront Ltd) was set up in 1986 as a City Council-owned self-funding body with ambitious plans to develop the inner harbour foreshore. It introduced more commercial methods into what had been up to then largely municipal central government oversight of the waterfront.

*Early timber wharves at Te Aro.
(MWCeS 6712)*



Wharves

The first private wharf was built in 1841 by William Heaton Rhodes, later to be chairman of the Province's Wharf Committee. This and other early wharves were fairly crude – often only stone-filled hogsheads bound together and overlaid with logs, or simple timber jetties. Some wharves were free to use while for others a fee was charged. Perhaps the most famous of all private wharves was "Plimmer's Ark" a vessel beached on Clay Point, (today Stewart Dawson's corner) in 1849 and turned into a wharf and warehouse. After 1862, wharf development stayed in the hands of Government or local authorities. After 1880, wharves were the sole responsibility of the Wellington Harbour Board.

Along with the wharves, some 33 cargo sheds were built around Lambton Harbour. Those on the northern side of Queens Wharf were eventually labelled with odd numbers and those to the south with even numbers; initially, letters of the alphabet were used. All the wharves and warehouses to the north of Shed 21 (where this trail begins) are owned by Centre Port; all those to the south by Wellington Waterfront, formerly Lambton Harbour Management.



Waterfront architecture

The waterfront the WHB inherited in the 1880s was very much Wellington's 'back door', architecturally speaking, with only a few substantial structures, like bonded stores, among a group of smaller, dowdier structures.

After it was established, the WHB began to build some significant structures among the wharf sheds and in a variety of styles. The most important of those buildings alongside them were private buildings and warehouses. Only some of these early buildings have survived, but the mixture of styles remains. The spaces previously occupied by demolished WHB buildings are now being filled by landscaping, sculpture and new public and commercial buildings. Along with the adaptation and refurbishment of many older buildings, the introduction of contemporary buildings and other elements into the landscape is the biggest change to waterfront architecture since the demolitions of the 1970s and 80s.