



## WHANGANUI DISTRICT HERITAGE INVENTORY

**Register Item No:** 317      **Type:** Building

**Site & Building:** Pre-1900 Archaeological Interest

**Name:** DUSTIN'S

**Location:** 59 Victoria Avenue, Whanganui

**Legal Description:** Pt Sec 177, Town of Wanganui

**Current Details:** Owner: [Contact Whanganui District Council for details]

Occupier: Jean Jones and Anna S (clothing shops)

**Original Owner:** TB Taylor Estate (Section); Building: David Bain

**Date:** 1895; altered 1908 & 1939 (façade)

**Architect/Designer:** Andrew McFarlane (1895); Thomas Battle (1908); Clifford Newton Hood (1939)

**Builder:** Andrew McFarlane (1895); George Bengé (1908)

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**Status:** District Plan Class: Class B, 2013

**Thematic Context:** Industry/Commerce and Cultural/Social

**Significance:** Historic, Architectural, Cultural

**Integrity:** 1939 façade substantially intact

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**Photo Reference:**

WDC File Ref: Heritage/Inventory/B16 15m

Date: Nov 2003

See p4 for additional photograph(s)



This 1939 façade was put in place when the Grand Picture Theatre closed and Dustin's renovated their premises.

## History:

### *Of the site:*

The section was owned by Thomas Ballardie Taylor and his Estate after his death in 1872. The previous building was probably erected c1874 for James Bain, who established his bakery and confectionery business in Wanganui at that time. The business was managed by William Hogg from 1883 until 1895, when James Bain's son, David, took it over and Hogg moved to new premises in Ridgway Street (where the Chief Post Office now stands).

### *Of the building:*

**David Bain** commissioned Andrew McFarlane to design and erect a building to suit his developing business. The new premises were opened on 14 December 1895, with a detailed description in the *Wanganui Chronicle* the previous day. The shop had a double frontage to the Avenue, with a separate entrance leading to the first floor ladies refreshment rooms. This was described as a "bright and cheerful retreat" for the ladies, furnished with tea tables, flower stands and pictures and having two windows overlooking the Avenue. Downstairs was another refreshment room, with further "stalls" each seating four people behind the shop counters. A kitchen and bakehouse at the back, plus living quarters upstairs, completed the premises. David Bain's entry in the *Cyclopedia of NZ* (published 1897) describes his premises as being two stories high, with a frontage of 33 feet to the Avenue. His sister supervised the retail department; private sitting and refreshment rooms were "well appointed" and the Staunton Chess Club met on the first floor. A factory at the rear was supervised by David Bain, with three "hands" involved in the confectionery business.

In 1898, after David Bain's untimely death, the confectionery business was sold to **William Dustin**, whose business remained in the building until it closed in 1957 (see below). **Thomas Dickson**, the tailor, moved into part of the building in 1908 and remained there until 1914. (*See B16.14 for more information about Thomas Dickson.*)

In 1908, Dustin decided to alter his premises. Thomas Battle planned the brick extensions, comprising a downstairs tea room and an upstairs supper room. The *Chronicle* reported on 16 July 1908 that George Bengé had the contract for this work, to be completed in three months, when a start would be made on replacing the Avenue frontage. Although the shop front may have been changed, the façade was not altered at this time. In 1915, Dickson's old shop became the entrance to the **Grand Picture Theatre** (see B16.19a) and the 1919 Peace Procession photograph shows both the sign for the Grand and the original 1895 façade still in place.

In 1939 the picture theatre closed down and Dustin's took over the rest of the building, contracting Clifton Newton Hood to prepare plans to modernise the premises inside and out. This resulted in the Art Deco-style plastered façade replacing the old wooden one. A new verandah and shop front were also installed. The contractors for the work were Mackay & Dixon, with shop fittings provided by Fry & Treloar. Further alterations were made for Dustin's in 1946, by which time they still had their upstairs reception room and tea rooms. A dressmaker, Miss Nicholl, also had rooms in the building in 1941.

Dustin's remained in the building until 1957, when it was altered again (plans by C Newton Hood & CFH Cawsey) for Messrs **Udy & Burton**, the men's outfitters who took over one of the shops. Charles Begg & Co operated out of the other shop by 1959.

Richards Studios later took over the Udy & Burton shop; it was renovated to plans by Mouldey, Dodd & Associates. By 1989, Richards Studios and the Fashion Warehouse were in the two shops; Great NZ Gifts moved into one shop in 1991 and by 2004, Jean Jones and Anna S, both women's clothing retailers, were in both shops.

### *Of Dustin's:*

William Samuel Dustin emigrated to Wanganui in 1880 from his native Plymouth and established the Devon Bakery first in Guyton Street then in Wicksteed Place. This was very successful, selling 5,000 loaves a week by 1897. After Dustin took over Bain's Victoria Avenue premises in 1898, his business developed to include the existing refreshment rooms. The upstairs reception room was popular for Saturday night suppers. By 1908, Dustin's had a second shop and bakehouse further up the Avenue, near Ingestre Street, and later a bakehouse in Ridgway Street, which burnt down in 1925, after which they moved their bakery operations to Churton Street.

Dustin's catering enterprise extended to race meetings and providing canteens at Trentham and Featherston military camps during World War I. William's son, Corporal Claude Dustin, had the distinction of being the first Wanganui man to be killed at Gallipoli.

Five other sons were involved in the family business, including Sydney Dustin whose sons, Stan and Claude, followed the baking tradition until the firm closed down in 1957.

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**Description:**

The 1939 plastered façade has an art deco feel, with the central pilaster (which carried the name of the occupier). Two of the upper windows changed to doors at some time. It is a timber building with weatherboards at the rear and extensions. Corrugated iron roof. The shop at No 59 Victoria Avenue has ceiling cornices which may be original, as this was the main confectionery store.

**Condition:**

Good, although the upper façade could benefit from a sympathetic paint treatment.

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**Resources Consulted:**

Wanganui District Council Building files – 59 and 59b Victoria Avenue, contain papers from 1927 (relating to Grand Picture Theatre, B16.19a) and 1939 with plans of façade renovation.  
Wanganui Borough Council Valuations Rolls Database – entries for WS Dustin and Thomas Dickson.  
Wanganui Borough Council Rates Book, AAF 64:1 – entries for Section 177.  
1908 Wanganui Borough Insurance Assessment map – shows Dustin and Dickson in the building.  
Wanganui Borough Council Building Permit Register, Archives Ref AAF 174:1 – permit issued 24 Aug 1908 to WS Dustin for additions to his Avenue shop, £1500.  
*Wanganui Chronicle*, 13 Dec 1895 – description of “Mr D Bain’s new premises”.  
*Wanganui Chronicle*, 16 Jul 1908 – report on plans to extend Dustin’s Avenue premises.  
*Wanganui Chronicle*, 18 Nov 1939 – article on the modernisation of Dustin’s, to be completed by Christmas.  
*Cyclopedia of NZ*, Vol 1, pub c1897 – entries for David Bain, William Hogg and WS Dustin.  
*River City Press*, 27 Aug 1992, p11 – history of Dustin’s.  
*Wanganui Coronation Souvenir*, 1911 – entry for Dustin’s. Includes photographs of premises following the 1908 alterations.  
*Wanganui Chronicle*, 18 Jun 1957, p6 – Dustin’s closes shop.  
*Wanganui Photo Album*, AP Bates – 1919 Peace Procession photograph shows Dustin’s next to Collier’s.  
Note that this building, as well as the next three buildings, are also shown in 19 June 1897 Jubilee Procession photographs appearing in the *Yeoman* supplement.  
Alexander Turnbull Library: Timeframes website – interior photographs, etc as shown on page 4.

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**Comments on Significance:**

*Historic*

The main building in town that has associations with Dustin’s, a bakery and catering business that operated in Wanganui for more than 75 years. The catering enterprise extended to race meetings throughout the lower North Island, and by 1911 the firm had a branch in Palmerston North.

*Architectural*

This is the only example of an Art Deco style façade in the Avenue and is substantially intact since the 1939 “modernisation”.

*Cultural*

Dustin’s recalls a time when refreshment and tea rooms were such an important part of life in Wanganui. The firm’s catering enterprise was considered to be one of the best “on the coast” in 1911.

**Recommendations:**

**Date:** 1 July 2004 (updated 15 March 2005) **Research by:** Wendy Pettigrew

Historical photographs:

1919 Peace Procession photograph, in *Wanganui Photo Album*, AP Bates – shows Dustin’s façade.

Alexander Turnbull Library photographs:



No. 1/1 016064 – interior of WS Dustin’s confectionery shop, 1909. Frank Denton photo.



No. 1/1 016061 – interior of Dustin’s tea rooms, 1909. Frank Denton photo.



No. 1/1 024401 – employees outside WS Dustin’s confectionery shop, c 1909. Edith Emily Williams photo.